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# Kurdish Ethnonationalism: A Threat To Turkish Security

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## Abstract

Traditional thinking on security fails to explain the security predicament of Third World states. These states, with their existence assured by international recognition, are not primarily concerned with externally generated threats. Their internal charcteristics violate the tenants of the realist theory, because they have more than one nation within their borders. The domestic conditions of these states make tham internally insecure and weak --the threat of ethnic conflict great.

As such, placing security in the military sphere alone, ignores these contradictions which lead to an insecurity dilemma. Thus, the concept of security needs to be broadened to include, not merely the military but also the political, societal and economic factors. The threat posed to state security from dissenting ethnic groups is both a domestic and foreign policy issue. It is within this discussion, that the thesis examines Turkey's security predicament with regards to her Kurdish minority.

**Abstrait**

En ce qui la stabilité des pays du tiers Monde, tous les procédés jusqu' alors employés se sont avérés et s'avèrent peu fructeux. L' autonomie, bien que reconnue par les lois internationales, ne semblent pas être très solide. Nous pouvons y discerner plusieurs causes: (1) Devoir faire face à l' autonomie de leurs frontières; (2) Gérer les conditions économiques du pays; et, (3) Concilier les différents groupes ethniques qui font parti de leur population.

Ces pays se trouvent souvent dans une position très ambiguë, un grand dilemme. Le recours à la force n' a jamais résolu aucun problème. La stabilité d'un pays tiers Monde exige des procédés nouveaux: une meilleure évaluation de leur situation politique, économique, culturelle, aiderait à la stabilité de la paix et la prospérité. Ces procédés non-reçus, qui demandent réflexion, patience, et esprit inventif sont indispensables pour régler, par example, le cas du conflit qui surgit en Turquie.

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## 1. Introduction

Traditional scholarship on the security predicament of states indicates that these unitary actors are primarily concerned with threats that are external in origin. These challenges have tended to be associated with the continued territorial integrity and statehood of nations within the international community of recognized states. So that security has been applied solely to the military sphere --military capability of states-- with little consideration to the ambiguity and complexity of the concept. Although Third World states share the same international environment as Western states, their internal conditions differ from those faced by European nations. It is these differences in internal conditions which highlight how the Third World case fails to follow the realist paradigm of the *security dilemma*. The *security dilemma*, as traditionally understood, hinges on the external threat conditions faced by states and on the effectiveness of their efforts, as unitary actors, to meet these challenges (i.e., the state's military capability to deal with such challenges is the primary concern).

There are a number of ways in which the internal situation of Third World states violate the underpinnings of the *security dilemma*. In realist thought it is assumed that state borders contain a single nation (cohesive society); but since the borders of Third World states when drawn often combined different ethnic groups, these nations are, in fact, multiethnic. With this comes the necessary assumption that the ruling regime enjoys the support of the majority, if not all, of the population; but as the majority of Third World states are demographically a patchwork of competing communal groups, the regime in power often lacks the support of a significant proportion of the population because ruling elites represent the interests of either a particular ethnic or social section of the citizenry. Thus, there is a perceived lack of popular legitimacy for the existence and security concerns of these governments.

Also, taken for granted is that each state has effective institutional capabilities to provide peace, order and the needed conditions for its population to enjoy a satisfactory physical existence. Finally, the traditional thinking on the security of states identifies all threats to the nation-state as external, making the very existence

of the states vulnerable. However, when we consider Third World states within this context we find that they have a guarantee of continued existence within the international system through the internationally recognized norm of the inalienability of sovereignty. Prior to the First World War for the elimination and absorption of states considered not viable was common. Since then many political entities in the Third World, which in the past were unlikely to survive, have continued to flourish --their legal existence protected irrespective of their internal conditions.

A fundamental component of this "insecurity dilemma" is tied to the process of state-formation in the Third World. Unlike their European counterparts these fledgling states needed to conduct state consolidation and nation-building within a restricted time frame, concentrating a process which normally took hundreds of years to evolve into a few decades. Their colonial experience has resulted in certain predetermined conditions for such fledgling nation-sates. This has meant the freezing of territorial boundaries which cut across ethnic, tribal, linguistic and religious ties. The result that "[the] ethnic attachments of the dominant community in such states is thus strengthened and transformed by its translation into state nationalism; by the same token, the ethnic consciousness of subordinate groups becomes fundamentally altered as they are constrained either to assimilate into the dominant group, or to identify themselves as cultural inferiors" (Brown 1989: 11). In an effort to accelerate nation-building and state-consolidation these fledgling states were forced to use existing pre-independence multiple "traditional" structures to maintain authority. Different sections of the population continued to perceive each other as rivals, and moreover as potential enemies. At the same time these states continued to co-opt traditional leaders, further complicating state-consolidation.

Nation-building activities help to politicize ethnicity as new ethnic solidarities are formed with the piecemeal introduction of representative government based on colonially formulated models of communal representation, helping to strengthen intercommunal differences. As ruling elites of Third World nations tend to deny their state's multiethnic reality and attempt to build a national consciousness by

constructing a monoethnic state dominated by a single ethnolinguistic or ethnoreligious group there develops a gross inequality in the sharing of political and economic power --so that the state and its representatives are perceived as the enemy.

In order to better understand the insecurity dilemma experienced by such states the definition of security needs to be broadened if it is to allow for the complexity of the situation experienced by these countries. Hence, security is taken in this thesis to represent "...the pursuit of freedom of threat and the ability of states and societies to maintain their independent identity and their functional integrity against forces of change which they see as hostile" (Buzan, 1991: 18). In this way both the domestic conditions and the international (external) considerations states have to deal with in their security calculus are subsumed within this conceptualization of national security. By defining security in this way we find that the security of states is multidimensional: military, political, economic, societal and environmental. These five sectors do not work in isolation from one another, as each represents a focal point in the security problematic and offers a way of ordering security priorities.

The case under consideration is that of Turkey and the challenges it faces with respect to its Kurdish minority in the southeastern region. Turkey has been chosen because of its importance as an early developing World state embarked on a clear program of state and nation-building after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, and her strategic importance in the Gulf. Many Western observers have for some time seen Turkey as an *"oasis of stability"* in a fragmented and uncertain region. However, a close examination of the problems posed to Turkey both domestically and in its relations with regional neighbours shows this view to be an oversimplification. The basis for this view of Turkey is the implicit assumption that it differs from the geopolitical regions which lie adjacent to it.

The internal nature of the insecurity dilemma means that regional security is complicated and further constrained by domestic interests and policy requirements. Cooperation between regional neighbours is dependent upon the

degree to which they are threatened by similar separatist forces. This can be observed when one considers the predicament faced by Turkey, as it has the largest Kurdish population of all the states in the region (Iran, Iraq, and Syria). Of the four states, over whose borders the entire Kurdish population straddles, Turkey has the most to fear from any step towards Kurdish independence. If fellow states are not threatened by ethnic conflict, or to a lesser degree, they are more likely to use one state's weakness in order to gain concessions on regional policies they wish to pursue. A clear example of such an instance is shown by continued Syrian support of the PKK and the sheltering of its leader Ocalan in Damascus. This is directly attributable to the fact that Syria has the smallest Kurdish population (around 1.5 million) and uses the Kurdish issue to obtain concessions from Turkey on such issues as water in the region.

Thus, regional cooperation between states is more likely the greater the overlap of their domestic interests. As is shown by past and present Turkish and Iraqi cooperation on the Kurdish issue. Since the colonial legacy has often meant the dispersal of ethnic groups between a number of states, ethnic separatism is not an exclusively domestic concern. This extraterritorial nature of ethnic issues means that each state's ability to freely determine policy towards her ethnic minority is restricted by the need to take into account her neighbours' domestic policy towards the same ethnic group. The threat posed to state security from dissenting ethnic groups is not only a domestic policy issue, but also a foreign policy one. Hence, domestic policy affects foreign (regional) policy, and vice versa.

One can say that Turkey is, to varying degrees, stable, democratic, secular, unencumbered by extremism and pro-Western in approach. What gives cause for concern about such an assumption is that it implies that Turkey is somehow impervious to the stresses that pervade in such regions; immunized against the forces which have been brought to the fore since the end of the Cold War. "The reality is that Turkey is no less susceptible to the collapse of ideology, the centrifugal forces within states, and the dangers of interstate conflict than any other country in Eurasia"

(Robins 1993: 658). To date, such tensions have been most apparent for Turkey in relation to the Kurdish issue. The presence of so large a minority in Turkey has exposed a serious contradiction in Kemalist ideology, at a time when authoritarian ideologies are deeply unfashionable in the world. "The disaffection of the Kurds of the southeast represents the strongest centrifugal force in the country" (Robins, 1993: 658). The insurgency led by the Partiya Karkaran Kurdistan (PKK, Kurdistan Workers' Party), which since 1989 has grown to dangerous proportions, has rendered part of the country a no-go area and threatened the very stability of the whole state. The collapse of state authority in northern Iraq and the alacrity with which Turkey's nearest neighbours appear willing to exploit the Kurdish question to weaken the Turkish state, indicate the extraterritorial nature of the problem. The acute nature of the threat posed by the PKK insurgency has exacerbated interstate tensions in the area over the past years.

For Turkey, the Kurdish question is an existential issue. The first threat to the integrity of the Turkish state came when the country was still in the womb of history. The Treaty of Sèvres of 1920 prescribed the creation of a fragile and inconsequential state out of the grand ruins of the Ottoman empire. This rump state was to be created because the entente powers wished to bring both the Kurds and Armenians closer to statehood. However, the Treaty of Sèvres became irrelevant soon after it was concluded, as the Turkish nationalists, led by Atatürk, ignored international convention and carved out a Turkish state of the proportions that exist today. Thus, with the demise of Sèvres went the possibility for the establishment of a Kurdish state. Some 74 years later, however, the Sèvres experience remains fresh in the minds of Turks. "The diplomatic lesson drawn by many is that the creation of a Kurdish state will inevitably weaken the Turkish state" (Robins, 1993: 659). This has greatly predetermined the kind of policies implemented by successive Turkish governments over the years towards its Kurdish minority.

Soon after the foundation of the modern state of Turkey there took place three Kurdish rebellions. Though these were swiftly suppressed, the fact that three major

armed rebellions against the state were led by Kurds and based in the Kurdish region of Turkey firmly established the Kurds in Turkish minds as the source of the primary challenge to their independent existence. Even before the first revolt, Atatürk had begun to develop an ideology based on ethnonationalism, drawn from the European experience. It set out to simultaneously deny the existence of other ethnic groups and co-opt the Kurds (and other members of the Turkish nation). The essence of Kemalism as it relates to the national question was that those disparate people of the modern state were to have their previous identities subsumed under that of being Turkish. Thus, all Turks were to be treated as equal members of the state with equal opportunities and duties.

Kurdish individuals have until only recently been able to achieve ministerial and parliamentary positions by denying their Kurdish origins and stressing that they are Turks. While those that suppressed their Kurdish identity could prosper within the Turkish state, up to 1989 those who did not were immediately subject to suspicion and possible persecution. The very rigidity of this contract implied that those who did not subscribe to it must, as a consequence, be engaged in trying to subvert the Turkish state. This combination of authoritarian ideology and state power might have been successful in stifling a specific Kurdish self-consciousness had it not been for the size of the Kurdish community in Turkey and the presence of significant Kurdish communities in neighbouring states, over which Turkey had no control.

It is hardly surprising in view of the political sensitivity of the matter, that the number of Kurds in Turkey is disputed. However, with the Turkish population standing at just over 60 million and the Kurds constituting around 17 per cent, that would mean that there are 12 million Kurds in the country, most of which are located in the southeast. With the absence of economic benefits, and the political polarization of politics in the southeastern region throughout the 70s and 80s, this has left the Kurds with little stake in the prosperity of Turkey. Given this socio-economic marginalization and historic suppression of Kurds within Turkey since its

creation, they represent a serious secessionist force within the state. Although in the beginning of its insurgence the PKK declared the desire for a separate Kurdish state on the lines of that prescribed in the Treaty of Sèvres, the extraterritorial nature of the Kurdish question seems unlikely to persuade them to look to carve out a separate homeland of their own as they might easily become part of another state with a sizeable Kurdish minority. Whatever the outcome in the years to come the Kurdish issue is likely to remain a perennial and persistent problem in the region.

The analysis that follows is concerned with answering the following questions: (1) Has Turkey's own brand of state-formation helped to politicize Kurdish ethnicity, and if so, how?; (2) What kind of a security threat does the Kurdish insurgency represent for Turkey?; (3) What kinds of policies has Turkey pursued in an effort to reduce the threat posed by the conflict in the southeastern region, and why? In other words, can this be attributed to its pattern of state-formation?; (4) How has Turkish policy vis-à-vis its Kurdish minority affected PKK activities within the southeast region over the duration of the conflict?; and (5) How have Turkey's relations with its neighbouring states and the West been influenced by the Kurdish issue?

## Chapter 1: State Formation and Security in the Third World

### 1.1 History of State Formation in the Third World

There exists a body of evidence which has shown that there is a close connection between state making and security in the Third World. So it can be postulated that the security of the Third World state is determined by two crucial factors: (1) the history and process of state-formation in the Third World and (2) the way in which the system of states has impinged upon this process, thereby providing it with some of its distinctive characteristics (Ayoob, 1986 and Job, 1992). These two factors, interacting with one another, have helped to shape the contours of what is called the "insecurity dilemma" of Third World states.

To understand the sources of this dilemma, one must compare the pattern of state-formation in the Third World with that of the Western European experience. During such a comparison, one finds that the events in European history belie the nation-state model of national identification, peaceful assimilation, nationalism, popular and legitimate government, and national security. "[The] typical Western European experience most always involved the painful transition from state to nation, within a bloody history of elimination of political contenders, forced assimilation, and repressive consolidation of authority in the hands of the most efficient" (Job, 1992: 25). Thus, while the end result was final, the process was much more violent and top-down than was commonly acknowledged (Tilly, 1975; and Ayoob, 1991).

In the end, "it was the state, with its territorial definition of political power and its role as internal and external security provider, that emerged as dominant over contending economic, communal, and political forces within society" (Job, 1992: 25). There are those scholars (Ayoob, 1991) who argue that the European state-building process, however understood, is likely to be repeated in the Third World given time. "This implies that efficient and effective forces will emerge through struggle; national identities will be forged through directed assimilation; and ultimately relatively secure nation-states will be the model form of the Third World

states as well" (Job, 1992: 25). However, to suggest that time alone will solve the problems faced by Third World states ignores the fact that the existence and security context of the contemporary Third World is unique. Thus, Third World states went on to adopt "...the European model of the sovereign state and the European ideology of nationalism --that the state should be the homeland and incorporate the aspirations of a single people or nation" (Esman and Rabinovich, 1988: 4). In so doing, these states helped to create the security problems they would come to face in the future.

### 1.2 The Colonial Experience of Third World States

This attempt at state-making in a hurry has been made immeasurably more difficult, and the security predicament of the postcolonial state thereby made more acute, by the discontinuities and distortions introduced by colonialism into the process of state-formation in the Third World. The colonial experience resulted in a number of predetermined conditions for these fledgling states:

1. The proclivity of colonial powers to use multiple 'traditional' structures of authority in the colonies as instruments of rule that mediated between the colonial power and the colonized population. Thus, different sections of the population were left perceiving each other increasingly as rivals, and ominously as potential enemies (Mazrui, 1986:112). Moreover, co-option of traditional leadership affinities was conducted and continued by the post-colonial states, further complicating state-formation.
2. Furthermore, new ethnic solidarities were formed, largely as a result of the workings of the colonial process. New definitions of communal identity were determined by such factors as migration from rural to urban areas, etc.
3. Also, the piecemeal introduction of representative government based on colonially devised formulas of communal representation tended to consolidate communal/ethnic solidarity and sharpen intercommunal divisions.
4. The freezing of territorial boundaries which cut across ethnic, tribal, linguistic and religious ties --dismembering established political units, and joined more than one precolonial political entity into uneasy administrative unions. (Job, 1992: 70-71)

## 1.3 Post-Colonial State Making and Societal Demands

The process of modernization augmented the destabilizing consequences of the colonial legacy of politicized ethnic and communal identities. Thus, modernization "far from destroying communalism, in time both reinforces communal conflict and creates the conditions for the formation of entirely new communal groups" (Melson and Wolpe, 1970:1113). The heightening of such ethnic fissures has led in several cases to the outbreak of separatist insurgencies demanding secession from the post-colonial state. "Such challenges are regarded as subversive to the [state]. Because powerful challenges are proscribed, there is [often] no outlet for grievances except civil disobedience or violence" (Esman and Rabinovich, 1988: 22).

Most separatist movements exist as a result of the fact that many Third World state elites deny that their societies are multiethnic and attempt to construct monoethnic states dominated by a single ethnolinguistic or ethnoreligious group. "This was the threat to minorities ...that exacerbated tensions among the various ethnic communities in the [Third World] and between those communities and the new states" (Esman and Rabinovich, 1988: 4). Therefore, ethnicity[1] often becomes politicized, and sometimes poses serious threats to the security of Third World states, due to the gross inequality in the sharing of the political and economic power within most such states --an inequality that is frequently perpetuated by deliberate state policy (Brown, 1988:1-77; Brown, 1989: 1-17).

This is further complicated by two factors acting in developing countries during the process of state-making. The two factors are: (i) the demand for political participation by the general populace of the state, and (ii) the demand for welfare and for a more equal distribution of the economic pie. "Together these demands, even if only partially gratified, place enormous burdens on many Third World state structures that are barely able to perform the minimal tasks of statehood, viz., the provision of political order" (Job, 1992: 73). Satisfying such popular demands can and do run counter to the imperatives of state-making.

## 1.4 The International System: It's Workings and Norms

Third World state-making does not take place within a vacuum. One of the major differences between the early European experience in state-formation and that of the Third World is that the system of states evolved concurrently with the evolution of modern European states. "The process of formation in the early modern states of Europe started prior to the evolution of the state system; without the former the latter could not have come into existence" (Job, 1992: 73).

In the case of the Third World, state-making was "...undertaken in the presence of a well-established system of states whose norms and rules have been evolved and refined over centuries and the patterns of interaction within which have been firmly established" (Job, 1992: 74). This seriously constrains the process of state-formation in the Third World to a considerable degree and makes it far more dependent on the configurations of political, military, economic, and technological power in the now truly global international system than was the case with most European states at a comparative stage in their evolution. Two sets of norms which have greatly affected Third World state-formation are:

### 1.4.1 International Norm of the Inalienability of Juridical Sovereignty

The European experience in state-building shows that an elimination of states considered not viable took place, either because of their internal contradictions or because their existence did not suit great power aspirations. This was acceptable to the international community through to the end of the First World War. This international consensus on the alienability of juridical statehood began to change during the interwar period and crystallized after World War Two (Job, 1992: 78). This has meant that many political entities in the Third World, which in an earlier time would have been considered unlikely to survive, have continued to flourish in a condition of juridicial statehood. The new international norms, while managing to protect the legal existence of these states regardless of their internal cohesiveness, have been unable to solve or even mitigate the security problems that they face as a result of the contradictions inherent within the state-making process.

### 1.4.2 International Norm of the Ideal Democratic Welfare State

Another set of international norms are those set by the demonstrated success of modern industrialized states to meet the basic needs of their populations, protecting their human rights, redistributing income, and promoting and guaranteeing political participation. Such norms have undermined "...the legitimacy of Third World states by prescribing standards and yardsticks in terms of the output functions of political systems that most Third World states will be incapable of meeting for many decades to come" (Job,1992: 78).

So the two sets of norms can work at cross-purposes. While the first insists on the judicial existence of even the weakest states; the second demands standards of effective and humane performance from the most fragile and weak of polities, which are incapable of carrying out even the minimum function of maintaining political order. "The interaction of these two sets of norms thus exacerbates the security predicament of Third World states by not permitting them to exit from the system of states and by enforcing on them standards of 'civilized' behaviour that they are unable to meet" (Job, 1992: 78).

It should come as no surprise, with the international system in effect shielding some Third World states from extinction, that these countries are preoccupied with internal rather than external security, violating the traditional view of the security problematic.

### 2.1 The State as the Object of Security Analysis

In order to understand the state as the primary object of security it is necessary to understand the relationship between nation and state. At least two possible models[2] of nation- state links suggest themselves.

According to Buzan, first is the primal nation-state, as exemplified by Italy and Japan. In this case, "the nation precedes the state, and plays a vital role in giving rise to it" (Buzan, 1991: 72). Where the state's role "is to protect and express the nation, and the bond between the two is deep and profound" (Buzan, 1991: 72-73). The

nation serves to provide the state with both a solid base for domestic legitimacy and a strong identity in the international system. Such a state's domestic legitimacy should be solid enough to withstand any revolutionary upheaval.

The second model, and that found more often in the Third World, is that of the state-nation. Here it is the state which is instrumental in creating the nation, rather than in other way round. The process is top-down rather than bottom-up. However, this process is more successful when populations have been transplanted from other lands to fill an empty, or weakly held, territory --as in the case of the United States, Australia and Latin America. If successful an entity is produced which is similar in all respects except ancient history to a primal nation-state.

This may not appear to be applicable to the Third World context, but this model can also be applied in places where the state incorporates a multitude of nationalities. Here, the main point is that "...the state is regarded as the instrument of a single ethnic group; others must accommodate themselves to the terms of coexistence determined by the dominant group" (Esman and Rabinovich, 1988: 16). However, in such a situation the creation of a nation(or national consciousness) will "...[require] the absorption or subordination of the indigenous nations on their own ground..." (Buzan, 1991: 73). This is a much harder task than the incorporation of uprooted and dispersed immigrants. Many post-colonial states, faced with complex ethnic, tribal and religious divisions, turn to the state-nation model for their salvation. "Nation-building is to be achieved by the transfer of allegiance from ethnic groups to the symbols and institutions of the state, or by encouraging assimilation of minorities into the dominant ethnic community, eventually achieving the union of nation and state" (Esman and Rabinovich, 1988:272). Turkey represents a state which has "...explicitly incorporated the aspirations of the dominant ethnic group" (Esman and Rabinovich, 1988: 16). Nonmembers are expected to accept a different relationship to the state than members of the dominant ethnic group. If, the state opts to consign its minorities a *de facto* or *de jure* subordinate status, with inferior economic roles and limited participation in the polity, it will lack legitimacy among

such groups and have to rely on coercive measures of control (Esman and Rabinovich, 1988).

As suggested, this can involve an attempt to obliterate existing identities (as Turkey has done), or more likely, adding a new layer of collective identity on top of those already existing (co-option can be one of the means of implementing this). The latter route exploits the human potential to have several layers of identity, and aims at a multinational state, such as that of Britain.

If successful, then, nation and state will coincide in efficient domestic government and the creation of a strong presence within the challenging international environment. If not, then the state can be perceived by some sectors of society as threatening. One implication of this situation is that struggles between nations and the state point to a level of contradiction in the meaning of national security. So the state would be lacking with respect to its domestic legitimacy and therefore, feel threatened by any national upheaval. This is a condition inherent in many Third World states, where the focus of national security are internal threats. Such states are weak as far as their attempts at political and social cohesion are concerned.

### 2.2 Weak States and the Third World

The distinction between weak and strong states is vital to any analysis of national security. For this study the following usage will be adopted: "weak or strong *states* refer to the degree of socio-political cohesion; weak or strong *powers* will refer to the traditional distinction among states in respect of their military and economic capability in relation to one another" (Buzan, 1991: 97). This usage differs from the literature, where 'state' is used to refer to governing institutions, and where 'weak state' refers to governments like that of the United States which are highly constrained and/or diffusely structured in relation to their societies[3].

Most, though not all, weak states are found in the Third World. The decolonization process created many new territorial states in the European mould; but for the most part it failed to take into account existing cultural and ethnic

boundaries, nor helped to create new nations to fit within them. " The political legacy of many Third World governments was a state without a nation, or even worse, a state with many nations" (Buzan, 1991: 98). The distinguishing feature of such states is their high level of concern with domestically generated threats to the security of the government (regime) in power. "This does not mean that external threats are totally absent, for they are not. But the 'mix' of internal and external sources of threat to these state structures, and particularly to their regimes, is quite often heavily weighted in favour of internal sources" (Ayoob, 1986: 8).

As Buzan(1991) points out, the following represents a list of the kinds of conditions one may expect to find in weak states[4]:

1. High levels of political violence (Examples: Ethiopia, Cambodia, Sri Lanka).
2. A conspicuous role for political police in the everyday lives of citizens (Examples: Iraq, Romania, China, North Korea).
3. Major political conflict over what ideology will be used to organize the state (Examples: Peru, Poland, El Salvador, Afghanistan).
4. Lack of coherent national identity, or the presence of contending national identities within the state (Examples: Nigeria, Ethiopia, Sudan, Turkey, Yugoslavia, Sri Lanka).
5. Lack of clear and observed hierarchy of the political authority (Examples: Lebanon, Sudan, Chad, Uganda).
6. A high degree of state control over the media (Examples: China, Iran).

Where a state is strong, national security involves protecting the components of the state from outside interference and threat. All the parts of the state, its institutions and territories will be clearly defined and stable in their own right[5]. However, if the state is weak only its physical base (land mass occupied) may constitute a clear objective of national security. In the case of Turkey, it possesses a physical base whose existence is guaranteed by the internationally recognized norm of the inalienability of juridicial sovereignty.

The fact that those states, which exhibit several of the conditions mentioned, exist at all is largely due to the fact that the international community recognizes them and does not dispute their existence. This distinction between states with serious

domestic security problems and those whose primary security concerns are external is crucial in understanding the security predicament of Third World states.

"Of course strong states have to guard against subversive penetration of their political and military fabric by foreign agents and interests, but for such states the concept of national security is primarily about protecting its independence, political identity, and the way of life from external, rather than from... [challenges]... arising within its own fabric" (Buzan, 1991: 103). "In such states domestic threats to the government cannot be completely separated from the influence of outside powers , and in this sense, the domestic security problems of weak states are often hopelessly entangled with their external relations" (Buzan, 1991: 106). Turkey's insecurity is firmly rooted within the domestic sphere and is exacerbated by its neighbour's interference.

As highlighted by much of the literature on Third World states, such threats can take many forms including military coups, guerrilla movements, secessionist movements, mass uprisings and political factionalism. When one considers Turkey's history, one finds that it has had its share of military coups (in 1960 and most notably, 1980) and suffered from political factionalism; but given the very precepts upon which it was first founded in 1923, the greatest threat has been the secessionist movement and guerrilla war led by the PKK in and around the southeastern provinces. For Turkey, the very existence of competing ethnic nations within its borders is an existential issue --that is to say, that such a condition would threaten the very basis and legitimacy for its existence. The very acceptance of a Kurdish minority existing within Turkey shatters the idea of the state as possessing a homogeneous, unified population under the banner of Turkish nationalism, whereby each member of the nation is a Turk and only a Turk. "Proclaiming oneself a Turk [has become] a badge of pride and the key to full membership of the state, rather than the social stigma it had been under the Ottomans" (Robins, 1991: 5). "The constant emphasis placed on Turkism [represents] an attempt to gloss over barely hidden ethnic cleavages that could exert a fragmentary effect on the modern Turkish

state"(Robins, 1991: 5).

The political conditions of weak states has often helped to propel the military into government "as the only organization possessing the proper and/or the national legitimacy to hold the state together" (Buzan, 1991: 104). Within Turkey, since its creation, the military has always been perceived as the guardian of democracy and guarantor of the continued existence of the nation as prescribed by Atatürk.

"To suggest this type of distinction between weak and strong states runs against the... orthodoxy [of] international relations. The illusion that all states are basically the same type of object springs not only from their common possession of sovereignty, but also from the habit of looking at them from... [an exclusively] system -level perspective" (Buzan, 1991: 102). However, if examined solely from outside states do appear to be much more definite and similar objects, than when viewed from within.

It would appear from the discussion on weak states that such states will be chronically insecure. This chronic insecurity has come to be known as the "insecurity dilemma" (Job, 1992).

### 3. The 'Insecurity Dilemma'

In order to understand how this insecurity dilemma comes about, one must first briefly consider how it violates the assumptions of realist international theory. Under the realist paradigm the contentions and contradictions of the security interests of individuals, nations, regimes, and states are resolved. The people within territorial boundaries are viewed as having singular national identities, that are in turn fostered by the institutions of the state. Therefore, they are nation-states. Regimes are regarded as legitimate agents for the national interest and a functional social contract exists with citizens ceding rights and resources to the state in return for protection and order in their lives. "In the international milieu, these nation-states interact according to principles of territoriality, sovereignty, and nominal equality" (Job, 1992: 17). From this it follows that national security refers to the

security of the nation-state, whose externally focused interest is derived form the presumption of a unified, self-identifying, and ordered society existing within its borders.

The primary metaphor within the realist rubric used to describe the security problematic of nation-states is the "security dilemma" (Jervis, 1978). As states operate in the international environment's anarchy, they seek to advance their individual national securities, create and sustain an international arena of decreased relative security for themselves and the collective of states. The security dilemma, therefore, focuses on the external threat conditions states experience and their efforts, as unitary actors, to meet these threats.

However, in light of the discussion of the internal and external circumstances of contemporary Third World states, the security dilemma metaphor and its underlying logic do not hold up to scrutiny. Such an external perspective distorts the view in relation to national security by neglecting the domestic security dimension. "National security cannot be considered apart from the internal structure of the state, and the view from within not infrequently explodes the superficial image of the state as a coherent object of security" (Buzan, 1991: 102-103).

Turning our attention to the "insecurity dilemma" one finds that it violates the security dilemma in four key ways (Job, 1992: 17-18):

1. Within the territorial borders of the state, there is often no single nation.
2. Therefore, the regime in power lacks the support of a significant component of the population, because it represents the interests of either a particular ethnic or social sector, or of an economic or military elite. In all cases, this results in an absence of perceived legitimacy to the existence of the security interests of the regime.
3. The state lacks effective institutional capabilities to provide peace and order, as well as the conditions for satisfactory physical existence, for the majority of the population.
4. The sense of threat which prevails is that of internal challenges to and from the regime in power, rather than externally generated threats to the existence of the nation-state unit itself.

The discussion below will highlight the implications of this "insecurity dilemma" to our thinking about national security and the Third World.

## 4. The Scope and Content of Security

As discussed before, security is made up of five sectors (though only four are used for this study). The different components of security are defined as follows:

### Military Security

This concerns the two-level interplay of the armed offensive and defensive capabilities of states, and the state's perceptions of each other's intentions. "In the real world, military threats pose the most direct, immediate and visible danger to state security, and military means have frequently proven useful against both military and non-military threats" (Buzan, 1991: 276). "By turning a political --and quite often a social and economic-- problem into a military one and by presenting the military threat as [emanating] from external sources, regimes in the Third World quite often try to choose an arena of confrontation with domestic dissidents that is favourable to themselves, namely, the military arena" (Ayoob, 1986: 8)[6]. Turkey's policy towards its Kurdish minority and the PKK illustrates the translation of such a political challenge into a purely military threat, with only a military solution.

Though the political, economic and societal sectors of a nation's life have to be strong enough to survive competition within their own sectors and in their own terms, none of them can be expected to be strong enough to withstand coercive pressure or violent disruption, such as guerrilla war, unaided. For this reason the strengthening of a nation's military force is vital for the protection of those sectors (political, economic, societal) against threats of force. Of course, it follows that the maintenance of an adequate military establishment becomes itself a national security interest.

Though, generally speaking, this aspect of security is directed towards external military threat, the internationalization of ethnic conflict[7] and threats to the regime mean that a nation's military capabilities come into play when her territorial integrity is under threat from challenges generated within society --such as secessionist movements.

**Political Security**

This is concerned with the organizational stability of states, systems of government, and the ideologies which give them legitimacy. "Political threats are [directed] at the organizational ability of the state" (Buzan, 1991: 118). The reasons for such threats "can range from pressuring the government on a particular policy, through overthrowing the government, to fomenting secessionism and disrupting the political fabric of the state..." (Buzan, 1991; 118). It is the idea of the state, particularly its national identity and organizing ideology, that are the normal target for political threats. With the state being essentially a political entity, such threats may be as much feared as military ones. This is very much the case if the state is a weak one.

Threats to the national identity can be clearly identified as attempts to heighten the separate ethno-cultural identities of groups within the target state[8]. As ethnicity may be generated and sustained by external as well as internal influences, contending ethnic groups "...may seek help from sympathetic outsiders, who may be willing or even eager to intervene in pursuit of their strategic or ideological goals" (Esman and Rabinovich, 1988: 23). The outsiders may be governments, or diasporas of the contending ethnic parties. An example is Syria's protection of the PKK leader, Abdullah Ocalan, and its support of the PKK guerrillas.

More importantly, in the Third World "where state boundaries are so porous...and where communities straddle the borders of two or more states, distinctions between external and internal parties to conflict often become blurred" (Esman and Rabinovich, 1988: 23).

**Economic Security**

This concerns the access to resources, finance and markets necessary to sustain levels of welfare and state power. For the purposes of this study, the definition has been extended to include a state's access to foreign aid (in terms of military hardware and monetary aid)[9].

**Societal Security**

This is concerned with the ability of societies to reproduce their traditional patterns of language, culture, association, and religious and national identity, whether threatened from within, or from outside the state. "Societal threats can be difficult to disentangle from political ones" (Buzan, 1991: 122), as they are often part of a larger package of military and political threats.

The main difficulty with such threats as national security issues is that they mostly occur within states --this relates to our discussion of weak states and the insecurity dilemma. "If societal security is about the sustainability, within acceptable conditions of evolution, of traditional patterns of language, culture and religious and ethnic identity and custom, then threats to these values come more frequently from within the state than from outside it" (Buzan, 1991: 123). Internal societal threats are symptomatic of weak states.

As such states possess polyethnic populations within their territorial boundaries, there exist extensive grounds for conflict between natural nations and the attempts of governments to create nations which coincide with state boundaries. The struggles of the Kurds in Iran, Iraq and Turkey illustrate this.

"...From the point of view of efficient domestic government and the establishment of a firm presence in a challenging international environment, having state and nations coincide provides tremendous advantages" (Buzan, 1991: 72). It becomes clear that national identity is a vital component of the security dilemma problematic whether or not it lines up with the state. As Buzan puts it: "The continuing power of national identity as a mobilizing force is made evident by events from Tibet and Sri Lanka to Estonia and Yugoslavia" (Buzan, 1991: 72). As a determinant of individual behaviour, national identity can either powerfully reinforce or deeply undermine the state.

It is with this analysis in mind that Turkey is to be examined in the next chapter. The chapter first sets out the historical background, from the state's recognition through the ratification of the Lausanne Treaty in 1923, Atatürk's

reforms and building of a Turkish national identity; and the three early Kurdish uprisings in the country's formative years, the non-performance of the provisions in the Treaty of Sèvres for Kurdish autonomy, through to the awakening of Kurdish consciousness and the birth of the PKK. The discussion shall then highlight the policies adopted by Turkey in the 12 years since the war began in 1984.

The chapter addresses the following questions: (1) What kind of a threat do Kurdish separatist forces represent for Turkey?; (2) How did this threat come about?; (3) How dangerous is this threat to Turkey?; and (4) How has this security concern affected Turkish domestic policies in dealing with Kurdish separatist forces?

## NOTES

1. For the purposes of the study, ethnicity is taken to be "...collective identity and solidarity based on such ascriptive factors as imputed common dissent, language, customs, belief systems, practices (religion), and in some cases race colour". As found in Ethnicity, Pluralism and the State in the Middle East, edited by Esman, Milton J., and Itamar Rabinovich (1988: 3).

2. Buzan (1991) suggests a further two models for nation- state linkages, known as the part state-nation and the multination-state. The first exists where a nation is divided between two or more states, and the population of which consists largely of people from that nation. In the case of the multination- state, this consists of those states which contain at least two substantially complete nations within their boundaries --two sub-types exist within this model: the federative state and the imperial state. For a detailed discussion of these models refer to pages 74 - 77 in his book. It should be noted that all the models represent ideals which few states fit into smoothly, and that certain models will best describe particular states.

3. For Migdal (1988) and others, a weak state refers to one possessing government agencies that are very constrained with regard to their societies. Such states are seen as highly democratic and most are to be found in the West.

4. From careful consideration of this list, it should become apparent that more than one of the conditions mentioned can be observed within Third World States. If we consider Turkey, one finds that there exists, not only contending national identities, but also a high degree of state control over the media --as the ban on the use of the word 'Kurd' in newspaper reports until recently has shown.

5. The component parts of the state are three. A state must possess "a physical base of population and territory; it should have institutions of some sort which govern the

physical base; and there must exist some idea of the state which establishes its legitimacy in the minds of its people" (Buzan, 1991: 66). However, the additional factors which help to make states a distinctive group of entities are size and sovereignty.

6. There are three general types of security strategies often adopted by Third World regimes: (1)militarization --developing and arming substantial military/police forces; (2) repression and state terror --attempting to destroy the perceived "enemy within"; and (3) diversionary tactics --finding and provoking external enemies to distract attention from the situation at home (Job,1992: 28).

7. This term refers to the fact that ethnic conflicts, like the Arab-Israeli conflict, have the habit of spreading internationally. In 'The Internationalization of Ethnic Conflict' (1991), five factors are identified which help such conflicts to spread across borders and embroil a wider set of direct and indirect participants. The factors found to be necessary are: "(1) the international dispersal and distribution of at least one of the ethnic groups in a conflict (as in the case of the Kurdish population); (2) the strategic location of the strife-torn country in relation to international power rivalry; (3) the organizational and communications capability of the adversaries and their allies; (4) the ideological identification of any of the ethnic groups in the conflict with one of the major international or regional powers; and (5) the presence of international organizations which are sensitive to the mass atrocities that tend to occur in communal conflicts" (de Silva and May, 1991: 16).

8. This can clearly be seen in the use of the Kurdish card by Turkey's closest neighbours, particularly Syria, in an effort to obtain concessions or agreements on regional issues, such as water. The use of the Kurdish issue in foreign policy shall be examined in further detail in Chapter 3.

9. Economic threats fall very largely within the boundaries of normal conduct, and

cannot easily or clearly be linked to the logic of national security. "But when the consequences of economic threat reach beyond the strictly economic sector, into the military and political spheres, then three somewhat clearer national security issues can emerge. The linkages involved are between economic capability on the one hand, and military capability, power and socio-political stability on the other" (Buzan, 1991: 126). This will be discussed in greater detail with reference to Turkey in the next chapter.

## Chapter 2: The Creation of Turkey and the Growth of the Kurdish Issue

### 1.1 The Creation of the Turkish Republic

"The end of World War [One] left the disparate peoples of Anatolia as broken and as dispirited as the Ottoman state of which they were subjects" (Robins, 1991: 3). There seemed every prospect of Asia Minor being parcelled up between the victorious allies. "The peace talks promised little to the Turkish people apart from a fragile and inconsequential state based on a few provinces in Anatolia ...[with] only a single outlet to the Aegean" (Robins, 1991: 3).

It was not until the Treaty of Lausanne, signed by Britain, France, Italy, Japan, Greece, Romania, and Turkey on July 24, 1923, that the borders of Turkey were recognized by the international community and established by international law (Entessar, 1992 and Robins 1991). Thus, the national territory of the Kurdish people was carved up into four parts. "Sèvres had been humiliating for the Turkish people and equally unjust to the Kurdish people. Lausanne, in contrast, was undeniably a victory for the Turks, but for the Kurds it marked the beginning of a new phase of servitude" (Chaliand, 1992: 49). "The diplomatic lesson drawn by [the Turks] is that the creation of a Kurdish state [would] inevitably weaken the Turkish state" (Robins, 1993: 659) and that only through the resort to arms can such an eventuality be avoided.

At Lausanne there was much talk about the Kurds, in their absence. Oil was a central topic in these discussions. Britain presented herself as the disinterested champion of the interests and freedom of the Kurdish people who "like all other peoples of the region should enjoy national rights and have its own government". The Ankara delegation, on the other hand, asserted that "the Government of the Great National Assembly is the Government of both Turks and Kurds",... that "Turks and Kurds are equal partners in the Government of Turkey", and that "although Turks and Kurds may speak different languages, these two peoples are not significantly different and form a single bloc from the point of view of race, faith and custom" (Chaliand, 1992: 49). With the signing of the peace Treaty at Lausanne most of the Kurdish

territories were given over to Turkish sovereignty, but "...the negotiations failed to resolve the future of Mosul..." (Robins, 1991: 21).

The Kurds in question were not surprisingly those Kurds of the oil-rich area of Mosul, which both parties were eager to obtain for themselves. "The Turkish argument for the incorporation of Mosul was that the majority of its population was Kurdish, like that of the adjacent area in Turkey" and the Ankara government believed that the integration of the Anatolian Kurds would be hampered by the estimated half million unintegrated Kurds next door in Iraq (Robins, 1991: 21-22). However, the vehemence of the argument on both sides tended to reflect the pre-eminence of the region's oil fields in the minds of both sets of negotiators, rather than any real concern for the welfare of the Kurds there. In the end the League of Nations awarded Mosul to Iraq, and the Turks eventually accepted its status, albeit reluctantly, by signing a treaty to that effect with Britain.

The Treaty of Lausanne, unlike that of Sèvres, made no mention of the Kurds, and granted them no national rights. It did, however, contain a few stipulations concerning the "protection of minorities" (Section III, Articles 37-44):

> There will be no restriction on any Turkish citizen's rights to use any language he wishes, whether in private, in commercial dealings, in matters of religion, in print or at a public gathering.
>
> Regardless of the existence of an official language, appropriate facilities will be provided for any non-Turkish-speaking citizen of Turkey to use his own language before the courts. (Article 39)
>
> Turkey commits itself to recognize the stipulations contained in Articles 38-44 as fundamental laws and to ensure that no law, no regulation and no official action will stand in contradiction or opposition to these stipulations, and that no law, regulation or official action shall prevail against them. (Article 37) (Chaliand, 1992: 50 - 51).

Unfortunately, Articles 40-45 specify that the minorities in question are non-Muslim minorities. In arguing the Kurds governed Turkey as equal partners with the Turks, the Ankara nationalist authorities refused to include them amongst the minorities protected by the stipulations. A few years later, not only were the Kurdish people no longer accepted as "equal partners and allies", their very existence had ceased to be recognized. Following the colonial carve-up, Kurdistan was split

amongst Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria, the four most powerful entities in Western Asia.

### 1.2 The Building of the Turkish Nation

Once the Kemalists were successful in establishing the Turkish state based on the whole of Anatolia, they then set about the relentless pursuit to consolidate the state and achieve national sovereignty. This process was principally led by Atatürk himself, who went on to define the Turkish state's norms and values. Once the Treaty of Lausanne was signed, the inalienability of Turkey's juridical sovereignty was guaranteed by the international community, so Atatürk could concentrate on nation-building. This process was top-down, with the Turkish state being instrumental in the creation of the Turkish nation. So, ethnicity was to prove to be "...a resource which [Atatürk was] ...able to manipulate to [his] advantage..." (Brown, 1989: 10). In this way, he was able "to legitimate [his] authority, enhance [his] power, strengthen state security [and] promote national unity" (Brown, 1989: 10) --that is to say, Turkish ethnicity became a tool which could be used to shape the idea of the Turkish republic [1].

"From the moment he came to power until his death in 1938, Atatürk set himself the task of defining the very nature of the Turkish people, and by extension that of the Turkish state" (Robins, 1991: 4). By the time that the Lausanne treaty had been ratified, Anatolia was no longer the heart of the state but became the state itself. "The imperial pan-Islamism of the Ottoman Empire, in which the Turks as an ethnolinguistic group were in the minority, had collapsed with the empire" (Robins, 1991: 4). The Ottoman Empire [2] was not a Turkish one "in which the ideological motivation was Turkish nationalism" (Robins, 1991: 18). The principal motivating ideology of the state was Islam. "The Ottoman elite was an evolving one based on cultural empire, rather than a [Western] narrow and exclusive notion of ethnicity or race" (Robins, 1991: 18). Now the Turks would be the ethnic majority within the newly created Turkish state.

The three main competing ideologies left after the creation of Turkey were the

Anatolianism to which Atatürk broadly subscribed, Turanism or Pan-Turanism, and a post-Islamism. "Atatürk had a strong vision of what the values and norms of the Turkish state should be: it should be independent, modern, industrialized, European-orientated, secular, Turkish and based almost exclusively on the territory of Anatolia" (Robins, 1991: 4). These elements were mutually reinforcing. Turkey needed to give up any notion of an empire in the Middle East if it was to be firmly orientated in Anatolia and convincingly secular, which in turn would be prerequisites of a European identity. "Turkish nationalism was for the consolidation of the Turkish state and not for the dissipation of its energies and resources in foreign adventure" (Yapp, 1991: 157). "Consequently, the ideal citizen of Turkey would be a resident of Anatolia, nationalist, European in outlook, secular, and, most important of all, would feel himself a Turk" (Robins, 1991: 4).

At the beginning of the century, under the Ottoman Empire, the term 'Turk' had been a humiliating designation assigned to 'rude peasants', or "...Turkish-speaking Anatolian peasant, a mere clodhopper or lout" (Macfie, 1994: 32). "Turkism was considered a dangerous and extremist current" and "[t]he word 'Turk' was [expunged], lest a nationalist consciousness prevail over Ottoman consciousness" (Chaliand, 1992: 59). It was this deep-seated contempt for Turks which provided the background for the emergence of a Greater Turkish nationalism. "Turkism only became more respectable with the creation of the Turkish state, when it was set up as the official ideology of the new state" (Chaliand, 1992: 59).

"The notion of Turkism was fundamental to the forging of a new [national] identity for the [Turkish] state" (Robins, 1991: 5). "This craving for unity, was in part, a reaction against a weak and vacillating Ottoman empire whose acceptance of its own multi-cultural nature had led to the search for independence and autonomy by minority groups" (Muller, 1996: 42). Clearly, this emphasis on a Turkish identity, was initially very valuable in opposing the creation of other states which might have threatened the spatial cohesion of Anatolia. Once Armenian and Kurdish national aspirations were defeated, "these ethnic groups were unlikely to accept Turkish identity or to be enthusiastic members of [Turkey]" (Robins, 1991: 5). Armenians

and Kurds alike, did not identify with Atatürk's famous maxim, 'Happy is he who calls himself a Turk!' It is not nationalism per se which has led to Kurdish disenfranchisement, but the concept of nationalism invoked by Atatürk based upon membership in an ethnic culture as opposed to citizenship in a nation state (Muller, 1996).

"This helped to introduce an additional requirement of total acceptance of Turkish culture and it is for this reason that the nature, character and boundaries of the Turkish state have become inextricably linked to the idea of ethnic nationalism" (Muller, 1996: 43). Turkish identity became "the common denominator of only those people who could be expected to support the creation of a state based on the whole of Anatolia" (Robins, 1991: 5). In choosing to adopt "...the 1918 armistice boundaries as the basis of his claims...[he] created a state which could not be rationalized in either Ottoman or Muslim terms but which [could only be realized] in terms of ethnic Turkish nationalism" (Yapp, 1991: 155).

But Atatürk's mission was not merely to instill pride in the new Turkish identity. Atatürk wished to undermine Islam as a force within the politics and society of the new Turkish republic. He attacked Islamization by closing all Islamic schools and religious orders outlawed, replacing all symbols of Islamic or oriental nature with those which were Christian or European in origin, and based the Turkish legal system on the Swiss Civil code. He did not seek to eradicate the Muslim faith, but "...sought to harness and subordinate religion beneath the secular requirements of the [Turkish] state" (Robins, 1991: 7) --religion was consigned to the personal domain and predominantly from the urban to the rural context. "There was a second... reason for Atatürk to relegate Islam to the level of private faith, namely the potential divisiveness of the religious question in Turkey" (Robins, 1991: 8). Through his reforms, "in time ethnic nationalism came to underpin the whole raison d'être of the Turkish state" (Muller, 1996: 42).

### 1.3 The Treaty of Sèvres

In order to understand the demands of the Kurdish people we have to examine the first and only international recognition of their right to self-determination, as represented by the Treaty of Sèvres. With the end of the First World War the Kurdish struggle for a homeland received a major boost in August 1920, when delegates of the victorious Allied powers and the defeated Ottoman sultan signed the treaty. The treaty called for the creation of an independent Kurdistan and Armenia.

The Treaty of Sèvres contained three articles concerned with Kurdish autonomy and independence. The first, Article 62 focused on the mechanism by which autonomy was provided to the "predominantly Kurdish areas lying east of the Euphrates, south of the southern boundary of Armenia as it may here after be determined, and north of the frontier of Turkey with Syria and Mesopotamia". Under Article 63, the Turkish government agreed to execute within three months the terms set forth in Article 62 by a three man commission appointed by the British, French and Italian governments. Article 64 outlined the conditions under which Kurdish independence was to take place. It was stated as follows:

"If within one year from the coming into force of the present Treaty the Kurdish peoples within the areas defined in Article 62 shall address themselves to the Council of the League of Nations in such a manner as to show that a majority of the population of these areas desires independence from Turkey, and if the Council then considers that it should be granted to them, Turkey hereby agrees to execute such a recommendation, and to renounce all rights and title over these areas.
...If and when such renunciation takes place, no objection will be raised by the main Allied Powers of the voluntary adhesion to such an independent Kurdish State of the Kurds inhabiting Kurdistan which has hitherto been included in the Mosul *vilayet*". (Chaliand, 1992: 34)

However, the provisions of the Treaty of Sèvres regarding Kurdish autonomy and independence were never implemented. In fact, the treaty was never ratified because Turkey claimed sovereignty over Mosul as called for in the National Pact proclaimed by the Turkish nationalists, led by Atatürk, in 1920.

A number of factors contributed to British backtracking on the Treaty of Sèvres. "First, the victory of the Turkish nationalists over the Greeks, which halted

Greek advances toward Ankara, emboldened the Turks to become more aggressive in opposing the independence of the Mosul vilayet. Furthermore the rise of Atatürk as the dominant stabilizing factor in Turkish and regional politics compelled the British to take a more serious look at the Turkish position on Kurdish independence and the implications of independence on an emerging pro-Western Turkey" (Entessar, 1992: 52).

Second, the British were well aware of the existence of oil in Kirkuk and other areas in the Mosul vilayet. "The British reasoned that by incorporating the area into their client state of Iraq, as opposed to allowing the establishment of an independent and unpredictable Kurdish state, they would have a more secure grip on the area's oil reserves" --thus the geostrategic importance of the Mosul region of Kurdistan was first established (Entessar, 1992: 52).

Another reason was the opposition of the British-India Office, which guided British political and military policy in the Gulf during World War One. "It concluded that the British protectorate of Iraq would not remain a viable state without the inclusion of the Mosul vilayet, and without an economically viable Iraq, British interests would be in jeopardy" (Entessar, 1992: 52). So it came that the Treaty of Sèvres was forgotten by the international community. Despite the non-performance of its provisions, the Treaty of Sèvres represented the only international recognition of the Kurdish movement and the Kurdish desire for self-determination in the twentieth-century. The provisions of this treaty still form the basis for Kurdish claims to establish their own state.

### 1.4 Three Important Kurdish Uprisings in Turkey's Early History

Once the abolition of the Caliphate in 1924 was achieved, the old Ottoman concept of a Muslim *umma* (community) was undermined allowing the Kemalist secular notion of a Turkish nation to emerge. As Kurdish religious and tribal leaders had derived their authority from the twin institutions of the Sultanate and Caliphate, the abolition of these institutions removed the temporal and spiritual basis of their legitimacy, which led the Turkish republic to outlaw all public manifestations of

Kurdish identity, on the grounds that it represented a secessionist threat. The Kemalist threat to Kurdish identity and socio-political structures brought Kurds with competing, and sometimes diametrically opposed, viewpoints together in common struggle against republican Turkey. In this regard three Kurdish nationalist movements of the period are worth noting.

The first was the revolt of the Shaikh Said of Piran, which began in February 1925 and was eventually crushed by the stronger Turkish army in April of the same year. Despite its short duration, this rebellion "marked a watershed in Turkish-Kurdish relations" (Entessar 1992: 84). It caused the Turkish government to adopt harsh measures against all manifestations of Kurdish culture and Kurdish nationalism. "From [Atatürk's] point of view, the long awaited rebellion mounted by the Kurds in eastern Anatolia posed a serious challenge to the integrity of the new republic and to the process of secular reform then underway" and "it is not surprising, therefore, that his response was both ruthless and thorough-going" (Macfie, 1994: 163).

These policies helped to compel "many Kurds in the Mosul vilayet, which was claimed by both Turkey and the British Mandate of Iraq, to express a definitive desire to become part of Iraq. This helped to convince the League of Nations... to award [Mosul] to Iraq" (Entessar 1992: 84). While Shaikh Said's revolt resulted in the suppression of ethnonationalism in Turkey, the League of Nations' decision, and the Anglo-Turkish Treaty of June 1926 regarding the status of Mosul, "it also led to an understanding between Britain and Turkey: they would oppose the emergence of an independent state or autonomous region in Turkey, while allowing for such an entity to emerge in Iraq" (Entessar, 1992: 85). Such an understanding on the part of Britain further helped to stifle any chance for self-determination for the Kurds in Turkey.

The second noteworthy Kurdish rebellion in Turkey was that led by Ishan Nuri Pasha in 1930. This revolt is significant in light of the fact that it represented the first time that a secular nationalist organization (*Khoyboun*/Independence) led a Kurdish rebellion. It is also important in that "the rebellion obtained the tacit support of the Iranian government, and as a result, Ihsan Nuri's forces were able to freely cross into

Iran and receive supplies and equipment from sources in Iranian Kurdistan" (Entessar, 1992: 85). The Iranian government was apparently intent on using it's support for the Kurdish rebellion as a bargaining chip to force Turkey to settle some of its territorial disputes with Iran --an option which has served Turkey's neighbouring states many times since. Without support from Iran, the revolt of 1930 could not have been as successful in threatening the fledgling Republic of Turkey, or have lasted as long as it did.

"By the summer of 1930, the Kurdish forces were surrounded by a Turkish force of forty-five thousand men, and by the end of the summer, the revolt had been defeated" (Entessar, 1992: 85 and Chaliand, 1992). The severity of Turkish retaliation for the uprising was greatest in areas where the revolt had its strongest support. Turkish policy in the aftermath of the Ishan Nuri rebellion emphasized the mass deportation of Kurdish villages [3], the exiling of Kurdish shaikhs and aghas, and the forceful recruiting of young Kurds into the Turkish army. "A law published in the official Turkish journal announced that there would be no prosecutions for crimes or misdeeds committed during... [the clean-up]" (Chaliand, 1992: 56). The government was in effect legally sanctioning acts of vigilantism against the Kurds during this period of repression --Article 1 of Law No. 1,850 illustrates this decision on the part of the Turkish authorities [4]. The passage of this law was instrumental in the "pacification" of the area of the First Inspectorate, including the major Kurdish areas of Diyarbakir, Bitlis, Hakkari, and Mardin.

The third major Kurdish revolt of the first half of the twentieth-century was that of Shaikh Sayyed Reza's rebellion in Dersim (now Tunceli) in the north western region of Turkish Kurdistan. Shaikh Reza's revolt began in 1937 and lasted until the end of 1938, when crushed by the Turkish army. What gave this rebellion prominence was that it cut across tribal boundaries and proved more durable than the earlier revolt of 1920 in Dersim. After assembling a guerrilla force of some fifteen hundred men, Reza began attacking visible symbols of Turkish authority, such as the gendarmerie posts in Dersim, and forcing rural Turkish police to abandon their posts

--this targeting of the symbols of Turkish dominance ushered in a new dimension to the Kurdish struggle, a tactic later to be used by the PKK.

This rebellion later spread to other regions and was joined by a contingent of veterans of the Shaikh Said rebellion from Syria. Unlike the previous revolts by Said and Nuri, the rebellion of Dersim did not involve conventional warfare between two opposing armies. In Dersim, the Turkish army faced a small but determined force that relied on the hit-and-run tactics of guerrilla warfare --something which was to be used in the 1980s by the PKK, and to prove a problem for the Turkish Armed Forces. Although Reza and several other tribal leaders were captured, tried and condemned to death in November of 1937, the revolt continued for several months. It was finally put down in October 1938 after a long period of sustained attacks on Dersim by the Turkish forces, which included reliance on the "massive use of poisonous gas, artillery and air bombardment"(Chaliand, 1992: 67) . Unable to replenish their supplies and facing total eradication, the Kurdish forces had no choice but to terminate their uprising. The repression that followed was extensive to say the least.

Entire villages were depopulated or massacred. "The destruction of Dersim was so thorough that it evoked apocalyptic visions" (Entessar, 1991:87). The Turkish government sought to erase the memory of this bloody episode by replacing the name of Dersim with Tunceli and putting the area under a total state of siege until 1950. The use of the words 'Kurdistan' and 'Kurds' was banned and references to them were removed from Turkish history books and publications. "Since then Ankara has pursued an iron fist policy towards any expression of Kurdish dissent" (Muller, 1996: 42).

## 2. The Radicalization of Kurdish Political Parties in the 1970s

A number of factors contributed to the radicalization of Kurdish political parties in the 1970s. As Van Bruinessen(1984) noted, the most significant factor in the radicalization of the Kurdish movement was Kurdish urbanization --the massive voluntary and involuntary migration of Kurdish villagers to cities --and the inability of the strained Turkish economy to absorb them into mainstream life. Kurdish

migrants to the cities of western Turkey became aware of the great disparities that existed between the western region and their own eastern region of the country. As Esman and Rabinovich (1988: 15) assert, "[g]roups that begin with educational, occupational, status or political disadvantages soon convert their sense of deprivation into protest" and such ethnic groups are more inclined to secede, than those which are perceived as more advanced (Horowitz, 1985 and Nagel, 1980). As Besikci states in his book[5], it was the ability of the Kurdish migrants to compare and contrast their situation with that of their Turkish brethren which helped awaken the Kurdish consciousness to the actual extent of their plight under Turkish rule . As individuals feel discriminated against in their capacity as group members "...they mobilize along ethnic lines for political action" (Esman and Rabinovich, 1988: 15). So modernization rather than eroding communal solidarities, tends to modernize and convert them into more effective instruments of group defense, promotion, and combat.

One of the reasons for the continued underdevelopment of the southeast are the entrenched interests of the local aghas and shaikhs. "The fact that political parties consistently go about attempting to win votes in these areas simply by working through the traditional socio-economic and religious hierarchies has helped perpetuate structural underdevelopment" (Robins, 1991: 29). This represents an effort "...to coopt and absorb...[the Kurdish minority] as individuals with the object of eliminating pluralism" (Esman and Rabinovich, 1988:16) --an activity the Turkish state continues to pursue to the present day. "Turkey in line with its assimilationist policies strengthened the feudal structure in Turkish Kurdistan for years in an attempt to use tribes to control any possible uprisings" (Ismet, 1996: 28). This proved to be a determining factor in the turning to quasi-leftist ideas by Kurdish dissidents.

"Thus, in the Kurdish areas, there tends to be a... convergence of social standing and economic and political power, which both bolsters the position of the aghas and maintains the loyalty of the communities over which they have historically held sway" (Robins, 1991: 29). "In return for being allowed to assume their

traditional authority, these Kurdish leaders acted in the way political machines in big US cities had operated" (Van Bruinessen, 1984: 8). That is, they "controlled large numbers of local votes, in exchange for which they received spoils to distribute among their followers. Thus the position of these traditional leaders were reinforced, both vis-à-vis the central government and vis-à-vis the local population" (Van Bruinessen, 1984: 8). "Even though the alliance between the state and traditional foci of authority in the Kurdish areas cuts across the ethnic divide, the predominantly Kurdish areas of Turkey are readily identified as those which are economically and developmentally dispossessed" (Robins, 1991: 30).

Although agriculture has remained a major source of revenue for the eastern region, the Kurds also became acutely aware of their region's importance to Turkey as the only producer of oil. For all intents and purposes, the region did not benefit from petroleum production, as the bulk of the revenues from the oil were exported to other parts of the country --to those western regions whose continued development required these revenues, and still does today. "Turkey's rapid rise in prosperity during the 1980s has not narrowed the gap between the rural Kurdish areas and the rest of the country" (Robins, 1991: 29). "In Turkey, the southeast provinces have a standard of living far below that of the western part of the country" (Buckley, 1994: 14). GDP per capita averages US$3,500 in a city such as Izmir and only US$150 in Hakkari, in the southeast. "Apart from the aghas, the only Kurds to have prospered during the past decade are those who have left the land for the cities" (Robins, 1991: 29) --Istanbul is now the Turkish city with the largest Kurdish population.

Kurdish life reflects the typical image of a Middle Eastern agrarian society, with only one third of the population working in secondary and tertiary sectors in towns --though this proportion is growing rapidly as Kurds are forced from the countryside by unemployment and the war in the region. The southeast has always been a poor area, only producing "4% of Turkey's GDP and 2% of its industrial output" (Dowden, 1996: 15). "In fact, the beginnings of industrialization are built on the mining industries: phosphate, chromium (at Madin), iron (at Dirvigi) and oil, all of which are state controlled" (Chaliand, 1994: 41). As Robins (1991: 29) has noted,

"in a country which in recent times has made great strides in terms of industrial output, it is all the more surprising that industry is almost totally absent, even from such a regional centre as Diyarbakir". Significantly, "the economic frontier between the least-developed provinces and the remainder of Turkey roughly correspond[s] to the ethnic divide between the Turkish majority and the Kurdish-speaking minority of eastern and southeastern Anatolia" (Hale, 1981: 259).

"The rural Kurdish population has always subsisted on an economy combining cultivation and pasture..." (Buckley, 1994: 14) --something which the Turkish military's scorched earth policy has seriously affected. "The army battles on as if it had never heard of hearts and minds [and its] very brutality is[ helping to create] the separatist nationalism it wants to destroy" (Dowden, 1996: 5). It is not surprising that civilians get caught in the middle and are compelled to flee the region. "Within Turkey, the government's sledgehammer policy in Kurdish areas has, unsurprisingly, encouraged Kurdish support for the PKK" (Dowden, 1996: 15). "Although a subsistence economy predominates in the mountainous regions, a surplus of grain is produced in the plains of Iraq and Syria" (Buckley, 1994: 14), and cotton has begun to grow for the first time in some parts of Turkey.

These agricultural elements of the Kurdish economy have been joined in the twentieth century by oil and water [6]. Much of Iraq's oil reserves lie in the Kurdish areas around Kirkuk and Mosul. "Most of Turkey's oil has been found in Kurdistan, in the fields near Adiyaman, Batman and Diyarbakir" (Buckley, 1994: 14) --all major towns in the southeast. Also, Syria has its oil located in its northeastern corner, close to the area claimed by Kurdish nationalists. Not only is Kurdistan rich in oil, but water too is a major asset in the area. For the Kurdish mountains are the source of most of the water which flows into western Iran, Iraq and Syria.

The rural Kurdish areas are just as backward in their social development. "Educational standards, for instance, are far lower in eastern and southeastern Anatolia than in the rest of Turkey" (Robins, 1991: 29). This is largely due to the scant resources available and the lower investment made there by the government.

Many of the remotest villages lack schools and " trained teachers are unwilling to work in these mountainous, sparsely populated areas, where moreover, the return on educational investment is likely to be lower than in more densely populated regions" (Robins, 1991: 29). "The number of doctors in Kurdish zones are four times fewer than other Turkish regions" (Chaliand, 1994: 41). Robins (1991) goes on to point out that "...[t]he ambivalence of many Kurds towards the Turkish state, and the Turk's social snobbery towards [such] backward... regions, and their people make it harder for these areas to use the political process to gain more resources for social projects" (Robins, 1991: 29). Thus, the Kurdish population has become increasingly alienated from even the "progressive" ruling circles -- this is another factor which contributed to the leftward drift of the Kurdish movement in Turkey . "The state in turn has been guilty not so much of malevolence as of neglect, and of a general unwillingness to offer positive incentives directly to develop the region" (Robins, 1991: 29).

Moreover, as the number of Kurdish secondary-school and university students increased, students became more politicized and sensitive to the legal and social discrimination of the Kurds. Leftist student radicalism pervaded Turkish educational institutions, and younger Kurdish immigrants became the conduit through which awareness of the issues of class struggle, underdevelopment, exploitation and imperialism "spread outside narrow intellectual circles.... Urban educated teachers and students returning to their villages brought new political ideas, in simplified form, to the countryside and attempted to mobilize the peasants" (Van Bruinessen, 1984: 9). Kurdish mobilization faced new dangers in the 1970s, however. After the military coup of 1971, revision of the country's penal code and constitution made it easier to prosecute those who were active in the Kurdish movement.

Nevertheless, until the imposition of martial law in Kurdish regions in 1979 and military intervention of September 1980, the various coalition governments that ruled Turkey during much of the 1970s were relatively ineffective in implementing a sustained and efficient repressive policy toward their Kurdish minority. This imposition of martial law in the Kurdish provinces and military intervention of the

following year amounted to an assertion that the state "intended to brook no expression of the Kurdish movement or identity whatsoever" (McDowall, 1985: 9). It was thus that support for the PKK and the politicization of the Kurdish population took place.

### 3. Birth and Growth of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK)

The most prominent and effective Kurdish organization to have emerged from the leftist "renaissance" of the 1970s, was the PKK. It was created in 1975 and is led by Abdullah Ocalan (Apo), a former student of political science at Ankara-university The PKK's first task was the publication of a booklet called "The Manifesto" outlining the main tasks and perspectives of the planned revolution in Kurdistan --the PKK, "like the Komala in Iran, blended Marxism-Leninism with a strong dose of Kurdish nationalism" (Entessar, 1992: 94). It advocated the establishment of a Kurdish Marxist republic in southeastern Turkey, with the ultimate aim of creating an independent Kurdistan that unites Kurdish regions throughout the Middle East. What made the PKK different from other Kurdish organizations was the party's unequivocal advocacy of total Kurdish independence --however, this demand would later change in 1993 with Ocalan's declaration of a cease-fire in April of that year.

In 1978, after the PKK had managed to expand its membership beyond university circles into the general Kurdish population, it met in Diyarbakir and issued the first edition of "The Manifesto" which reflected its analysis of the Kurdish situation in Turkey. The document had to be distributed clandestinely throughout Turkey under the title "The Road to Kurdish Revolution". The important elements of this document are contained within its analysis of Kurdistan as a classic colonial entity, where feudal Kurdish landlords and 'comprador bourgeoisie' collaborated with the ruling classes in the colonial countries, particularly in Turkey, to perpetuate the exploitation of the Kurdish peasantry and the working class. "The main difference between the PKK and other regional Kurdish organizations was that instead of representing tribes, it represented the poorest and most dissatisfied Kurdish masses" (Ismet, 1996: 28).

"The Manifesto" ,adopted as the founding program for action of the party at its First Congress, has provided the framework within which the PKK has functioned since its formation in 1979. The document recommended a two-tiered revolution to solve the Kurdish problem -- national, then democratic. "The national revolution will establish political, military and cultural power" (KSC/KIC, 1992: 6) --this will involve the establishment of an independent Kurdistan as a *sine qua non* for the attainment of Kurdish rights. The democratic phase "...will strive to alleviate social contradictions stemming from the feudal times" (KSC/KIC, 1992: 6). Thereby "clear[ing] away the contradictions in society left over from the Middle Ages, [such as] feudal and comprador exploitation, tribalism, religious sectarianism and the slave-like dependence of women" (KSC/KIC, 1992: 6; and Gunter, 1990:60).

The document asserted that the transformation of Kurdish society could be achieved only through a Marxist-Leninist revolution whose final aim would be to create a classless society, and "to put an end to all forms of domination by Turkish colonialism, [setting up] an independent economy and to strive for the unity of Kurdistan" (KSC/KIC, 1992: 6). Armed struggle was advocated as the only method by which these objectives could be achieved, and the PKK, has to date, tried to practice what it preached.

The PKK's activities, as well as those of other political parties and movements, came to an abrupt halt with the military coup of September 1980. Even so, the activities of the PKK were to become more violent after the military intervention became well established.

By 1984 the PKK was ready to revive its armed activities in the southeast. In August of that year the PKK began [its] operations [consisting] of small groups of... activists primarily engaged in hit-and-run raids directed mainly at soft targets, both human and material (Robins, 1991: 31). The creation of the Kurdistan Liberation Brigades (HRK)[7] signalled the growth of the PKK and a new confidence in the organization as it targeted Turkish army units and police stations located within villages in the southeast. Although the Turkish army reacted swiftly by dispatching heavy armoured units into Kurdistan, the state failed to capture the PKK guerrillas

responsible as their attacks were too well coordinated for the security forces to respond adequately. The PKK appeared to have reorganized its ranks and went on to intensify its guerrilla operations.

In May 1985, as its successes against the armed forces grew, the PKK formed the Kurdish National Liberation Front (ERNK)[8]. Since then the PKK has used this organization to better coordinate its forces and target attacks against Turkish forces and their Kurdish collaborators (mainly members of the village guards [9]). As Ismet (1996: 29) points out, "[this] turn to the village guard system [by the government], was the first of a series of decisions which would escalate the Kurdish problem into a major bloody conflict in the [years that have followed]". This proved to be a vital turning point in the conflict as the creation of these paramilitary forces has helped to give further momentum to the PKK's activities and increased popular support for the guerrillas in the Kurdish areas. In fact, "[by] 1987, the crisis had not only grown but the PKK had managed to get better organized and had recruited thousands of sympathizers" (Ismet, 1996: 30).

However, the PKK did suffer some setbacks with the Turkish-Iraqi cooperation[10] of the mid-1980s and the PKK-KDP (Kurdish Democratic Party/Iraq) rivalries. With the loss of its freedom to operate out of the rugged, mountainous Turkish-Iraqi border areas, the PKK had to concentrate on building up its operational bases in Syria, where the relatively flatter Turkish-Syrian border region made it easier to control guerrilla activities. As a result of these setbacks, the PKK decided to create still another group, which would hopefully be a more powerful organization, the Peoples Liberation Army of Kurdistan (ARGK)[11]. The establishment of the ARGK clearly indicated that the PKK's fighters had increased in number, although the Turkish-Iraqi cooperation had managed to curtail PKK activities.

By the early months of 1987, the ARGK had proved its effectiveness when it struck a number of targets in the southeast and most of the casualties were village guards, who were hit so strongly that the system was brought to near collapse. By

determining the targets for such terrorism in a selective way the PKK [has]... managed to maintain its effectiveness and gained support from the Kurdish population (Ismet, 1996: 30) --even if out of shear fear at times.

The summer of 1987 was to witness an escalation in PKK attacks and in the overall seriousness of the situation. "The amount of civilian blood lost over the period between 1987 and 1990 can be [directly] attributed to the use of the village guards by the Turkish state" (Ismet, 1996: 30). Not only was the PKK warning 'state collaborators' that they would be punished, but that it was dangerous, determined and more effective than government troops. "In short, it was in the peoples' best interest to give their support to [the PKK] rather than to Turkey" (Ismet, 1996: 30). The PKK attacked many Kurdish villages in the southeast declaring them 'state collaborators'[12]. With the seriousness of the conflict escalating, the Turkish state was forced to introduce a state of emergency in the ten provinces of the southeast[13] --this is still in effect at the present time.

By 1989 the PKK showed its effectiveness by managing to establish bases deep within Turkey. The PKK strengthened rapidly in the region and faced almost no problems in finding new recruits, weapons or financial assistance (Ismet, 1996). The seriousness of the situation faced by the Turkish state is clearly indicated as "by the end of 1989, 98 per cent of the security forces operating in the troubled region were military personnel while only 2 per cent were police forces" (Ismet, 1996: 31).

Although in March 1989 the Turkish state was forced by the situation in the southeast to acknowledge the existence of the Kurds in the form of a public recognition by the late President Ozal, the National Security Council (NSC) still voted to launch a major military crackdown on all Kurdish separatists --PKK members and supporters alike[14]. This led to a series of measures being implemented both against the terrorists and the general Kurdish population in the southeast. "An overwhelming number of the population operate with the PKK because of the brutality of the Turkish special operations teams against the civilian population" on the Syrian border and in the southeast provinces generally (Entessar, 1992: 100). "The blanket hardline

approach of the Turkish government has done much to foster... deep-seated disaffection" amongst the Kurds (Robins, 1991: 36). In fact by sticking to a purely military approach to its Kurdish problem, the Turkish state has actually helped to recruit for the PKK, swelling the ranks of the guerrilla forces to 25,000[15] (Ismet, 1996).

The beginning of the 1990s witnessed two developments which proved to be a watershed. First, in 1990 there was a quantitative increase in the intensity of the conflict within the southeast of Turkey, with the loss of life rising (Times, April 4, 1990) --this was the result of the more concerted effort by Turkish security forces to stamp out PKK incursions. Second, there was a qualitative change in the nature of the conflict, with the first popular showing of support for the PKK insurgents against the Turkish authorities[16] (Guardian, May 3, 1990). The worsening situation forced the Turkish state to review its Kurdish policies in the southeast. This resulted in an new and all-encompassing legal instrument to combat Kurdish nationalism being devised by the government. Decree 413 or the Anti-Terror Law (ATL) as it came to be known, gave the governor general of the ten southeastern provinces under the state of emergency, carte blanche to deal with the Kurdish uprising[17]--this law is still in effect within the troubled region.

Meanwhile there was a major shift in the PKK's policy towards the village guards. Up until 1989, the PKK had been blamed for terrorizing the region with raids on villages and civilians. However, by its first congress in 1990 it had decided to cease all activities which could lead to civilian casualties and concentrate more on military targets and political struggle[18]. Significantly, "as the PKK moved to clean up its own human rights record, turning to a more politicized struggle, [the Turkish state] was unknowingly deciding to get harsher" (Ismet, 1996:31).

Although the use of the Kurdish language was legalized in April 1991 by Ozal in an effort to appease the Kurds, the military, through the National Security Council (NSC), still determined much of the state's policy toward the Kurdish population. "While Kurdish was freely spoken for the first time, a many-voiced debate began on

the new orientation in the Kurdish issue" initiated by Ozal (Gürbey, 1996: 14). Ozal was the first president to give priority to a political resolution to the Kurdish problem and "in contrast to the coalition government and the military [he] welcomed the unilateral cease-fire declared by the PKK in march 1993", seeing "... it as an opportunity to engage the PKK politically; and to pave the way for a political solution through specific measures, such as for example, the granting of amnesty [to PKK guerrillas]" (Gürbey, 1996: 15). The PKK called the cease-fire in March 1993 in order to signal two things:" on the one hand, its readiness for negotiations, and on the other, the turning back from its ultimate goal of creating a Kurdish state" (Gürbey, 1996: 23). However, Ozal's untimely death in April 1993, brought an end to the first liberal attempts to change the thrust of Turkey's Kurdish policy. "The PKK considered ...its loss of an approachable partner meant the end of a chance at dialogue" with the Turkish state (Gürbey, 1996: 23). After the cease-fire, the PKK concentrated more on centralizing control and selecting targets for its operations in the southeast (Ismet, 1996: 34).

In the meantime, the Turkish government attempted to drain the PKK of logistical support by establishing so-called "strategic villages" along its border with its three neighbours, and keep the Kurdish population under state and military control. Since 1992, the result of such intense resettlement of Kurdish villages has been the creation of slums and temporary dwellings with the flight of Kurds into cities in the southeast and western Turkey, and northern Iraq. " The policy of deportation has, on the whole, broadened the conflict by carrying it, and with it the PKK, into urban areas" (Gürbey, 1996: 18). These illegal settlements of those fleeing from the southeast have proved to be fertile ground for the politicization of the Kurds, which enables the PKK to organize in the cities (Gürbey, 1996) and has led to discrimination and attacks against Kurds in western Turkey increasing.

By 1992 the inability of the Turkish armed forces to eradicate the PKK from the southeast became evident as the state began to build up Islamic and right-wing radical groups as a counterweight to the PKK. This decision inevitably led to an escalation in the cycle of violence in the southeast. In fact, "a considerable portion of

the special units and security forces are preferentially recruited from the ranks of [such] activists by the Turkish state "(Gürbey, 1996: 18). These *Kontragerilla* groups are still used extensively by Turkey against the PKK and its sympathizers at present. "The terrorization of the populace [has] intensified with the emergence of [these groups], ...reputedly controlled by the security forces..." (Muller, 1996: 47).

As the war in the southeast got bloodier in 1993, "the Turkish authorities turned their attention towards the Kurdish and liberal press in an attempt to silence dissent over the government's iron fist policy towards the Kurdish issue" (Muller, 1996: 47). Restrictions were placed on the press, foreign journalists, assemblies, political speeches, demonstrations, academic publications, television and radio. A multitude of legal provisions were used in order to effect comprehensive censorship "...solely to preserve the ideological imperatives created by Atatürk's conception of ethnonationalism" (Muller: 1996: 48).

Whilst Ozal had considered the Kurdish MPs of the Democratic Party (DEP) a peaceful conduit that might mediate between the Turkish state and the PKK, the ruling coalition government chose to remove their parliamentary immunity and expel them from the Turkish National Assembly in March 1994. The state subsequently imprisoned seven and another six DEP MPs fled to Europe where they set up the Kurdistan Parliament in Exile (KPE)[19]. The Kurdish parliamentarians were tried for statements such as:" the PKK is a side in this war", or that "real proof was necessary of the states intentions to solve the Kurdish problem" and that "the armed struggle had taken on the dimensions of war" (Laizer, 1996: 146).

By December 1994, the DEP MPs were finally brought to trial and sentenced to three and a half to fifteen years under Articles 168 and 169, for belonging and assisting an illegal armed group (the PKK) (Laizer, 1996 and Nigogosian, 1996). With this the Turkish state banned the one political party which gave a moderate voice to the Kurdish grievances and further disenfranchised the Kurds, thus support for the PKK increased as it remained the only organization able to represent them Kurds at the present time.

Meanwhile that same year, the PKK issued a formal "Declaration of Intention" to abide by the humanitarian law and rules of war set forth in the original Geneva Convention --in it the PKK clearly set out whom it regarded as legitimate targets within the Turkish security forces (Ismet, 1996: 36). This was to be followed by two further cease-fires in December 1994 and 1995, however the Turkish state refused to open dialogue with the insurgents --thus, these opportunities for peace were lost again. The PKK continues its diplomatic initiatives in the West.

To date, by portraying the PKK as an organization without grass-roots support, the Turkish state has hoped to alienate the local population from the guerrillas and undermine popular sympathy for them. However, given the continuation of the conflict, it is evident that without some measure of popular support the PKK would not have survived the onslaught of the Turkish armed forces. The present situation in the southeast has worsened since 1987 and Turkish policy has changed little with regard to the Kurdish issue.

### 3.1 Kurdish Attitudes Toward the PKK and the Turkish State

As indicated above, the Turkish state has maintained that there is no Kurdish problem or popular support for the PKK in the southeast. However, a special report published in July 1995 produced "...shockwaves in Turkey [as this was] the first time that such a report had been undertaken and made public with the object of finding a political solution to the Kurdish problem" (Laizer, 1996: 156). Although the report was investigated by the government until December 1995, some of its findings are informative (Nigogosian, 1996: 45). For example, 91% identified themselves as Kurds; 65% said they spoke Kurdish at home; 63% confirmed their desire for Kurdish to become the second state language; and 35% admitted to having someone close in the PKK.

More significantly and which angered the military establishment were the 77% who did not think that the Turkish army could suppress the PKK and 46% of those who responded supported PKK activities. This clearly indicates that the PKK has support from the Kurdish population. "It is remarkable that 35 per cent of the

respondents admitted to having someone close in the ranks of the PKK, especially given the fact that the Kurdish regions are under extremely tight security" (Nigogosian, 1996: 45). One of the most important findings of the report, carried out under the aegis of the government, makes credible the claim that the PKK is not merely a handful of terrorists but a liberation movement with a wide popular base. The fact that 77% of those surveyed stated that they did not think that the Turkish army would defeat the PKK "demonstrates a high degree of motivation and morale among the Kurds, which will make suppression, especially political suppression, of this movement difficult" (Nigogosian, 1996: 46). Not surprisingly, as the report appeared to advocate a federal solution to the Kurdish problem and that a significant number of Kurds were joining the ranks of the PKK, the Turkish government dismissed the study as inaccurate, choosing not to debate its findings.

### 4. Turkey's Insecurity Dilemma

Throughout the height of the Cold war period Turkey was sheltered from having to face the contradictions within its organizing ideology, and the ethnic friction it has helped to foster. During this period the importance of Turkey's strategic location in Western security interests, especially those of the US, in halting the progress of communism in the Middle East, drew attention away from the state's internal security problem. However, with the collapse of the Soviet Union, the new international environment has helped to highlight Turkey's Kurdish problem in the 1990s and given concern to its Western allies over the continued stability of the country. The image of Turkey as possessing enviable stability in the Middle East has been exploded by its waning geostrategic importance and the spotlight is now firmly on its internal security problem.

As in other developing states in the Third World, the Turkish state was instrumental in creating the Turkish nation. Since this process is generally top-down, the state was first created and then became the instrument of a single ethnic group (usually the dominant group within society) and others, like the Kurds, had to accommodate themselves to the terms of coexistence determined by the state. In the

Turkish case this has required the absorption and subordination of the indigenous Kurdish nation. Thus, nation-building was achieved by the wholesale transfer of allegiance from ethnic groups to the symbols and institutions of the state, or by encouraging the assimilation of minorities into the dominant ethnic group, eventually obtaining the union of state and nation.

Turkey represents a clear example of a state which has incorporated the aspirations of the dominant ethnic group. This has meant that the Kurdish population was consigned a *de facto* or *de jure* subordinate status, with inferior economic roles and limited participation in the polity. As a result, since the early years of the Turkish Republic the state and its institutions have lacked legitimacy among the Kurdish population. This has led to the Turkish state relying on coercive measures of control, and therefore, adhering to an exclusively military solution to the Kurdish issue --whether Kurdish dissent takes the form of civil disobedience, or violence as conducted by the PKK.

The Turkish constitution of 1982 makes it quite clear that there is only one state and therefore, only one nation can exist, and that like the state, it is Turkish in origin[20]. If such a state-nation model is successful, the nation and state should coincide in efficient domestic government and the creation of a strong presence within the challenging international environment. However, the fact that Turkey is still embroiled in a war with the PKK in the country's southeast thirteen years since it began in 1984, suggests that the fusion of nation and state has been unsuccessful. As a result, the Kurdish population has come to perceive the Turkish state as threatening. One implication of such a situation is that struggles between nations and the state indicate a level of contradiction in the meaning of national security.

The Turkish state lacks domestic legitimacy vis-à-vis its Kurdish minority and feels threatened by any national upheaval, such as the secessionist activities of the PKK. This would imply that Turkey's focus within its national security concerns will tend to be more heavily weighted in favour of internally generated threats, rather than external ones. So one can conclude that Turkey is a weak state with respect to

the degree of political and social cohesion it has achieved in its efforts to unite state and nation.

As Turkey is most concerned with threats emanating from within her borders, one can say that the state is faced with an "insecurity dilemma". This condition is most evident with respect to weak states. A state being identified as weak depending upon the degree of socio-political cohesion it has achieved through its process of state-formation. It is important to note, that this is not a measure of a state's military or economic capabilities in relation to other states, whereby it would be identified as either a weak or strong *power*. If we consider Turkey, we can clearly see that it is a strong power, with the largest standing army of all the member states of NATO. However, as Ayoob (1986 :8) points out, such states are not oblivious to external threats but face a combination of external and internal challenges to their state structures which tend to be weighted in favour of internal sources.

If we examine Turkey with respect to the kinds of conditions Buzan (1991) expects to find in weak states, we can clearly observe that there exist contending national identities within the state (as the Kurdish issue illustrates), a high degree of state control over the media (especially in the reporting of events in the southeast of the country) and a conspicuous role for political police in the everyday lives of sectors of the population (as in the case of the Kurds in the southeast).

Whilst Turkey possesses a clearly defined physical base (the land mass it occupies) whose existence is guaranteed by international recognition (through the inalienability of juridical sovereignty), in such a state domestic threats to the government cannot be completely separated from the influence of external actors, and in this sense, the domestic security problems of weak states are often entangled with their external relations (Buzan, 1991: 106). As Turkey's insecurity is firmly rooted within the domestic sphere, it has been subject to interference from neighbouring states, like Syria.

In such cases, as Buzan (1991: 102-103) highlights, "national security cannot be considered apart from the internal structure of the state, and the view from within not infrequently explodes the superficial image of the state as a coherent object of

security". Thus, the " insecurity dilemma" of these states violates traditional security thinking in four fundamental ways: (1) within the state there is no single all encompassing nation; (2) the regime in power often lacks the support of a significant portion of society; (3) the state can lack effective institutional capabilities to provide peace and order, as well as satisfactory conditions for physical existence, for the whole of its population; and, (4) the sense of threat which prevails are those of internal challenges to and from the regime in power, rather than externally generated threats to the existence of the nation state unit itself.

Turkey's policy regarding its Kurdish population has been two-pronged. On the one hand, the government has sought to 'pacify' the Kurdish population by directing more economic aid into southeastern Turkey to revive its economy, especially agriculture, and by integrating the local Kurdish economy into the mainstream Turkish economy. This can be explained by the fact that "[the] only problem in the southeast [successive Turkish governments] will admit to, apart from 'terrorism', is underdevelopment" (Dowden, 1996: 15). Turkish sources concluded that only through economic redevelopment of the eastern regions would the state put a stop to separatist violence (Gunter, 1990: 82-83). Turkish policy has, with the exception of Ozal's presidency, concentrated on a military solution to the Kurdish problem --this same hardline policy has helped to spread the conflict to the west of the country in the 1990s.

As indicated in Chapter 1, security for states like Turkey, can be conceptualized as involving five sectors: Military, Political, Economic, Societal and Environmental. Here, to recall that earlier discussion, *security* is defined as " ...the pursuit of freedom from threat and the ability of states and societies to maintain their independent identity and their functional integrity against forces of change which they see as hostile" (Buzan, 1991: 20).

**Military Security**

Whilst military security involves the two-tier interplay of the armed offensive and defensive capabilities of states and the states' perceptions of each other's intentions (i.e., externally generated threats), such means also prove useful against military and non-military threats emanating from within the state itself --such as the threat posed by the Kurdish issue in Turkey. As mentioned previously, Turkey has a large standing army of around 500, 000 men which makes the state a worthy candidate as a *strong power*. So while it may be true to say Turkey is a strong power, it is also a weak state.

Turkey's official policy toward its Kurdish minority illustrates the translation of a political (and often a societal and economic) challenge into a military threat, with only a military solution. The state is thereby choosing "...an arena of confrontation with domestic dissidents that is favourable to [itself], namely the military arena" (Ayoob, 1986: 8). Whilst the political, societal and economic sectors of a nation's life are expected to be strong enough to survive competition within their own sectors and in their own terms, none can be presumed to be strong enough to withstand coercive pressure, or violent disruption --as created by the PKK in its war against the Turkish state. For this reason, the maintenance of an effective military establishment has been one of the founding tenants of Kemalist ideology and has become itself a national security interest. From the beginnings of the Republic, Atatürk realized the importance of a strong military as a vital prerequisite for the protection of the political, economic and societal security of Turkey, against threats of force or disruption.

In order to understand the importance of the Turkish military to the country's national security we must examine the role played by the armed forces within the state's decision-making process. As Gürbey (1996: 12) points out, "[the] military assumes a special position in the political system in Turkey" which can be attributed to several factors. Historically, during the advent of the Ottoman Empire a strong army was the central instrument of state politics. In fact, "[the] link between the military and politics [at the present time] is characterized in particular by the

[pivotal] role of the military as a political force of order and in its role as ' keeper and protector' of Kemalist principles, such that [it] has become an important agent in Turkish politics" (Gürbey, 1996: 12).

The degree of influence the Turkish military exerts within the country's political scene has been strengthened by means of constitutional-legal mechanisms. Within the National Security Council (NSC) the military is afforded a constitutionally secure position. It should be noted, that it was not until the first military intervention (coup) of 1960, that this body was incorporated into the Constitution --Article 118, Turkish Constitution 1982. It was thus that the previously hidden participation of the armed forces in the implementation of power within Turkey became legally fortified.

The Constitution stipulates two important functions of the NSC, in Article 118 of the Turkish Constitution of 1982: "on the one hand, the protection and defense of 'national security' against internal and external dangers and, on the other hand, the 'definition, determination, and application of a national security policy' based on the principle of the indivisible unity of the state's people and its territory according to Kemalist state doctrine" (Gürbey, 1996:12). Noteworthy is the fact that the tasks of the NSC are very extensive and its limits not clearly defined by the Constitution. "Within the scope of its tasks are not only national security and defense but regulation of aspects of the entire life of ...society. Thus, the concept of national security has been extended with the help of the formula that 'protects the welfare and security of the community' [at large]"[21] (Gürbey, 1996: 12).

As such, not only are the decisions of the NSC given preference by the Council of Ministers, but they have also been afforded a certain political and morally binding power. Therefore, the NSC whilst acting as a planning and controlling body, plays an active role in both the definition and application of policy aims and measures, being in no way responsible to Parliament. From this it would appear that the Turkish political system has two centres of decision-making: the *civilian authority* (in the form of the Council of Ministers and Parliament) and the *military authority* (in the form of the National Security [NSC]).

Gürbey (1996: 13) points out that "[the] decision-making process [within Turkey] demonstrates an interrelationship of forces that results in an imbalance of power at the expense of the civilian authority". Therefore, as the Kurdish issue as understood within the definition of Turkish politics and the military, it is perceived as a national problem --a potential source of danger to the indivisible unity of the state's people and its territory-- and the Kurdish claims for increased self-realization are viewed *a priori* as a ' separatist' threat. From this it is evident that the NSC is the primary decision-maker in the Kurdish question. Turkish policy toward the Kurds, with the exception of Ozal's premiership, has been exclusively military in scope and solution. This has meant that civilian policy makers have tended to be constrained by the NSC, such that only a military solution to the Kurdish problem has been implemented by successive Turkish governments. The Anti-Terror Law (ATL)[22] is a clear example of this, it was designed to supplement the military approach to the conflict with a range of ancillary measures. "The ineffectiveness of [the Turkish state's] repression as a response to the assertion of ethnic identity by [its Kurdish minority] is easily confirmed by reference to experience elsewhere, as in the 900 year history of dissidence in Ireland" (Andrews, 1989: 37).

**Political and Societal Security**

In light of the fact that societal threats cannot easily be entangled from political ones, these two components of the security dilemma problematic will be considered together. As indicated in Chapter 1, the political security of a state refers to the organizational stability of the state, its system of government and the ideology which gives it legitimacy. Here, what is essentially at stake is the very idea of the state itself, in particular its national identity and organizing ideology. Thus, "if societal security is about the sustainability, within acceptable conditions of evolution, of traditional patterns of language, culture and religious and ethnic identity and custom, then threats to these values come more frequently from within the state than from outside it" (Buzan, 1991: 123). Such internal societal threats are symptomatic

of weak states.

As states, like Turkey, possess polyethnic populations within their territorial boundaries, there exist extensive grounds for conflict between natural nations and the attempts by governments to create nations which coincide with their borders. "From the point of view of efficient domestic government and the establishment of a [strong] presence in [the] challenging international environment, having state and nations coincide provides [great] advantages" for a country (Buzan, 1991: 72). Therefore, it becomes clear that national identity is a vital component of the security dilemma problematic. Turkish national identity is firmly grounded within the tenants of Kemalist ideology. Since the birth of the Republic, the county's ruling elites have rigidly adhered to the notion of the entire population being Turkish in origin. The very existence of Kurdish dissent within the state is identified as an attempt to heighten the separate ethno-cultural identities present within Turkish society. As such, Kurdish demands for cultural recognition call into question the very raison d'être for the creation and continued existence of the Turkish republic --that is to say, the legitimacy of the organizing ideology is challenged.

In order to understand the treatment of the Kurdish issue in Turkey, we must first discuss the position of ethnic minorities "as one important characteristic lies in the inextricable link between the minority issue in Turkey and the ideological structure of the Turkish legal and constitutional system" (Gürbey, 1996: 9-10). Thus, one can maintain that the causes for the Kurdish problem need to be sought within Turkey's political and legal system. Traditionally, "[the] main effort of ethnic speculation inside Turkey has been directed towards the definition of an effective Turkish ethnos for political unity" (Andrews, 1989: 41).

The rigidity of the political and legal system, particularly in its present form, possesses inadequacies when examined within the context of Turkey's obligations within the framework of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the Council of Europe . The very inflexibility of the constitutional rules and regulations attempts to proscribe the means of political and social life within

Turkey in as much detail as possible, thus hindering pluralization and democratization. As Gürbey (1996: 10) suggests, it is "[a] strict concept of a nation-state in combination with extreme nationalism [which represent] the essential characteristics of Turkish state ideology", commonly called Kemalism.

However, as Andrews (1989) points out, Turkey's population exhibits a high degree of ethnic, linguistic, and religious diversity and at least forty-seven distinct population groups can be differentiated. Among them, the Kurds are the largest linguistic and ethnic group. The main internal cause of the conflict between the Turkish state and the Kurdish nation is the strict application of the Kemalist definition of nation in the country. This is clearly articulated within the preamble of the 1982 Constitution, Articles 2 and 66. Kemalism defines the Turkish nation as the sum of all the citizens contained within the state's territorial borders without consideration of ethnic identity. In fact, this conceptualization of the Turkish nation helps to negate the legal interpretation of the existence and protection of ethnic minorities. As Andrews (1989: 35) states, "whilst the dangers of confusing ethnicity and nationality had been foreseen by the advocates of Anatolianism (1924 - 1925), the urgent need for renewed self-assertion among the Turkish, Sunni majority following the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and the struggle to free Turkey from the occupying powers proved paramount". This need to inject national pride and unity into the Turkish majority was further increased by the abolition of the Caliphate and the ensuing Kurdish uprising of 1925.

In the Constitution of 1982 the definition of '*Turk*' is maintained in Article 66: "a Turk is someone associated with the Turkish state by ties of Nationality". However, this definition is not very clear and results in the ethnic connotations of the term being disregarded, as potentially divisive and dangerous. "In the context of Turkey it is particularly important to emphasize [that] since the ethos upon which the Republic is based has, since its earliest years, incorporated use of the word *Turk* in an ethnic, as well as a national sense, without any clear distinction between them", the misunderstandings which arise from this ambiguity have been ignored (Andrews, 1989:18). "Yet, as they affect language, and even the recognition of non-Turkic

groups, they remain a source of friction within the country" (Andrews, 1989: 35).

As a result of this confusion,"...certain sections of the Government and academics, have assumed that ethnic minorities within Turkey have no inherent right to exist in their own *emic*[23] terms and have sought to remove any [indicators] which define them through legislation, common education, or deliberate re-definition" (Andrews, 1989: 36). Whilst the effect has been to gloss over, or distort the historical realities of the country's demographics and arrive at a simple view, "[this] mobilization of opinion has been [only] partly successful" (Andrews, 1989: 41). What Turkish ruling elites fail to recognize is the precarious nature of this policy and that it provokes doubts in many citizens who have grown up among ethnic minorities, and know that they exist. "As a counterpart to the promotion of the Turkish ethnos, the interest in ethnic minorities has on the whole been ignored or discouraged" (Andrews, 1989: 42).

In its most extreme form, this deliberate re-definition can be considered as quite simply a question of the Kurds having to adjust or be eliminated. Therefore, any form of articulation of cultural difference was and is perceived by the Turkish state as a threat to its cultural and national unity, and is strictly forbidden. So on the basis of the Kemalist definition of nation and the resulting principle of equality of all Turkish citizens, any expression of Kurdish identity is forbidden and persecuted.

"As members of the Turkish nation, the Kurds have equal rights in all aspects; however, the right to care for and develop their ethnicity; culture and language is not included within the understanding of equality, as it pertains to Turkey. This policy of assimilation and homogeneity has influenced and continues to influence the forms of Kurdish resistance and is a cause of the open use of violence [by the PKK]" (Gürbey, 1996: 10). It is within this framework that the emergence of the PKK should be viewed.

The second component which plays a central role in connection with the issue of the protection of minorities within Turkey, is that the Kemalist concept of nation cannot be viewed in isolation from the principle of the 'indivisible unity of a state's

people and its territory' and the concept of 'national culture' (Article 3, Turkish Constitution 1982). Basic rights and liberties can be restricted to protect this principle, as is constantly reflected in the legal system within numerous regulations -- Article 125 of the penal code is a clear example whereby capital punishment is prescribed for any who attempt, with or without violence, to separate portions of the state's territory from the state union or attempt to pull away from the control of the central government. "Even though the whole of the Constitution is aimed at preserving national unity, the unity envisioned by Atatürk, as achieved by common education, language, morality and aesthetics, is an abstraction which has, up to the present failed to engage a considerable portion of those living in Eastern Anatolia, [i.e., the Kurds]" (Andrews, 1989: 35 - 36).

Within the Anti-Terror Law (ATL), any propaganda questioning the indivisible unity of the state's people and its territory is subject to penalty under Article 8 of this law. Although Article 8 of the ATL was revised in October 1995, this only led to the reduction of prison sentences allowable; however, 'separatist propaganda' still remains punishable under the law as it still stands. Turkey still faces a fundamental legal-political dilemma regarding ethnic minorities, like the Kurds, within her territory and the infringement of basic civil rights in Turkish society. "The concept of minority, as understood by the state and international law, is referred to by Turkish law only in connection with the clauses on minorities of the [Lausanne Treaty] of 1923", contained in Articles 37 - 42 (Gürbey, 1996: 11) --these only refer to non-Muslim minorities.

On the grounds of Turkey's rigid concept of what constitutes a nation-state, the country has not accepted the internationally recognized rights of minorities, applicable to not only religious, but also ethnic and linguistic minorities as well. "The concept of minority only exists at a legal level in connection with the prohibition of 'creating minority groups' " (Gürbey, 1996: 11-12) --as in Article 81 of the Law on Political Parties[24]. The changes made to constitutional regulations in July 1995 led neither to the relaxation of the central elements of state ideology anchored within the

Constitution nor to an adjustment of the concept of minority in line with the European standard.

By asserting their ethnic identity the Kurds have helped to highlight the contradictions within Turkish nationalism and called into question the country's national identity and organizing ideology. In the case of Turkey, this has resulted in its national identity helping to undermine the idea of the state. By not recognizing the plurality of Turkish society, successive governments have helped to make the country more politically and socially insecure from within and externally, as neighbouring countries, like Syria, use the Kurdish issue to obtain concessions on regional security issues from Turkey --a clear example is the issue of Euphrates water, which is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 3. Only by official recognition that Turkey's ethnic plurality, as so clearly seen in the case of the United States, can be a source of cultural enrichment for the Turkish nation will the existence of the Kurds be equitably dealt with in the Turkish commonwealth. Through such recognition Turkey will have helped to alleviate its present insecurity dilemma.

**Economic Security**

With regard to the economic dimension of the threat posed by the Kurdish issue in Turkey, the most obvious impact has been the high cost of conducting the war in the southeast. At present the estimated cost to the Turkish state to fight the PKK is somewhere in the region between $7 to $10 billion annually. This annual drain on the economy helps to account for a substantial portion of Turkey's present budget deficit. It is unlikely that Turkey can indefinitely sustain such a level of expenditure into the future as it is almost equal to the annual deficit if external commerce.

One important effect is that "[the] conflict intensifies the imbalance between the western and eastern parts of the country and prevents [the much needed] economic upswing" (Gürbey, 1996: 19). The enormous cost of the war has reduced the effectiveness of the state's assimilationist policy in the Kurdish region. As Andrews (1989: 37-38) points out, "...changes in economic and social circumstances can bring about a profound readjustment of the *emic* and *etic* definition [of a group's

ethnicity]". Since the early days of the Turkish state, the government recognized the principle agents of assimilation to be, apart from the economic one, education and military service. However, the effectiveness of nationalized schooling depends greatly upon the frequency of schools, sadly deficient in the southeast of the country; when only standard elementary schools are available in villages and transport to the schools in town decides its impact (Andrews, 1989: 39).

A counterpart for the economic factor in assimilation is the need for opportunity. "If this is absent, full integration may be delayed in a rural setting, or migrant groups find themselves stranded, impoverished and embittered in one of the big cities..." (Andrews, 1989: 40). In Turkey, the Kurds have been obliged to migrate to the West in search of employment as they feel that any future in Turkey holds no promise for them --many try Istanbul and Ankara before emigrating, but the economic marginalization of the Kurds continues in the west of the country; with shanty towns developing on their outskirts of city centres and the conflict being transferred from rural to urban areas. "When among the towns most gifted children, the image of future well-being is so firmly anchored outside the country, one may ask just how long the group can continue to regard itself as Turkish" (Andrews, 1989: 40).

Turkey's solution is the "...$32 billion South Anatolian Project (GAP): an integrated development plan to bring everything from industry to health care to the region" and "the project [plans] to provide 3.5 m jobs by the time it is completed in 2005, and quadruple farm production in the region" (Dowden, 1996: 15). The project was initiated in 1988 for this reason, but is seen by many Kurds, particularly the PKK, as a continuation of Turkish assimilationist policies. "Moreover, even if growth could attenuate conflict, the critical question is how the [state] distributes the surplus " (Esman and Rabinovich, 1988: 34). As Dowden 91996: 15) points out, "[t]he vast bulk of the electricity [to be] produced will go to the west [of the country]" and "those parts of the project that will benefit western Turkey are well ahead of schedule, but those which are earmarked to alleviate the underdevelopment of the southeast are barely started --not surprisingly, Turkish officials argue that the delay is

due to PKK attacks and that they intend to see the project through". Whilst the GAP project is a step in the right direction in an effort to give Kurds a greater stake in the Turkish nation, its benefits will only accrue in the long term. However, these benefits may well be too late in arriving for the Kurds of Turkey.

Even if the political premise that "it is an article of conventional wisdom that economic growth and prosperity provide the ideal context for the management of ethnic conflict..." (Esman and Rabinovich, 1988: 22)is valid, there exist a number of problems with the project. The first problem is the scope of the project. "Despite the massive undertaking... GAP will lead to the transformation of the economy in only six provinces"[25] (Robins, 1991: 34-35) --although the benefits are expected to filter down, any economic rejuvenation elsewhere in the rural Kurdish areas will be more modest. The second, "relates to exactly how much investment the state will deliver" and "much will depend upon the health of the Turkish economy when subsequent investments are due to be made" (Robins, 1991: 35). Also, large engineering structures and huge reservoirs are unlikely to impress the local population, who crave for much needed electricity, better roads and a clean water supply --in these areas the state has been rather less conscientious and effective in the past!

The third problem involves the ownership of the land which is affected by the GAP project. In the past, much of it belonged to the aghas, but the issue of ownership and redistribution remains ill-defined. If the land remains in the hands of the few, "the increased levels of prosperity which are being promised [are unlikely] to come about, and expectations would have been raised unrealistically" (Robins, 1991: 35). The fourth problem relates to the timing of the project. "What is clear is that the major economic benefits envisaged [are unlikely to] accrue before 1995 and probably not until after the year 2000" (Robins, 1991: 35). So the GAP project offers little hope of improving those conditions which have helped bring about the hostilities in the Kurdish areas.

Not surprisingly, as Bozarslan (1996: 149) points out, "[the] continuation of the war will only be possible at the price of the militarization of the economy" and

whilst this may be possible in Iraq and Syria, "this is not the case for Turkey which has a strong private sector that the state does not control". For the Turkish private sector any such militarization will inevitably require a larger contribution to the war and participation in the process of resource allocation. "However, in Turkey, as elsewhere, the 'patriotism' of the bourgeoisie has its limits " (Bozarslan, 1996: 150). "The object of the... war that the population has financed for more than ten years [has] come increasingly under question" (Gürbey, 1996: 19). The continuation of the war has already provoked criticism and helps to explain the hostile declarations of business associations, like TÜSIAD and a report by the country's Chamber of Commerce. Prominent sectors of the business community in Turkey have asked for a political solution to be found to the Kurdish problem.

Not only has there been a push from within the country for a new policy orientation to Turkey's handling of the Kurdish issue, but pressure from the IMF has the same orientation. The IMF has demanded that Turkey reduce its public expenses, namely military spending. Of equal significance is Western pressure, which can be explained more by the impact of the Kurdish issue in Germany than by a perceived pro-Kurdish attitude of Turkey's Western allies --this is discussed in more detail in the next Chapter 3. However, concerns over the stability of Turkey and human rights abuses have given rise to arms transfers being cancelled or delayed by the country's Western allies. In fact, the growing American pressure on Turkey to find a lasting solution to its Kurdish problem is attributable to a pro-Turkish policy --the necessity of having a stable Turkey (Bozarslan, 1996: 150).

Whilst "[these] pressures could remain manageable for a military regime that is not accountable before an electorate", this is not possible for Turkey's civilian government (Bozarslan, 1996: 150). As Bozarslan(1996: 150) goes on to highlight, "[the] reason for this is quite simple: since 1946, Western support and external credibility of the country have always been an element of legitimization of civilian governments inside Turkey". So having obtained the Customs Union with the EC, Turkey is likely to experience more pressure from the West in the form of arms transfer reductions and military aid being withheld if it maintains its present level of

spending on the war in the southeast --as well as, adhering to its traditional policy on the Kurds.

Having considered the internal effects of the Kurdish issue for Turkey's security, the next chapter will examine the impact of the war in the southeast of the country upon its external relations --both regional and international. The question Chapter 3 hopes to answer is: How have Turkey's relations with her neighbouring states and the West been influenced by the Kurdish issue?

## NOTES

1. "The manipulation of ethnicity by state elites is even more easy to observe in those states which have strong mono-ethnic tendencies. In such states, dominant cultural groups in the society (usually majorities)have been able to enhance or preserve their dominance through the instrument of state power; and, to varying extents, the process of the formation of the state has encouraged the close link between the ethnic nationalism of its dominant group and the state nationalism; the cultural symbolism of the dominant group thus forming the basis for the articulation of state-national identity" (Brown, 1989: 10 - 11). This is very obvious in the case of Turkey.

2. "The Ottoman empire was not typical of the European empires of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, whose underlying characteristic was that of a distinct people of the metropolitan core, motivated by a nationalistic ideology, seeking the subjugation of peoples in the periphery" (Robins, 1991: 17). Like the Roman, the Ottoman empire believed much more in the assimilation of its territories and peoples, with various parts of the empire sending representatives to its parliament --this policy represented the millet system.

3. On May 5, 1932 a law ordering the deportation and dispersion of the Kurds was passed. In it four separate categories of inhabited zones were recognized in Turkey:

No. 1 zones will include all those areas in which it is deemed desirable to increase the density of the culturally Turkish population. [This obviously referred to Kurdistan]

No. 2 zones will include those areas in which it is deemed desirable to establish populations which must be assimilated into Turkish culture.

No. 3 zones will be territories in which culturally Turkish immigrants will be allowed to establish themselves, freely without the assistance of the authorities. [The most fertile and inhabitable areas of Kurdistan were to be offered]

No. 4 zones will include all those territories which it has been decided should

be evacuated and those which may be closed off for public health, material, cultural, political, strategic or security reasons. [This category included the more inaccessible areas of Kurdistan].

So, from the winter of 1932, several hundred thousand people were removed from their lands and villages. Only a shortage of material means prevented the Turkish government from deporting the entire Kurdish population. These deportations were to continue until the end of 1935 (Chaliand, 1994: 38).

4. Article 1 of Law No, 1850, states:

"Murders and other actions committed individually, from the 20th June 1930 to the 10th December 1930, by the representatives of the state or the province, by the military or civil authorities, by the local authorities, by guards or militiamen, or by any civilian having helped the above or acted on their behalf, during the pursuit and extermination of the revolts that broke out in Ecris, Zilan, Agridag (Ararat) and the surrounding areas, including Pulumur in Erzincan province and the area of the First Inspectorate, will not be considered as crimes" (Chaliand, 1992: 65).

5. Although a Turkish sociologist, his book, Kurdistan: An Interstate Colony, has never been published in Turkey and due to the nature of the subject he has spent several years in prison and is still held in custody today. This represents the first study of the situation in southeastern Turkey. Within this analysis of the situation in southeast Turkey (Kurdistan), Besikci concludes that the region is an internal colony. An internal colony refers "to a deprived economic zone whose population is dismally abandoned by the central government or whose resources are unjustly exploited by it" (Nisan, 1991: 13).

6. The issue of water shall be discussed in greater detail in the next chapter, highlighting Turkey's relations with neighbouring states.

7. Turkish authorities have described the HRK "as a duplicate of the Viet Cong"

(Gunter, 1990: 74). "Its structure was based on a 3-3 military system: three squads constituted a team; three teams formed a company", and so on (Gunter, 1990: 74).

8. The rationale behind its creation at the start of the Kurdish insurgency, is summed up by Ocalan himself, in Ismet (1996:28): "Before anything else, armed propaganda will attract the attention of the masses who have been lost in daily life and who have been brainwashed by imperialist media or become dependent on this or that establishment party, to the revolutionary movement. It will thus activate the [passive] masses". It was in an effort to gather the non-Marxist and often religious Kurdish masses under one roof that the ERNK came into being in 1985. As Gunter (1990: 77) states: "Public relations were identified as the [PKK's] most important problem" in 1986, so the ARGK was founded in order to organize these masses into guerrilla units. It should be noted that at present the ERNK "...has now been entrusted with a diplomatic peace-time mission and appears to be actively involved in international diplomacy, meetings with foreign governments and officials, in search of a solution through dialogue on the on going conflict" (Ismet, 1996: 35).

9. "Today, Turkey has approximately 70,000 village guards and is paying each an attractive salary" (Ismet, 1996: 29). With high unemployment among the Kurdish population in the region for many years, initially the project appeared to be an attractive offer to earn a good income and arm oneself. "But this [policy] served no purpose other than creating a buffer zone of flesh for the state" (Ismet, 1996: 29). As government sources were later to admit: "In a way, what has happened is that the state has singled out its supporters in rural settlements making them an easy target and identifying them for the terrorists" (Gunter, 1990: 81). "It is also a system which has led to (a) atrocities committed by these paramilitary forces and (b) state troopers forcing locals, to the extent of direct attacks, to accept weapons against the Kurds" (Ismet, 1996: 29). The PKK chose to target Turkey's village guard system because it believes it to be an obstacle to Kurdish liberation. "Its main purpose has been to deter villagers from joining the paramilitary force and instead support the armed

movement" (Ismet, 1996: 24).

10. This Turkish-Iraqi concerted effort against the Kurds began with the first hot pursuit agreement in April 1983. By 1985 Turkey pushed for a second protocol to be agreed whereby each side was allowed to go beyond the hot pursuit provisions of the earlier agreement --either could penetrate the others territory in pursuit of Kurdish insurgents and remain for up to 3 days. As at the time the PKK was operating from bases in northern Iraq one can understand Turkey's insistence upon this three day extension.

11. "ARGK fighters, allegedly now numbering around 25,000 in the whole region are trained in central camps, work according to a former East Bloc 3-3 formation order, constitute units from platoons to regiments and are well-equipped" (Ismet, 1996: 35). They can be identified by their uniforms and operate under a tight military discipline and represent the primary core of the PKK's armed activities, which are carried out according to a central committee order supervised by the ARGK Military Council. Its main activities involve ambush, raids, sabotage, executions and mine laying. The ARGK is governed by a set of laws which include first, second and third degree crimes. "Membership to the ARGK is compulsory for all Kurds at or above the age of 18 regardless of their gender" (Ismet, 1996: 35).

12. The majority of those killed were relatives of village guards (Kurds whom the state armed and paid to combat the PKK guerrillas). Thus, "the message was spread that the PKK would punish those who collaborated with Turkey or turned against the organization and that the movement had no intention of tolerating local village guards" (Ismet, 1996: 30). The villages targeted in such campaigns were specifically chosen and tended to be located in areas where the PKK needed to expand its support. As far as the general Kurdish population was concerned, the PKK's attacks on civilians were not directed at ordinary people but Kurdish villages with state connections, who agreed to collaborate against their own kind. Such activities by the PKK, helped to

draw a clear line between those it considered as combatants and those it saw as innocent. In this way "the PKK was gaining success at the popular level as the government [stepped up its involvement] in the conflict, lifting its veil [during] many instances and showing...[how] repressive [its] policies [were] to the [Kurds]" (Ismet, 1996: 30). Throughout 1988 and 1989, the situation was similar, with the PKK stepping up its targeting of state supporters.

13. As of July 1987, the situation faced by the Turkish authorities was summed in the cover story of one Turkish journal that declared: "For a moment last Thursday, the Turkish state looked helpless and unable to root out the terrorists... . The claims of successive Turkish governments over many years that the 'Kurdish question' does not exist has been discredited by events. What looked like local insurgency, has, since the start of this year escalated into something like a full scale guerrilla war" (Gunter, 1990: 78). Turkish sources were forced to conclude: "Against Turkey's increasing military presence in the region, not much seems to have been done to prevent attacks from taking place" (Gunter, 1990: 78 and Economist, June 22, 1987). The same report declared "that the PKK has achieved one goal... bring[ing] the 'Kurdish question' finally to the international platform" (Gunter, 1990: 78 and Economist, June 22, 1987).

14. As a result the Turkish press has been heavily censored, citizens resident in the region can be removed, anyone supporting the separatists or giving them aid can now be sentenced to 10 years imprisonment and the state would in no way tolerate PKK sympathizers (Muller, 1996). The impact of this new policy became clearly evident in the region with the increase in indiscriminate security operations, leading to well documented human rights violations throughout the Kurdish areas (Helsinki Watch, 1990).

15. The policy of the Turkish state has helped to turn what initially appeared to be 'a mere terrorist group', based on marginal demands and ideology, into a major ethnic

insurgency group, backed by hundreds of thousands of people. As Ismet (1996:33) states: "Officials [by insisting that] the problem is [fundamentally] one of terrorism and they will deal with terrorism first, and then look into other aspects of the crisis" have helped to perpetuate the conflict.

16. The Kurdish uprising began in March 1990 and spread throughout Kurdistan, characterized by major strikes and boycotts of schools. In fact the uprising, which plagued the Turkish authorities throughout the early part of 1991, was the most serious challenge to Turkish control in the southeast. Although security forces managed to contain the uprising by mid-1991, sporadic uprisings continued in the area.

17. For a description of the contents of the ATL refer to Helsinki Watch (1990: 13) -- the Ministry of the Interior and the NSC were given the authority to control all media broadcasts from the Kurdish region under the state of emergency and exactly one month after the law came into force, the Council of Ministers gave the governor general of the region the power to dismiss any judge, prosecutor or military officer working within his jurisdiction. The governor general is now unaccountable for his actions which is a power even the president of Turkey does not have.

18. The PKK declared a general amnesty for all village guards who lay down their guns and refused to collaborate with the state. This new PKK strategy forced Turkish troops to target village guards and families attempting to drop out of the system, to carry out mass arrests, and deportations, as well as, arson attacks on civilian villages (Ismet, 1996 and Helsinki Watch, 1990). In effect, "the wide-spread human rights violations on the Turkish part only helped to support the PKK's argument and further [helped] to strengthen the organization's" support in the region (Ismet, 1996: 31).

19. "The KPE was established to give voice to inhabitants in Kurdistan and is dominated by parliamentarians of Kurdish origin expelled from the Turkish National

Assembly" (Nigogosian, 1996: 41). The idea to create the KPE "...evolved from... the removal of all democratic political means of the Kurdish peoples and their elected representatives for resolving the Kurdish problem in Turkey" (Laizer, 1996: 149). It was established in April 1995 in Holland. "The PKK and its adjunct organizations comprise the largest single block of the KPE's sixty-five members" (Nigogosian, 1996: 41) --12 seats are held by the PKK through the ERNK (Ismet, 1996: 36). As Gürbey (1996: 25) states, "on the one hand, the parliament in exile functions as a partner in dialogue and, on the other hand, it proves that the prohibition of the DEP brought the PKK and the DEP parliamentarians in exile closer together". Clearly the common activities of the two parties mean that any process of dialogue which disregards the PKK would be difficult to realize.

20. The 1982 constitution, approved by a referendum, placed a number of restrictions on the use of the Kurdish language. Articles 26, 28 and 89 were particularly clear on this matter:

Article 26: No language prohibited by law shall be used in the expression and dissemination of thought. Any written or printed documents, photograph records, magnetic or video tapes, and other media instruments used in contravention of this provision shall be confiscated.

Article 28: Publications shall not be made in any language prohibited by the law.

Article 89: No political party may concern itself with the defense, development, or diffusion of any non-Turkish language or culture; nor may they seek to create minorities within our frontiers or to destroy our national unity.

21. As the constitutional law expert and former Turkish foreign minister Mümtaz Soysal concludes regarding the function of the NSC: "Because the [NSC] is a body which is in a better position to express opinions concerning issues of national security due to its proximity to detailed information, it is only natural that the Council of Ministers 'gives preference' to these opinions. The real danger here lies in the fact that the concept of 'national security' is being used in a very broad and all-encompassing manner --and includes almost all issues which fall under the responsibility of the government-- and because of this broad interpretation, a new mixed decision-making body is created which is nearly parallel to the Council of Ministers, but does not carry

political responsibility" (Gürbey, 1996: 12). Given the prominent role of the NSC in the decision-making process, it would appear to support Buzan's (1991: 276) suggestion that military means frequently prove useful against both military and non-military threats. Thus the NSC, and the armed forces are there to safeguard against both external and internal challenges to both the territorial integrity and the idea or organizing principle(s) of the Turkish state.

22. Article of the ATL "defines terrorism so broadly and vaguely that almost anyone can be convicted of it: no violent act is required" (Muller, 1996: 45). The ATL represents the primary legal policy instrument used by the Turkish state in an effort to stamp out Kurdish dissent, whether peaceful or violent in nature. Given that Turkey is party to the European Convention on Human Rights and has pledged to meet human rights standards set by the Paris Charter of the OSCE, the ATL is clearly in breach of Turkey's obligations under the Treaty. "Firstly, the all-embracing nature of the Anti-Terror Law is in conflict with the general spirit of the rights establishing freedom of expression. Secondly, its subsequent application by the authorities is at odds with its original purpose" --it was not designed to restrict non-violent dissent (Muller, 1996: 47).

23. "There are three fundamental aspects to ethnicity: the *emic*, that is the internal view of the group, the *etic*, that is the view taken by those outside the group, and the *mediating*, that is the effective balance established between the two" (Andrews, 1989: 19). In the case of Turkey, the emic view is that held by its Kurdish population and the etic view is that held by the population at large, especially of policy makers. It should be noted that changes in the ethnic markers defining ethnic groups can result in an effective lack of recognition, as in the case of the Kurds in Turkey.

24. As Gürbey (1996: 11-12)points out: Political parties and associations in Turkey are prohibited from asserting that there exist within its territory minorities that are distinguished by differences in their national or religious culture, ethnicity or

language. As such, they may not pursue the goal of creating minority groups on Turkish territory, to avoid disrupting the integrity of the nation through to caring for, developing and propagating of languages and cultures other than Turkish (Gürbey, 1996: 12).

25. The six provinces are Adiyaman, Diyarbakir, Gaziantep, Mardin, Sanhurfa and Siirt. Interestingly, the province of Hakkari, where many PKK operations have taken place, has not included for redevelopment.

## Chapter 3: Consequences for Turkish Foreign Relations

### 1.1 The Internationalization of the Kurdish Ethnic Conflict

In order to understand the impact of the Kurdish insurgency on both Turkey's relations with neighbouring countries and the West, we must briefly examine the internationalization of the conflict and the factors which have brought this about.

For domestic ethnic conflicts, like that conducted by the PKK in Turkey, to spread across borders and embroil a wider set of direct and indirect participants, certain structural and organizational features need to be present (de Silva: 1991:16). One of the most important features of the Kurdish insurgency is the international dispersal and distribution of the Kurds. As Barkey (1996: 65) states, "because of the dispersal of the Kurdish territories among at least four states --Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria--the Kurdish question cannot always be contained within the territorial limits of one state". Of the four states, Turkey has the largest Kurdish population at 12 million (50% of the total Kurdish population), Iran has some 7 million (25%), Iraq has around 4 million (15%) and Syria has 1.5 million (5%)[1] (Buckley, 1994: 9). According to future population estimates, the Kurdish populations in these countries are likely to double by the year 2020 --the Kurdish birth-rate is already higher than that of the rest of the general population in Turkey, at present (Fuller, 1992: 14).

"Ethnic affines, wherever they are located, generally tend to become involved supportively in some way with the struggles of their community" (de Silva: 1991: 16). The entire Kurdish population in the Middle East straddles the borders of all four states. "In addition to its appeal across Kurdish communities, the temptation of neighbouring states to take advantage of the other's minority problem to score tactical or strategic gains is especially enhanced during periods of local unrest" (Barkey, 1991: 65). Syria's continued harbouring of Abdullah Ocalan, the PKK leader, illustrates this point. Also, "ethnic affines can be found in far-off places because of migration or forced dispersal" (de Silva: 1991: 16).

As we shall see, "the emergence of an active Kurdish diaspora, especially in Europe... has helped [to] heighten the visibility of the [Kurdish] issue and also

provided various Kurdish political organizations in Turkey with financial and other forms of critical support" (Barkey, 1996: 66). In fact, it is Turkish policy toward the Kurds within her borders that has helped to create the large community of Turkish Kurds in Europe. This has meant that European countries, like Germany, which possess large Kurdish populations, have indirectly become involved in the Kurdish issue by virtue of the fact that their domestic interests have been affected by their relations with Turkey, and in turn, this internationalization of the Kurdish question has influenced bilateral ties with Turkey.

Another element which has helped the internationalization of the Kurdish issue, is the strategic location of Turkey (de Silva, 1991: 17). "The transformation of international balances after the demise of the Soviet Union, have rekindled some of the long-dormant ethnic tensions around the globe" (Barkey, 1996: 66). Turkey is no exception. For the United States, the stability of Turkey is of great concern to its own regional interests. The continued rebellion in the southeast of the country represents an existential challenge to the Turkish state . The Kurdish insurgency, not only contradicts the dominant ideology which is the basis of the Republic, but a successful rebellion could also possibly force a change in the boundaries and/or organization of Turkey. This would be detrimental to American interests in the Gulf.

"The internationalization of ethnic conflict is often perceived as beneficial to at least one of the involved [parties]" (de Silva: 1991: 18). In fact, internationalization of the Kurdish question, especially after the Halabja massacre in Iraq (1988) and at the end of the Gulf war in 1991, has conferred a great degree of visibility and new sources of sympathy for the Kurds --such as that expressed by the smaller states of the EU regarding human rights abuses by the Turkish forces in the southeast. It has also resulted in material resources and organizational skills being donated, as in the case of the Kurdish information centre in London. The fact that there was great media coverage of the Gulf war, more of the world has got to know of the plight of the Kurds, not only in Iraq but also in Turkey.

Also of importance in highlighting the Kurdish insurgency in Turkey, is the work of groups particularly interested in monitoring the issue of repression and

human rights, like Amnesty International and Helsinki Watch. They have further publicized events in the southeast of Turkey and "their reports have been known to cause donors to terminate aid to countries" (de Silva, 1991: 19). Since the early 1990s, Amnesty International has published yearly reports on Turkey with particular attention to the Kurds in that country. All these issues are important if one is to understand the impact the Kurdish question has had on Turkish foreign relations.

### 1.2 The Regional Setting

Turkey's immediate sphere of concern in the Middle East is with the states adjacent to it: Iran, Iraq and Syria. From Turkey's point of view, all three share certain characteristics which are potentially problematic. Firstly, all three have regional leadership aspirations. As Turkey is also a regional power they tend to regard her as a fourth competitor for regional influence. Secondly, all three states have the resources to give substance to these ambitions. They are all major oil producers, with large populations and have considerable agricultural potential.

Third, all three have common borders with Turkey. This means that they are more likely to have boundary disputes and irredentist movements are more likely to exist; such is the case with Syria over the Turkish province of Hatay and to a lesser degree Iraq over the Mosul *villayet*. Also of great concern to Turkey, is the existence of ethnic and kinship ties which straddle these borders --for example, the fact that there are Kurdish populations in all four states means that it is easier for neighbouring states to make mischief within the Turkish border; as Syrian support of the PKK has shown since 1984.

"The porous nature of the three respective boundaries with Turkey and the mountainous terrain on the Turkish side makes such interference much harder either to monitor or to stamp out"[2] (Robins, 1991: 49). Fourth, all three of Turkey's neighbours in the region are formally and instinctively anti-Western. This can be attributed to fact that all three have been subject to Western control during their

suspicion of Turkey itself. "Turkey is perceived as an outpost of the Western military alliance willing to serve its collective ends" (Robins, 1991: 49). It is with these considerations in mind that one turns to Turkey's relations vis-à-vis her nearest neighbours, with particular attention to the state of affairs from 1993. The reason for choosing to examine Turkey's regional relations from this time period is due to the fact that the Iraqi Kurds appeared to be on the brink of creating an independent state in northern Iraq. Potential repercussions of such a situation developing seem to have led Turkey to conclude a series of national security agreements with not only Syria, but also Iran and led to a brief rapprochement with Iraq in 1993.

### 1.2.1 Relations with Syria

Relations between Syria and Turkey have never been cordial and often cold. Therefore, Turkey has always regarded Syria as the most difficult of her neighbours to deal with. One reason is the question of the province of Hatay which Syria lost to Turkey in 1939. The loss of Hatay offends the pan-Arabist and Greater Syrian ideologues. Turkey fears that if Hatay were restored to Syrian sovereignty, "it could prove [to be] the thin end of the irredentist wedge" (Robins, 1991, 49).

Historical suspicion and the outstanding territorial dispute over Hatay, have in the past been exacerbated by East-West tension. "Turkey and Syria have continued to regard one another as being on opposite sides of an essentially bipolar world" (Robins, 1991: 50). During the 1980s, another important issue emerged to blight the bilateral relationship: the vexed question of the waters of the Euphrates river. As will be discussed in more detail further in the chapter, Syria is concerned about the volume and quality of the water she will receive once Turkey's GAP project is completed. Although Turkey, cognizant of Syrian concerns, has guaranteed an average annual flow of water from the river this has not stopped Syria from supporting the PKK since 1984 in an effort to elicit further assurances from Turkey.

"Syria is concerned because it knows [full well] that [such guarantees] can be withdrawn as easily as they [are] extended" (Robins, 1991: 51). As Robins(1991:51) states, "there can be no doubt that the Euphrates issue is deeply unpalatable to the

Syrians because it is Turkey, a perceived regional rival, which has control over the headwaters". However, as Syria supports the PKK the Turkish government's response has been to engage the Syrians in a constructive dialogue. Repeatedly Ankara has tried to reach a formal understanding with Damascus whereby the Syrians end their support for the Kurdish insurgents. "Turkey has attempted to use a range of mostly economic inducements to this end, including help with oil and gas prospecting, the export of electricity, the provision of drinking water by pipeline, greater volumes of formal trade and loans" (Robins, 1991: 52).

Though periodically, the Turkish government has obtained Syrian commitments to the end of aid for the PKK, and the two countries have signed reciprocal extradition protocols, these accords have rarely lasted long. The most salient feature of these meetings has been the linking of water and the Kurdish issue, but this is discussed further in the section on Water and Regional Relations below. In this section, we are concerned with Turkey's relations with Syria since 1993.

By the end of November 1993, Turkey and Syria had signed a security protocol regarding the PKK and other terrorists. The Syrian interior ministry chief stated in an interview that Syria would no longer be a thoroughfare for "those who are against Turkey's interests" (Olson, 1996: 86). Turkish officials were undoubtedly delighted to hear the PKK being labelled a terrorist group . This was the first time that a high-ranking Syrian official had done so and marked a significant departure in the foreign policy of Syria[3], which had hitherto supported the PKK since it commenced its guerrilla activities in 1984.

This change in Syrian foreign policy was not doubt, in part, due to the August 24 summit talks held in Damascus that same year. Syria had participated at the foreign ministry level in the summit conference with Iran and Turkey in which the Kurdish question figured prominently. The three foreign ministers "expressed their unalterable opposition to the fragmentation of Iraq and vehemently opposed the planned elections [to be held] in 1995 in northern Iraq, which they declared would contribute to the fragmentation of that country" (Olson, 1996: 86). Turkey has been

against the 'safe haven' created by the Allied forces in March 1991, because Ankara fears that it would make its Kurdish problem even worse. All three countries took this opportunity to express their displeasure at not being invited to attend the Kurdish Conference held on July 23 in Paris, whilst officials from Britain, France and the United States attended.

Although at the Damascus summit, the Syrians did not specifically denounce the PKK as a terrorist organization as Turkey demanded, they did state that Syria was adamantly opposed to the fragmentation of Middle East countries, an apparent reference to the Kurdish nationalist challenge to Turkey, as well as Iraq. At the same time, "the Turkish foreign minister announced that Turkey would soon place new restrictions, particularly on representatives of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), on entries into Iraq at the Habur/Khabur crossing, the main entry point between Turkey and Iraq, located near the town of Cizre on the Turkish border" (Olson, 1996: 87, and Laizer, 1996).

Two weeks later the Turkish government announced the closing of the Habur crossing to all human rights organizations and members of foreign parliaments --this was obviously in an effort to control information coming out of the area about Turkish security force's activities to eradicate the PKK from the area. Turkey also hoped to avoid any reporting of human rights violations its forces might commit in the area. Only personnel connected to UN programs in northern Iraq and Turkish and Iraqi journalists would be allowed passage (Hürriyet, September 15, 1994).

The August summit meeting in Damascus made clear the direct connection between the Kurdish question and the distribution of the Euphrates river waters. The Turks stressed that they would not pursue earnest negotiations on the water question until Syria assured them it would no longer support the PKK's activities or shelter Abdullah Ocalan. "Until agreement was reached, Ankara [pointed out] that it would be difficult to move forward on other problems such as the distribution of the Orontes river, which flows through Syria before entering Turkey's Hatay province"[4] (Olson, 1996: 87).

In late 1994 and early 1995 relations between Syria and Turkey took a brief upswing. On December 5, the president of Turkey's chamber of commerce and stock market (TOBB) led a one-hundred-person delegation to Damascus to engage in trade discussions. The Syrian foreign minister made it clear that Syria was interested in improving trade relations with Turkey, particularly if Syria's $300 million trade deficit with Turkey could be reduced. The Syrians "suggested that one way to reduce the trade deficit would be for Turkey to import phosphates from Syria, which had an abundance for export, rather than from Tunisia" (Olson, 1996: 88). The Turkish trade representatives confirmed that they would strive to help reduce Syria's trade deficit. "Ankara was hopeful that, when signed, a peace agreement would open up greater trade opportunities for Turkish trade and business ventures, especially for its construction companies in Syria, Lebanon, the West Bank and Gaza"(Olson, 1996: 88). The TOBB delegation stressed that Turkey wanted to participate in the reconstruction and development of the Arab region.

By February 1995, despite Damascus' continued to support the PKK and the agreement that greater trade was desired between the two capitals, the amount of water from the Euphrates reaching Syria once more soured relations. Prime Minister Çiller announced in February 1995, that Turkey was prepared to sign a water protocol with Syria, affirming Ankara's commitment to providing Damascus with 500 million cubic metres per second provided it abandon its protection of the PKK (Hürriyet, February 11, 1995). Although relations between the two countries seemed to be improving well into the summer, reports that the PKK was attempting to establish a stronger presence in the Hatay region once again soured bilateral relations. It was confirmed by the commander of the ARGK, the military wing of the PKK, that PKK guerrillas were engaging in operations in the Taurus mountains and in Hatay during July (Kurdistan Report no.22, September/October 1995: 25). The ARGK commander stated that the PKK had first stationed forces in these areas in 1994 and claimed that Turkish Intelligence had initially become aware of the PKK presence in early 1995 with the Turkish National Security Council (NSC) meeting to discuss methods to eliminate the PKK presence. The NSC decided to deploy "thousands of

soldiers to the region and hoped to achieve a victory over us [ARGK] by means of military operations" (Kurdistan Report no. 22, September/October 1995: 25). The Turkish government also set-up a system of contra-guerrillas and village guards in urban areas, such as Çukurova, Hatay and Adana[5].

It was in September 1995, that reports of the PKK presence in Hatay first began in the Turkish press (Hürriyet, September 17, 1995). Ocalan apparently intended to turn Hatay into another Botan, increasing the number of PKK operations in the region[6]. According to the Turkish press the PKK had initially attempted to infiltrate into Adana, Mersin and Hatay areas in the early 1990s, but had failed to win over a substantial number of new recruits in the hinterland of Adana and Mersin. The PKK was unsuccessful because the Turkish armed forces were imposing a tight security blanket in and around Hatay at the time.

"By the early 1990s these cities were already swelled with Kurds fleeing the scorched earth policies of the Turkish armed forces in the southeast" (Olson, 1996: 89). Throughout the 1990s the Turkish policy of evacuating villages in the southeast was stepped-up and helped to increase migration to Hatay. The Kurds that have taken refuge in the Hatay province over the last decade are largely Sunni, "but may include [some] 15 to 20 per cent Alevis, which is approximately the proportion of Alevis among the Kurdish population"[7] (Olson, 1996: 89). Turkish press reports emphasized that the PKK hoped to exploit the religious and ethnic diversity of Hatay in its efforts against the Turkish state -- the Turkish government countered by arming the Turkomen population in an effort to stem PKK infiltration in the region (Hürriyet, September 17, 1995).

"Reports of further clashes between the PKK and Turkish armed forces during the first days of December 1995 suggest that there was truth in some of the comments of the ARGK commander and in the report in the Hürriyet" (Olson, 1996: 90). The PKK clearly intended to expand its guerrilla war from the southeast to the shores of the Mediterranean. As Olson (1996:90) goes on to state, the "increase in guerrilla [activity] in Hatay [suggested] that the PKK [was] willing, [felt] bold enough...to

take its war against Ankara out of the southeast region, which is predominantly Kurdish". More importantly, the choice of Hatay is significant as it is sensitive. As the province had been part of Syria till 1939, its sovereignty remains a contentious issue between Damascus and Ankara --it represents one of the sore spots in their relations.

"The attempt of the PKK to enlist the minority [Alevi], especially Arab, and economically marginalized population against the dominant Sunni and Turkish population is bound to create more friction between [Ankara and Damascus]" (Olson, 1996: 90). Reports of PKK activity in Hatay helped to ice relations further between the two countries and the PKK attacking the KDP in late August only helped to convince Turkey that Damascus had encouraged this move by the PKK. In light of this development it is easy to understand Turkish suspicions that Syria is behind the PKK's activities in Hatay[8]. The PKK's activities in Hatay help "to confirm Ankara's position that Damascus [actively] supports the PKK and the Kurdish nationalist movement in Turkey as [an instrument] to weaken politically, militarily and diplomatically its big northern neighbour" in an effort to gain concessions from Ankara on regional issues, like water (Olson, 1996: 90).

The issue of Syrian support for the PKK took centre stage once again in late 1995, when Ocalan had contacts with high-ranking German political and intelligence officials in Damascus (Hürriyet, November 22-26, 1995). Heinrich Lummer, a political ally of Chancellor Kohl, met with the PKK leader on September 30. This meeting was the culmination of several which had taken place prior to Lummer's visit. "The [purpose]...of the German visit was to discuss German concerns that PKK demonstrations and political activities in Germany were creating more disorder than Germany thought tolerable" (Olson, 1996: 91).

By the end of 1995, Syria's sheltering of Ocalan and its support of the PKK, particularly its tacit endorsement for the PKK move into Hatay, remained the principle reason for the sour state of relations between the countries to date.

### 1.2.2 Relations with Iran

When the Islamic revolution took place in Iran in 1979 prospects for bilateral relations between the two countries looked bleak. To the Islamic revolutionaries, Turkey appeared to be "a model which the Shah of Iran had attempted to emulate: it was secular, closely allied to the United States, and eagerly adopted Western values and culture" (Robins, 191: 53). Although Iran and Turkey had entered into two major alliances during this century, the Saadabad Pact and the Baghdad Pact, later to be reincarnated as the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO), the Iranian revolution would have an impact on future relations. "The Iranian revolution had a major impact on Turkey's [otherwise] smooth relations with Iran over the past half century, creating strains resulting from Iran's efforts to export the Islamic Revolution" (Fuller, 1992: 65).

Even with the ideological tension which still exists between Iran and Turkey, a pragmatic convergence of interests has emerged between the two countries, particularly in the economic field (Robins, 1991: 54-57 and Fuller, 1992: 65). During the Iran-Iraq war economic interaction between Turkey and Iran greatly increased; but it was only in the economic sphere that Iran was willing to court Turkey as a means of securing its neutrality (Robins, 1991: 54). As Robins (1991: 54) points out, it was during the Iran-Iraq war that "Iran [came to fully appreciate]the importance... of the border security question [to Turkey], especially after the launch of the PKK insurgency in 1984". As Turkey had managed to conclude an agreement with Iraq in October 1984 which included a hot pursuit clause, thereby rendering it more difficult for the PKK to use Iraqi territory as a sanctuary, Iran did not want to appear less helpful to Ankara in this matter than Iraq. Iran also realized that "the Kurdish insurrection [in Turkey] not only [helps to distract] Ankara but [would] make it more solicitous of Tehran's cooperation for border security" (Barkey, 1996: 77).

After the Gulf war in 1991, Iran became concerned "that Turkey might take advantage of an Iraqi collapse to seize the oil [fields] of northern Iraq" (Fuller, 1992: 65-66). "Iranian concerns were also heightened by the UN's creation of enclaves at the end of the war along the northern Iraqi border with Turkey for the protection of

Kurdish refugees" (Fuller, 1992: 66). Iran feared that such an "action might presage Turkish designs against Iraqi Kurdish territory or lead to the occupation of [areas] in northern Iraq by US or other Western powers" (Fuller, 1992: 66). Both Turkey and Iran were worried by developments in northern Iraq and how they might influence their own Kurdish populations.

Since 1993 and early 1994 the rapprochement between Turkey and Iran, which had begun just after the end of the Gulf war, over the mutual challenge posed by Kurdish nationalism, particularly from the PKK, continued. According to Olson (1996: 92), diplomatic and security meetings between the two countries increased over May and June 1994. "By September 1, 1994 [around] ten [high-level] meetings had taken place " (Olson, 1996: 92). This rapprochement had started in November 1993, with the signing of a joint security protocol which stipulated that neither country would permit any terrorist organization (the PKK) to exist in its territory. It was at this time that the Iranians publicly announced that their country would take military measures against the PKK. The Iranian statement is understandable given their concern over Turkey's increased involvement in the 'safe haven' in northern Iraq (Fuller, 1996: 66). By May 1994, Iran had handed over twenty-eight members of the PKK to Turkey.

The level of cooperation over the Kurdish issue between the two countries is shown by the fact that Ankara requested that Turkey be allowed to bomb PKK bases located around the areas of Mount Ararat and Tendurek in and near Iranian territory, on June 13, 1994. The importance placed by the Turkish government in obtaining Iranian cooperation in its offensive against the PKK, which was launching its attacks from bases near Mount Ararat, is highlighted by the fact that President Demirel took time out of his summer vacation to announce that Ankara and the Islamic Republic had agreed to work together against the PKK.

On June 16, Iran appeared to give permission for Turkey to bomb the PKK bases in her territory, but only did so because the two countries agreed: (1) that there was a need to prevent the passage of PKK guerrillas from northern Iraq to Iran; (2) to prevent PKK passage to Armenia and hence to Russia; and (3) at the request of

Turkey, to bomb roads in Iranian territory that were used by the PKK to replenish supplies for its camps in Iran from which it was launching attacks against Turkey (Olson, 1996: 92). In return, Ankara pledged to move against the Mujahidin-i-Halq opposition to the Iranian government in Turkey.

When President Demirel met with President Rafsanjani from 15 - 27 July, the national security concerns between Turkey and Iran were uppermost in their discussions --this represented the first time that a Turkish president had visited the country since the Islamic revolution (Hürriyet, 22 July, 1994). Turkish and Iranian relations continued to improve in early 1995, with "[m]uch of the improvement centred on Iran's potential participation in an international consortium of companies and countries slated to build a natural gas pipeline, estimated to cost [some] $6 billion, from Turkmenistan to Turkey" (Olson, 1996: 93 and Guardian , 20 January, 1995). It was during the pipeline negotiations that Iran moved to settle a $200 million debt it had with Turkish exporters.

As Olson (1996: 93) states, the proposed route for the pipeline through Iranian territory would mean greater cooperation between Turkey and Iran against the Kurds because it would cross regions mainly inhabited by Kurds in both countries. This would naturally engender even closer national security cooperation between Ankara and Tehran to prevent Kurdish and Iranian opposition forces from sabotaging the pipeline.

"The emphasis placed on preventing the emergence of an independent Kurdish state in northern Iraq was [once] again the [central] topic of discussion [between] the foreign ministers of Turkey, Iran and Syria on September 8 in Tehran, during their [seventh] Tripartite meeting since the Gulf war" (Olson, 1996: 93). All the representatives reaffirmed their opposition to any division of Iraqi territory, that they were against terrorism and that each was concerned over the apparent stockpiling of weapons in northern Iraq. Iran further stressed its desire for more economic cooperation with Turkey.

The national security initiatives which took place between Turkey and Iran during this period are important for a number of reasons. First and foremost,"they

indicate the serious challenge [posed by] Kurdish nationalism, especially of the PKK to Turkey, to both countries" (Olson, 1996: 94). Second, "they [appear] to point to the need for Turkey to maintain close coordination with Iran in order to prevent the emergence of an independent Kurdish state in northern Iraq and all the geopolitical and geostrategic headaches this would bring to the two capitals" (Olson, 1996: 94). The creation of a Kurdish state out of northern Iraq "is perceived by [both] states as a potential disaster and challenge to [them] as presently constituted, physically and ideologically " (Olson, 1996: 95). At the same time, "Turkey fears two possible scenarios in Iraq: the replacement of the Iraqi Ba'ath by a Syrian Ba'ath, or Baghdad's submission to Iranian influence given the majority Shiite population in the country" (Barkey, 1996: 79).

Despite the cooperation indicated by the number of Tripartite meetings between Turkey, Iran and Syria, the emergence of areas in northern Iraq no longer under the control of Baghdad necessarily leads to greater competition between Ankara and Tehran in that space (Olson, 1996 and Fuller, 1992). "The problem is where the lines of influence of the two countries' spheres of influence will be drawn" (Olson, 1996: 94) and this problem was exacerbated from 1994 to 1995 as the KDP and PUK drew closer to Turkey and Iran as a result of internecine fighting between the two groups. Since 1991 Turkey has held talks with the KDP in an effort to elicit its help in containing the PKK's attacks launched from northern Iraq.

It was not until the PUK leader, Talabani, agreed to accept the help of the Iranian-controlled reinforcement which would be used in joint operations with his *peshmergas* in 1995, that the competition between Turkey and Iran within the 'safe haven' was highlighted. Talabani appears to have requested help from the Badr brigade[9], as the Iranian force is called, because he feared the closer relations between the KDP and Turkey in 1994 --a development equally feared by Tehran. "PUK and Iranian fears [grew] after the PKK attacked KDP forces [in the summer of 1995 (August 25)], and the KDP was [forced] to coordinate many of its military operations against the PKK with Turkey " (Olson, 1996: 95). With the Badr brigade, Talabani

hoped to better secure the PUK's position in northern Iraq so that he could repel the KDP and perhaps manage to reduce the territory held by the KDP.

Another reason for Talabani's decision to request Iranian help is to foster closer economic relations and more trade between the PUK-controlled region and Iran. "Since fighting between the KDP and PUK broke out over disagreement on how to allocate [funds] received from the truck traffic entering the KDP-controlled territory in northern Iraq from Turkey at the Habur crossing ", Talabani wanted to increase his revenue through trade with Iran (Olson, 1996: 95). Clearly the KDP-controlled region is being brought under Turkish economic and political influence and the PUK-controlled region is becoming tied economically and politically more closely with Iran as time passes (Olson, 1996: 96).

On the whole, since the Gulf war Turkish-Iranian relations have improved and that the geopolitical necessity of the two capitals to cooperate against the growth and spread of Kurdish nationalism remains an essential factor in their relationship.

### 1.2.3 Relations with Iraq

"Of Turkey's three Middle Eastern neighbours it is Iraq, with which Ankara has [had] the best potential for balanced relations" (Robins, 1991: 58). One of the reasons for this potential is that as Iraq is virtually landlocked, it relies on second countries for the security of its communications and supply lines. For Iraq, Turkey is the most direct land bridge to Europe. "In return, the potential economic benefits to Turkey of a highly developed trading relationship are extensive, while Iraq has been an important transit route for Turkish exports to the Gulf" (Robins, 1991: 58). Second, there are fewer obstacles and more convergences of interest between Ankara and Baghdad as Turkey does not hold territory which Iraq regards as its own. Whilst Iraq may still be anxious about the continuing Turkish attachment to the Mosul *villayet*, this has not bred feelings of dispossession and dishonour as in the Syrian case about Hatay. Unlike Tehran, Baghdad is not ideologically in conflict with the Kemalist philosophies of the Turkish regime. "Iraq may have been uncomfortable with Turkey's membership of NATO, but it approves of the secularism of the Kemalist

state" (Robins, 1991: 59).

The main common interest which Ankara and Baghdad share, in addition to trade, is their respective Kurdish problems. Of the four states with substantial Kurdish populations within their territory, Turkey and Iraq have suffered the most from Kurdish rebellions. Thus, they feel most threatened by the spread of the Kurdish nationalist movement. "Indeed, of the four, Iraq and Turkey have the largest Kurdish populations, both absolutely and as a proportion of their total population" (Robins, 1991: 59). Clearly, this makes Turkey and Iraq more inclined to help one another and less likely to use the Kurds as an instrument for pressure on each other. "Turkey historically gains when Baghdad is able to control its own Kurds; any development that ends up giving the Kurds greater freedom of action only frees them to broaden their... quest for autonomy" (Fuller, 1992: 62).

During the Iran-Iraq war, "neutrality not only kept Turkey out of the conflict, but served [its] economic interests well" (Fuller, 1992: 59). Iraq needed to export its oil to fund Baghdad's military campaign against Tehran. "Direct trade between Turkey and Iraq [increased], with Turkey importing a substantial proportion of its oil requirement from Iraq and making good much of that figure with merchandise exports" (Robins, 1991: 60). By the end of the war, Iraq had become Turkey's largest trading partner in the Arab world -- in 1990 Baghdad owed Ankara around $2 billion.

Just as economic links grew between the two countries, political links deepened through common concern over the Kurdish problem. For much of the war, Iraq had to abandon large areas of the state in the north to Kurdish opposition, whilst confining itself to the control of more strategically important areas in this region. As this left much of the Kurdish area of northern Iraq as a potential refuge for the PKK, Iraq agreed to a "hot pursuit" accord with Turkey in 1984. "With Iraq's agreement, Turkish forces made several raids across the border in 1986 and 1987, into the camps of [PKK] guerrilla insurgents operating against Turkey --thereby establishing a new pattern of involvement in northern Iraqi Kurdish affairs that has since continued and increased" (Fuller, 1992: 60). However, Turkish-Iraqi relations reached an all time low in the aftermath of the Gulf war.

Turkey's relations with Baghdad began to improve in 1993 from their icy state at the end of the Gulf war, a trend that gathered momentum throughout 1994 and early 1995. In fact, this rapprochement began in April 1993 when Ankara established diplomatic relations with Iraq at the level chargé d'affaires with ambassadorial rank[10]. "Economic, business and even military delegations, both official and unofficial, came and went continuously between the two capitals in 1993, 1994 and 1995"[11](Olson, 1996: 102).

In early 1994 both capitals were pressing the United Nations and other governments, including the United States, to allow the reopening of the two oil pipelines running from Iraq through Turkey. Prime Minister Tansu Çiller had pushed hard in her talks with US officials during a visit to Washington in October 1993 to allow the pipelines to be opened under some formula permitted by the UN sanctions[12]. As Olson (1996: 102-103) states, "Iraq apparently hoped that negotiations to open the oil pipelines would also open the way to better relations between the two countries on a host of other issues, in spite of profound Iraqi resentment of Turkey's influence in northern Iraq and its deep suspicions of [Ankara's] intentions". The most pressing problem between the two countries was and still is , of course, the Kurdish question. The Iraqis had begun to be concerned over Turkish activities in northern Iraq in 1991 when Ozal had first met with the KDP leader. By 1994, Baghdad was alarmed at developments in northern Iraq and the KDP alignment with Turkey.

By the summer of 1994, meetings and consultations between Baghdad and Ankara were becoming daily events and it was at this time that the Habu/Khabur crossing was officially opened on August 28. Although the trucks travelling from Turkey to Iraq "were declared to be carrying only [much needed] food and medicine, as allowed by UN sanctions, it was widely reported that they were transporting other goods and materials as well" (Olson, 1996: 103). In the Turkish press it was reported that the trucks were returning from Iraq carrying two to three tons of oil per truck. During the end of August 1994 further high-level meetings between Turkish officials,

including prominent members of Turkey's business community, and the Iraqis took place. This suggested the Turkish government's conviction that Saddam Hussein was going to remain in power for the foreseeable future, contrary to the US position that he would not be able to do so[13].

The Turkish delegation came to significant understandings with Iraq, and the two governments signed a protocol. The protocol stipulated that Turkish businessmen would be given every opportunity to do business in Iraq, and that Iraq wished to buy a variety of goods and materials from Turkey (Hürriyet, August 30, 1994). However, because of Iraq's lack of hard currency and funds, the bulk of the trade would be bartered. "It seemed clear that Iraqi oil would be bartered for Turkish goods" (Olson, 1996: 103).

On September 11, as another gesture of goodwill to Baghdad, the Turkish foreign minister announced that all persons entering Iraq from Turkish territory, with the exception of UN personnel involved in the distribution of aid in northern Iraq, diplomats, foreign journalists in Turkey, Turkish and Iraqi journalists, and citizens of the two countries, would require a visa from the Iraqi authorities (Hürriyet, September 15, 1994). By this action Ankara hoped to signal to Baghdad that it recognized Iraq's continued sovereignty and territorial integrity. Interestingly, in those cases in which Iraq could not issue an entry visa, right of passage was to be determined by the Turkish authorities at the border --this was obviously a tactic on the part of Ankara to enhance its influence in northern Iraq (Hürriyet, September, 15, 1994). As indicated, Turkey has been against the creation of the 'safe haven' in northern Iraq because of the serious repercussions it could have for its own Kurdish problem.

Turkey's goodwill measures toward Iraq were met with approval in the Turkish media. Editorials of the time proclaimed that Ankara's actions were signalling: (1) that northern Iraq belongs to Baghdad, so the Kurds should abandon their attempts to establish an independent Kurdish state in the area; and, (2) to Western countries to abandon their desire to establish an independent Kurdish state

in northern Iraq, and furthermore, that all efforts to aid the PKK should cease (Olson, 1996: 104). Ankara has always suspected the West of desiring to create a Kurdish state out of northern Iraq and, as indicated, feels extremely threatened by such a development.

Not wanting to incur the displeasure of its Western allies, particularly of the United States, Turkey stressed that its negotiations with Iraq were "conducted in close consultation with [its] Western allies...[and that Ankara] was acting as a catalyst ...[whilst] in a unique position to play such a regional role" (Christian Science Monitor, September 8, 1994). This suggests that Europe and the United States were informed of the content of the negotiations, if not privy to every detail.

In late 1994 and early 1995 Turkey and Iraq continued to improve their relations. The two countries were continuing their negotiations regarding the opening of the oil pipelines. During this period high-ranking Iraqi officials, like the foreign minister Muhammad Sa'id al-Sahhaf visited Turkey. On al-Sahhaf's visit of February 9, the first by an Iraqi foreign minister since the Gulf war, one of the issues discussed were "the national security positions that the two governments would take against the fighting between the KDP and PUK forces in northern Iraq" (Olson, 1996: 105). Heavy fighting between the two groups had broken out in December 1994 and continued throughout 1996.

By March 1995, the KDP was in possession of much of the territory north of the 36th parallel and the PUK was virtually excluded from this territory. The preoccupation of the two groups with their internecine fighting had allowed the PKK to further consolidate its presence in northern Iraq, from which it launched renewed attacks into Turkey. This situation concerned Turkey and it took the opportunity to move militarily into the region from December 1994 throughout 1995. As Olson (1996: 107) points out, "ironically, the very areas proclaimed as safe havens for the Kurds in 1991...[fell] almost completely under the control of the KDP and thus, indirectly under the influence of Turkey". Iraq was concerned by Turkey's growing influence in northern Iraq and its relationship with the leaders of the Kurdish Regional Government (KRG). Also discussed, most certainly, was the increasingly

closer relationship between Iran and the PUK.

It was in the context of the Kurdish fighting that in March 1995 Turkey sent 35,000 troops along a 150-mile front, 25 to 35 miles into northern Iraq. Not only did this represent the largest operation by Turkey since 1992, but it only had the support of the KDP. By the end of 1995, hundreds of Turkish military and personnel remained in northern Iraq, after the March operation. The KDP agreed to their stationing and have remained there ever since. "The improvement of relations with Turkey, albeit meager, on the part of [the Iraqi] regime...indicated that while Baghdad [remains] resentful of Turkey's relationship with the [KDP]..., and its influence in northern Iraq, [Iraq] does not think that Turkey wants to remain the dominant political influence there" indefinitely (Olson, 1996: 107-108). This implies that Baghdad is sensitive to the fact that Ankara's position in northern Iraq is dictated by its need to control developments in the Kurdish national movement in Turkey's borders (Olson, 1996: 108). However, "Turkey's increasingly enhanced role as a arbiter of the disposition of power in northern Iraq [still] posed a challenge to any hope that Baghdad may still entertain of regaining influence in the region" (Olson, 1996: 109).

By August 1995 Baghdad began to show dissatisfaction with what it viewed as Ankara's increasing presence and role in northern Iraq. On August 19, Baghdad announced that it would be closing its consulate in Istanbul and requested that Turkey close its consulate in Mosul[14]. In addition, Iraq planned to reduce its embassy staff in Ankara and requested that Turkey do likewise at its embassy in Baghdad. While the Iraqi regime stipulated that the closures and cutbacks were due to the lack of funds (Hürriyet, August 20, 1995), "it seemed clear that Ankara's lack of response to a series of diplomatic initiatives by Baghdad, including [that] to lift the UN-imposed economic sanctions and open the oil pipeline, was the real reason" (Olson, 1996: 109).

Baghdad was upset by the fact that it had not been invited to the Drogheda (Ireland) conference held in August under the auspices of the United States to settle differences between the two warring Kurdish factions (KDP and PUK). Iraq was

angered that Turkey was invited to participate. By late 1995 other factors were mitigating the need on the part of Turkey for improving relations with Iraq. In October, the Azerbaijani International Oil Consortium (AIOC) agreed to transport a portion of its oil from Caspian fields through Georgia to Turkey -- with strong support from the United States one of the routes for the oil was secured for Turkey. Obviously, "the possibility of obtaining long term oil from the Caspian fields [has] lessened Ankara's need to improve relations with Baghdad in order to secure oil for the country" (Olson, 1996: 109). It also reduces Turkey's need to work on getting the oil pipelines from Iraq to Turkey opened. At present, the most important factor impelling Turkey to better relations with Baghdad remained the need to control the Kurdish national movement.

From the previous discussion, we find that Turkey's regional policies since the Gulf war involved a tepid rapprochement with Iran, Iraq and Syria which was largely driven by Ankara's need to constrain the Kurdish nationalist movement in both its intrastate and interstate dimensions. The increased activities of the PKK after the Gulf war and the enormous expense of combating the Kurdish insurgents in the country, compelled Turkey to seek some accommodation with its southern neighbours.

### 2. Water and Regional Relations

As Bulloch (1993: 5) points out, "from Turkey to the Gulf, through the heart of the turbulent Middle East, water is a vital factor in the politics of the region as well as the lives of the people". "Turkey finds itself in a strategically strong position as the only country in the Middle East which enjoys abundant ground water resources" (Robins, 1991: 87). Not only do the plentiful water supplies of the Euphrates and Tigris rivers enable Turkey to exert an influence on her Arab neighbours; but they are also a factor in the war that has been going on in southeastern Turkey (Bulloch, 1993 and Robins, 1991).

The importance of the water issue to not only the Gulf region, but also the West, is shown by the fact that "a Central Intelligence Agency risk assessment paper

for the United States government has estimated that in at least 10 places in the world war could erupt over dwindling shared water resources" (Bulloch, 1993:6). It should come as no surprise, that the majority of these crisis spots are in the Middle East. However, in 1992, the Pentagon undertook a drastic review of possible future conflicts that might call for American intervention and one of the first contingencies was a war between Syria and Turkey! (Bulloch, 1993: 6). The reason for American concern is based on US dependence on Middle East oil.

Whilst the message coming out of the Middle East is that if conflicts are to be avoided there will have to be cooperation, as this cooperation implies sharing , this means that some countries will at times be worse off than they are now. "In most areas of the world, upstream countries can use water to control events in neighbouring states, by either diverting or threatening to do so, as Turkey has done by implication" (Bulloch, 1993: 26). With the Tigris-Euphrates basin almost a big as that of the Nile, this gives Ankara a decisive voice in the affairs of Syria and Iraq, and enables it to play a role in the politics of the Arabian peninsula. As "approximately 90 per cent of the water from the 2,800 kilometre-long Euphrates is drained from Turkish territory", Turkey has a strong bargaining chip as the river is the main source of water for Syria and further down, for Iraq (Robins, 1991: 88).

The "uncharacteristic fortitude in Turkey's dealings with its Middle Eastern neighbours [can be] chiefly [attributed] to the importance of the [Southeastern Anatolia Project (GAP)] domestically" (Robins, 1991: 91). The dam projects are central to Turkey's initiative to improve the national economy, and in particular to boost economic activity in the rural south and east; and thereby alleviate the Kurdish problem. Also, the relentless publicity "means that increasingly the reputation of not only the Turkish government but even the majority of the mainstream political elite in Turkey is bound up with the completion and success of the programme "(Robins, 1991: 91). Syrian and Iraqi concerns over the water issue are understandable in light of their most pessimistic forecast that "the GAP could cost Syria 40 per cent and Iraq 90 per cent of the Euphrates flow"[15](Bulloch, 1993: 59).

Turkey's policies regarding the water issue appear to be guided by two considerations: (1) Although Turkey has abundant water and a large population, it lacks what the Arab countries have plenty of: Oil. Turkey still needs to maintain good relations with Arab states and Iran, even though she proclaims herself European and not a Muslim country linked to its southern neighbours; and (2) Turkey has to take into account what her neighbours can do to affect the situation inside Turkey by giving or withholding support for the PKK --this issue is at the heart of Turkey's relations with Syria (Bulloch, 1993: 30; and Robins 1991).

Syria and Iraq remained as wary as ever of what Turkey was doing with its GAP project, and on January 13, 1990 their worst fears were realized. "The concerns and suspicions which had been brewing for ten years over the utilization of the Euphrates water came to a head in January 1990, when the Turkish authorities began to fill the Atatürk Dam reservoir" (Robins, 1991: 90).

The filling of the dam could have been done in two ways: (1) "the diversion channel could have been left partially open, so that water would continue to flow on down to the Syrian border at Karkamis", or (2) "a quicker way was to shut off the supply of water to Syria altogether; and that was the way the Turks chose, despite an informal agreement [in 1987] that Turkey would allow an average flow of 500 cubic metres per second into Syria " (Bulloch, 1993: 65-66).

Although Turkey tried to allay Syrian and Iraqi fears, the dramatic drop in the flow of the Euphrates river caused a great outcry in the entire Arab world and "by the time the normal flow was restored the water issue was cited as a possible future cause for war "(Robins, 1991: 90). In her efforts to allay her neighbours fears, Turkey chose the winter for the timing of the operation, "when rainfall levels in the western Middle East are at their height" and "compensated its two downstream neighbours by allowing a larger than usual flow from the Euphrates into Syria from November 13, 1989 to January 13, 1990" (Robins, 1991: 91-92).

Syria and Iraq protested about the harm being done to their economies. "Syria, always at odds with Iraq, wants the maximum flow of water from the Euphrates to lessen its dependence on the River Jordan and thus, on Israel's good

will" --although downstream, the Israelis are a dominant power through their military prowess (Bulloch, 1993: 30). At the end of the Euphrates, Iraq needs water for its programme of industrialization, including the production of armaments and for its population. "To the Iraqis and the Syrians it was a message and a warning: Turkey, they believed, was flexing its muscles, showing that it had its hand on the tap and could starve them of water whenever it chose to do so"[16](Bulloch, 1993: 66).

Syrian and Iraqi concerns fell into three categories. First, the damage the shut off itself was supposed to have inflicted. The second, and more serious concern, was the prospect of future problems due to further shut offs and ultimately to changes in the volume and quality of the water flow. At present, the Euphrates carries about 7,000 billion gallons of water across the border into Syria each year (Robins, 1991: 92-93). "The Southeast Anatolia Project is expected to divert as much as half of that into Turkish dams and irrigation canals" (Bulloch, 1993: 59). Although much of the water will get back into the Euphrates, it will do so only after having irrigated Turkey's fields and will be saltier when it reaches Syrian and Iraqi farms downstream (Bulloch, 1993; and Robins, 1991).

Third and most profound, "was the effect which control over water was likely to have over the power relationship within and among the three states" (Robins, 1991: 93). "The effect was dramatic: Syria and Iraq, for years sworn enemies, suddenly united in denunciation of Ankara, and even went so far as to hold secret security talks to discuss what to do in case of future Turkish pressure" (Bulloch, 1993: 66). The Syrian and Iraqi cooperation "was a salutary surprise to the Turks, who had not expected that the danger of the loss of their water lifeline would be enough to make the rival regimes of Baghdad and Damascus sink their differences and unite to face a common enemy"[17] (Bulloch, 1993: 66).

An unplanned result was to precipitate the negotiations that both sides had come to realize to be necessary --talks which would have as their bottom line the exchange of water for peace. Though no one was crass enough to spell it out in such stark detail, according to the Turks it was the Syrians who had first linked security

in 1987. Once again Turkey attempted to persuade Syria to cease her support of the PKK, but the Turks failed. Like the security protocol of 1987, whose provisions were general, no mention of the PKK was made.

The next opportunity for Turkey to discuss water and, more importantly, the PKK with Syria came in the summer of 1992 with the formal opening of the Atatürk Dam near Bozova in the southeastern region. On July 25, 1992 , President Ozal and Prime Minister Demirel for once sat united in support of the project. At the same time, the PKK had stepped up its activities near Cizre, not far from where the Turkish, Syrian and Iraqi borders all meet, and a battle ensued that very same day in July, with several soldiers left dead.

"A third element provided a direct link between the celebrations at Bozova and the regular routine of the... war that continued every day in the ...southeast" (Bulloch, 1993: 59). As officials of the Turkish Foreign Ministry prepared briefs for their minister, in Damascus, Syrian advisers studied the latest reports from Turkey and drew up their own notes for the series of meetings planned for the following week.

Since the start of the war in Turkey's southeast, the PKK has been constantly armed and supported by Syria and occasionally helped by Iran and Iraq. It has been, since 1978, President Assad's direct response to Turkey's decision to harness the abundant waters of the Tigris and Euphrates in the huge GAP project. Assad recognized the potential danger of the GAP project as it was bound to have effects far beyond Turkish borders --Syria's water supply would diminish considerably. Assad realized that in the PKK he had a lever that could be used to force Turkey to take account of Syrian demands. In Damascus "it had been decided at the highest level...that the time had come for Syria to give full backing to the just aspirations of the Kurdish people "(Bulloch, 1993: 62).

Although Ocalan knew that he and his men were to be used by Syria in a game between two regional powers, he understood very well Syrian national interests. Ocalan jumped at the chance to "transform his raggle-taggle army into a fighting force that could achieve a momentum of its own, and in time be able to operate

independently of Syria" (Bulloch, 1993: 63).

The failure of the 1987 security protocol to secure guarantees from the Syrians that no further support would be given to the PKK, prompted Turkish diplomats to hold talks with President Assad, in April 1992. Though Assad stated that there would be cooperation to solve the PKK problem, the Syrians saw the meeting as just another in a series of low-level talks. The Turks had a different view. Turkey believed that the protocol of 1992 represented a formal agreement between the two countries, rather than merely a record of agreed minutes. "The Turkish foreign ministry claims that whether in a formal protocol or in agreed minutes, the fact is that in April 1992 Syria had agreed that the PKK was a terrorist organization, and that it would cooperate by arresting its members, preventing cross-border infiltration and closing any training camps" (Bulloch, 1993: 70). Of course, Syria did not go as far as that, and never intended to do so, but merely asked Ocalan and the PKK to be a little less visible, and made sure that all camps and bases were moved to the Bekaa valley.

Turkey reaffirmed that it would continue to pump 500 cubic metres of water to Syria, as agreed in 1987, but emphasized that the Tigris and Euphrates came under Turkish sovereignty as long as they were within Turkish territory. The Turks decided to try again and another visit, one week after the official opening of the Atatürk Dam, was arranged. The Turkish foreign minister emphasized that the question of the PKK was one of not merely border cooperation, but international relations as well. And though Turkey was careful not to make any threats, the visit had been carefully timed to coincide just one week after the ceremony to start the generators on the dam --the Turks hoped to place pressure on Syria by reminding her that they controlled her water lifeline. The Syrians blamed Lebanon for allowing the camps to remain in the Bekaa valley, even though it was Syria who controlled the area. For Syria it was business as usual and her support of the PKK has continued ever since.

In 1992, the Turkish foreign ministry made it quite clear that they recognized a link between Syria's support of the PKK and Turkey's decision to expand the GAP project in 1980: "It is true that Syria does have a habit of working through proxies. It was about 1980 that we first started talking very seriously about expanding the GAP

project, and it was about that time that Ocalan began getting help from Damascus"(Bulloch, 1993: 71).

"Although [Turkey] has formally stated that the rivers will not be used as a political weapon , in reality it is difficult to imagine that the water will not be used , whether explicitly or implicitly, as a lever of its foreign policy", in particular during her efforts to contain the Kurdish issue (Robins, 1991: 99; and Bulloch, 1993). Water is becoming an essential component of political power in the Middle East (Bulloch, 1993 and Robins, 1991). "In the future it is bound to become the object of increasing competition, and hence increasing, friction between states" (Robins, 1991: 99).

### 3. The Kurdish Issue and Turkey's Relations with the West

"The dominant strain in Turkish foreign policy, which has advocated closer integration with the West, has suffered the most from the rise of Kurdish nationalism in Turkey" (Barkey, 1996: 70). For as long as the Kurdish issue was under wraps, the dominant pro-Western element's beliefs in the principles of secularism and citizenship appeared to blend well with those of the West, despite the fact that at times the Turks have kept the West at arm's length and have generally been uneasy about the extent of their relationship with the United States. Any "criticism of Turkey has arisen only [in light of] embarrassing proof of Turkey's use of NATO weapons against civilian Kurds" (Laizer, 1996: 196).

As far as Turkish foreign policy is concerned, Ankara has extended its domestic practice of associating anything Kurdish with the PKK to this domain as well. "Despite the PKK's offers to find a solution through peaceful political processes the Turkish government has rejected every initiative, vowing to finish off the terrorists " (Laizer, 1996: 196). "While it has succeeded in equating the PKK with terrorism and other ills in the minds of US citizens and most Europeans, it has also steadfastly refused to acknowledge the existence of moderate Kurdish groups"(Barkey, 1996: 71). Ankara is likely to face difficulty in the future because of the proliferation of such groups, which have emerged as a result of two developments. "First, the PKK will spawn groups and associations such as the present Kurdistan parliament in exile

(KPE) in order to put the Turkish government on the defensive" (Barkey, 1996: 71). Second, the PKK is also likely to engage in many more initiatives, such as the cease-fire announced on the eve of the December 25, 1995 national elections, designed to slowly build up momentum in its favour.

Such increasing diplomatic consciousness among the Kurds is likely to result in both the PKK feeling more politically confident and, therefore, more inclined to experiment with political options as well as non-PKK groups emerging to fill the gap between the PKK and the political centre. "One can argue, that the moderation of the PKK may result from the successful Turkish campaign to demonize it" (Barkey, 1996: 71). Such developments will likely bring more attention and sympathy for the plight of the Kurds in Turkey and hence more criticism of Ankara's policies.

### 3.1 Turkey's Relations with the United States

The most important factor in Turkey's geopolitical standing in the Gulf region are its relations with the United States, the only remaining superpower. Despite the demise of the Soviet Union, US policy toward Turkey has remained very supportive. The military success of the Allied war effort against Iraq in 1991, enhanced Ozal's stature more in the Western capitals than at home. "In particular, Turkish-US relations reached a new level of understanding ; both countries entered the 1990s with a strengthened sense of bilateral cooperation" (Sayari, 1992: 18-19).

"In its appreciation of Turkey's solid support during the Gulf crisis, Washington provided Ankara with increased security assistance and new trade benefits"[18](Sayari, 1992: 19). "The United States provided significant military supplies to Turkey for free as it ran down its European stocks and, perhaps most importantly, it successfully lobbied the European Union members to improve the conditions for Turkey's accession to a customs union"(Barkey, 1996: 71-72).

In the aftermath of the war, the US intervened with third parties to help Turkey recover some of the $5 to $7 billion it had lost as a result of the Gulf crisis (Barkey, 1996 and Sayari, 1992). "Furthermore, the United States played a leading role in the Gulf Crisis Coordinating Group's pledge to provide Turkey with $4 billion

in aid as well as the commitment of the allies in the Gulf to contribute $2.5 billion to the Turkish Defense Fund" (Sayari, 1992: 19).

As Barkey (1996: 72) points out, the Kurdish question may have helped Turkish-US relations in the short-run. "On the PKK, US policy has mimicked Turkey's". By choosing to brand the PKK a terrorist organization at every possible occasion, the United States has shown its unwavering support for Turkey's basic position on the Kurdish issue. However, despite the pro-Turkish positions of recent US administrations, the Kurdish question has intruded on the US-Turkish dialogue in two areas: (1) "with respect to policy toward Iraq and northern Iraq", in the aftermath of the Gulf war, and (2) "concerning human rights violations" (Barkey, 1996: 72).

It is Turkish uneasiness with the de facto autonomous Kurdish entity in northern Iraq which is the source of their resentment toward Operation Provide Comfort (OPC) (Barkey, 1996 and Sayari, 1992). There are two reasons for the Turkish concern over the creation of the OPC: (1) the failure of the Allied coalition to remove Saddam Hussein from power and dismantle his regime was especially worrisome to Ankara; and (2) the Gulf war had vastly complicated Turkey's Kurdish problem (Barkey, 1996 and Sayari, 1992). The Turkish government had only supported the creation of the de facto Kurdish controlled zone after the massive influx of Iraqi Kurds, following the collapse of their revolt in northern Iraq. Turkey believed that allowing the Kurdish refugees into her borders would help to make her own Kurdish problem even worse.

In fact, "the Gulf war and the Kurdish rebellion in Iraq contributed to the intensification of ethnic consciousness among Turkey's Kurdish population" (Sayari, 1992: 19). There were also signs that Saddam Hussein had begun to arm and supply the PKK in retaliation for Turkey's close cooperation with the West during the crisis (Sayari, 1992: 19 ). However, "the [recent] upsurge in fighting [between] the two Kurdish factions (KDP and PUK) in northern Iraq has somewhat reduced Turkish anxieties" as it shows the inability of the Kurds to run their own affairs[19] (Barkey, 1996: 72). However, a complete breakdown of order in northern Iraq potentially

helps the PKK, which can then operate with a greater degree of freedom.

These fears about the autonomous region meant that, until recently, Ankara openly advocated a return to the *status quo ante* that existed before the Gulf war and Turkey has made her displeasure quite clear if any arrangement were made to secure a federal or even autonomous region for the Kurds in a post-Saddam Iraq[20]. While Turkey has avoided an open disagreement with US positions on Iraq, it has made it clear that she would not oppose the return of Saddam Hussein to northern Iraq.

"Unlike some of the Europeans, the United States has been more than tolerant of Turkish incursions into northern Iraq in pursuit of the PKK" (Barkey, 1996: 73), including the large one of March 1995, noted for its duration and the extent of the operation --some 35,000 Turkish troops. While Ankara appreciated Washington's support, the basic interests of the US and Turkey in Iraq cannot be reconciled: for the US, Hussein remains the primary threat to the region and its interests, whereas from Turkey's perspective the existence of the Kurdish entity poses a long-term threat that is too great to ignore (Olson, 1996) --thus, "Turkey [has] played a leading role in the affairs of northern Iraq [since] March 1991" (Laizer, 1996: 204).

However, where human rights are concerned, the US has become alarmed at the repression applied to the Kurds in Turkey. The Kurdish question was first mentioned in a State Department report in 1988 (Barkey, 1996: 73). "Since then, [all future] reports have chronicled [Turkish] state actions in greater detail " and, all the while criticizing the PKK for its share of atrocities (Barkey, 1996: 73). "Nonetheless, the State Department reports have become [a powerful] tool for those in Congress anxious to reduce the level of aid to Turkey ...or those who dislike being associated with levels of repression unbecoming a US ally and NATO member" (Barkey, 1996: 74). At the same time, nongovernmental groups concentrating on human rights have accelerated their criticism of Turkish policies. Such groups have succeeded in blocking the sale of cluster bombs to Turkey and this does not bode well for future Turkish-US relations[21] (HRW Arms Project, 1995).

On the whole, ever mindful, that the Kurdish issue evokes the worst fears of

the Turkish leadership and public, the present US administration has chosen a policy intended to bolster Turkey's confidence in the post-Cold war environment. Present US policy is being pursued in the hope that a Turkey which is more firmly footed in both NATO and the European Union will be able to take steps to accommodate some of the Kurdish demands. "Even with its diminishing strategic importance, Turkey remains a valued ally, and perhaps more importantly, at a time when the Arab-Israeli conflict is finally on the verge of being resolved, the United States does not want the emergence of another long-standing ethnic conflict that could encompass other regional actors" (Barkey, 1996: 74).

"Despite the United State's efforts on Turkey's behalf, Turkish uneasiness remains strong: suspicions that the US may be harbouring a secret agenda are strengthened by the conflicting messages emanating from Washington, particularly during periods of intense legislative-executive squabbling " (Barkey, 1996: 74). The Turks "[are] worried about the rise of America's anti-aid lobby, which sees the end of the Cold war as a reason for cutting aid to Turkey " and show concern "about what America is doing in northern Iraq" (Dowden, 1996: 16).

### 3.2 Turkey's relations with the European Union

With trade blocs accounting for an increasing share of world trade, Turkey has found it necessary to firmly locate herself in the European Union. This can be explained by the fact that Turkey's most important economic relations are with member states of the EU. Through Ozal's leadership and by abandoning her inward-orientated economic policies of the early 1980s, Turkey has succeeded in diversifying her exports and become an important market for foreign investment, particularly from EU member states. "Turkey has been moving towards free trade with the EU for the past 22 years" and "even before it joined the customs union, it was sending more than half of its exports to Western Europe" (Dowden, 1996: 17).

"This is the reason the achievement of the customs union agreement with Europe has been such a priority for recent Turkish governments --even though [Turkey] would have preferred to become [a] full member of the European Union "

(Barkley, 1996: 75). However, the main reasons why Turkey is unlikely to get closer to Europe in the near future lie in the country itself. "The first is the state of its economy: as things stand, it lags a long way behind even the poorest EU members. The second, and more important, reason is its lack of democratic values and its violation of human rights"(Dowden, 1996: 17).

According to Robins (1996), the first cracks in the bilateral relations between Turkey and the EU began with the popularizing of the Kurdish issue after the use of chemical weapons by the Iraqi military against the Kurdish town of Halabja in 1988. The subsequent world-wide media coverage of the Iraqi action elicited great sympathy for the Kurds. "This image of the defenseless Kurd at the mercy of repressive states of the region, received a powerful boost in the aftermath of the international coalition's victory against Iraq in February 1991" (Robins, 1996: 115). "The Gulf war in 1991 was the ultimate catalyst, highlighting more than ever the existence and predicament of the Kurds as a whole " (Fuller, 1992: 41). It is US support for the Kurds of Iraq and the 'safe haven' provided for them which has helped reinforce this image of the Kurds in Western minds (Laizer, 1996: 204). Turkish policy toward the Kurds who fled Iraq after their failed rebellion reinforced a view of the Turks as heartless and brutal, which was underpinned by historical images of Ottoman repression.

"This tendency to equate these images of callous violence by the Turks with images of the Kurds as victims was further reinforced by two trends: the growing Kurdish insurgency in southeastern Turkey against the Turkish state and the growing presence of an effective Kurdish lobby in Western Europe" (Robins, 1996: 116). As discussed in Chapter 2, the rise of the PKK was facilitated and accelerated by the Turkish state in the 1980s, which, in the wake of the generals' hard-line policy against the Kurds, helped to eradicate the centre ground in Kurdish politics. The result has been political polarization.

"The scale of the insurgency and the widespread nature of the methods used to try to suppress it have [helped result] in a growing fusion of human rights questions with the Kurdish issue"(Robins, 1996: 116). In fact, during the 1990s it has become

increasingly difficult to separate the Kurdish issue from the human rights issue, because they have been much publicized by human rights activists in Western Europe and around the world --for example, Amnesty International has published numerous reports on the condition of the Kurds in Turkey throughout this period[22].

"The second factor which has helped to bolster the image of Turks as oppressors and the Kurds as victims is the growing expatriate Kurdish population in Western Europe and its increasingly sophisticated political organizations, especially with regard to the use of information" (Robins, 1996: 117). As indicated in Chapter 2, again the Turkish state has to take much of the blame. It was the state's uncompromising stance on its Kurdish policies and brutal methods that forced many Turkish Kurds to flee. As a consequence, there is now a substantial Kurdish presence in the countries of Western Europe[23]. "Of all [those in Europe], 85 [to] 90 per cent come from Kurdistan in Turkey"(Laizer, 1996: 193). This is clearly indicated by the fact that in 1993, the PKK was reported as having 4,800 activists in Germany alone (Independent, December 1, 1993). "Kurds from the southeast constitute a significant share of [the] Turkish labourers in Germany" (Fuller, 1992: 23). By 1996, German sources estimated that the figure had risen to 6,900 PKK members in Germany (Gürbey, 1996). "At mass rallies, the PKK succeeds in mobilizing a much higher number of sympathizers than is reported by official sources" (Gürbey, 1996: 24).

"Of greater importance than actual numbers involved, is the effectiveness of the organization of the Turkish Kurds in Western Europe"(Robins, 1996: 117). While there exist many different bodies among Turkey's Kurdish émigrés, the best organized and most effective are those that are linked to the PKK (Gürbey, 1996). These organizations are associated with the PKK indirectly through affiliated groups, such as the PKK's predominantly political wing, the National Liberation Front of Kurdistan (ERNK). At the political level, the Kurdistan Parliament in Exile (KPE) which convened for the first time at The Hague in April 1995, includes many PKK representatives[24].

The PKK has pursued a policy of trying to open representative offices, run by

the ERNK, across the continent. The fact that there now exist ERNK offices in Athens, Copenhagen and Madrid in Western Europe and Kurdish solidarity and information centres in cities like London, illustrates the PKK's increased commitment to political propaganda in its struggle against the Turkish state. "A significant characteristic of the PKK is that, on the one hand, it leads the guerrilla war in the Kurdish regions of southeast Anatolia as a militant organization while, on the other hand, it has the political flexibility to adapt to international and regional conditions" (Gürbey, 1996: 24). The PKK performs widespread, intense activity abroad in public relations and created the ERNK in order to act as a partner in dialogue with both Turkey and the West.

In the realm of media, the PKK news agency, *Kurd Ha*, was a constant source of information on the Kurdish issue in Turkey, at a time when western journalists were regularly prevented from entering the southeast region. But the crowning jewel, in the PKK's publicizing of the Kurdish issue is *MED TV*[25], which was set up to broadcast from Brussels on April 20, 1995.

It is in light of the previous discussion, that "Ankara's relations with the states of Western Europe can best be divided into two realms --relations with the smaller states of Europe and relations with those larger states whose extensive foreign interests prompt them to play a more active role in foreign relations" (Robins, 1996: 118).

### 3.2.1 Relations with Smaller States

The impact of the Kurdish issue on relations between Turkey and the smaller members of the EU tends to manifest itself in two ways: (1) "it creates an indirect impact through the institutions of the European Union", and (2) "through the bilateral relations of the smaller states with Turkey" (Robins, 1996: 119).

"These smaller states are a constant and vociferous lobby within the EU for human rights and democracy to be placed high up on the agenda of the Community's foreign affairs" (Robins, 1996: 119). Given that high-level bilateral contact between

Turkey and these smaller states is relatively infrequent, human rights rank higher on the list of foreign policy concerns for these states. "By contrast, the larger states have a more wide-ranging set of interests in their foreign relations" (Robins, 1996: 118) -- their extensive trading links with Turkey and strategic questions are also of greater influence as most are members of NATO.

"The notion of Turkey as an important ally, fostered by decades of close contact through ...NATO, is embedded more deeply in the bureaucratic psyche [of states like Britain and France] than is the case with the smaller states" (Robins, 1996: 119). Furthermore, several of the larger states of the EU (most notably, Britain, France and Spain) have suffered from acts of terrorism in recent years. Like the United States, they are far more sympathetic towards Turkey's presentation of the PKK as an exclusively terrorist organization.

Ever mindful of its EU aspirations, Ankara does tend to be periodically attentive to smaller states. However, the aim of such Turkish attention is to ensure that relations run as smoothly as possible whenever they approach an important period in EU-Turkish relations, as in the case of the Customs Union passed in December 1995. As bilateral contacts between Ankara and these states tend to be fitful in nature, only during periods of sudden and intense strain do these bilateral ties gain prominence. Over the last six years the Kurdish issue has most frequently provoked such interludes.

Two recent examples which help to illustrate the point are: (1) Turkey's incursion into northern Iraq in March 1995, and (2) the inaugural meeting of the KPE at The Hague in April 1995. In the case of the Turkish military operation into northern Iraq in 1995, the smaller states of the EU were most critical. In fact, a number of these states were willing to impose sanctions on Turkey, as a symbol of their disapproval[26]. In the second example, "the fact that the Dutch authorities were unable or unwilling to stop the convening of the [KPE] assembly placed an immediate strain on bilateral ties with Ankara" (Robins, 1996: 120). But once the KPE assembly had finished its deliberations and the initial Turkish anger had subsided, the foreign

ministries of the two countries quietly went about trying to rehabilitate their bilateral relations.

At present, "the obvious stumbling block for Turkey's progress in Europe is the Greek veto" of the financial cooperation package from Europe (Dowden, 1996: 17). "When Greece decides to stop blocking it, this will give Turkey 375 [million] ECUs ($460 million) over five years, and a further 750 [million] ECUs from the European Investment Bank in loans"[27]. Turkey requires these funds because the abolition of tariffs on trade with Europe is likely to cost the country in excess of $2 billion in government revenue each year (Dowden, 1996: 17).

### 3.2.2 Relations with Larger States

The bilateral relations between three of the EU's four major players --Britain, France, and Italy-- have remained surprisingly unaffected by the Kurdish issue, in spite the increasing intensity of the issue within Turkey during the 1990s. "Of the three, relations between Italy and Turkey have been least subject to turbulence " (Robins, 1996: 121). This is due to Italy having sizeable commercial interests in Turkey, which date back to the late 1960s[28]. The nature of Italian-Turkish relations was made clear by the fact that the Italian President felt able to give explicit support to Turkey's fight against terrorism, though his visit coincided with the Turkish incursion into northern Iraq in March 1995. Unlike the leaders of smaller EU member states, the Italian President only appealed to Turkey for the respect of human rights. This is indicative of how little an impact the Kurdish issue has had on relations between the two countries.

"Relations between Turkey and both Britain and France have, by contrast, been subject to some strain in the recent past, although in neither case has this been the result of the Kurdish issue " (Robins, 1996: 121). The close relationship between Britain and Turkey had few blemishes before 1993. "This solid relationship was based on a common perception of security priorities, which laid a premium on the continued existence of a strong NATO and an Atlanticist orientation", as well as a shared scepticism of a more European approach to security matters (Robins, 1996:

121). Whilst this convergence of views had existed prior to the Gulf war, it was complemented by a growing commercial relationship --British exports to Turkey reached an all time high in 1993, at $2 billion. By 1994, there were more than 200 British firms operating in Turkey in joint ventures.

Political relations tended to reflect these close ties at the security and commercial levels. Significantly, it was to London that Süleyman Demirel paid his first visit to Europe on becoming prime minister in November 1992 (Times, November 23, 1992). On the several occasions that the British foreign secretary, Douglas Hurd, visited Turkey the human rights issue was raised but was not given a central prominence and was certainly not allowed to cloud relations. Hurd's public pronouncements on such matters during his visits to Turkey were of a low key, subtle nature, urging the Turks to introduce "quality democracy and human rights" (Times, January 21, 1994). As far as the Kurdish issue is concerned, it did not blight Anglo-Turkish relations until 1995. "Only since the spring of 1995 and the successful application in London of a broadcasting license for MED TV, which Ankara holds is nothing but a propaganda arm for the PKK, has the Kurdish issue emerged as a problematic issue in bilateral relations" (Robins, 1996: 122). The station "was officially opened in May 1995 under license of the British Independent Television Commission (ITC)" (Laizer, 1996: 205). MED TV is very proud of the fact that the ITC, "which requires [that] strict standards of impartiality be maintained" by every broadcasting station "and precludes any political body from controlling a station", gave it a clean bill of health (Ryan, 1997: 45).

Ankara's reaction should come as no surprise, as "the first ever broadcasts in Kurdish caused an uproar in Turkey as the Turkish government's ban on the use of Kurdish [appeared to be] torn apart overnight" (Laizer, 1996: 205). The Turkish government condemned Britain and made protests "at the highest levels" for having issued MED TV with its license to broadcast (Daily Telegraph, May 24, 1995). Although Turkey has attempted to place pressure on west European countries to close down MED TV --most notably, Turkey tried to have the Belgian government remove permission for the station to have its main production facility in Brussels-- the station

continues to broadcast. "At the same time, police and soldiers in Turkey [have] carried out raids on private homes and teahouses, seizing or destroying satellite dishes wherever possible throughout the Kurdish provinces in a desperate attempt to maintain censorship of all reporting of the Kurdish issue" (Laizer, 1996: 206).

In Franco-Turkish relations the Kurdish issue has been the second most important problem area since 1988, particularly in view of the pro-Kurdish activism displayed by President Mitterand's wife Danielle. Interestingly, "France began to make a serious effort to placate Ankara over the Kurdish issue toward the beginning of 1992, paradoxically at a time when Turkish loss of life and a hard-line state security policy were both on the increase" (Robins, 1996: 122). The arrest of two members of the PKK in April 1992, was heralded by the Turks as "a new approach" in the French government's stance toward Turkey. "This tougher approach toward the PKK was further stiffened with the crackdown on the organization and its affiliated bodies by the hard-line interior minister Charles Pasqua in November 1993"[29] (Robins, 1996:122). The French then proceeded to ban two Kurdish groups which they claimed were merely front organizations for the PKK. In 1993, "France followed Germany's lead and also banned the PKK" (Laizer, 1996:200).

As Robins points out, "it appears quite possible that the increasingly violent activities of militant Kurds in France the summer before, which had included the holding of six hostages at the Turkish Consulate in Marseilles, together with the seizure by the PKK of four French tourists in southeastern Turkey had helped to precipitate the backlash" (Robins, 1996: 122). Since then France has appeared to tread carefully around the Kurdish issue and Ankara's relations with France have been cordial ever since, particularly in light of the fact that the final negotiations for the Customs Union were concluded during the French presidency of the EU Council of Ministers.

Germany is the only member of Western Europe's four largest states that found it hard to maintain relations with Turkey on an even keel at times of heightened controversy surrounding the Kurdish issue. Relations between the Federal republic

and Turkey can be best described as consisting of frequent outbursts and recriminations. Although Germany has since the early 1990s officially labelled the PKK a terrorist organization, it has "frequently been subject of sniping from [the Turks] as to what it is prepared to do to give substance to this position" (Robins, 1996: 123).

One major stumbling block for bilateral relations has been the use of German arms by the Turkish military against Kurdish targets. "Since the 1960s, Germany has been the second largest military supplier of Turkey. Germany has delivered numerous defense items ranging from communications equipment to fighter aircraft" (HRW Arms Project, 1995: 34). In March 1992 Germany halted all arms sales to Turkey after it had asserted that armoured personnel carriers sold to Turkey had been used in the anti-insurgency operations in the southeast[30]. This affair provoked tit for tat retaliation with each country's representatives cancelling proposed visits to each other's nations. "The bad atmosphere which ensued was [only] relieved on that occasion by the resignation of the long-serving German foreign minister, Hans Dietrich Genscher, who, it was argued, had been the root cause of the difficulties in bilateral relations" (Robins, 1996: 123). The German arms embargo lasted just over a month.

Tensions flared up once more in October 1992, during the Turkish military's extended ground and air operations in northern Iraq. Reports that a PKK fighter had died as a result of being hitched to the back of a German-made armoured car appalled opposition politicians. The opposition party, the Social Democrats (SPD) subsequently placed the Bonn government under increasing pressure to suspend all arms sales to Turkey. They even went so far as to demand the severing of all relations with Turkish police and intelligence agencies[31]; as well as, the substitution of economic for bilateral military aid. "German military aid for the next three years was halved to $86 million, while the German chancellor, Helmut Kohl apparently found it prudent to delay a planned visit to Turkey" (Robins, 1996: 123).

Although German-Turkish relations appeared to warm up once again during

1993, the nervousness of the German government in the face of accusations of the improper use of German weaponry by the Turkish military resurfaced once more in the spring of 1994. On merely the suggestion that German tanks had been used against Kurdish insurgents in the southeast, Bonn once again halted all German arms shipments to Turkey. These charges, it was later admitted, were false, and the embargo was subsequently lifted. "What was particularly revealing was that Bonn so readily believed the initial accusation and that the overriding need was for the federal government to protect itself against domestic criticism rather than trying to evade Turkish anger"(Robins, 1996: 124).

The German government's opprobrium was once more provoked by the second extended intervention by the Turkish military in northern Iraq in March 1995. Both the German foreign minister and the British foreign secretary (Douglas Hurd), while not wanting to isolate Turkey, "warned the Turks that they could scupper the ratification of Turkey's customs union agreement with the EU" (Guardian, April 4, 1995). "Germany found itself compromised by the Turkish [operation] and was embarrassed into condemning it as reports began to be heard of civilian fatalities in the course of Turkish attacks on Iraqi Kurd villages " (Laizer, 1996: 197).

Bonn immediately restricted military hardware sales --in this case the withholding of grants promised to help in the purchase of two new frigates. After President Demirel's suggestion that the Turkish military might remain on Iraqi soil for up to one year, the German foreign minister threatened a total halt in military aid if Turkey did not withdraw quickly (Times, March 29, 1995). Whilst there were renewed calls from the SPD to cease military sales to Turkey, a shipment of arms, provided for in a 1990 agreement made under the Cascading Initiative, was suspended.

"The fact that the extended nature of the Turkish intervention in northern Iraq resulted in growing public protests by Germany's Kurdish population, notably a twenty-thousand-strong demonstration in Dusseldorf on April 1, brought home to the Bonn government the growing domestic cost that such behaviour by the Turkish state could bring about "(Robins, 1996: 124). "With the rise in intercommunal conflict,

the Kurdish question increasingly becomes more of a domestic problem for the German government, which is powerless to resolve it" (Barkey, 1996: 76). Therefore, in the long run, it is likely that the German government will seek to influence Ankara to adopt a more accommodationist stance at home. "In the short run, to counter the spread of intercommunal violence, Bonn even dispatched a high-ranking intelligence advisor to Chancellor Kohl to meet the PKK leader Ocalan in Syria" (Barkey, 1996: 76-77, and Olson, 1996: 91). However, even with the difficulties in German-Turkish relations, like the other big players of the EU, the Germans have joined Britain and France in helping Turkey during their presidencies of the Council of Ministers.

"The nature of successive presidencies toward Turkey has shown a remarkable consistency" (Robins, 1996: 125). There are two reasons for this: (1) the convergence of thinking among the big players on Turkey; and (2) the relatively pliant nature of the smaller states during their presidency terms. Whilst maintaining the focus on bilateral relations with Turkey during their own and smaller states' presidencies, the major players have also been instrumental in seeking to limit the damage caused by individual events on Turkey's relations with the EU. In doing so, the larger states have: (a) "sought to take a firm attitude toward Ankara" --pressure from opposition politicians (in the case of Germany) and special interest groups (in the case of Britain), together with pressure from the smaller states has obliged such a position[32]; and (b) "sought to ensure that any one issue does not come to dominate bilateral relations and that such issues as human rights and the Kurds be balanced against other interests" (Robins, 1996: 126).

### 3.2.3 Relations with the European Parliament (EP)

Even with all the support Turkey has received from the larger states of the EU and the United States, "it has been in the realization of the Customs Union that the Kurdish issue has made itself felt most acutely" (Barkey, 1996: 75). "The EP has long been interested in and critical of the human rights situation in Turkey, especially as it applies to the Kurdish issue" (Robins, 1996: 127).

As early as 1992, after the widespread clashes and loss of life during the Newroz festival in March, the EP was highly critical of Ankara in expressing its overwhelming condemnation at the excessive use of force by the Turkish military. Not only was its language stronger than that used by the larger states, but the EP proposed a number of measures designed to penalize Turkey for its actions[33]. But it stopped short of requesting an arms embargo and condemned the PKK's use of violence, in an effort to be balanced in its approach. However, this attempt at balance did not impress Ankara, which was particularly angered by the EP's references to Turkey's Kurds as a minority, implying that they should have the political rights of a minority. "The Turkish government simply dismissed the report on the grounds of bias, an important step in the development of [the] somewhat disdainful attitude the Turkish establishment has routinely displayed toward the EP" (Robins, 1996: 127).

A second example of the uneasy relationship that has developed between Turkey and the EP was the case of the Kurdish MPs, who had their parliamentary immunity lifted and were tried, found guilty and sentenced in Turkey during 1994. Members of the EP, sensitive to the treatment of fellow elected representatives, were livid to discover that some of the charges brought against the DEP MPs related to statements they had made during a visit to the EP, in September 1994 (BBC World Service, September 20, 1994). "Increasingly concerned at the prosecutions, the EP Political Affairs Committee decided not to convene a meeting of the joint EU-Turkish Parliamentary Committee while the case was still in progress" (Robins, 1996: 127). "Western governments voicing their concern to President Demirel were simply informed that the DEP deputies had links with the PKK" (Laizer, 1996: 140).

When the guilty verdict was returned and the sentencing took place, the EP passed a strongly worded resolution recommending that the work on the Customs Union should be suspended and a meeting of the Association Council, scheduled for December 19, should be postponed. However, both Turkey and the Council of Ministers ignored both the parliament's recommendations. As Robins (1996: 128) points out, this is indicative of "the tendency displayed by the insider institutions of the EU and the Turkish government to brush aside the pronouncements of the EP"

until the completion of the final negotiations of the Customs Union, in March 1995.

Even though the EP had, from the beginning of 1995, started to come under intense pressure from the EU Commission and member states to adopt the Customs Union, it managed to delay voting on the issue for over nine months. "Euro MPs were subject to an intense campaign, which carried both personal inducements and the threat of institutional penalties" (Robins, 1996: 128). Whilst the initial reason for the deferment was Turkey's incursion into northern Iraq during March and April 1995, the EP also "made it quite clear that it would not sanction Turkey's accession to the Customs Union until certain basic modifications were made to the laws governing the criminalization of speech and constitutional provisions that represented roadblocks in the furthering of democratization"[34] (Barkey, 1996: 75). In fact, the scope and duration of the massive incursion into northern Iraq was reduced due to intense European criticism.

Also, in reaction to the Turkish incursion, the Council of Europe's 34 countries approved a resolution to suspend Turkey's membership of the European Council unless it showed significant progress towards a withdrawal from Iraq prior to the June 26 European Union summit (Reuters, April 27, 1995). "The council also called for a peaceful solution to the Kurdish problem and democratic reform of Turkey's constitution and laws" (Laizer, 1996: 197). "While some members would have preferred to press Turkey to make more concessions, such as the release of jailed DEP [MPs], others were satisfied with the constitutional changes , implemented in 1995 and the modification of Article 8 [in the Anti-Terror Law]" (Barkey, 1996: 75).

However minor the European demands, they represented an obvious interference in the domestic affairs of a state and one with which many of the same countries have had extensive military relations. Still, given the importance of the Customs Union, Ankara was willing to pay the price to join. "If Ankara delayed some of the changes until the last moment, it was for tactical reasons; the sooner these were implemented the greater the likelihood that the Europeans could demand further concessions" (Barkey, 1996: 75).

By amending the Anti-Terror Law's Article 8 and releasing two of the DEP MPs, Turkey obtained the EP's endorsement of the Customs Union in December 1995 --it was passed by 343 votes to 149 (with 36 abstentions). "Although the Europeans no longer have the Customs Union as a carrot to dangle in front of Ankara, the fact remains that for Turkey this is an interim step: the ultimate goal is full [EU] membership" (Barkey, 1996: 75).

It is this very desire that is likely to render Turkey vulnerable to further criticism in the future and force the country to take seriously the EP, an institution it has come to revile. As Barkey(1996: 75) states, "membership in the Customs Union, as a further step toward the Europeanization of Turkey, will inevitably mean that the Europeans will feel freer to criticize Turkey for human rights violations". "The Kurdish Issue has clearly emerged as a visible and controversial factor in relations between the EU and Turkey in the 1990s" (Robins, 1996: 128).

## NOTES

1. As there exist few recent census figures for the precise Kurdish populations in these countries, particularly within Turkey which does not recognize its society as multi-ethnic, Buckley (1994) and others base their estimations on past demographic trends in the Middle East.

2. The very fact that the Turkish Armed Forces are incapable of monitoring the mountainous regions in southeastern Turkey has helped the PKK's guerrillas to avoid capture after they have attacked. The Turkish conscripts are not used to the harshness of the winters high in the mountains and have great difficulty in locating PKK bases --so Turkey has increasingly relied on aerial bombing raids in the hope of driving the insurgents down to the valleys, where they might be more easily dealt with.

3. Though it is beyond the scope of this chapter to discuss all the reasons for Syria's slight change of policy vis-à-vis the PKK in 1993 to 1994, obviously its continued negotiations with Israel and with the United States and its desire to participate in the Middle East peace process played a major role in this policy change. "Syria no doubt thought that its anti-terrorism remarks would result in its removal from the U.S. State Department's list of countries supporting terrorism and bring with it the benefits that would entail" (Olson, 1996: 90). Syria was eventually removed from the list in 1996.

4. "The Turks want an agreement that will prohibit the Syrians from severely restricting the flow of the Orontes river before it enters Hatay" (Olson, 1996: 87). Given the contentious nature of Hatay's sovereignty and the issue of the Euphrates water to Syria, it comes as no surprise that Syria has been restricting the flow of the Orontes over the last few years.

5. The Commander went on to report that in the first six months the ARGK had killed

twenty-five Turkish soldiers and village guards. The ARGK sustaining just two casualties during its operations during this period (Kurdistan Report no. 22, September/October 1995: 25).

6. Botan is south of Lake Van and extends into areas in northern Iraq, in which bloody battles have taken place over the past decade between the PKK and the Turkish armed forces. The Hürriyet (September 17, 1995) reported that Ocalan intended to turn Hatay "...into a bloody lake" too.

7. Though there are no reliable figures regarding the ethnic and religious character of Hatay's population, the population is known to include a large number of Arabs, both Sunni and Alevi --the Turkish population being predominantly Sunni.

8. Given the importance of the issue of Hatay to the Syrians, both historically and politically, their fervent endeavours to bring up this subject at every opportunity indicates a desire to see it resolved on their terms --hence their continued support for the PKK.

9. The Badr brigade consists of between three to five thousand troops (some sources put the figures lower) made up of Shi' a muslims who had earlier fled Iraq and are now under the control of Iran.

10. As early as 1992, Ecevit, the Democratic Left Party leader, held talks with the Iraqi leadership in Baghdad.

11. Even the assassination of the administrative attaché of the Turkish embassy in the Iraqi capital at the end of 1993 did not sour the developing relations between the two governments. It would appear that neither government wanted to allow the assassination to impede the ongoing negotiations to improve trading and economic cooperation.

12. Despite American reluctance to grant such permission, negotiations between Ankara and Baghdad regarding the reopening of the oil pipelines continued from 1994 into 1996.

13. "The U.S. position was the officially proclaimed reason for maintaining U.S. support of the Provide Comfort force in southeastern Turkey, whose role is to monitor the UN imposed 'no-fly' zone over northern Iraq" (Olson, 1996: 103).

14. This proved to be a sharp blow to Ankara, as the Mosul consulate served as its primary means of contact with the Turkoman population in northern Iraq which number around five hundred thousand.

15. "Syria's own ambitious irrigation plans would take another 3,500 billion gallons or so of water a year out of the Euphrates at the expense of Iraq, where farmers have been using Euphrates water for irrigation for 6,000 years" (Bulloch, 1993: 59).

16. As Bulloch (1993: 66) points out, Turkey was also making its bid for recognition as a major player in the Middle East having failed in it attempts to be accepted by the European Community as a full member.

17. "Syrian and Iraqi rivalries, stemming from the rule of the Baath party in both countries, each claiming legitimacy, were put aside" (Bulloch, 1993: 66).

18. "Washington was instrumental in Egypt's purchase of 40 Turkish-manufactured F-16s and in the EC's decision to increase the value of the Turkish textile quota" (Sayari, 1992: 19).

19. As Turkey was directly involved in the negotiations the US sponsored in Ireland during the fall of 1995 and later in London to reconcile the Iraqi Kurdish factions, this

has meant that Ankara has increased her influence in northern Iraq, much to the annoyance of the Iraqi government.

20. "Also claiming that the embargo on Iraq has disproportionately harmed citizens of the southeast, an argument used to explain away some support for the PKK " (Barkey, 1996: 73).

21. For a more comprehensive discussion of arms transfers to Turkey see Weapons Transfers and the Violations of the Laws of War in Turkey (Human Rights Watch Arms Project, 1995).

22. To date there have been some 10 reports highlighting the issue of human rights, with particular attention to the Kurds, within Turkey by Amnesty International. Since 1994 Amnesty International has placed full-page advertisements in the leading British papers about torture in a number of countries, including Turkey. These have helped to highlight cases of maltreatment of Kurds in the southeast provinces of the country.

23. "The Kurdish diaspora numbers around one and a half (1.5) million Kurds: refugees migrants, second and third generation citizens. Half a million live in Germany alone, with approximately fifty thousand Kurds each in France and the Netherlands. Around twenty thousand Kurds live in Britain, Sweden, Austria, Switzerland and the United States. In Belgium and Denmark there are an estimated ten to twelve thousand Kurds; presently close to ten thousand Kurds live in Australia and Canada. In Norway, Greece, Spain, Italy a further three to five thousand Kurds reside. Smaller numbers of Kurdish families live in almost every country in the world, including the Czech Republic and Slovakia, Finland and Japan" (Laizer, 1996: 193). It should be noted that "[e]ven those [Kurds] who had not been subject to systematic persecution or who were merely economic migrants found a receptive atmosphere in Western Europe to their applications for political asylum, based on the activities of

the Turkish state throughout much of the 1980s" (Robins, 1996: 117).

24. As mentioned in Chapter 2, the KPE was created in 1995 by the DEP MPs who fled Turkey and has a large PKK membership within its representatives in the form of ERNK members. There are a total of 65 members in the KPE (Nigogosian, 1996: 41).

25. See Ryan (1997: 42- 48 and 88-92) in WIRED (March issue) for a detailed discussion about *MED TV*. The Kurdish satellite channel has managed to politicize Kurds outside the southeast and helped the PKK counter official Turkish reports of events in the Kurdish provinces, as well as the number of casualties on both sides of the war.

26. "In the case of Denmark, these sanctions took the form of an arms embargo, which then, predictably, led to retaliation from Ankara in the form of putting such countries on a 'red list', effectively reciprocating the arms embargo" (Robins, 1996:119-120).

27. Although the Greek veto is a reality, many Turks believe that the most powerful objections come from Germany (Dowden, 1996: 17).

28. "Fiat opened its first joint venture factory in Turkey as long ago as 1968; Italy topped the league for foreign investment in Turkey in 1993 with $419 million worth of capital; in 1993 Italy exported nearly $2.6 billion worth of goods to Turkey" (Robins, 1996: 121).

29. "Police raids were undertaken in Paris, Lyon, Marseilles, Strasbourg, Toulouse, Bordeaux, Rouen and in Brittany, and more than one hundred suspects were arrested" (Robins, 1996: 122, and Turkish Daily News, November 19,1993 ).

30. "According to [the Small Arms World Report (Vol.5, no. 2, Summer 1994)],

Germany has supplied Turkey with 256,000 Kalashnikov rifles, 5,000 machine guns, and a hundred million rounds of ammunition from former East German Army stocks. Other weapons transferred from ex-GDR Army stocks include ammunition for BTR-60 cannon, trucks, 5,000 RPG-7 rocket propelled grenades, and various unnamed missiles and bombs with fuses. The German government stated that these weapons must not be used against the Kurds" (HRW Arms Project, 1995: 35).

31. "Germany supplies not only the Turkish armed forces but the police as well, in the form of equipment and training aid. This aid has consisted of cash donated to facilitate the purchase of arms for the police force; equipment such as computers, supplied by the firm Siemens; and training of special police forces in counter-terrorism" (HRW Arms Project, 1995: 35).

32. As Robins (1996:126) goes on to suggest, "[i]n the case of the Kurdish issue, this attitude has been amplified by a general sense of uneasiness as to whether the security policies being pursued by the Turkish state are really in the long term interests of stability in Turkey".

33. "These included demands for the international investigation of the Newroz events, the Commission and the Council of Ministers to take the initiative to find a solution to the Kurdish issue through the UN; and the EU-Turkish joint parliamentary commission to monitor the human rights situation in Turkey" (Robins, 1996: 127).

34. The modifications Turkey made to the Constitution and Article 8 of the Anti-Terror Law (ATL) amount to very little qualitative change --jail sentences will be reduced, more monetary penalties will be assessed and judges will have greater latitude in deciding sentences (Barkey, 1996: 82, note 12).

## Conclusion

By considering the case of Turkey and its Kurdish problem certain characteristics of the 'insecurity dilemma' have been highlighted. Firstly, Turkey has through her state-formation and organising ideology attempted to deny the very heterogeneous nature of its population, thereby creating a simplified view of its citizens --that Turkey is the homeland of the Turks and that all who are associated with the state are therefore Turks. Whilst this need to instil national pride in the majority Turkish population during the fledgling years of the Republic is understandable, however, adherence to the strict application of this Kemalist principle has hindered the very socio-political cohesion it sought to maintain. This leads one to consider Turkey a weak state, and as such, prone to security threats emanating from within its borders. While Turkey is undeniably a strong power with adequate military prowess to defend itself against external threats, it has proved unsuccessful in its efforts to eliminate Kurdish dissent within its territory. The country seems to be experiencing the same problem the United States faced in dealing with the Viet Cong, in that the Turkish armed forces are unable to identify Kurdish insurgents (PKK guerrillas) from the rest of the Kurdish population in the Southeast region. This has meant the indiscriminate use of force in the area and has helped to alienate much of the local population, facilitating PKK's recruitment and grass-roots support. As state policy of dealing purely militarily with the Kurdish problem has only made matters worse and forced the deficit to spiral ever higher.

Second, successive governments have lacked the support of the Kurdish population, with the result that the state and its institutions have lacked legitimacy vis-à-vis a significant portion of the citizenry. By adhering so rigidly to tenets of Kemalist ideology, the Turkish state has helped to force the Kurdish people to support the PKK. In not allowing the Kurds to have a democratic and peaceful representative, like the Democratic party, within the Turkish National Assembly the Turkish state has seriously restricted its policy options. The reason for this inflexibility on the part of policy makers can be understood in light of the fact that the Turkish military plays an

important role in the states decision-making process. The Turkish military is constitutionally empowered to safeguard the national security of the Turkish nation from internal and external threats, and the principle of the indivisibility of Turkey's people and its territory in accordance to Kemalist doctrine. The Kurdish issue is perceived as a national problem --a potential source of danger to the indivisible unity of state and territory. The Kurdish claims to increased self-realization is viewed as a separatist threat. From this it becomes clear that the military, through the National Security Council (NSC), is the principal decision-maker in the Kurdish question. Civilian policy makers have tended to be constrained by the NSC, so that only a military solution has been followed regarding the Kurds in the Southeast.

Third, these domestic concerns have helped to shape her regional and international relations as the entire Kurdish population in the Gulf straddles the borders of Turkey, Syria, Iran and Iraq. Even though Turkey has only recently become involved with the Kurdish groups in neighbouring countries (the KDP), like Iraq, it has had to face Syrian support of the PKK since the late 1970s. This highlights one of the problems faced by a state which has an internal security threat -- interference from external agents in an effort to influence regional security matters, such as the issue of water. Turkey fears the consequences for her own restive Kurdish population if the Iraq Kurds manage to create a viable state out of northern Iraq . Since the end of the Gulf war in 1991, Turkey has played a more active role in regional Kurdish affairs in an effort to contain any spillover effects . This indicates the seriousness of the PKK insurgency in the 1990s. Since 1993, Turkey has been induced to conclude security agreements with its neighbours regarding the PKK and the Kurds within the 'safe haven' in northern Iraq.

Fourth, the Kurdish problem within its borders has also had an impact on Turkey's relations with the West, particularly with member states of the European Community (EC) and its European Parliament (EP). The smaller members of the European Community and the European Parliament have managed to elicit concessions from the government. Even though the changes to the ATL were minor, they illustrate the potential influence of the European Community on Turkish policy

regarding the Kurds. Even the US has begun to press Turkey on the Kurdish issue and the issue of human rights violations, because it fears for the stability of the country. As the PKK extends its diplomatic and political activities in the West, Turkey is likely to face greater pressure from its allies to revise its Kurdish policy and reach a political settlement.

Although Turkish governments have maintained a military approach to Kurdish policy, they have admitted to the need for economic rejuvenation of the Southeast. However, the state's solution in the form of the huge South Anatolian Project (GAP) is unlikely to impress the Kurdish population which stands to gain very little in the long-term from the benefits to be accrued from it. In fact, western Turkey and its well developed industrial base is going to benefit the most from GAP. The barren Southeast is not likely to see an improvement in its development till the year 2005 --as the Kurdish birth-rate is already increasing at a far greater rate than that of the rest of the Turkish population, the increase in employment for the Kurdish areas is unlikely to be able to absorb the future generations, so emigration to western Turkey and abroad will surely continue unabated. For Turkey, this will mean that the conflict in the Southeast will be exported further into the cities of the west, and on to Western Europe. Therefore, the present association and cooperation between the Kurdish Parliament in Exile (KPE) and the PKK is likely to increase making the exclusion of the Kurdish insurgents from any negotiations in the future very difficult for Turkey to maintain --so Turkey will need to revise its policy of associating all Kurdish cultural expression as terrorist and the image of the PKK as representing only marginal terrorist interests.

Already the work of the Kurdish National Liberation Front (ERNK) has helped to publicized the Kurdish issue within Turkey to the wider European audience, which since 1988 has viewed the Kurds as oppressed victims of brutal states within the Gulf --this image was further strengthened by events during the Gulf war in 1991. The fact that a large number of Europe's capitals have ERNK offices, which conduct diplomatic and information activities, means that the West is receiving more than just the

Turkish side of events, even with the states restrictions on news from the Southeast. The PKK has, since 1990, concentrated more on its diplomatic initiatives and attempted to clear up its own human rights record, which has meant that Turkey is viewed as more of the aggressor --hence, the pressure from even the country's strongest allies in the West to revise her present course in dealing with the Kurdish calls for increased cultural expression. Within the European Community and the US there is an ever increasing concern over the issue of human rights violations, particularly on the part of the Turkish security forces --the fact that Turkey features prominently in reports by Helsinki Watch and Amnesty International throughout the 1990s is indicative of the greater reliance on coercive methods of containing Kurdish dissent within Turkey. Not only is Turkey facing a more difficult job to justify its hard-line policies, but the war is costing billions and its budget deficit is concerning the West and its business community which see it as one of the greatest obstacles to the country sitting permanently as a full member of the EC --human rights are also a stumbling block for entry.

Whilst the Turkish state has more than adequate military hardware to continue fighting the PKK, it will face greater criticism from the West and its business community, and interference from Syria. Unless Turkey can find a peaceful solution to its Kurdish problem then its image as a stable ally to the West will be further tarnished.

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