



A NEW ERA OF POLITICS IN TURKEY

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Bekir Ağirdır

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1. THE NEED FOR A NEW PARTY

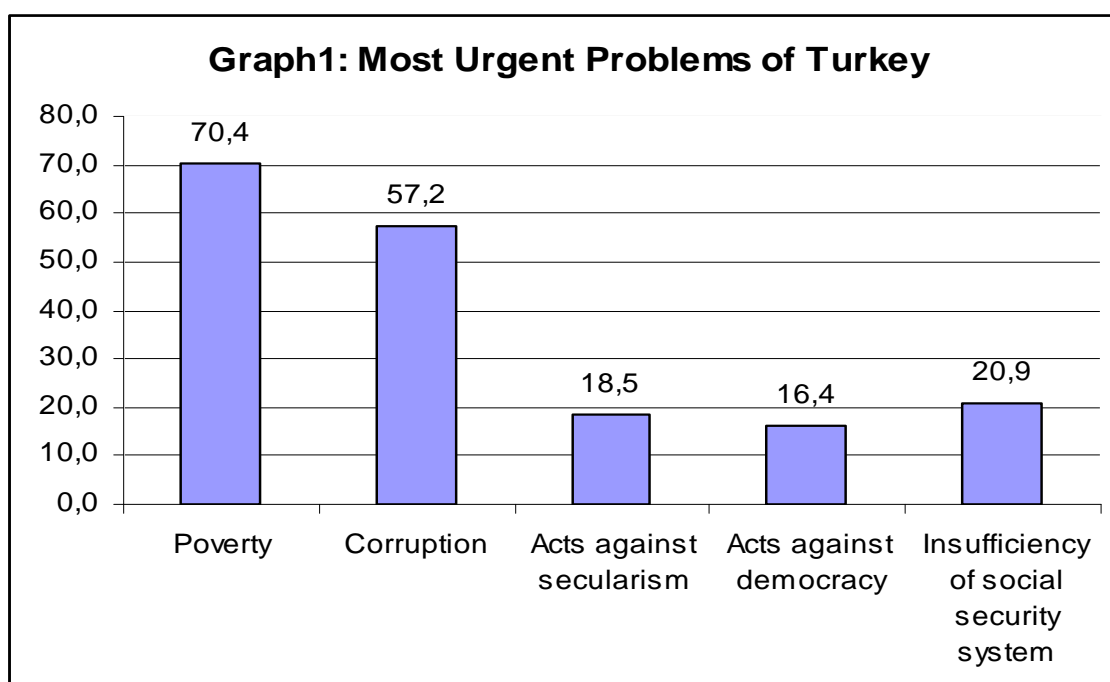
Following elections on July 22nd, part of our political arena is concerned once again with the presidential elections, while another significant portion is striving to understand the change in politics through questions like “what happened in the elections?”, “should CHP change?”, “have center parties come to an end?” and especially “what happened to the left-wing, how can it renew itself?”

As some of our readers may know, KONDA Research and Consultancy conducted a series of opinion polls prior to elections. Besides election-related questions, the poll conducted on June 30th-July 1st, 2007 included questions on the expectations, hopes and concerns that respondents had about their own lives as well as about the country. Following these, it also included questions on what they saw as the country’s main problems and risks; which party/parties could solve them and if not, whether a new party or leader was necessary for solutions.

In this paper, we will first summarise the electorate’s perception and expectations vis-à-vis these issues, based on the responses in the poll and then share with the reader our subjective political analysis and commentary.

The finding about political party preferences in the above mentioned opinion poll was that AKP would get 47.3 % of the votes, CHP 21.1 % and MHP 16 %. As these findings are very close to the eventual outcome of elections, we may assume that other findings are also close to the reality and that they can provide many important and valid clues about the electorate’s request of a new party and new leader.

1.1. What Are The Most Urgent Problems We Face?

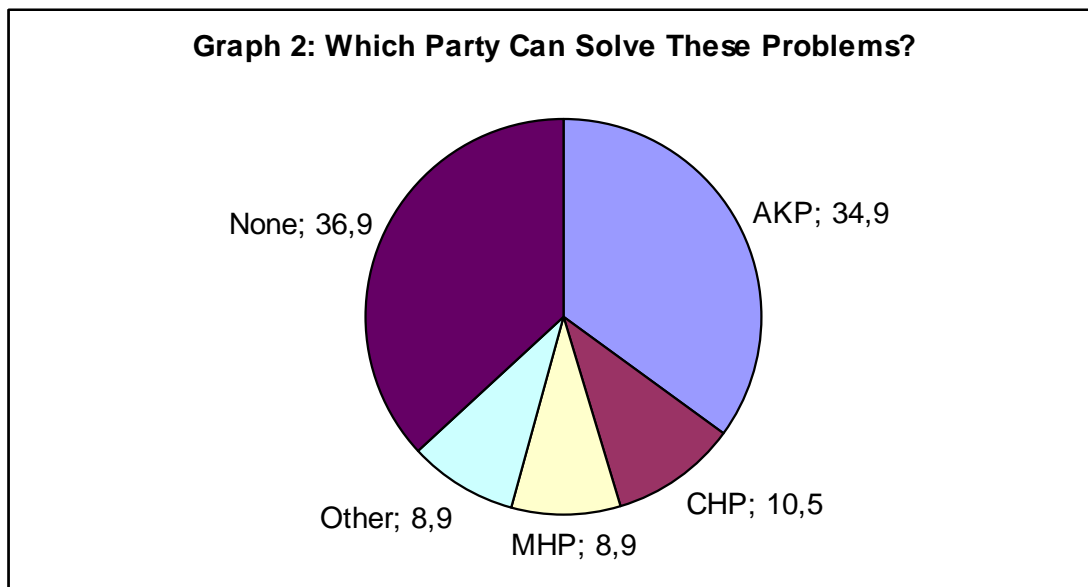




The electorate states that the most important problems of the country are poverty (70.4 %) and corruption (57.2 %). Following those are the insufficiency of the social security system (20.9 %), acts against secularism (18.5 %) and acts against democracy (16.4 %) (Graph1).

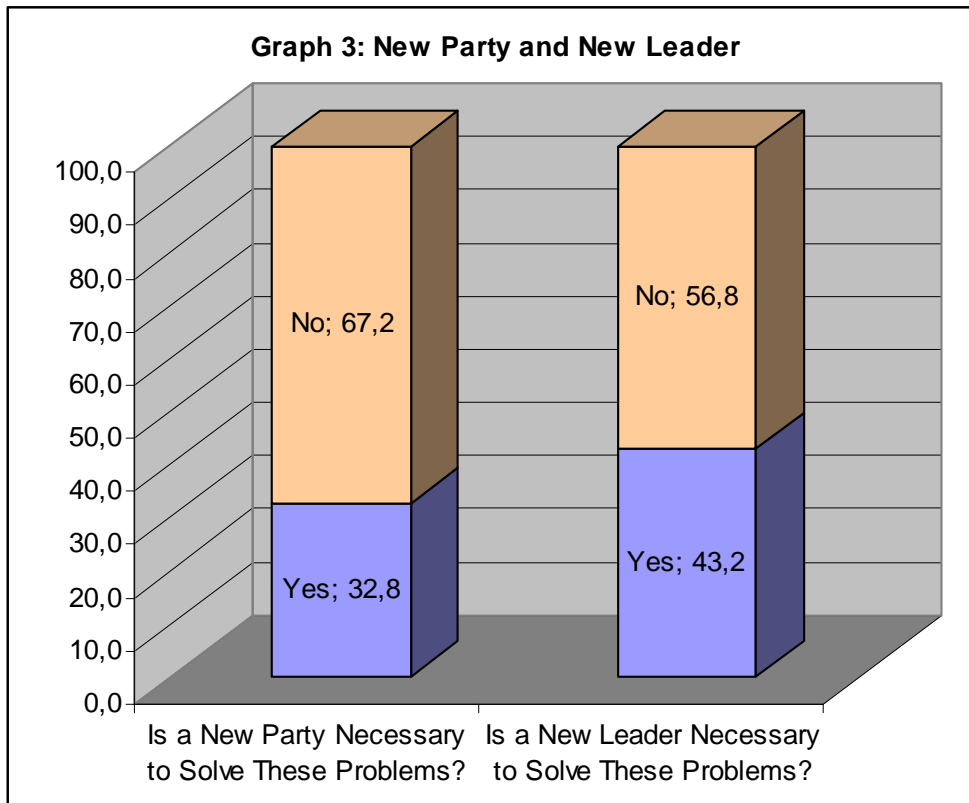
1.2. Which Party Can Solve These Most Urgent Problems?

As for which parties can solve these problems, voters make the following evaluation: AKP 34.9 %, CHP 10.5 % and MHP 8.9 %. Of all voters, 36.9 % believe that none of the parties are capable of solving them (Graph2). These percentages could be considered as the core votes, cast with firm belief while the rest of the votes that these parties receive can be viewed as more calculated, as results of considerations such as the wish to give this one a try or reactionary votes.



1.3. Is a New Party and a New Leader Necessary to Solve These Problems?

32.8 % of voters say that a new party is necessary and 43.2 percent that a new leader is necessary (Graph3). Given how evident the demand for a new party and a new leader is, it becomes indispensable, for the sake of shedding a fresh light on the ongoing debates, to look closely at the profile of those voicing this demand.



1.4. Demographic Distribution

| Table1: Is a new party necessary? | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------|-------|--------|------|------|-------|
| Gender | Yes | No | Turkey | Yes | No | Total |
| Female | 49.9 | 47.0 | 47.9 | 34.1 | 65.9 | 100.0 |
| Male | 50.1 | 53.0 | 52.1 | 31.5 | 68.5 | 100.0 |
| Total | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 32.8 | 67.2 | 100.0 |
| Age | Yes | No | Turkey | Yes | No | Total |
| Ages 18-28 | 32.0 | 29.7 | 30.4 | 34.5 | 65.5 | 100.0 |
| Ags 29-43 | 34.1 | 34.4 | 34.3 | 32.6 | 67.4 | 100.0 |
| Ages 44+ | 33.9 | 36.0 | 35.3 | 31.4 | 68.6 | 100.0 |
| Total | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 32.8 | 67.2 | 100.0 |
| Education | Yes | No | Turkey | Yes | No | Total |
| Middle school or less | 61.9 | 69.3 | 66.9 | 30.3 | 69.7 | 100.0 |
| High school | 26.9 | 23.6 | 24.7 | 35.7 | 64.3 | 100.0 |
| University | 11.2 | 7.1 | 8.4 | 43.5 | 56.5 | 100.0 |
| Total | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 32.7 | 67.3 | 100.0 |
| Household size | Yes | No | Turkey | Yes | No | Total |
| 1-2 Persons | 16.8 | 13.1 | 14.3 | 38.4 | 61.6 | 100.0 |
| 3-5 Persons | 60.0 | 60.6 | 60.4 | 32.5 | 67.5 | 100.0 |
| 5-8 Persons | 19.1 | 20.5 | 20.1 | 31.2 | 68.8 | 100.0 |
| 9 + Persons | 4.0 | 5.7 | 5.2 | 25.7 | 74.3 | 100.0 |
| Total | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 32.8 | 67.2 | 100.0 |
| Monthly Household Income | Yes | No | Turkey | Yes | No | Total |



| | | | | | | |
|--------------------------|------------|-----------|---------------|------------|-----------|--------------|
| Under 300 YTL | 11.1 | 10.1 | 10.4 | 35.0 | 65.0 | 100.0 |
| 301-700 YTL | 45.0 | 47.6 | 46.8 | 31.5 | 68.5 | 100.0 |
| 701-1200 YTL | 28.5 | 30.0 | 29.5 | 31.6 | 68.4 | 100.0 |
| 1201-3000 YTL | 13.6 | 10.6 | 11.6 | 38.6 | 61.4 | 100.0 |
| Over 3001 YTL | 1.7 | 1.8 | 1.8 | 32.3 | 67.7 | 100.0 |
| Total | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 32.7 | 67.3 | 100.0 |
| Location | Yes | No | Turkey | Yes | No | Total |
| Urban | 68.8 | 69.0 | 69.0 | 32.3 | 66.5 | 100.0 |
| Rural | 31.2 | 31.0 | 31.0 | 32.7 | 66.7 | 100.0 |
| Total | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 32.4 | 66.6 | 100.0 |
| Region Inhabited | Yes | No | Turkey | Yes | No | Total |
| Istanbul | 17.7 | 17.5 | 17.6 | 32.6 | 66.3 | 100.0 |
| Western Marmara | 6.2 | 4.3 | 4.9 | 40.7 | 57.6 | 100.0 |
| Aegean | 16.5 | 13.7 | 14.6 | 36.7 | 62.8 | 100.0 |
| Eastern Marmara | 12.3 | 8.1 | 9.4 | 42.7 | 57.3 | 100.0 |
| West Anatolia | 10.2 | 9.8 | 10.0 | 33.0 | 65.4 | 100.0 |
| Mediterranean | 11.9 | 12.6 | 12.3 | 31.3 | 68.3 | 100.0 |
| Central Anatolia | 3.4 | 6.4 | 5.5 | 20.2 | 77.3 | 100.0 |
| Western Black Sea | 6.9 | 7.3 | 7.1 | 31.5 | 68.1 | 100.0 |
| Eastern Black Sea | 4.4 | 3.9 | 4.0 | 35.4 | 63.9 | 100.0 |
| Northeastern Anatolia | 1.6 | 3.1 | 2.6 | 20.4 | 79.6 | 100.0 |
| Central Eastern Anatolia | 4.5 | 4.2 | 4.4 | 33.3 | 64.1 | 100.0 |
| Southeastern Anatolia | 4.5 | 9.1 | 7.6 | 19.0 | 79.9 | 100.0 |
| Total | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 32.4 | 66.6 | 100.0 |

The information on demographics in Table 1 demonstrates that the demand for a new party comes not from a monolithic, cookie-cutter group, but rather from all segments of society.

1.5. Political Party Choice and the Demand for a New Party

The most salient features of those demanding a new party become clearer with their political party choices (Table 2).

| Table 2 | | Is a new party necessary? | | |
|------------------------|-----|---------------------------|-------|--|
| Political Party Choice | Yes | No | Total | |
| AKP | 23 | 59 | 49 | |
| CHP | 32 | 16 | 20 | |
| MHP | 18 | 14 | 15 | |
| Other | 21 | 10 | 13 | |
| Independent | 7 | 2 | 3 | |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | |
| Political Party Choice | Yes | No | Total | |
| AKP | 12 | 88 | 100 | |
| CHP | 42 | 58 | 100 | |
| MHP | 31 | 69 | 100 | |
| Other | 43 | 57 | 100 | |



| | | | |
|-------------|----|----|-----|
| Independent | 56 | 44 | 100 |
| Total | 26 | 74 | 100 |

42 out of every 100 persons voting for CHP, 31 out of every 100 persons voting for MHP, 56 out of every 100 persons voting for independent candidates and 12 out of every 100 persons voting for AKP state that a new party is necessary.

From another perspective, out of the 100 persons who claim the need for new party, 32 would vote for CHP, 23 for AKP and 18 for MHP.

1.6. *What is Their Status in Life?*

| Table 3: | | | |
|--|---------|--------|-----------|
| Is a new party necessary? | | | |
| In terms of happiness, which segment do you consider yourself to be in? | Yes (%) | No (%) | Total (%) |
| Very happy | 26.0 | 74.0 | 100.0 |
| Happy | 23.9 | 76.1 | 100.0 |
| Neither happy nor unhappy | 38.5 | 61.5 | 100.0 |
| Unhappy | 43.8 | 56.2 | 100.0 |
| Very unhappy | 46.2 | 53.8 | 100.0 |
| Total | 32.6 | 67.4 | 100.0 |
| Is a new party necessary? | | | |
| In terms of income and welfare, which segment do you consider yourself to be in? | Yes (%) | No (%) | Total (%) |
| 1st segment, poorest | 41.5 | 58.5 | 100.0 |
| 2nd segment | 36.2 | 63.8 | 100.0 |
| 3rd segment, mid-level | 30.4 | 69.6 | 100.0 |
| 4th segment | 23.2 | 76.8 | 100.0 |
| 5th segment, wealthiest | 15.4 | 84.6 | 100.0 |

Looking at voters in terms of the level of happiness and welfare, one can see that as happiness or welfare decreases the need for a new party increases (Table 3). While 26 % of those who feel very happy state the need, this rate increases to 38.5 % among those who feel somewhat happy, to 43.8 % among the unhappy ones and up to 46.2 % among the very unhappy ones.

In terms of perceived income and welfare, 41.5 % of the poorest demand a new party whereas 30.4 % of the mid-level and 15.4 % of the wealthiest express this demand.

1.7. *Hope about the Future*

A similar picture emerges with voters' hopes about their own future as well as that of the country (Table 4).

| Table 4: Will your life be better in five years? Are you hopeful? | | | |
|---|---------|--------|-----------|
| Is a new party necessary? | | | |
| | Yes (%) | No (%) | Total (%) |
| | | | |



| | | | |
|--|---------|--------|-----------|
| I am hopeful | 24.0 | 76.0 | 100.0 |
| I am neither hopeful nor unhopeful | 36.3 | 63.7 | 100.0 |
| I am not hopeful | 46.5 | 53.5 | 100.0 |
| No Opinion | 36.4 | 63.6 | 100.0 |
| Total | 32.6 | 67.4 | 100.0 |
| Will the next five years be better for our country? | | | |
| Is a new party necessary? | | | |
| | Yes (%) | No (%) | Total (%) |
| Will be better | 20.1 | 79.9 | 100.0 |
| Will stay the same | 45.3 | 54.7 | 100.0 |
| Will be worse | 46.2 | 53.8 | 100.0 |
| No Opinion | 39.0 | 61.0 | 100.0 |
| Total | 32.9 | 67.1 | 100.0 |

The more pessimistic voters become about themselves or about the country's future, the higher the demand for a new party. While 24 % of those who are hopeful about their own lives demand a new party, the percentage is 46.5 % for the unhopeful ones.

Similarly, the ones hopeful about the country's future express the need by 20.1 % while the unhopeful ones express it by 46.2 %.

1.8. Evaluation of AKP Rule

| | | | |
|--|---------|--------|-----------|
| Table 5, Important reforms implemented during AKP rule. | | | |
| Is a new party necessary? | | | |
| | Yes (%) | No (%) | Total (%) |
| Yes, correct | 21,6 | 78,4 | 100,0 |
| No, wrong | 44,7 | 55,3 | 100,0 |
| No opinion | 43,5 | 56,5 | 100,0 |
| Total | 32,7 | 67,3 | 100,0 |
| Fundamentalism increased during AKP rule. | | | |
| Is a new party necessary? | | | |
| | Yes (%) | No (%) | Total (%) |
| Yes, correct | 42,4 | 57,6 | 100,0 |
| No, wrong | 23,2 | 76,8 | 100,0 |
| No opinion | 43,6 | 56,4 | 100,0 |
| Total | 32,7 | 67,3 | 100,0 |

Evaluation of AKP's main characteristics through views on its reformist or fundamentalist nature once again demonstrates that the new party demand does not have a fixed character.

Nonetheless, while merely 21.6 % of those who believe that important reforms were implemented during AKP rule state the need, 44.7 % of those who do not, state the need. As for fundamentalism, 42.3 % of those who believe it increased during AKP rule demand a new party while 23.2 % those who believe it has not increased demand it.



1.9. Evaluation

The above findings clearly indicate one fact about the 32.8 % of voters who demand a new party: they do not have static, typical characteristics. Nevertheless, generally speaking, as aggravation and hopelessness increases, the need for a new party is voiced more often.

While voters point to poverty and corruption as the most urgent problems of the country, it would be more beneficial to understand these terms with much broader meaning.

It would be more appropriate to understand the problem of poverty as a general problem of the economy and of equality in income distribution, in which unemployment is solved, sustainable growth is realized, as what we could simplify as “quality economy.” Similarly, corruption should be taken as not simply bribing and preferential treatment but with a broader sense of law and justice.

Evaluated along with the findings of other surveys by KONDA, it is noticeable that while AKP has become a mass party, there is still a significant portion of the electorate to which it fails to give hope. This portion of the electorate, which could be viewed as the opposition, is experiencing a serious problem of political representation. A third of AKP and MHP partisans and half of CHP partisans emphasize the need for a new party. It is quite clear that the lack of opposition, as is often debated in recent years, needs to be filled and that further research is needed for an understanding of the demand for a new party.

Up until this point, we demonstrated through our findings that a new party is needed and that society voices this need. The upcoming evaluations are wholly personal commentary on politics. In other words, findings on the demand for a new party constitutes the rationale for the following evaluations and analyses.



2. THE CHANGING RHYTHM OF LIFE

Our country went through general elections but our real problems were not discussed during the elections period. Everyone, the public-at-large notwithstanding, blames others at debates, rather than focusing on efforts to understand the results. In the meanwhile, the world is changing, in fact the era is changing. All the systems and values of the world as we know it are being reshaped for the new century.

Political actors have yet to voice that the scope of this change will effect all arenas of life as well as our thought system, values and attitudes. We are barely familiar with terms such information society and information economy.

Politicians and intellectuals incapable of coping with the complexity that life has taken on seek an easy way out through violence. Violence, whether material and immaterial, bears more and more weight in everyday life.

Politics is the only area where imagination and reality come side by side, face to face as well as intertwined. This juxtaposition is only possible for **an advanced political claim about the future** of our country. It is crystal clear that politics should be shaped not by the past, by what has happened but by the future, by what will happen. It is therefore imperative to understand that which is coming. Maybe we must forget and unmemorise all we have seen, all we know; we must change our mental map and relook at the era and at what is coming.

2.1. The Information Revolution

Up until now, development and welfare were defined through the concepts of industrialisation and production of goods. This definition, by its nature led to more and more production, to larger production facilities and assembly lines, to standardized products and consumption patterns. Relevant to production were land/raw material, labor and capital.

Today, information has become the most important factor in production. Information has come to replace time and other factors in production.

As a result of the incredible developments in information and communication technologies, each individual can reach any necessary information from his/her computer at home or from his/her mobile phone. Information can penetrate into and be produced in all the pores of social life. This bombardment of information has become a fresh source of energy both for societies and for individuals.

2.2. New Production / New Structures of Production

Both the speed with which people reproduce and consume information and the developments in information and communication technologies have changed the production structure. Instead of



standard large-scale production and products, small-scale yet specialized production became possible. Production customized for each client and for each market meant differentiation and specialization in consumption demands.

These changes in the production structure inevitably brought about changes in the values and sensitivities of the consumer. Social and political demands also become specialized with the production infrastructure; special demands such as the environmental movement and women's movement have begun to show themselves.

Industrial enterprises and organizations are changing in an attempt to meet the differentiation in demands. Organizations and enterprises are becoming smaller, more flexible and nimble.

The state and other governmental bodies also face the challenge of having to become smaller yet more efficient, to decentralize and to localise in order to meet the changing social and political needs.

2.3. The Globalization Phenomenon

The production of information by millions and its widespread and common consumption have brought countries and economic structures together at an unprecedented speed. With country economies entwined as such, a market of an unforeseeable magnitude came about. The most notable development was that as the market grew, the information revolution in production and consumption opened up incredible possibilities for small and authentic producers. It came to such a point that the philosophy of "think globally, act locally" transformed into "think locally, act globally." Everyone wanted to take on a role in the global world as "oneself." The differentiation in consumers' demands also provided the energy for this demand.

At this point, great problems followed. In this huge borderless market, where rules were almost abolished, the actors were not developed equally, the imbalances and inequalities worked against those left behind and even further fueled these imbalances and inequalities.

2.4. Political Order

These developments inevitably shook the political order of organization. Every ethnic group which accepted itself as being different demanded to be "itself" in the globalizing world rather than "a motif" in some other political organization. Demands on identity developed and become effective. The notion of nation-state and the order of the state up until now were affected by these changes.

At a point where even the basic functions of the state, namely defense and justice, are being handed over to international organizations, many functions such as education and public works are moving over to local administrations. In short, the role of the state changed.

The concept of human rights became more deepened and widespread. As its scope grew, it became an indispensable condition for the livelihood of countries. Representational democracy fell short of meeting the needs of the changing world and evolved towards participatory democracy.



2.5. *Conclusion*

In summary,

- The production and consumption of information become one of the most important activities of everyday life.
- Information technologies and the use of information served as leverages for attaining development and welfare.
- Consumption preceded production.
- The focus of economic activities shifted to finance rather than production. The character of finance capital changed such that it consisted mainly of individuals' funds and began to move at an alarming speed.
- Economic organization shifted towards modular and flexible forms; small and medium-sized enterprises became more important.
- Yet simultaneously economic monopolies gained speed.
- Smaller and more specialized structures replaced people coming together in factories.
- The quality of labor changed and diversified.
- The social and political demands of people began to differentiate and diversify as a result of these developments.

The mentalities, organization models and political movements which responded to the known problems of the 20th century, became mere observers of the new developments instead of shaping and directing them. The left and social democrat movements which marked the 20th century were now suddenly outdated.

At the center of all these changes, our thought system or mind map has changed. All our values, knowledge, behaviours, our way of thinking, all of which are nurtured by the internal mentality of the industrial society, in short, all have changed. The incapacity to interpret and adapt to the new world led to an inquiry about why we fell outside of life.



3. CHANGES IN OUR THOUGHT SYSTEMS

- a) Information has become more important. However, being a part of the system depends not on the “need to know” but rather on the “need to share knowledge” and “to multiply while sharing.”
- b) It is as if gravity has completely vanished; information and money is moving at an unbelievable speed. As a result, in all areas of life, time and speed have become more important than ever.
- c) Experience became anonymous. The quality of communication which accelerated all areas of life also caused experience to become widespread and anonymous.
- d) Anxiety became somewhat important in individuals’ and societies’ daily lives. The changes we are undergoing are so vast, so varied and at the same time so fast that one’s capacity to adapt could either have advantageous results or mean the risk of disappearing, like it does in much of the world. A fast and drastic change coming from an unseeable and intangible foe constantly threatens us. The fear that your job or your community could change suddenly due to some unsustainable, unnamed economic or technological force begins to command one’s behaviours.
- e) This sudden change fuels the local, and the instinct to hold on to what you are certain is yours. In fact, our most basic elements such as our language, our culture, our physical and social environment, our sense of belonging, our need for shelter are all vulnerable to the destructive forces of globalisation. This necessitates that we own, appropriate these values.
- f) Affiliations have become varied, different demands for each affiliation have proliferated simultaneously.
- g) The local itself can go beyond borders and establish crossborder relations and networks. For example the Gaziantep Chamber of Commerce can directly establish relations with a region in China.
- h) Countries and companies skilled in adapting to and managing these changes, in adding this skill on top of previous advantages, arrive at an uncontrollable, advantageous and destructive position against others.
- i) If we define discrepancies within this context and solve the most fundamental discrepancy, we could solve problems and come up with policies to solve discrepancies. However, today we are living in a world where it is more important to manage discrepancies within the complexity and speed of life. Paradoxes, dilemmas and discrepancies do not define our day, we face multidimensional problems and impasses.
- j) We witness how billions of minute and individual decisions add up to an incredible density. Therefore, at each moment, every actor, every country and every system constantly needs to



be perfectionist. From institutions to countries, a new notion of total quality has become an indispensable part of life.

- k)** Nothing in life develops linearly. On the contrary, reciprocal interaction and change between parties mean relations with geometrically developing results.
- l)** At this point, it becomes both necessary and appropriate to manage not by results and goals, but rather by processes.
- m)** In an environment where any decision at any moment by any actor can affect others dramatically, in a lifestyle where uncertainty is very certain, perceiving changes and making the countermove is only possible through more flexible decision processes. But this also implies different organizational models, people and decision makers with different qualities. Notions such as transparency, accountability, sustainability, quality, total quality have become necessities for correctly defining processes through all this complexity.
- n)** Production and organisational models completely independent of time and space have begun to stand out. New organisational models and network systems, organised by themselves and not fitting any form or model previously defined by the industrial society are starting to become dominant in other areas of life.
- o)** While the complexity of life and the fact that the virtual world has become effective from the internet to credit cards, from e-state to commerce brought concerns about security to the fore, the post-9/11 era has radically changed the notion of security, from its characteristics to the definition of source of threats.

4. CHANGES IN POLITICS

The changes we mention naturally influenced the political arena. The most salient change was that politics, both in the world and in our country, become deficient and infertile. Politics that we mention here is the old-style politics. In other words, politics still thinking with an industrial mentality, taking its energy from clash between classes, striving to direct a whole country and aiming come to power at the governmental level, while still a necessity, has lost its flare.

Especially in the last 20 to 25 years, the political world in our country, failing to see and interpret in the coming change, lost ground.

One could list the reasons for this as follows:

- a)** Political movements which gave its proponents a sense of aim and existence, have lost their aims.
- b)** Exercising politics over the state and governments lost its meaning because the borders, the power, the legitimacy of states themselves become questionable while the individual gained importance.
- c)** As individuals and the identities they took on for themselves became diversified, politics based on only one aspect of identity became functionalless. In other words, politics over identities



such as leftist, Kemalist, nationalist, Kurdish or patriot no longer embraces the diversity of peoples' identities. Yet, a Kemalist may at the same time be a pious person, a nationalist and a Kurd. Politics organized around a singular identity that ignores or glosses over other identities has become irrelevant and is thus no longer given any consideration.

While MHP monopolizes nationalism and bases its politics on an assumption that all its electorate is nationalist, AKP sees all the pious as militants of its own understanding of religion and Islam. The traditional left-wing in our country also commits the same mistake by not considering anyone except themselves as secular and by pretending that being nationalistic or religious is not important. It fell short of understanding and emphasizing that these typologies and classifications were not important in politics, that problems such as education or unemployment still exist and need to be solved regardless of who it is for or by.

- d) Politics lost its ability to reproduce. While previous political movements and parties used to accept and adopt new ideas from economic and social sciences, today such scientific nourishment disappeared because science diversified but politicians were unable to find ways of nourishment from, for example, biology or anthropology. Our politicians neither think about how genetics will influence the future of humankind and what problems we will be facing as a result and nor draw lessons from organizational theories of management science. Yet the complexity of life affects individuals in all details of life and individuals have to fight against these problems by themselves with no political proposition. The left-wing in our country has lost all connections with science and academia, let alone dealing with this universal problem. Political parties in Turkey which call themselves left-wing or social democrat have become incapable of understanding and interpreting change, of offering solutions. For example none of the left-wing parties have any method of nourishment from the world of information technologies. As a result, they have no opinion or policy with regards to the effects of information technologies on everyday life, to its uses, to the sector's position as a leverage for economic development, or to its significance for SMEs and most importantly to the information infrastructure as the neutral system of a transparent democracy. Today there are 10 million internet users in Turkey. Left-wing parties are not even aware of this medium or mass of people, which are integral from dissemination of policies to publicising the party, from adult education to reaching out to youngsters. Another example is the problem of land erosion and drought and none of the parties have any concrete policy, or even any such quest.
- e) Big passions have lost their intensity in lives broken into small private spaces. Neither in our country nor in the world are there any demonstrations drawing millions to the streets, nor any movie or novel discussed or months. This is not because problems are solved; they have always existed but lost their lust, it is because they are seen as personal escapes. The political movements and discourses nourished by the notions of industrial society no longer overlap and ignite the individuals dreams about tomorrow.

The situation is graver in countries like ours. Because people crushed under heavy problems cannot channel their passions and demands within proper organisational movements, they turn to reactionary or individual remedies. And gradually an egotistic mentality is becoming dominant, full of anger, detached from a common tomorrow, completely disregarding even the state. In such a mentality individual ways out are not possible without political leadership.



- f) In the face of young people who are ready to challenge the world, who are exceedingly dynamic, with different sensibilities, the existing political movements stand with an image of rooted, unchanging and unchangeable structures. Young people realize that existing political structure do not provide them the opportunities to express themselves, to contribute to policy-making and have begun to view politics as a irrelevant structure. Parties and political movements became fell short of utilising this young energy and became deficient.
- g) Communication technologies, the media and their power over the society also changed. While previously the dissemination of a political idea depended on the speed and strength of the organization, now they can spread much faster, independent of organizational speed. As political movements and parties insistent on an old-fashioned organizational model placed more significance on the organization than on ideas, their detachment from the society accelerated.
- h) Society and individuals can be informed and aware about politics independent of the organisation. However, this information and awareness was a far cry from being an opportunity of feedback for parties.
- i) At the point societal life has come to, it has become impossible to explain individuals' interests only through class interests, to define away opponents and proponents merely as friend or foe. As parties failed to embrace the new and varied interests and to make policies through their synthesis, politics began to be perceived as an act outside of life. People for whom politics did not meet their own interests withdrew themselves away from politics and thus it became professional, career politicians took over. This caused people to further distance themselves from politics.
- j) As political power was seized by professionals, people were further distanced from the responsibility of coming up with solutions for common problems. As daily life was detached from solutions and debates, the professional politicians were freed from accountability. As a result, government and politics became an arena of profit sharing; the unmonitored state became harsher, moving towards oligarchical methods. Resultantly, today, politics became practiced on three platforms.
- In civil and military bureaucracy (harsher, more despotic, more withdrawn by the day)
 - Among professional politicians and partisans (detached from the problems of the country, existing and fed by political profit)
 - In daily life, every day and everywhere (in NGO's, civic initiatives, on the street, at demonstrations, mosques and among communities).

5. THE DEVELOPMENT AND MODERNISATION PROJECT OF TURKEY AND NECESSITIES

- a) The development and modernisation project initiated by the founders of the republic were directly influenced by all these changes. What were the main elements of this project?



- A strong state; the relationship between state and citizen defined such that stereotypical citizens have responsibilities towards the state
- National development, entrepreneurship led by the state, production backed by imported goods, financial markets manipulated and controlled by the state
- Republican citizen (duties have become ideologies, differences deliberately disregarded)
- Modernisation based on reason and science (science as definitive and indisputable)

The development and modernisation project of the republic with a vision of creating a nation-state has in fact become successful on the political level. However, problems have obviously arisen in economic development and social modernisation. Some of the problems have become demands and these demands have found a political means of expression during the period beginning with Democratic Party (*Demokrat Parti*) and continuing with Justice Party (*Adalet Partisi*). Yet some of the problems were not voiced and could become political demands due to the circumstances and context of that period.

- b)** As of the 1960s, the gradual change throughout the world was not interpreted by the politicians in Turkey and the project thus could not become democratized. While democratization was not possible on the political plane, on the economic plane, external forces imposed the gravitation towards free market and led to the Motherland Party (ANAP) government.
- c)** The Islamic opposition of strong religious beliefs which was not articulated into the development and modernisation project of the Republic of Turkey was developed and transformed through time into the conservative development and modernisation project whose characteristics are now crystallised in the AKP government. This project, contrary to some views, is not nourished by an urge to get even with the republic nor by fundamentalist powers. It is rather a project critical of modernisation in the world, aiming to develop an alternative. It would be wrong to view this project merely on an East-West axis.
- d)** The conservative project can be characterised as open to the local, open to some aspects of democratisation through religious communal structures, supportive of the periphery against the center, proponent of the free market but seeking to base ethics on religion instead of law. Social policies find their justification in the religious sentiment of solidarity. Against the social problems of modernisation, it promises, not the heaven of consumption in this world, but heaven in the next world through religious ethics.
- e)** However, this project in essence fails to solve the problem of democratization and its political representatives have triggered reaction and opposition from the society both because of their lack of education, skill and vision and because of their provincial style of politics. AKP, or the conservative project, received full support from the dynamics of globalisation due to the progressive aspects of its characteristics. While seeking legitimacy for itself both on a national and an international level, it came to pioneer change. But at this very point, a critical problem put the project at a deadlock. It was unable to hold on to a clear position on the debates about its focus on religious values much more intense and in a sense course than other countries (maybe that was its real preference). This caused the conservative project to be confused, unclear about its goals, cutting off possible reciprocal interactions with the democratic and



modernised elements of society. With the European Union's own confusion of identity being reflected in our relation with them, the conservative project is about to go into a deadlock because democracy and respect for human rights is not among the project's concerns.

- f) Although not represented yet on a political level, the demand is being expressed in society for a third development and modernisation project. At the center of this demand and necessity is democracy and universal human rights. And the subject of this demand is the human, the individual, instead of the state or religion of the previous projects.
- g) With the republican project, people were freed from being subjects of the sultan and became citizens but this was a one-dimensional and obligatory citizenship. Yet today we need a project of transformation from obligatory citizenship to voluntary citizenship, from a monolithic society to a democratic society, from nation-state to an effective state.
- h) A novel Project of Democratic Development and Modernisation, its political representatives and making this project a reality is necessary. Because:
- Neither the republican project nor the conservative project understand the changing world so they are unable to appropriate the project of renovating the state according to the changing role of the nation-state. While one of them tries to hold on to the traditional nation-state model, the other sees it as tool, as something to be conquered, as a power to be possessed. However, the state needs to be transformed, its role needs to be redefined: as an effective organ of monitoring and regulation, receding from duties of production and distribution of profit.
 - Neither project even have a conception of a radical administrative reform in line with the changing world, let alone a willingness for it. Yet, regardless of all ideologies, the administrative mechanisms of our country need to be restructured. Not just the police force or local administrations but each and every unit needs to be redefined and restructured. In a world where problems have become so diversified, it is as impossible to manage Hakkari and Istanbul with the same local government laws as it is to manage our drought and water problems with the existing General Directorate of State Hydraulic Works.
 - Both projects are incapable of even accepting and discussing, let alone solving, the Kurdish issue which is the primary obstacle in front of the moves of democratization and administrative reform. They not only fail to grasp why it has become the major problem in diplomatic relations, but they actually think it is the source of the problem.
 - As both projects are unable to correctly read the negative effects of the changing world, they begin to see other countries as foes, as enemies and inner dynamics as foes from within. Due to this tension, the creativity and productivity released by criticism and debates cannot be utilised by the country.
 - Both projects treat differences not as richness but as enemies of the order they propose. They even define themselves not through what they themselves are but through sentiments of enmity towards others and thus create tension daily.
 - Both projects are nurtured not by science but by beliefs so they are incapable of coming up with systematic and sustainable solutions neither for erosion, draught, environmental problems, the avian flu nor the recurring tuberculosis.



- Both projects lack a definition of “national interest.” They are therefore unable to read foreign policy, constantly taking the wrong sides. Today foreign policy no longer runs on geopolitic position, military power or diplomacy alone. A country’s reputation on a global level depends on many intertwined elements today such as a country’s position and significance on the global cultural map, its status in production of knowledge, quality of life and level of human rights.
 - Both projects are incapable of grasping the simple fact that the roots of the social order and ethics problems that our society faces requires a true legal reform. It is thought that the looting, the plundering of the state treasury or of the forests are temporary problems of corrupt governments; it is thought that drugs are merely a mafia problem. Yet, we need a deep renovation and reformation of law and jurisdiction, the scope of which would include all institution and all mindsets, with laws, legal staff, politicians.
- i) On top of all of these, both projects base their politics more and more on an enmity towards each other, on a style of politics of demolishing, exterminating the other. Each office, each institution and each political platform is sacrificed crudely for everyday debates as if war loots gained over from the other. The country’s energy and enthusiasm is caged within.
- j) The tension between the two projects brings together groups which used to be quite separate from each other: people’s democrats, nationalists, patriots, traditional leftists have united with an instinct to protect the republic project. The panic and ill-temper of both projects is caused not by the other but by the fear and insecurity about not being able to read the changes in world, to handle the uncertainty of what is coming. Nor do they have any vision of trying to understand what is coming.
- k) For example, both projects have different views on the issue of education yet both are wrong. While one views it from the perspective of citizenship education, the other sees it from that of religion education. They do not see the changes in the mentality of education, the educational system need to change as a whole. Therefore, whether students listen to class ready for a military hail or for worship, it makes no difference if it is taught with the existing content. Rather than developing problem-solving skills for the changing world and teaching values of tolerans, peace and human rights, an education system preaching rote memorization, chavinism and sacrednesses is still in place.
- l) For example, looking at the problem of social security issue neither as a problem of religious solidarity nor as a necessity of social state in a traditionalist sense can solve the problem. Or, looking at what is being implemented, one becomes confused about whether AKP is implementing leftist policies. For this reason, it becomes impossible in this changing world to develop the necessary health and social security policies that allow people be individuals first and foremost.



- m) For example, both projects think with the verb “to direct” in mind, without a clue about “governance” or “participatory democracy.” Therefore, they view the problem of local administrations as a mere question of increasing levels of authority. However, what our citizens need is a management system where they can manage decisions about their neighborhood, without approval from higher authorities; a new process model where decisions are localised and integrated into society.
- n) Leftist and social democrat parties, especially those in Europe, used the chance to reform themselves, to change themselves according to the world, even if with different methods and processes. However, the traditional left in our country could not renew itself and taking a stand against the coming conservative projects, it positioned itself at the extreme of the republican-nationalist axis. Traditional left was unable to read the changing qualities of labor, the diversification of grievances, the paradoxical and inevitable coexistence of the local and the global. Sentiments of guardianship took over and it failed to renew itself.
- o) Traditionally, all issues are viewed on a continuum. In many areas of life, thought systems based on continuums such as left-right, secular-religious, us-them are dominant. However, in a world continually becoming more complicated, there are multiple dimensions, multiple actors and multiple axes. Freeing our country’s politics from these double-sided continuums, from impasses have now become critical. This is what befits the reality of life, and more so the politics in Turkey.
- p) In our opinion, the simple axis in Turkey has been shattered. In the political arena, we can now talk about three main axes. A new axis of democracy referencing itself from democracy, from the individual is completely separated from the axis of republicanism, with its main characteristics quite distinct from the republican axis.

6. FROM WHERE, FROM WHICH RESOURCES CAN THE PROJECT OF DEMOCRACY BE NURTURED?

Politics producing responses for today and for tomorrow, what should it be like? What should the project of democracy be proposing? Which factors, which elements should the democracy project take its power and energy?

The source of energy for leftist politics which left its mark on the last century was the existing classes and clash between classes. It is impossible to view or solve today’s problems merely on a platform of clash between classes. Even a mutually-agreed definition of class is unlikely. The source of energy for contemporary politics aiming to solve problems of the 21st century should be renewable and reproducible, dynamic, not static.



- a) The most salient source of energy is the demands for democracy. However, the definition of democracy needs to be agreed on:
- Democracy is a lifestyle. Not just a harmony of those in conflict, in competition or in mutual interest; but opposition as a whole mechanism is beneficial in itself. A world with such diversified political, social, cultural and economic demands is only possible through a democracy hopeful about, nurtured by and supportive of the coexistence of all these different demands.
 - Democracy cannot be prioritized as if a list item in the basic human necessities. Democratic demands cannot be handled with an approach such as “first solve terror, then democracy,” or “first bread, then democracy.” Democracy is the ground on which these demands can be voiced and organised.
 - Democracy is about freedom, not arbitrariness. Democratic mechanisms should be transparent and monitored.
- b) Given its above definition, democracy is an incredible source of power and energy for change. Many of the problems in our country stem not from too much democracy as come may claim, but from not having full-fledged democracy in place, with a civil constitution, with its institutions and rules and all. Today it is impossible to respond to people’s demands “for the people despite the people.” As long as people’s demands can be voiced, discussed and organized and these demands can find their own paths of compromise in daily life. In other words, as long as natural means of politics are opened up, our people have the maturity to solve their own problems. The second source of energy for the democracy project is people. Capital has turned from the land to the merchant, from the merchant to industrial capital and from industrial capital to financial capital. And now it is turning to human capital and knowledge. The transformation to information society increases the number of educated, skilled people. Changes in information and communication technologies are shaking the grounds of classical understanding of education. This is what needs to be different here from previous policies: People should get their power not from opposing but from being proponents of something, from a claim to the “new.” And this “new” can be shaped within the people who benefit the day, who benefit the information society. A politician with merely strong rhetoric skill no longer stands a chance of mobilizing the masses. Only truly knowledgeable and skilled people can mobilize the masses. At this point, women and the youth also gain importance. Instead of putting certain quotas for women and youth as has been discussed until now, the focal point of organization and production should be shifted to them.
- c) The third source of energy for the democracy project is participation and solidarity. This may seem paradoxical when everything is moving towards the individual. However as many problems and solutions become more local, many of them become global. International agencies are becoming more effective in solving problems such as AIDS, the environment, the ozone layer or nuclear tests. This effectiveness makes people more individualistic on the local level while pushing them towards solidarity on the international level. In order to solve their own problems people can be much more effective through civil initiatives, through civil societal platforms as opposed to the old-fashioned mass organizations. A new model of participation and solidarity built on civil society needs to be opened up. The democracy project, by



mobilizing the demand for participation and solidarity, harbors the opportunity of transforming individual energies into synergy.

- d)** The fourth source of energy is the diversification in grievance and oppression. While previously it was the working class which was oppressed and the left based its policies on that, today there are various forms of oppression and disadvantage from regional imbalance to income distribution, from health insurance to social security. Those oppressed because of their identity, because of their beliefs, because of economic reasons (the unemployed, the exploited, the poor, the underdeveloped, the SMEs), because of globalisation (the uneducated) and those excluded will all become the agents for the democracy project. The democracy project by nature depends on universal human rights and solidarity with the oppressed. It needs to expand on this basis and be constantly nurtured by new allies and problem sources so that it finds solutions and propose policies.

7. A PARTY AND UNDERSTANDING OF POLITICS – WHAT SHOULD IT BE LIKE?

- a)** It should be debated whether the political party of the democracy project should have a wide member base or function as an effective party with active and responsible members? Partisans should consist of sensitive people who center their politics around daily life problems and around their environs rather than the daily in-and-outs of the party. Their presence in the party and in politics should be empowered by shared hope for tomorrow, by shared dreams.
- b)** The party should be organized not by geography or administrative units but around problems. Besides the organization required by law, a problem-centered organizational model should be adapted and this organizational model should be integrated into the party hierarchy.
- c)** The party should be one that “learns,” “negotiates” and “proposes,” not one that “knows.”
- d)** The responsibilities and authorities of and the relations between elements of the party, that is, between the members, congresses and elected committees, should be clearly defined and full autonomy should be ensured.
- Members should not be punished for their in-party political decisions; they should not expelled from membership: their right to be elected should not be derogated.
 - Congresses should function outside of elections as well, as mechanisms for local problems, or for party policies and propositions.
 - Congress decisions, election results, policies and proposals on local problems should not be subject to approval or cancellation.
- e)** The primary duty of members and local committees should be the use of political identity to participate in and lead local endeavours for problem-solving rather than dissemination of party politics to the people. The discourse of local organisations and members should not emphasize the partisan identity; they should rather take action and set an example as a party member.



- f) The party of the democracy project should change the definition of politics and convey this to the public properly. Politics is not just about government debates. Politics is about monitoring or even objecting to modifications of one's city development plans, about being involved in the neighborhood school's heating problems. This type of politics or involvement in the daily problems of people around us is too serious a matter to leave to the hands of certain types of people and there are countless examples in our country, good or bad. Citizens may not always be as active about such problems as one might wish; they may simply not be interested in participating in solutions to local problems. Party members of the democracy project should be ready, however, and dynamic enough to propose an initiative and solidarity model when citizens are willing to participate.
- g) The party of the democracy project should have a mission of eliciting and kindling the sentiment of active citizenship. Mistrust towards politicians, which at the root is really towards deadlocks and desperation, can only be overcome by increasing citizens' interest in non-governmental organization and local administrations. People of the democracy project should deal closely with the decisions and implementations of local administrations. Especially the debates and decisions on development plans, objections and modifications should be monitored and kept transparent. Local NGOs should be contacted, policies should be shaped in light of their demands and warnings and mechanisms for mutual feedback and cooperation with such institutions should be established.
- h) The problem-solving capacities of NGOs and their culture of dedication should be held above party relations. These people can and should interact with the party. Yet, if relationships with NGOs are not viewed as means of cooperation between equals but as mechanisms for harvesting members, this would only lead to a new impasse in politics.
- i) Politics should be sensitive towards values that people uphold as sacred but it should not be based on these values and politics based on sacred values should not be acceptable.
- j) Politics should be based on the reality, not on paranoia, worry or fear; it should be carried out with a vision of the future in mind, not the past.

8. CONCLUSION

THE DEMOCRACY PROJECT must be successful in restructuring our country, in proposing policies for overcoming the existing impasses and in providing hope. It must be because the depression that the country is in necessitates hope and political leadership.

Our country has every potential to solve the problems it is going through. Missing is political leadership and mobilization of hopes. Success depends on organization of today's much needed knowledge and skill towards a common goal. Even if all the actors of differing natures whose common denominator is the republican development and modernization project came together, they could not come to power. Because there is no such demand.

The goal of politics is to create internal dynamics. Internal dynamics can only come to life in a project demanded by the society. It is hope and certainty that can mobilize the masses: it is the conviction



that a better world is close by. The high rate of those who say “undecided” and “none of the parties” in all opinion polls demonstrate that there is another vein in this country and they are not represented politically. In our opinion, none of the attempts or initiatives up until now have been able to clarify the differences between these two projects and having taken the relationship for granted, not having properly delineated their relation to the republican project, they have failed.

Therefore, what needs to be done is right away is to develop this new project and work at organizing this new party.