

INSTITUTE OF CURRENT WORLD AFFAIRS

PAR-9  
Elections in Northern Cyprus

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TURKEY

12 July 1985

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Dear Peter,

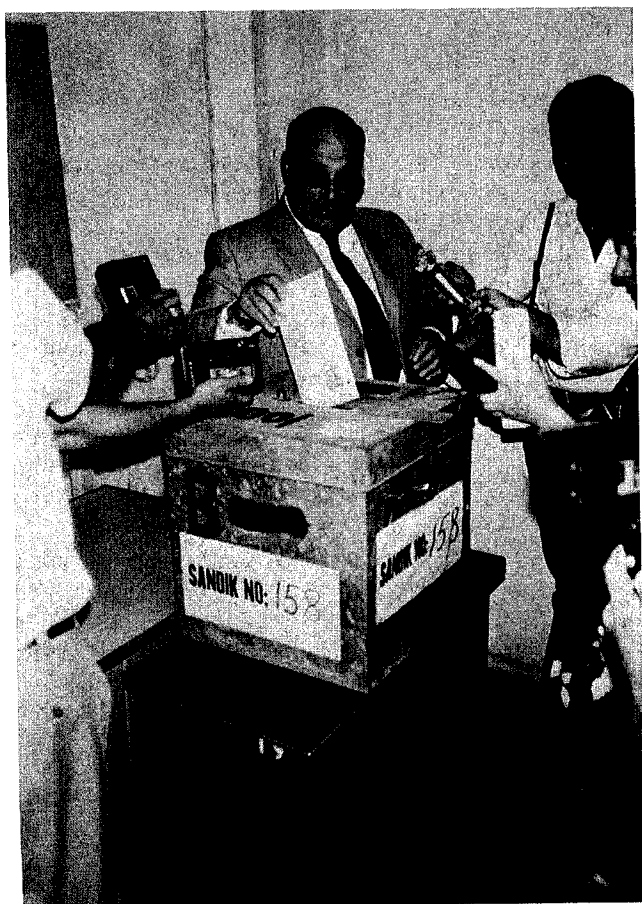
Elections have a way of clearing the air--particularly in a parliamentary regime equipped with institutions designed to eliminate or reduce the influence of splinter parties. There are, however, exceptions to this rule. Sometimes, the resort to the ballot box creates or simply prolongs a deadlock; and, where the major parties are poles apart or their leaders are bitterly hostile, these situations can be extremely dangerous for a country and for democracy. The elections that took place in Turkey in the 1970s did little to stem what Turks today call "the anarchy." In the end, it took a coup d'etat to clear the air.

Fortunately for Rauf Raif Denktaş and, I suspect, for the Cypriot Turks as well, the elections recently held in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) provided that new-born republic's first government with a clear mandate. On the 5th of May, 70% of the electorate voted to approve the constitution proposed by the Constituent Assembly that Denktaş had appointed. On the 9th of June, almost exactly the same proportion of those who went to the polls voted to make Denktaş the TRNC's first President. Finally, on the 23rd of June, these same voters gave a plurality of the ballots to the political party most closely associated with the President. As Foreign Minister Necati Münir Ertekin was to tell me just after the votes had been counted, "Now, at last, we have put our house in order."

The details of the most recent voting results deserve close attention, but they must first be put in context. As I mentioned in the one earlier letter I devoted to Cyprus (PAR-5: Kibris--First Impressions), The Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, which was formed on the 15th of November 1983, is the successor to the Turkish Federated State of Cyprus (TFSC), which was established on the 13th of February 1975, almost exactly six months after the

Turkish army carved out a canton for the Turkish Cypriots in the northern part of the island. Within the TFSC, elections were held in 1976 and again in 1981.

In 1974, the Cypriot Turks had welcomed the soldiers from the Turkish mainland as liberators; and, when the initial election took place in the north, the euphoria had not yet faded. For the first time since December, 1963, the Turks of Cyprus could live free from fear, and they attributed their good fortune in large part to the shrewdness and persuasiveness of Rauf Denktas, the barrister who had long been their leader. Accordingly, Denktas and his conservative National Unity Party (NUP) won a landslide in that first election. He was elected President by a comfortable margin, and his party gained thirty of the forty seats in parliament. The leftist Communal Liberation Party (CLP) secured six seats, and the now defunct People's Party and the far left Republican Turkish Party (RTP) took two seats each.



RAUF DENKTAS CASTING HIS BALLOT

By 1981, disappointment had set in. With the death of Archbishop Makarios, the prospects for an early settlement with the Cypriot Greeks had faded. Partly as a consequence of the economic embargo imposed on the north by the government in the south and partly because of mismanagement, the economy was a shambles. Moreover, as was inevitable, some of the Turkish Cypriot refugees from the southern part of the island were persuaded that they had not received a fair shake when some of the property in the north that had belonged to the Greeks was divided among them. This gave the left a real opportunity.

Consequently, in the second ballot, Denktas received only 51.7% of the vote, and the NUP lost twelve of its thirty seats--with eleven of these going to the leftist parties. The moderate Democratic People's Party (DPP) took two seats; and one was awarded to the conservative Turkish Unity Party, which drew support from

some of the mainland Turks brought to the island between 1974 and 1976 to add ballast to the population and to perform services that the Cypriot Turks were ill-prepared to perform for themselves. The left won nineteen seats--with thirteen going to the relatively moderate CLP and six to the extremist RTP.

Initially, the National Unity Party sought to form a coalition with the Communal Liberation Party, but the less moderate members of the latter won out in an intra-party squabble and demanded concessions that they knew the NUP would be unwilling to make. Three of the deputies representing the CLP in parliament subsequently resigned from the party in anger at the intransigence of their colleagues, but this did little to alleviate Denktas' troubles. As President of the TFSC, he found himself saddled with a weak, conservative government.

#### TURKISH FEDERATED STATE OF CYPRUS

##### First General Elections (1976)

<u>Parties</u>	<u>Out of 40 Seats</u>
National Unity Party	30
Communal Liberation Party	6
People's Party	2
Republican Turkish Party	2

##### Second General Elections (1981)

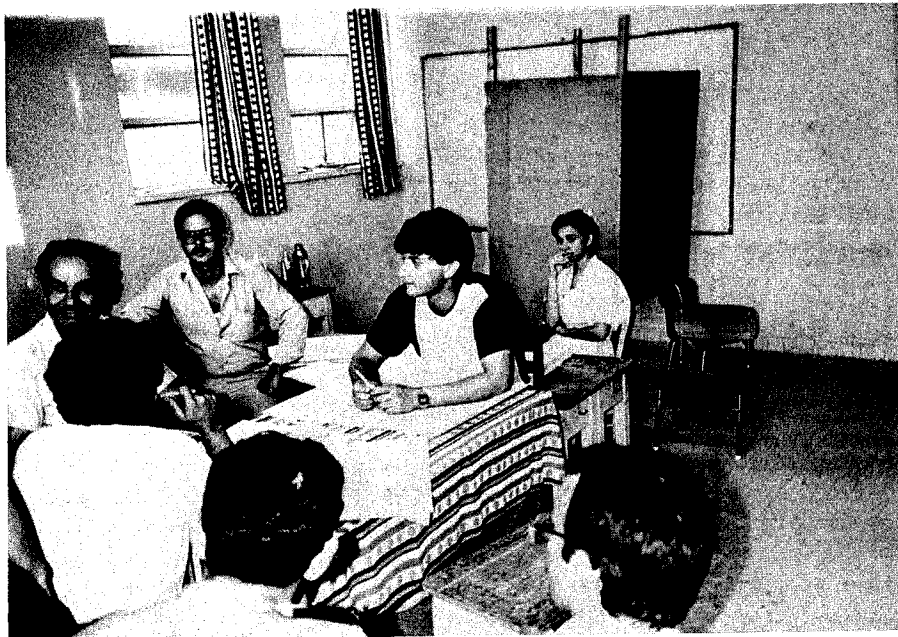
<u>Parties</u>	<u>Out of 40 Seats</u>
National Unity Party	18
Communal Liberation Party	13
Republican Turkish Party	6
Democratic People's Party	2
Turkish Unity Party	1

It is a testimony to Denktas' surpassing shrewdness as a politician that he no longer faces so unwelcome a prospect. Over the last two years, he has consistently outwitted his opponents both at home and abroad. In proposing that the Cypriot Turks declare independence and substitute the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus for the Turkish Federated State of Cyprus, he accomplished two things at once. At home, he placed the leftist opposition in an impossible position. The Turks of Cyprus feel little affection for the island's Greeks. Because they were frustrated by the continuing unwillingness of the government in the south to accept the Turkish community as an equal partner on the island, they were pleased and even eager to find some means to assert themselves against their adversaries. Had the CLP and the RTP openly and vigorously opposed the declaration voted on in November, 1983, they would undoubtedly have suffered badly in the polls to follow. Knowing this, the leaders of the two parties chose to fall in behind Denktas, and in the process they sacrificed whatever claim they might have possessed beforehand to represent a viable alternative to his rule.

By the same stroke, Denktas placed Spyros Kyprianou, the President of the Republic of Cyprus, in an equally impossible position. On the 20th of September 1983, the Greek Cypriot Foreign Minister Nicos Rolandis had resigned in protest, charging that Kyprianou was not interested in a settlement and that he had proved his ill-will by refusing to accept a set of 'indicators' that he had encouraged UN Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar to draw up. Kyprianou's enemies quickly joined in a chorus, suggesting that, by his

inept intransigence, the Greek Cypriot leader was playing into Denktas' hands. The Turkish Cypriot declaration of independence, which came seven weeks later, served simply to confirm the charge.

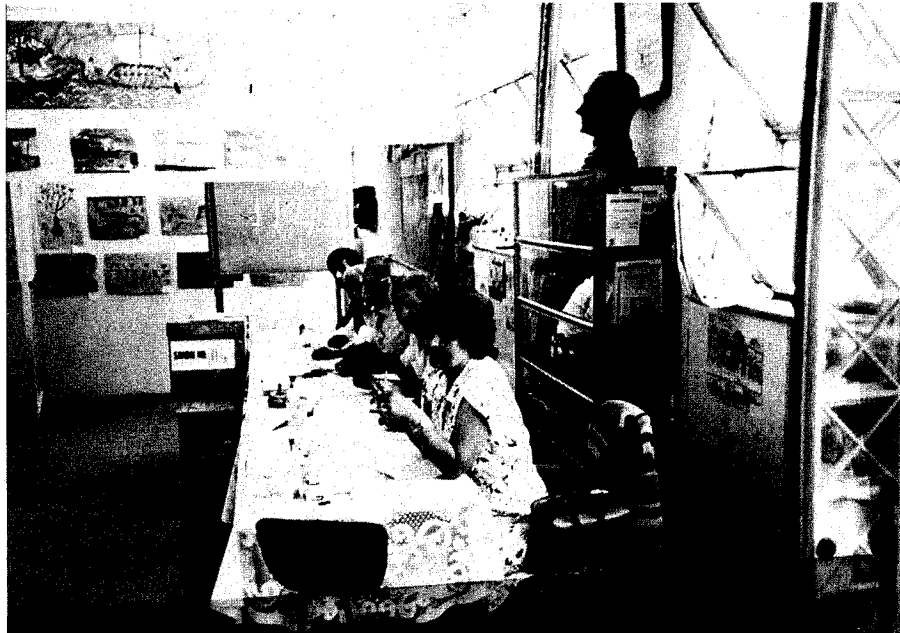
The timing of Denktas' action may have been determined by the interregnum in Turkey consequent to the election of Turgut  zal as that country's Prime Minister. This is what most observers believe, and I see no reason to contradict their claim. Even if Turkish President Kenan Evren was party to the decision, as I believe he was, he will have wanted it to appear that Turkey was faced with a fait accompli. Be this as it may, Denktas can hardly have been unaware of the impact that such a declaration, following so close upon Rolandis' resignation, would have in the south--particularly if the vote in the Turkish Cypriot parliament was unanimous, as indeed it was. Glafkos Klerides, who had briefly served as Acting President of the Republic of Cyprus after the coup of 1974 and the subsequent Turkish intervention, responded to the event by arguing that, if something was not done soon to reverse the tide, the division of the island would be irreversible. Many Greek Cypriots then shared his fears, and more do now--so many, in fact, that the Greek Cypriot communist party AKEL is now cooperating with Klerides' conservative party Democratic Rally in a concerted attempt to force Kyprianou to resign.



#### LOCAL ELECTION BOARD AND PARTY REPRESENTATIVES AS THE COUNT BEGINS

More Greek Cypriots share Klerides' fears now than ever before because, in the meantime, Denktas has managed to outmaneuver Kyprianou again. After the declaration of independence, the Turkish Cypriot leader made a statement to the effect that he would not allow the declaration to stand in the way of a reconciliation between the two ethnic communities on Cyprus. This left Kyprianou little choice; his critics at home would have hounded him from office had he not taken the opportunity to call for a resumption of the intercommunal talks. The result was a series of 'proximity talks' in which

the UN Secretary-General and his aides shuffled back and forth between Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot negotiators, trying to sketch out a settlement. Denktas seized the initiative late in 1984 when Perez de Cuellar asked each side to provide him with a statement of its final offer. At that point, the Turkish Cypriot leader offered considerable territorial concessions. The Turkish sector on Cyprus includes 37% of the island; Denktas offered to return 8% of the total land area to the Greeks. Included in the offer was Varosha, the posh Greek Cypriot suburb of Magousa (Famagusta).



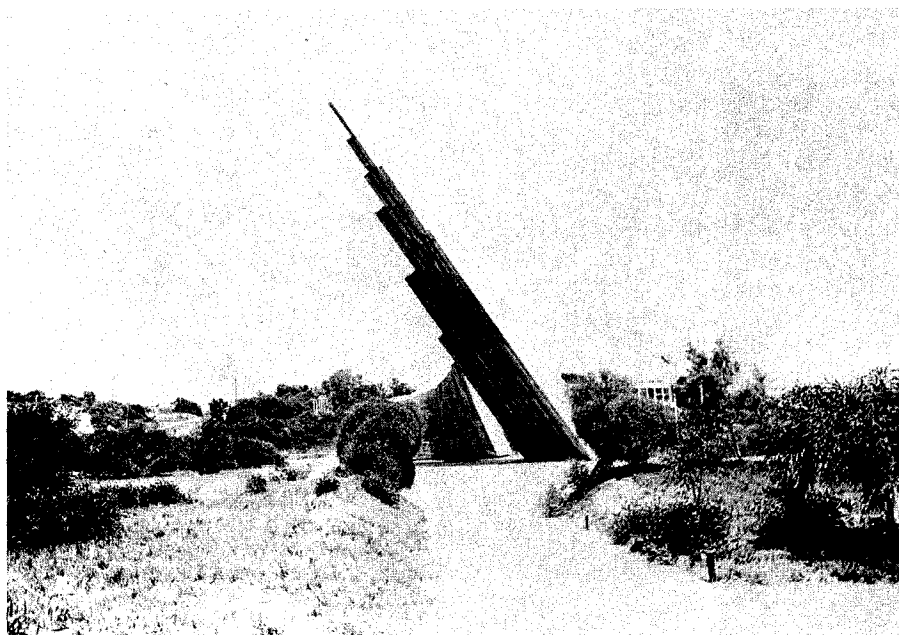
#### TRNC ELECTION OFFICIALS AND PARTY REPRESENTATIVES COUNTING THE VOTES

It is rumored that Denktas' offer was elicited by pressure brought to bear on the Turkish government in Ankara by the United States, and this may well have been the case. Partly as a consequence of the American embargo following the Turkish intervention on Cyprus in the summer of 1974, the Turkish army is ill-equipped. Mindful that Turkey has the second largest army in NATO and that Turkish soldiers have an enviable record on the battlefield, the Reagan administration would like to provide Ankara with additional military aid. Unfortunately, Cyprus has proved a stumbling block for the American Congress. Richard Burt, the Assistant Secretary of State for Europe, and Richard Haass, the State Department's Coordinator for Cyprus, were no doubt keeping tabs on the 'proximity talks,' and Perez de Cuellar may have informed them that the situation looked promising. It would have been relatively easy to persuade President Evren that it was in Turkey's interest that a settlement be reached--or at least that the onus for the failure of the talks be placed on the side of the Greek Cypriots and the mainland Greeks.

I am not inclined to place as much emphasis on the American initiative as others might--for the simple reason that I think Denktas was himself ready to make a dramatic move. I do not mean to suggest that, late last year, he was eager for a final settlement or even hopeful that one might emerge. My

opinion is, rather, that he never for a moment expected Kyprianou to sign the Draft Agreement that came out of the final round of 'proximity talks,' and in this case my thesis is more than an educated guess.

The Saturday after the elections, there was no point in journeying in to the capital Lefkoşa (Nicosia) from Girne (Kyrenia) where I was staying. The government offices were closed; the various political leaders were at home if not in the mountains or on the beach. Spurred by their example, I rented a car and drove west along the island's north coast, past the monument marking the place where the Turkish soldiers first landed in July, 1974, and on to



MONUMENT AT 'PEACE BEACH' IN HONOR OF THE TURKISH LANDING

Mariemonte, where, I had been told, the beach was superb. My Cypriot informants were as usual correct; unfortunately, half the population was in on the secret. But, though the beach was crowded, there was compensation. Not long after I had returned from a swim and settled down in the scorching hot sun to read the last few pages of Lawrence Durrell's little classic Bitter Lemons of Cyprus, Alper Faik Genç, the President's private secretary, sidled up and stopped to chat. I will have more to say about this conversation before I am through, but for the moment let me limit myself to relating a single, brief exchange. At one point, I asked whether the news that Denktaş had made considerable territorial concessions had upset any of the Turks living in the villages that lie along the border separating the north from the south. He replied that, of course, they had been upset. They knew that the land he had offered to hand over to the Greeks included the land they farmed. Thereafter, a good many of them had come to Lefkosa to speak with Denktaş. "He told them not to worry, that there would be no settlement, that Kyprianou would never sign," my companion concluded.

His report fit in well with the attitude that Denktaş had evidenced earlier in the week when he consented to be interviewed by a group of reporters from Pakistan, Bangla Desh, Portugal, and Italy, whom I happened to be with. Years ago, between 1964 and 1968, when Denktaş was in exile in Turkey, he used to slip across from the mainland by boat from time to time to confer with the leaders of the Türk Mudafa Teskilat (TMT)--Turkish Defence Organization--which he had helped found. On one such occasion, the Cypriot Greeks caught him; and, for a time, his life was in danger. In the end, he was released and allowed to return to the mainland because Glafkos Klerides intervened on his behalf with Archbishop Makarios. Klerides and Denktaş knew each other well; both had attended the English School; and Denktaş had been in the same class as Klerides' older brother. Later, between 1968 and 1975, they represented the two communities in a series of intercommunal talks. At the interview I attended, Denktaş evidenced a certain contempt for Kyprianou. It seemed reasonable to ask whether he thought that a final settlement would have been reached if the Greek Cypriots had had a more formidable leader like Glafkos Klerides. So I asked. "No!" he fired back. "He would have signed the agreement, tied our hands, and the negotiations would eventually have broken down in the working groups." The next day, when I drew the attention of Necati Ertekün to Denktaş' remarks, he added a brief gloss. "As a dinner companion, I would much prefer Glafkos Klerides," he observed with a grin. "But, as a negotiating partner, well, Spyros Kyprianou is the easier man to deal with."

It became clear in the course of these two conversations that Rauf Denktaş and his advisers neither expected nor wanted a settlement in January. Like his Foreign Minister, the President of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus wants time for the new state to put its house in order--time so that the fledgling TRNC can articulate its institutions and can gain the international recognition and support that will allow it to treat with the Republic of Cyprus as an equal. Some doubt whether Denktaş wants a settlement at all.

# I

One among these is Alpay Durduran, a mechanical engineer who helped found and, until very recently, presided over the Communal Liberation Party. He was his party's Presidential candidate in the elections held on the 9th of June. He had taken a real drubbing; and he was not happy about it at all. Accordingly, he had a few, choice words to say about Rauf Denktaş and his associates when I interviewed him on the eve of the parliamentary elections. "We are facing another enosis, this time to Turkey," he charged. "We are a different community; we want to keep our own character. We want to be free from Turkey, independent of Turkey." When I pressed him, he admitted that no one supports annexation "openly." But, he added, Rauf Denktaş "covertly" supports it. I could not help chuckling when I noticed the photograph of Atatürk on the wall opposite his desk. Statues, busts, and photographs of this "Father of the Turks" are as omnipresent in northern Cyprus as they are on the mainland.

At the time that we spoke, the National Unity Party and four offshoots from it were contesting the elections along with the CLP and the RTP. Durduran contended that only one of the nonleftist parties--the Social Democratic Party of Rauf Denktas' cantankerous son Raif--seriously wanted a settlement; the rest were privately opposed to the Secretary-General's Draft Agreement and breathed a sigh of relief when Kyprianou refused to sign the document. Though his own party's deputies had in the end voted for the declaration of independence, the party was in fact opposed to independence; the CLP wanted a settlement with the south. Durduran did not say so in so many words, but he



ALPAY DURDURAN

evidently fears independence because he sees it as a stepping stone towards annexation. He did claim that Turkey was firmly behind the declaration of independence. In preparation for the declaration, the Turkish ambassador had allegedly intervened with Ismet Kotak, leader of the Democratic People's Party, to prevent a cabinet crisis early in 1983. The ambassador had purportedly told Kotak that it was important that the coalition remain intact for a few more months because a declaration of independence was being contemplated. "Turkey thought that it was time to threaten the world," Durduran explained.

Though I tried, I was never able to locate and speak with Ismet Kotak. As a consequence, I am not sure to what degree I should credit the charges that Durduran lodged. I interviewed him in company with Hélène da Costa of Radio France Internationale, the one journalist present who was seriously interested in digging

below the surface. A year or two ago, Christopher Hitchens, a new left journalist now based in Washington, had published an article charging that the new airport being built at Lefkoniko in northern Cyprus was in fact being designed with the Rapid Deployment Force in mind. Hitchens is well connected in southern Cyprus. He is married to the niece of Vassos Lyssarides, who was Archbishop Makarios' personal physician and close political ally and who now leads the Greek Cypriot socialist party EDEK. Not surprisingly, Hitchens' article was picked up by the Greek press, and it caused an incredible stir in the south. Hélène, who will be contributing to a book on military strategy in



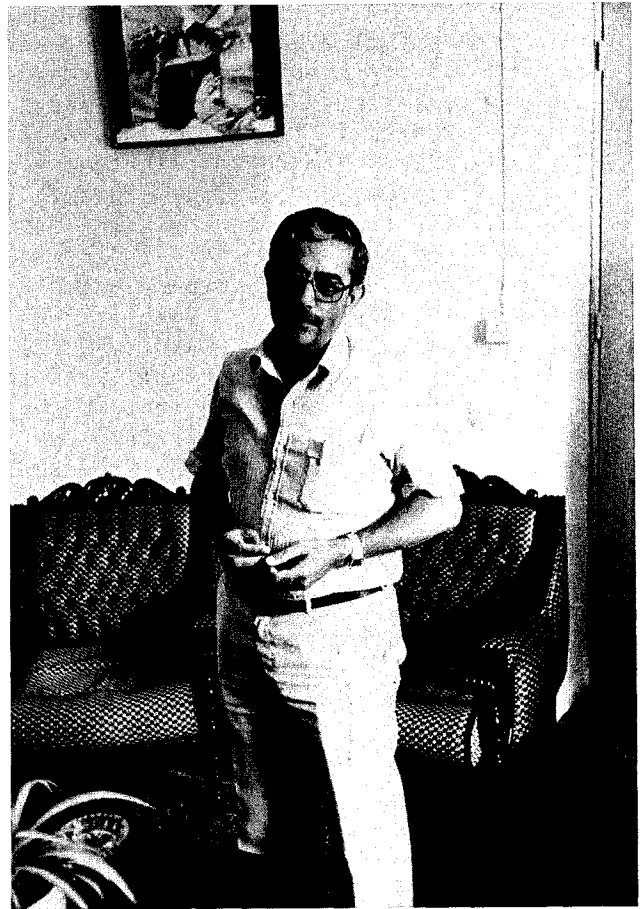
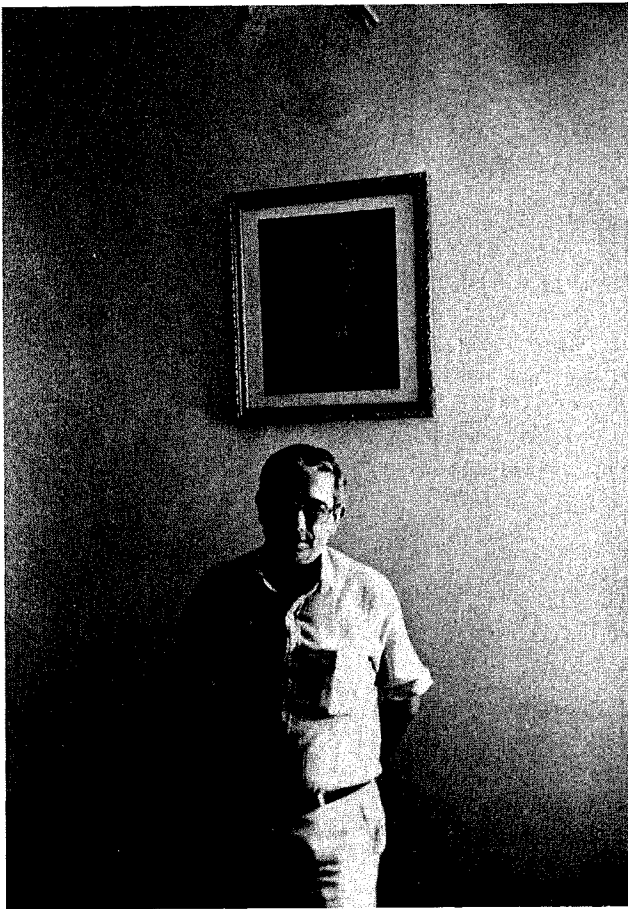
the eastern Mediterranean, wanted to know whether there was anything to the charge. I heard her ask the question many times, and the answer was nearly always the same. "Ercan airport is within artillery range of the south," her interlocutor would explain. "We need a second runway in any case, and it makes good sense to put it somewhere out of reach. If you really think that the one at Lefkoniko is meant for the Americans, go up there. Look at the site and at the buildings, and tell me just how suitable it is." Alpay Durduran was a partial exception to the rule. He claimed that Ercan was in one of the areas that Denktaş had offered to turn over to the Greeks. I later learned that this was simply not true.

At another point in the interview, I mentioned the split that had taken place in the CLP and asked Durduran whether that might not have had much to do with the fact that he received less than ten per cent of the vote in the Presidential election held two weeks before. This elicited not only a denial but the assertion that his party would get 20% of the vote in the parliamentary elections to be held the next day. "Denktaş terrorized people," he explained. "In the Presidential election, he frightened the civil servants and forced them to campaign for him. He had the postmen distributing his leaflets without stamps. He even brought back Turkish soldiers from the mainland to campaign for him--Turkish soldiers who had served in our enclaves when we were under siege in the period from 1963 to 1974." I later learned that much of this was pure malarkey. Denktaş had had the cooperation of the postmen; the rest was sour grapes. In the parliamentary elections held on the 23rd of June, the CLP received 15.91% of the vote. In the four years following the elections of 1981, the party had lost almost half of its support. The brouhaha that had erupted when the hardliners in the party had decided to make it impossible for there to be a coalition with the NUP had done the party considerable damage, and it had not yet recovered.

## II

The other political leader who doubts that Rauf Denktaş really wants a settlement is Özker Özgür, once a schoolteacher assigned to instruct Turkish Cypriots in English and now the chairman of the Republican Turkish Party. Hélène and I had found Alpay Durduran a bit frenetic, mildly incoherent, and rather unimpressive overall. At times, he seemed to be grasping at threads, and he had a goofy look in his eyes. His precipitous fall from public favor had evidently shocked him and left him almost incapable of serious reflection. One could hardly think of him as a rival to a man as formidable as Rauf Denktaş; and, yet, that is precisely what he had been in 1981. Özker Özgür seemed, in contrast, a far more impressive figure. He is dapper, soft-spoken, and very sophisticated. But it is not likely that he will ever come to power. He may display a photograph of Atatürk on his office wall like everyone else, but his party is unacceptable to Ankara nonetheless--and, as is only natural, the government of Turkey exercises considerable influence in the northern sector of the island.

The RTP was founded in 1970, four years before the Turkish army intervened on the island. The party's founder, Ahmet Midhat Berberoğlu, was a barrister from Nicosia who had served for some years in the Turkish Communal Chamber of the Republic of Cyprus. In intercommunal affairs, Berberoğlu was generally inclined to be more conciliatory than Rauf Denktaş, and he founded the party as a counterweight within the Turkish community to Denktaş' power. Özker Özgür joined the RTP in 1976. In the intervening years, a number of leftists, young men who had cut their teeth in the bitter political struggles that took place in the early 1970s on the campuses in mainland Turkey, had returned to Cyprus. They joined the RTP and, under the leadership of Naci Talat Usar (now secretary-general of the party), they secured control. Usar reportedly persuaded Özgür to join by offering him the party chairmanship.



ÖZKER ÖZGÜR AT THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE REPUBLICAN TURKISH PARTY

Hélène and I spoke with Özker Özgür just before the poll, and I saw him again a few days thereafter. On both occasions, he was extremely gracious. When I asked him to characterize the RTP, he denied that it was Marxist-Leninist and described it as "a progressive socialist party." I pressed him to explain what he meant, asking whether the RTP was a member of the Socialist International, whether it bore any resemblance to Vassos Lyssarides' left socialist party (EDEK) in the south or to Andreas

Papandreou's Panhellenic Socialist Union (PASOK) in Greece. "No," he replied, "we are not in the Socialist International--but it would be quite beneficial if we could join." And, no, his party was in no way the Turkish Cypriot counterpart to EDEK. Nor could it be properly compared with PASOK--though the RTP had sent him to a "progressive socialist" conference in Libya to which EDEK sent Lyssarides and PASOK, a delegation of "observers."

On the subject of Papandreou and Lyssarides, Özgür was surprisingly outspoken. He called the two men "racists" and "chauvinists," and he described the former as "a very dangerous politician." "Papandreou would be very happy to partition the island with Turkey, and so would Mr. Lyssarides," he averred. "They want to bring Greece into the Middle East; and, if this happens, there will be a very great danger eventually of there being a war between Turkey and Greece in the Middle East." At this point, I interrupted him to ask whether Turkey wanted to annex northern Cyprus as Alpay Durduran had suggested. "No," he responded, "that would not be in Turkey's interest." I remembered that the Greek Colonels, when George Papadopoulos was their leader, had reportedly tried to negotiate a partition of the island with Turkey, and I reminded him of the fact. He smiled. "In a way," he remarked, "there is a certain continuity there."

Özgür denied the charges made by the other Turkish Cypriot politicians that his party was just a branch of the Greek Cypriot communist party (AKEL). He denied Rauf Denktaş' claim that RTP coordinated strategy in London with AKEL through the agency of a man named Nurretin Seferoglu. But he did not hesitate to assert that, if he were ever to lead the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, he would prefer AKEL as a negotiating partner on the Greek Cypriot side. "AKEL always plays a positive role when the question of reaching a rapprochement between the two communities arises," he explained. For Spyros Kyprianou and Rauf Denktaş, he could not say the same. "Neither of them wants a settlement," he asserted. If Denktaş signed the January Draft Agreement, it was solely because he had come under pressure from Ankara. "The Americans want a settlement; Turkey needs America; and Denktaş is Ankara's puppet," he charged. Though scathing in his denunciation of the two chief leaders of the two Cypriot communities, Özgür was nonetheless sanguine that a settlement would soon be reached. As he put it, "In the end, Denktaş abides by the wishes of the Turkish Cypriot community; sooner or later, Kyprianou will have to abide by the wishes of his people as well."

On both occasions when I saw him, Özgür seemed content. His had been the only party to oppose the new constitution, and three voters in ten had followed its lead. In the Presidential election, he had managed to attract more than eighteen per cent of the votes, nearly twice the support secured by Alpay Durduran. And, finally, in the parliamentary poll, CTP improved its standing to 21.33%. Four years before, Özgür's party had barely topped 17%. He had reason to celebrate.

After the second interview, Özgür offered to drop me off at the Foreign Ministry. But, as it turned out, Turkish Cyprus' diplomatic establishment had moved to new quarters--and the leader of the TRNC's second largest party had no idea where they had gone.

## III

I was unable to interview National Unity Party chairman Derviş Eroğlu before the poll, but Hélène and I did journey to the party's headquarters, and we were able to speak with Enver Emin, the NUP's secretary-general, a man who exuded great confidence. Like many NUP deputies, he had served with the Türk Mudafa Teskilat during the years of intercommunal strife. By trade,

he was a pharmacist, and he told us that he was originally recruited by Denktaş because he was a popular, local soccer star. We wondered why there were so many splinter parties, and he courteously took the time to explain. Here, I will only briefly summarize the tangled course of events.



NATIONAL UNITY PARTY HEADQUARTERS

In assessing the electoral struggle in northern Cyprus, one must keep in mind that the population is miniscule. There are roughly 160,000 residents, and of these not many more than 93,000 are registered to vote. The RTP may be an exception to the rule, but in general it is fair to say that the parties of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus are parties of notables. When figures popular in particular localities are unhappy with their status within their party, they tend to resign--and they often take a chunk of the electorate with them. Durduran's Communal Liberation Party had suffered from just such a split, and the NUP--as the largest party and

the governing party--had suffered from such squabbles as well. İsmet Kotak had resigned from the party in the period following the 1976 elections, and in 1981 his Democratic People's Party had won two seats. Rauf Denktaş' son Raif had abandoned the NUP after he had lost his seat in the 1981 poll, and he had subsequently founded the Social Democratic Party (SDP). More recently, İrsen

KÜÇÜK, who had served for a number of years as the secretary-general of the NUP, had followed suit. He is the wealthiest landowner on the island; he is the nephew of the late Dr. Fazıl KÜÇÜK, who had been elected Vice-President of the Republic of Cyprus in 1960; and he had the support of the family newspaper Halkın Sesi ("The People's Voice"). His party--the Communal Endeavor Party (CEP)--could be expected to cut deeply into the NUP support. Or so we thought.

Enver Emin calmly corrected our misreading of the situation. In his view, circumstances favored the National Unity Party. He acknowledged that, as President, Rauf Denktaş was formally above party politics and had therefore resigned from the NUP. But, he asserted, everyone on the island knows that we are his closest supporters. We will, accordingly, take the lion's share of the conservative vote. İsmet Kotak's Democratic People's Party had little support outside the Magousa (Famagusta) area and would not improve its share of the votes; Raif Denktaş' Social Democratic Party was negligible; and İrsen KÜÇÜK was involved in a scandal. While Minister of Agriculture some months before, he had allegedly accepted a bribe. Moreover, there was a clause in the new constitution that was not to be found in the constitution of the Turkish Federated State of Cyprus, and it would spell the death knell for these splinter parties. To secure representation in the new assembly, a party had to receive at least eight per cent of the ballots cast within the TRNC. Emin predicted that the NUP would gain forty per cent of the vote, that it would be allotted twenty-eight of the fifty seats in the new assembly, and that İsmet Kotak's DPP, Raif Denktaş' SDP, and İrsen KÜÇÜK's CEP would all fail to pass the threshold of eight per cent. In his view, the only splinter party likely to be represented in the assembly was Aytaç Beştaş's New Birth Party, which drew virtually all of its support from the mainland Turks who had immigrated to Cyprus between 1974 and 1976 and had stayed to make the island their home.

Neither Hélène nor I thought Enver Emin's description of the situation plausible; it sounded too partisan--and, in one particular, it was. In the final count, the NUP took not 40% of the vote, but 36.75%; and it gained 24, not 28 seats in the assembly. In every other respect, however, Emin's predictions were borne out by the event.

#### IV

When I saw Rauf Denktaş on the 24th of June, he was in fine fettle. The results were coming in, and the pattern was clear. In the period stretching from 1981 to 1985, the NUP share of the total vote had dropped from about 41% to 36.75%--but the total vote received by the nonleftist parties had jumped from somewhere in the neighborhood of 53% to nearly 63%. "I did not expect, after ten years of rule, that the NUP would be successful again," Denktaş remarked--and then he alluded very briefly to the reason why it had done so well.

I had intended to go to Cyprus a week or so before the elections. That had proved impossible because all the planes had been full: the elections in northern Cyprus had coincided with the vacation (Şeker Bayramı) that comes at the end of Ramadan, the month-long period when devout Muslims fast during the daylight hours, and many a Turk had flown off to Cyprus to gourmandize and guzzle. I did, however, arrive in time to attend a number of political rallies, and I had been struck by the failure of any of the speakers to make foreign policy an issue. This was the fact that Denktaş brought to our attention the day after the poll. The entire election campaign had been fought on economic issues. The declaration of independence, the subsequent 'proximity talks,' the promulgation of the January Draft Agreement, Kyprianou's refusal to sign the document, and his inept, last-minute attempt to turn the result of negotiations into a basis for further negotiation--these events had robbed the left of the one issue that might have allowed it to cut into Denktaş' support. As özker özgür wryly admitted at the time of my second meeting with him, "We thought the declaration of independence a mistake--but Denktaş was right. It brought Kyprianou to the negotiating table."

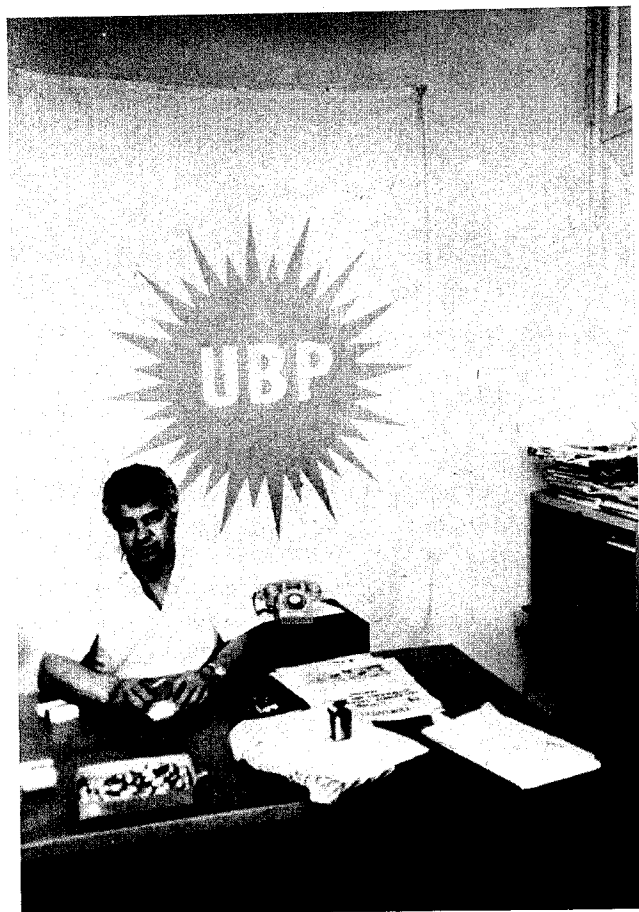
#### TURKISH REPUBLIC OF NORTHERN CYPRUS

##### First General Elections (1985)

<u>Parties</u>	<u>Percentage of Votes</u>	<u>Out of 50 Seats</u>
National Unity Party	36.75	24
Republican Turkish Party	21.33	12
Communal Liberation Party	15.91	10
New Birth Party	8.74	4
Democratic People's Party	7.39	--
Communal Endeavor Party	6.08	--
Social Democratic Party	3.76	--

Rauf Denktaş had reason to be happy with the outcome of recent events. Derviş Eroğlu, the chairman of the National Unity Party, was to be Prime Minister; and the NUP could form a coalition with the mainlanders' New Birth Party, with the leaders of a Communal Liberation Party much chastened by its poor showing in the polls, or with both. The Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus had put its house in order; on questions of foreign policy, it could present a united front to the world--while, in the south, AKEL and Glafkos Klerides' Democratic Rally were stepping up the pressure on Spyros Kyprianou by abolishing offices and gradually dismantling his government. Denktaş glowed as he reiterated once again his conditions for a settlement with the Cypriot Greeks. "This time," he promised, "there will be no secret negotiations." When pressed regarding the possibility of a settlement, he replied, "In truth, I do not expect a settlement now. Mr. Perez de Cuellar is misleading the world with his very optimistic reports to the Security Council. The differences are as deep now as they were when Makarios and the EOKA leadership first plotted the attacks against us that they launched in 1963 and 1964. Then, enosis meant practical union with Greece; today, it means a takeover of all of Cyprus by the racist Greek Cypriot regime."

When I stumbled into Alper Faik Genç a few days later on the beach, he told me not to expect a real settlement soon. "I predict," he hastened to add, "that a document of some sort will be signed within three months. The Greek Cypriots will get Varosha, and they will lift the embargo: Nicosia International Airport [which I mistakenly equated with Turkish Cyprus' Ercan Airport in PAR-5] will be reopened under United Nations supervision for use by both communities--and then the talks will break down once more." That is presumably what Rauf Denktaş expects, and it may be what he wants--for now. To this day, the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus depends on Ankara for sixty per cent of its budget. The only hope for the economy is tourism, and this year tourism suffered a marginal decline.



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TURKISH CYPRIOT PRIME MINISTER DERVIŞ EROĞLU

The day before I left the TRNC for Istanbul, Richard Haass, the State Department Coordinator for Cyprus, came to pay a visit to Rauf Denktaş. The American diplomats accompanying him were all in a good mood. Shortly after I had reached the island, a TWA airliner had been hijacked by Shiite terrorists after taking off from Athens airport. The passengers were subsequently removed from the plane and held as hostages in the Shiite slums of Beirut. Not long before Richard Haass crossed the Green Line that separates Greek from Turkish Cyprus, the word came through that the American hostages had been



RICHARD HAASS MEETS THE TURKISH CYPRIOT PRESS

released by their captors and were making their way from Beirut to Damascus. When I last saw Rauf Denktaş, he was haranguing Richard Haass on the subject, asking him why so much could be done for a handful of Americans while so little had been done during the period from 1963 to 1974 when the Turks of Cyprus were hostages in their own land. As Denktaş warmed to his subject and the reporters crowded round to take photographs, Richard Haass smiled and smiled and smiled. The elections were over; the various Turkish Cypriot party leaders were making appointments to consult with Turkey's ambassador; and, at the Presidential Palace, the diplomatic chess game was about to begin again.

Sincerely,

*Paul A. Rahe*

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RICHARD HAASS SMILES AT RAUF DENKTAS' HARANGUE



THE UBIQUITOUS ATATÜRK

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