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Democrat Party - Press Relations

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Abstract

In order to understand the relations between the press and Democrat Party, it is important to look into the relations between the press and Republican People's Party which is their previous era. After the foundation of the republic, the government started to deal with the opposing movements by putting new laws into effect. Some of these laws were about the press and their freedom was also limited by these laws. As a result of these, the country was going towards an authoritarian government. After the Second World War started, The Republican People's Party put more pressure on people. But more and more pressure was put on the press. However, after the end of the war, the whole world changed the direction towards more freedom and Menderes and his friends wanted to make use of this opportunity and formed their opposition around this topic. As a result of this, the press started to support them. When they started to govern the country, they tried to remove the hindrances in front of freedom and made laws for more liberty. But later, many things started to go wrong, and the economic situation got worse. Then, the press started to oppose the government and the government started to make laws to hinder their freedom. This situation did not stay as a single event but throughout their ruling, the combat continued in the same way. The more the press opposed the more authoritarian the government became. Even towards the end of their ruling, the problem gained an international dimension and it was discussed in international arena. In the end, towards the coup d'état in 1960, the government censored the press for their opposition.

Key Words: Democrat Party; Republican People's Party; the Press; the Relations with Press

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1. Introduction

The main point in explaining the meaning of the relations between the Democrat Party and the press is to analyze the relations with the press during the previous era. The oppressive practices of Republican People's Party caused the opposing party gather around the Democrat Party altogether, in other words, it directed them to a struggle for freedom in some way. The restrictive laws made by the Single Party and the rigid practices during the World War II drove the press in the pursuit of freedom to give support to Menderes and his friends. Freedom which was one of the situations that people were excessively fussing over was quite restricted during that time. The end of such a great devastating war caused changed in many permanent paradigms, the whole world started to evolve into a more free structure. The Democrat Party considering it as an opportunity turned this issue to a political argument against the Republic People's Party having notoriety in this subject and especially won the press over. In order to see the reasons why the press having different ideological tendencies supported the Democrat Party, firstly the practices of single party are required to be considered.

2. Government -Press Relations during the Single Part Era.

During the Independence War, some extraordinary situations were experienced admittedly. During that time, sample news by the press communities supporting or not supporting the Independence War was issued. Those not supporting were sent abroad and tried by the Independence Court, some of those supporting became a member of parliament [21]. There was no regulation concerning the press in 1921 constitution act. There is a regulation concerning the press in the Article 77 of the 1924 constitution act. "The press is free within the limits of law and unpublished supervision does not subject to examination." [28]

However, when the social events having an important role in regulating the relations between the government and the press came up suddenly, restrictions were imposed on the press. The most well-known of them was the situation (13 February 1925) occurring as a result of Şeyh Sait Revolt. The social events breaking out were considered as an uprising against the new regime by the Republican Regime and harsh responses were given.

Mosul question continued with England in the field of foreign policy and the English carried out attacks on the frontier region of Hakkari. During that time, the press was free to write anything. However, the Nasruti revolt continued in the region and the press could easily write about this which caused Ankara a great worry [27].

Additionally, some developments continued to come up suddenly in the field of politics. The establishment of Terakkiperver Republican Party was the first of all.(17 November 1924). Law on the Maintenance of Order (4 March 1925) was enacted for the purpose of maintaining the order and safety of the community on the charges of the fact that this party did not adopt the principles of the revolution and some anti-revolutionists encouraged by them took action.

The first article of the law brought an order to the relations with the press. "All organizations, provocative or incentive enterprises and official publications concerning any reaction, uprising or the infringement of the assembly, peace, tranquility, security and the order of the country shall subject to objection ex officio and temporarily with the approval of the President. The government may entrust those in breach hereby to the Independence Court [29]."

As stated above, the anxious status of the government was referred in the first article of this law. Any provocation, incentive and publication to create social unrest were restricted by this law. Immediately afterwards, the newspapers of *Tevhid-i Efkar*, *Son Telgraf*, *İstiklal* and *Sebilürreşat* were shut down on 6 March 1925 and the newspaper of *Tanin* was shut down on 14th April. The claims that the opposing party is intended to be faced down on the ground of Şeyh Said revolt became effective during this period. After the newspaper was shut down, the owner of the newspaper Huseyin Cahit was exiled to Çorum [24].

During this term, many other newspapers were shut down and even some so-called proponent newspapers could not stand clear of this process [21].

After that, "The Censorship Regulation to be implemented in the Martial Law District on the Eastern Vicinity" was accepted and then the owner of the newspaper Ahmet Emin and many of his colleagues were tried by the Independence Courts [2].

It can be said that the second process concerning the relations between the government and the press started with the second attempt of multi-party system in 1930.

The biggest issue disturbing the government and the President Ataturk was the probability of an atmosphere that the country was being ruled by a dictator regime [17]. The issue of the fact that the most effective solution to change this situation was an opposing party came to the fore. As a result of such thoughts, Free Republican Party (SCF) was established under the chairmanship of Fethi Bey on 12 August 1930. Nuri Conker was assigned to the office of secretary general.

Afterwards, Fethi Bey going on the Western Anatolia trip from the date of 3 September 1930 intended to introduce his party. However, the government was directed to different initiatives and a conflict occurred between the police and the public due to the facts that he was welcomed with a great honor during his trip and called with the title of "Veteran" and then the civil commotion was spread to mass groups and showed as if it was CHF-SCF conflict [7]. The pro-government newspaper called "Anadolu" was attacked by the general public [28] The articles written in the same newspaper against SCF caused the processes start and led to the laws governing the press.

The Western Anatolia trip of Fethi Bey came with very critical points and the press was divided into two national sides [21].

Under such polarization environment, Fethi Bey shut down SCF upon the request of Mustafa Kemal on 17 November 1930 [26].

About 1 month later, Menemen event broke out and the country drifted into a state of chaos again. Very critical discussions related to the press occurred in the Assembly following this. In fact, it was said that the revolters took inspiration from the newspapers during the revolts and they were directed by them. Various critics were propounded that the anti-government press were worse even than the occupying forces. It was also said that some journalists were deceitful, some were conspirators and some others were humiliated by calling them the citizens of different nationalities and further many intellectuals held off from speaking due to the fact that the freedom of press was abused. Additionally, there were those indicating that the press undertook a very important mission in free countries. However, this situation did not prevent the new law from being enacted [21].

The Law Governing the Press numbered 1881 and dated on 25 July 1931 was accepted under these conditions. There were 23 articles in the law where many important issues concerning the press were discussed and it started with the explanation about the meaning of the publications. The procedure of opening printing house was defined as well. Publication of the press, sale procedure, the status of the employees, the rights of the owner, the responsible people for the publication crimes, the penalties for solicitation, obscene publications, blackmailing, false publications, those publication of which were restricted, noncriminal publications, right of responding, publication of the resolutions, closure of the newspaper or journal, collection of the publications, compensation and immaterial damage, lapse of time, prosecution and judgement procedures, implementation of the law were discussed within the scope of the law and wide range of regulations were introduced.

However, it can be considered from the point of view that the law brought a set of restrictions and prevented the free press. It would be helpful to look into the articles of some laws to verify this thesis. The qualifications required for the owners of the newspaper or journals were defined in the article 12. The technical details such as being Turkish, turning 20 years old, high-school or college graduation were listed and they were followed by some important restrictions. These are as bellows: “Not being convicted previously by any court or council due to an act against the country, national struggle, republic and revolution” (paragraph I of the article 12), not being engaged previously in any publication serving to the purposes of the enemy during the national struggle or the invasions (paragraph K).

The point not to be ignored is that undesired persons may be included within the scope of these articles in the line with the flexibility of the law.

In the article 27, the responsibility likely to arise from the publication has been given to the person running the newspaper. In the event that a news with a nick name or no name, if the prosecutor requests the real name of the person making the news, it shall be given to him or her, otherwise the newspaper

would be shut down upon the decision made by the court of law. The content of the news can be excluded from the legal proceeding and those responsible can be sentenced to imprisonment.

As it is seen, the reason for the punishment imposed hereby is not the content of the news but the fact that the name of the author is not given. The content of the news subjects to a separate judgment.

The issues concerning the opening of the newspaper and the contents of the news shall subject to permission to be obtained by the public officers. Additionally, the letters sent by the public officers as a right of reply are stated to be written in the same column and the same font size with the previous news on the next day [19].

The afore-mentioned law set forth pecuniary penalties for various issues considered as a crime within the scope of the law and this situation restricts the press to a great extent.

In accordance with the article 18, any publication committing any crime indicated within the scope of the law, it shall be shut down by the order of senior civil servant. In accordance with the article 50, those making publications against the general policy of the country are shut down temporarily with the decision of the Cabinet Council and they cannot publish anything under a different name [19].

During the implementation of this law, some detentions and mutual accusations took place and severe arguments continued under such an atmosphere. In this respect, it was said that the press could not publish whatever it wanted in the progovernment newspapers, they would be disciplined by the judges and this law brought important restrictions. Furthermore, some presses were shut down in accordance with the law [21].

On 28 June 1938, there had been some amendments in the law until that time, the most important amendment made on this date. In the procedure of publishing newspaper set forth within the article 9, the senior civilian authority was given a notification and the name, owner and the address of the newspaper as well as the language in which the newspaper was prepared and some important managers were required to be specified. Along with this amendment, the obligations of giving notification, obtaining license and paying the bail for the newspaper with political content on a bank account in proportion to the population of the region [18].

During the war, the press was taken under the strict control of the Department of the Press; many criteria were determined by the government. The dominance of the government was seen especially with regard to the subjects of the foreign policy. Along with this, the opponent press was opened but it had to be shut down under very difficult conditions and proceeded on its way with penalties of imprisonment. It was claimed that the reason for the government to take the press under its guidance was to create public opinion as it desired [3].

The newspaper "Tan" was shut down during this period, the government adopting an authoritative policy intended that the newspapers reflected its ideology. This situation continued this way until the

year of 1946, multi-party system was adopted along with the establishment of Democrat Party and many understandings started to change with the effect of the opposition party.

3. Press Relations During The Democat Party Period

3.1. The Period of Opposition Party (1946-1950)

A new system was started to be built along with the end of the World War II. The world began to turn into a bipolar system under the leaderships of the winning states of the war, the USA and the USSR. The USA started to take measures against the expansionist policies of the Soviets and consider the issue of the reformation of Europe as well. Under such conditions, the USA providing assistance to Turkey started to make demands on Turkey at the stage of adopting a democratic structure on the other hand.

İsmet İnönü began to imply that the multi-party system would be adopted in his speech on 19 May 1945. Until that time, the government pursuing oppressive policies with the effect of the World War II started to be in tendency of softening its policies. The group to establish the Democrat Party later started opposition with "The Land Law" representing the same period and then introduced the memorandum of the four for the sake of democratization. However, their requests were rejected. Following the events on June 1945, the opposition groups started to give opposing statements in the newspapers were exported from CHP (Republican People's Party) in the month of September. Later, Celal Bayar established the Democrat Party (DP) on 6 January 1946 after receiving the approval of the President İsmet İnönü. During the elections carried out on 21 July in the same year, Democratic Party started as the opposition party 62 members of the parliament [3].

The relations between DP and the press became positive from this term, it continued its approach concerning the freedom of press just like its other approaches in terms of opposition against the government party. It made its presence felt especially during the oppressive period beginning with the World War II and on the press due to the oppressive policies in addition to the aggressive manner of those supporting the government [22]. For instance, the newspaper "Tan" alleged to support the Soviets on 4 December 1945 were busted and damaged heavily.

Due to DP's opposition to the government and supporting the freedom of press, the press gave a great support to DP. In accordance with the article 50 in the Law Governing the Press, the CHP responded to DP expressing the government's authority to close many times by means of amending this article. According to the draft law accepted on 13 June 1946, the newspapers would be closed by the court decision [22].

Even though DP did not have its own media organ during this term, many articles by the notables of the party were being published in the newspapers such as Vatan and Tan. When the leaders of DP came to power, they put into words that they would make regulations concerning the freedom of press; this caused them to support the press to a great extent in this respect [15].

During this term, the press moved the news about Adnan Menderes to the headlines and first pages, gave big support to the party thanks to its liberal style [22].

3.2. First Period Power of DP (1950-1954)

When they came to the power considerably with the support of the press, one of the first practices of the DP power became amending the Law for Governing the Press. This Law was accepted on 15 June 1950 and entered into force on 21 June 1950. Main innovations introduced by this law were as below:

- a) The authorizations given to the government within the scope of the law were cancelled and the provision that the closing of newspaper subjects to the court decision was added.
- b) In accordance with the article added in 1938 concerning the publishing of a newspaper, the requirement of obtaining license from the senior civilian authority in the region was cancelled and just giving notification about this was considered to be sufficient instead. However, in the notification given, specifying the name of the responsible manager of the newspaper remained as a legal obligation again.
- c) The former articles concerning that those having a bad reputation shall not engage in journalism were cancelled with this law. Any article added this way was possible to be interpreted in any manner.
- d) Special authorized courts were entitled to the judgment of the crimes concerning the press.
- e) The articles which were set forth as a right to respond were amended and so the courts were given some authorizations concerning the preparation of the revise proofs.
- f) Only the author and the editor in chief would be held responsible for the articles prepared. The owner of the newspaper would have only legal and financial responsibilities [24].

During this term, "The Law about the Arrangement of the Relations between the Employees and Employers in Press" numbered 5953 and dated on 13 June 1952 was excluded and the journalists were given some employee personal rights. These rights were utilization of social securities, obligation to contract, compensation and paid leave [12].

The newspaper "Ulus" known to support CHP started to oppose DP at the beginning. It expressed that the new law governing the press could not satisfy the expectations and was not so different from the previous regulations in this respect. Ulus did not bring out this law later on; just criticize it for destroying the expectations. On the other hand, the newspaper "Zafer" supporting DP expressed that this law was a right step to the freedom in press [4].

After that the newspaper "Ulus" was casted out in the invitations given to the press, started to increase the number of members supporting the government in Anadolu Ajansı, made changes in official

announcement regulation and was criticized by the opposition. By August in 1950, the newspaper Ulus started to be inundated with the news that many members of press were sent to the courts.

On the other hand, the newspaper "Zafer" supported the government and expressed that the opposition press misinformed [4].

Furthermore, it did not abolish the article in penalty of imprisonment was proposed for the exaggerated or intentional news to break the belief and spoil the motivation of the community with the law enacted after the war and tried to use this against the opposition press. In the face of criticisms, they expressed that this was introduced by the former government. Whereas, the opposition press responded that this article was not used in any way during the period of CHP. Additionally, when they mentioned that the hearing of the trials was performed in military courts, the newspaper "Zafer" proceeded to counter attack and claimed that the opposition press did not trust the soldiers [4].

Immediately after coming to the power, DP prepared an amnesty law and included the press within the scope of this law and gave a judgment that no prosecution would be held for the crimes committed before the date 15 May 1950 [1].

Even though the initial years of DP had a good course along with the increase in agricultural production and thanks to the Marshall Plan provided by USA, it turned against the government in time due to interruptions in aid and unplanned economy [6].

The government emphasizing that the policies adopted were wrong and trying to show a harsh attitude against the press brought a new order with the law about the crimes to be committed through publication dated on 9 March 1954 and numbered 6334. The President Menderes expressed that the press is a kind of measurement against the situations to harm the honors of the citizen violate the personal rights and liberties as the reason for the enactment of this law [16]. Within the frame of this law, Huseyin Cahit Yalçın criticizing the government was sentenced to the imprisonment by means of lifting his parliamentary immunity [8].

In parallel with the political developments during the period following the initial years of the DP power, social developments came out and especially an immigration from villages to cities started [22].

The government stuck among all these events started to show authoritative tendencies and adopt harsh attitudes against the press. These can be considered as the indicators of the fact that the good relations with the press starting during the opposition year came to an end.

During this period, the newspapers divided into two groups as those supporting and not supporting the DP power, the opponent press was excluded and discredited, and it was discriminated even in terms of newspaper distribution and announcement as well. On the other hand, it continued press relations with a harsh manner and accordingly various arguments were generated by the other press against the

criticisms [4]. Some news were about the fact that the government opened the way to many liberties while some others claimed that the liberties were restricted on the other hand.

3.3. Second Period Power of DP(1954-1957)

After the elections conducted in the year 1954, DP started to push the press further. Meanwhile, the opponent press increased its criticisms. Many legal actions were filed concerning the opponent press [3]. During this term, many journalists were sentenced to imprisonment and pecuniary penalties as well.

The economic indicators deteriorated during the second period in particular which constituted serious challenges for the power. However the government maintained a harsh stance against the criticism. For example, many legal actions were filed about Cemal Sağlam who served as engagement manager in the opposing press, on 20 October 1955 when he died; he had a trial at the court which was another point of the issue [3].

A state of siege was declared by the government during the events of 6-7 September breaking out in the year of 1955 and some bans were imposed as a result [12]. The first procedure conducted in here was to censor the newspapers dated on 7 September. This censoring was carried out by means of defacing the relevant sections concerning the events in the newspaper as it was impossible to reprint the newspapers published that day [22].

Harsh attitude of the Democrat Party was not just for the journalists but also the academicians at the universities and the public officers. The public officers were deprived of the political rights and the professors tried to be retired earlier. However, all these oppressive attitudes influenced the press most. It was the press continuously criticizing and protesting these issues. Thus, it became the first target [14]. In this respect, detentions and pecuniary penalties were imposed on the journalists again and again. Such an oppressive government also caused unrests in the party and those separated from the party on December 1955 established the Liberty Party (Hürriyet partisi) [6].

Along with this, the press standing up for itself was supported, during the judgments made after the coup in 1960, the aids done from the discretionary fund were especially came to the fore [11].

The state of siege during the events of 6-7 September was not removed, an amendment to the law was applied on 7 June 1956. Along with the amendments made, the publication of the decisions taken and the interviews conducted during the clandestine gatherings by the press was restricted. The provisions concerning the exemption from the detention which were available in favor of the journalists within the scope of the Criminal Procedures Act were removed, high-school graduation was considered as minimum requirement for being a manager in the newspaper, and some obligations were introduced concerning the response and correction notices [15].

The problematic relations between DP and the press was not limited only with the publication, the government oppress the newspapers in terms of paper use as well. It cut the 50% of the paper supply of the newspaper "Hurriyet" and imposed penalty on the newspaper "Akşam" by means of not supplying paper [5].

One of the problems experienced between the government and the press was the issue of official announcement. When the gazette preference was totally left to the discretion of the ministry with the regulation in 1951, it caused a great argument. When the ministry used its discretionary power for the press supporting itself, the argument became deeper. However, the newspapers publishing news concerning the domestic and foreign policies and making comments in these respects were being selected preferably beforehand. The new regulation removed such a premise and left it completely to the discretion of the ministry.

A new regulation was brought in this respect on November 1953 and a requirement was introduced for the newspapers on which an advertisement would be put. These newspapers were required to be completed their 6 months. In this way, the newspaper "Ulus" which was the media organ of CHP the property of which were seized that year was closed and no announcement was published on the newspaper "Halkçı Gazete" opened instead of it [3]. It is also required to specify that the government party bestowed its privilege on the newspapers supporting it and used its discretionary power for them.

3.4. Third Period Power of DP (1957-1960)

Even though it became the first party in 1957 selections, big problems were waiting for the Democrat Party. The country entered into a downturn in terms of economy and many organizations previously supporting it were opposing any more. One of the most striking examples of them was the press. Because, until the Democrat Party came to the power, it continuously got support of the press due to the oppressive attitude of CHP and accordingly it conducted a challenging opposition process. However, the situation became reversed after the elections. From that time, many organizations and the press started to oppose the Democrat Party as a group. The legal regulations were followed by the detentions and pecuniary penalties to oppress the opposition, but rather this situation caused a greater cooperation in opposition members [23].

One of the events to describe the relation between the government and the opposition best during this term was the resignation of Fuat Köprülü. Defining that the Democrat Party went out of the frame and it was a national service to dissolve this party was a striking example in terms of showing the position where the opposition came [10].

The harsh attitude of the opposition party and many other problems directed the government to be oppressive and it resulted in violence at the end. For example, police used physical violence to the reporters and grabbed their cameras as well. Istanbul Journalists Association showing their reaction to this situation was closed with a mid-night raid and could not open for 9 months [10].

The repentance law brought to the assembly during this term was rejected and a repentance to be granted due to press crimes was restricted by the members of Democrat Party. International reactions aroused to all these events, International Press Institute (IPI) sent a critical review concerning these events to the Prime Minister Menderes. However, it was not taken into consideration by the Government [20]. The same institute invited the press organizations around the world to protest the press law introduced on 1954 in Turkey [15]. Under these circumstances, the government defended itself by means of claiming that the Institute interfered in the internal affairs of Turkey, the journalist of the period, Bülent Ecevit wrote a letter supporting the Institute [1].

One of the important international events leaving its mark on the period was the American journalist Eugene Pulliam's experiences and discussing them in Turkish press.

In 1958, the relation between the government and the press turned out to be an international issue. This situation drew the attraction on Turkey sooner. As mentioned above, the warning made by the foreigners to Turkish government and government's response to them brought with new issues, they became more interested in Turkey this time. During this term, Pullim intending to visit Turkey and meet Menderes could not find any chance in this respect even if he came after making an appointment. Upon this situation, he went back to his country and wrote contrarian pieces about the Turkish government. He sent them to the journalist Ahmet Emin Yalman in Turkey. Ahmet Emin Yalman published these pieces after translating into Turkish and added his own considerations in this respect as well. As a result of this, the judicial processes started, "Pulliam Trials" popular during that time in Turkey continued for the next 2 years [25].

On April 1960, Assembly's Inquiry Commission was established with a private law and it was given the authorizations for restricting of publishing, printing and distribution of the magazines and newspapers or even closing them. Later, publishing of the interviews in Turkish Grand National Assembly was restricted. Due to the censoring under these circumstances, the marching of the students of Military Academy for protesting the government on 21 May 1960 could not be published in the press and the student upheavals deposing the President in South Korea were published instead [9].

4. Conclusion

As one of the basic needs of people was freedom, they had a nature standing against any attempts restricting their freedom. Hence, Democrat party taking the support of many journalists and even several government bodies due to the oppressive approach during the period of Republic People's Party showed this especially with its attitude supporting the freedoms. As a result of this, many freedoms were paved the way. However the applications introduced by the government were disapproved and criticized in time and so the freedoms started to be restricted. Those giving support after a few year power of the government started to draw their supports back which created the core characteristic of the relations between the government and the press. Even though there were some organizations supporting the government and they were given financial aid as well, a great part of the press was not

afraid of criticizing the government but as a result they were sentenced to punishments through governmental means. One of these means was enactment which was the first of all. The first way of oppressing any opposition group was enactment and enforcing it on the press. The tension climbed constantly when the same methods were applied continuously and the issue was carried onto the international platform. The miscommunication and lack of mutual consultation resulted in the military coup in 1960.

It was not based on the relations with the press. The economic indicators started to show itself in a negative way. The necessary environment for the continuation of the power securely began to be disappeared and so the authoritative tendencies broke out. Oppressions coming from many directions including the foreign relations started to take place in the press and the government organs were applied as a reaction. However the result of such mutual interaction came to a position of authoritativeness and military coup as well.

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