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# **FOUNDATION OF THE TERRORIST ORGANIZATION REVOLUTIONARY PEOPLE'S PARTY-FRONT (DHKP-C) AND ITS DESTRUCTIVE ACTIVITIES**

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## **Introduction**

Due to its geopolitical location, the ideology behind its foundation and its potential, the Republic of Turkey has been exposed to various civil rebellions as of its foundation and to national and international terrorism in progress of time (Türkiye ve Terörizm Rapor, 2006:531). When examining the terminological origin of the concept of terror, we see that it stems from the Latin word “*terre*” which means frightening the people, making them run away and spreading terror to intimidate people. Turkish word used for “terror” (terör) on the other hand stems from the French word “*terreur*” which means ravaging things and properties, terror, intimidation, causing damage to life and spreading fear (Turkish Language Association, 2019). When we examine the academic literature, there is no common definition of terror or terrorism (Goodwin, 2012:52) and there are more than a hundred different definitions (Ergil, 1992:140). The concept of terror is generally defined in encyclopedias as the systematic violence, oppression, intimidation attempts of organized groups and institutions which have a hierarchical structure towards the state or people to achieve a certain political-ideological objective (Meydan Larousse Büyük Lügat ve Ansiklopedi, 1990:549).

The concept of terrorism is defined in Article 1 of the Anti-Terror Law No.3713 enacted on 12.04.1991 which was partially amended with 4928/20 on 15.07.2003 as follows; “*Terror is all kinds of criminal actions of any person or persons connected with an organization performed to change the Constitutional qualities of the Republic and/or political, legal, social, secular and economic order, disturb the indivisible integrity of the State with its country and nation, endanger the existence of Turkish State and Republic, debilitate and seize the state authority, exterminate fundamental rights and freedoms, disturb public order or health by way of terror, force and violence and by using any of the oppression, terrorization, intimidation, suppression or threat.*” ([www.mevzuat.gov.tr](http://www.mevzuat.gov.tr), 2019). According to Anti-Terror Law No.3713 an action will be regarded as a terrorist action-terror crime if the target is the integrity of the state or the nation from ideological point of view, if the action was taken by an illegal group/organization from organizational point of view and if the acts have dimensions such as scaring, intimidating, killing and terrorizing (Kuyaksil, 2004:90).

## **Terrorism in Turkey**

The Republic of Turkey has been exposed to almost all kinds of religious, ethnic and

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ideological terrorism threats from its foundation till the present time and the activities of these terrorist organizations in Turkey have always been supported by other countries including our (Bal, 2005:978-979) allies (Türkiye ve Terörizm Rapor, 2006:531). Turkey has become the target of international and particularly national terrorist organizations and their activities after 1965 (Ozankaya, 1980:170). The freedom of expression and opinion liberally provided by the Constitution of 1961 (Beyaz Kitap, Türkiye Gerçekleri ve Terörizm, 1973:16), removal of oppression on different political ideas and removal of the obstacles to organizing and trade union activities were resulted in organization of many political-ideological groups in the country (Taylak, 1998:4). Particularly those who are connected to socialist ideology and acting illegally in the past, the majority of whose leaders were oppressed have become active in a short time in this constitutional freedom environment. Since 1965, Turkey has been severely exposed to 4 waves of terrorism described below (Kongar, 2002:86-95);

- 1) First wave of terrorism: the period of international acts of terrorism by the Armenian terrorist organization ASALA (Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia) against Turkey.
- 2) The second wave of terrorism: the period of terrorism started after 1965 caused by organized opposing ideologies (right-left). In this period, these organizations were politically and ideologically differing from each other and their actions have led to a violence and terror spiral in a short time. Consequently, the period of 1970-1980 was almost like a civil war in the country.
- 3) The third wave of terrorism: the period of ethnic-separatist terrorism which started in Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia which has led to death of thousands of people and still going on today.
- 4) The fourth wave of terrorism: the period of reactionary-religious terrorism which started after the military intervention of 1980 caused by various groups like Hezbollah, FETO. Organizations and religious references of these organizations were different but all of them were trying to recruit militants in the regions near schools and mosques. They were secretly organized in the society, in a certain region or within the state institutions and they have become so powerful in time and even attempted to stage a military coup in July 2016.

Being exposed to anarchy and all kinds of terrorism after 1965 as state and people, Turkey lost and keeps losing thousands of its citizens during its struggle against terrorism.

### **Sociological and Ideological Origin of DHKP/C**

Entry into force of the Constitution of 1961 is accepted as the milestone of the terrorism

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in Turkey. The democratic environment brought about by this libertarian constitution was particularly abused by extreme left factions in a short time. The socialist ideology was banned until that period but then, the Workers Party of Turkey (TİP) was founded on February 13, 1961 by 12 trade unionists to gather their followers together (Aybar, 2014:9). Under the leadership of Mehmet Ali Aybar, *TİP has managed to have 15 members in the National Assembly in 1965 general elections. The slogans used by the party during their election campaign were “Gracious socialism” and “Socialism intrinsic to Turkey.”* (Doğan, 2005:12). The majority of the left-wing groups in the country have supported TİP in this period (Akkus, 2015:247). During this period, Turkish left has entered a rapid organizing action almost in all fields. The influential organizations founded by the marginal Turkish Left and served as incubators in their own field were as follows (YÖK, 1985:84);

- 1) In politics: Workers Party of Turkey (TİP),
- 2) In business world: Confederation of Progressive Trade Unions (DİSK),
- 3) In higher education: Federation of Idea Clubs (FKF), which later became the Revolutionary Youth (DEV-GENÇ) organization,
- 4) In education: Teachers' Union of Turkey (TÖS)

All of these organizations were very influential in their fields and they were aggressively campaigning to propagate the socialist ideology throughout the country. Consequently the Turkish left has become very active in politics and society and particularly among the students of higher education.

The Federation of Idea Clubs (FKF) was founded under the chairmanship of Hüseyin Ergün on December 17, 1965 with the merger of five idea clubs (Feyizoğlu, 2008:45). Although the students supporting TİP were affiliated with FKF, administration of TİP did not take kindly to foundation of FKF with the worry of it would detract the youth from the party (Feyizoğlu, 2008:17). However, after a while, the struggle of different left factions to seize power both in FKF and TİP was initiated. At the end, the students who were supporters of the National Democratic Revolution (MDD) who were advocating the idea of seizing power by way of armed or military revolution as opposed to those who aimed to seize power democratically took control of FKF (Yıldırım, 2008:15). The aim of the advocates of the MDD was spreading the atmosphere of armed turmoil and anarchy, inciting unrest in society, and at the end, staging a coup under the leadership of socialist officers and making the revolution through the army (Sayılgan, 1970:18-19).

Mihri Belli who suggested and heavily advocated the idea of National Democratic Revolution (Eren, 1993:222) and Doğu Perinçek took over FKF and changed its name

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to Revolutionary Youth Federation (DEV-GENÇ) in 1968 (TBMM Meclis Araştırma Komisyonu Raporu, 2012:711). More radical ideologies were developed within DEV-GENÇ and it has become a student organization which led to foundation of all successive marginal left groups (Menguç, 1998:91). After changing its name and administration, DEV-GENÇ was reorganized as a socialist and revolutionary organization and has become an important base for the left-wing revolution to be made with arms and pressure in the future rather than being an intellectual idea club where new ideas were discussed. DEV-GENÇ's aim was making a Marxist-Leninist revolution in Turkey and to that end (Karacan, 1984:236-237), they didn't hesitate to use the peasants and workers along with the youth of higher education, among whom they were organized and provoked them at every opportunity over their problems (Landau, 1974:39). Although DEV-GENÇ was seen as a student organization, the march they have selected as the anthem of the federation proves that they were actually a revolutionary and armed anarchist organization (Özgen, 1989:22).

*“Hey, Revolutionary Youth! Hey, Revolutionary Youth! Time for war is closing in,  
Take your weapon against imperialism,  
We workers, peasants, youth, army are ready to die for revolution,  
We are powerful revolutionaries, one day we will definitely win.  
Workers and peasants will seize the power hand-in-hand with blood..  
Long live the People’s War ... “*

The members of the left-wing movement in Turkey were preparing for and awaiting a communist revolution by intensively getting organized since 1961. The opportunity they were waiting for came up with the student movements spread over Europe and America in 1968. They were ready to adapt these movements to Turkey. The student actions that started all over the world in 1968 under the leadership of Sorbonne University students in France (Wilson, 1969:545) have gradually spread over and accelerated within Turkish left-wing movement but it also resulted in splits in a short time. When university students noticed that the protest movements in the form of organized boycott or building occupation have effect on the administration and politics, cause them to be taken into consideration and create an impression in the public, they wanted to move forward. However, as the sympathy for socialism spreads among intelligentsia, students and workers, these organizations have become certain that a left-wing revolution will take place in the country and they all wanted this revolution to be made in the manner and system they want and the country should be shaped accordingly. The main reason of a crisis of method within Turkish left was invasion of socialist Czechoslovakia by communist Soviet Union on August 21, 1968 (Zürcher, 2000:372).

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A clash of ideas begins within DEV-GENÇ and they lead to splits beginning from 1968. In the discussions made between Mihri Belli and Doğu Perinçek, initially Mahir Çayan, Yusuf Küpeli and some active student groups act in unison with Mihri Belli (Akan, 2002:57). However, the difference of opinion between Mihri Belli and Mahir Çayan's group in three key issues<sup>1</sup> brings along a new split.

### THKP-C and its Legacy

Mahir Çayan gives a long and criticizing speech in the congress of DEV-GENÇ held in October 1969 and later on, he declares in December 1970 (declaration no 1) together with Ertuğrul Kürkçü, Ulaş Bardakçı, Hüseyin Cevahir, İlhami Aras, Yusuf Küpeli, Captain Orhan Savaşçı, Münir Ramazan Aktolga, Bingöl Erdumlu and Ziya Yılmaz, and announces that (Çayan, 2010:142-146) the Turkish Peoples Liberation Party-Front (THKP-C) is founded (THKP-C Doğuşu ve İlk Eylemleri, 1987:13-14). The THKP was going to be the political leader of the Marxist-Leninist revolutionary movement and the THKC was going to be the striking power that enforces the orders of political leadership (Beyaz Kitap, Türkiye Gerçekleri ve Terörizm, 1973:66). THKP-C was managed by a core team of 12. The Central Committee had three members; Mahir Çayan, Özer Küpeli and Münir Aktolga and the General Management Committee was composed of other 9 (Marmara Brifingi, 1995:52-53). Most important characteristic of THKP-C was that they were the first organization to announce clearly that the Marxist-Leninist revolution needed to be made to have a communist administration in Turkey<sup>2</sup> could only be achieved with an armed struggle (Çobanlı, 2009:265). Even though the life of the organization was rather short, due to this characteristic and its implementation method, THKP-C has become the opinion leader of many successive organizations and all of them have alleged that they have inherited the legacy of THKP-C.

When acts of terrorism of the People's Liberation Army of Turkey (THKO) organized under the leadership of Deniz Gezmiş (Çayan, 2003:180-185) create a tremendous impression on the public (Beyaz Kitap, Türkiye Gerçekleri ve Terörizm, 1973:32), opinions of Mahir Çayan who was trying to prepare the founding organization and advocating rural guerrilla operations and his friends begin to change (Feyizoğlu,

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<sup>1</sup> Mihri Belli's group and Mahir Çayan's team had some differences. 1) While Mihri Belli was suggesting that a new legal party should be established instead of TİP which he claims that acting against the essence of revolution, Mahir Çayan was arguing that the new party will end like TİP, so an illegal party would be much better. 2) Mihri Belli was stating that the working class should be immediately organized and take action for the proletariat to be the pioneer of the revolution, Mahir Çayan was advocating that the peasants should be the pioneers and the revolution should be initiated in the rural. 3) Mihri Belli argued that the national borders should remain the same and include the Kurdish people but Mahir Çayan said that the Kurds should be allowed to live independently. See; BELLI, Mihri, **Case of June Movement, Documents I**, Compiled by: ASLAN S., Emekci Publications, İstanbul, January 1977, p.14-15.

<sup>2</sup> The advocates of the armed struggle in the Turkish left-wing have been greatly influenced by the following important principles of Marxist-Leninist ideology; 1) There will certainly be a convenient environment for social revolution and the revolution will take place sooner or later, 2) Armed actions are necessary to prepare the society and ensure the revolution, 3) Former imperialist and bourgeois power should be eliminated for the revolution come to life and survive, 4) A guerrilla structure should be established both in rural and metropolises and cities, 5) It is necessary to go beyond long and classical methods in order to ensure social change in society. See: KARACAN, İ., **ibid.**, p.203-205, cited by: ZAFER, Hamide, **Terrorism with its Sociological Dimension**, Beta Press Release Distribution, İstanbul 1999, p.17.

2002:312). Thus, the first action of THKP-C that hits the headlines was the bank robbery in Ankara (Alkan, 2002:68). The organization continues its actions such as a couple of bombings, a few bank robberies and two kidnappings (Satılmış, 2001:142-143) but the biggest action of the organization which creates a tremendous impression on the public was kidnapping of the Israeli Consul General Ephraim Elrom on May 17, 1971 and killing him (Milliyet Gazetesi, 1971; Tercüman Gazetesi, 1971; Cumhuriyet Gazetesi, 1971 and Akşam Gazetesi, 1971). This action instantly makes the organization come to the fore and they were firmly chased everywhere upon attracting great attention. After a while they were driven into a corner at a house in Maltepe, where they have taken the owners of the house hostage. The blockade and negotiations lasted 51 hours and finally an armed fight took place. At the end Mahir Çayan was captured alive but seriously wounded and Hüseyin Cevahir was killed (Milliyet Gazetesi, 1971 and Cumhuriyet Gazetesi, 1971). After a short imprisonment, Mahir Çayan shadily escapes from prison with four of his friends (Günaydın, 1971) and they kidnap two English and one Canadian technicians from a NATO base to stop the execution of Deniz Gezmiş and his group. On March 30, 1972, they were trapped at a house in Kızıldere, Tokat with their hostages and got killed (Gün Gazetsi, 1972 and Cumhuriyet Gazetesi, 1972) Upon killing of Mahir Çayan and his friends except Ertuğrul Kürkçü who came alive in Kızıldere, the majority of the leading founders of THKP-C were physically eliminated in a short span of time and consequently the organization fell apart (Kürkçü, 1988:2198)

Although the leading staff of THKP-C was actually eliminated in a short span of time like the leaders of THKO, differently from THKO many new organizations were founded alleging that they are successors of THKP-C as a result of theoretical analyses brought along by Turkish left (Aydinoğlu, 2007:309). Especially the Marxist-Leninist groups who were set free pursuant to the Amnesty Law No.1803 enacted in 1974 TBMM Meclis Araştırma Komisyonu Raporu, 2012:763) began to dissent and embarked on new quests to take revenge. This has resulted in foundation of many marginal factions including THKP-C, who claims that they follow Mahir Çayan's lead and take him as a reference. These organizations are below: Yurtseven, 2008:196-200).

<b>Various factions derived from the People's Liberation Party-Front of Turkey:</b>
Urgent Action (Acilciler)
Revolutionary Pioneers of the People
Revolutionary War
Unity of Action
Marxist-Leninist Armed Propaganda Unit (MLSPB) ----- Townsmen
THKP-C Fighters (Sympathizers)
THKP-C Road to Front
Union of Revolutionary Sympathizers on the Path of THKP-C (Çayan Sympathizers)
Liberation Socialist Journal (KSD)
THKP-C Fighters
THKP-C (ML) People's Path (Revolutionary People's Path)
Revolutionary Path
Revolutionary Left (Later DHKP-C)

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## Recovery Attempts after THKP-C and Development of DHKP/C Organization

THKP-C, which was a short-lived marginal left-wing terrorist organization founded by Mahir Çayan and friends has taken the lead for many successive organizations with its new and stern ideological development and militarist tactic. Many sympathizers of the Turkish left which was withdrawn into itself due to the severe oppression after the Turkish military memorandum on March 12, 1972 were set free with the amnesty law enacted in 1974. The first signs of recovery were observed in August 1976 with the foundation of the Revolutionary Youth Federation of Turkey (Dev-Genç) (Alkan, 2002:68). However, differences of opinion arose among the Marxist-Leninist revolutionary groups while they were trying to recover. As a result of these differences of opinion, the Ankara group within Dev-Genç decided to call themselves the *Revolutionary Path (Dev-Yol)* and Dursun Karataş and his friends in the Istanbul group *has called themselves the Revolutionary Left (Dev-Sol)* (Kuyaksil, 2004:103).

Immediately after its founding, the Dev-Sol has initiated armed actions to make its name known to the public and to increase its popularity among the left intelligentsia. Based in Istanbul, the organization was effective in Elazığ, Malatya, Çanakkale, Denizli, Bursa, İzmir, Konya, Kocaeli, Trabzon and Tekirdağ provinces (Türkiye'de Anarşî ve Terörün Gelişmesi, Sonuçları ve Güvenlik Kuvvetleri ile önlenmesi, 1982). Within two years, Dev-Sol has become one of the most active terrorist organizations in Turkey and their biggest actions in this period were killing the former Minister for Customs and Monopolies, Gün Sazak on May 27, 1980 in Ankara (Tercüman Gazetesi, 1980; Hürriyet Gazetesi, 1980 and Akşam Gazetesi, 1980) and assassinating the former Prime Minister Nihat Erim who put up a great fight against the radical left-wing movement after 1971 in Dragos, İstanbul on July 19, 1980 (Milliyet Gazetesi, 1980; Cumhuriyet Gazetesi, 1980 and Hürriyet Gazetesi, 1980). The organization has killed 240 people in total, 35 of whom were law enforcement officers, 25 were military personnel and 240 were civilians until the military coup on September 12, 1980 (Sol Terör Örgütleri, 1997:5).

Following the assassination of former Prime Minister Nihat Erim, security forces have carried out intensive operations to capture them. But in an attempt to prove that they are still effective after the military coup on September 12, the organization killed İstanbul Security Director Mahmut Dikler and his police escort on February 2, 1981 (Ersan, 2013:383). This assassinations led to increased pressure on the organization and they have lost many militants. In addition, many members of the organization, Dursun Karataş, the leader of the organization being in the first place were captured and the organization enters into the collapse process (Milliyet Gazetesi, 1981).

In the period they called “**Retreat**” after 1983, the organization was trying to gather strength (Sol Terör Örgütleri, 1997:6) and gravitated towards legal fields and became

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inactive. 1989 was an important milestone for the organization. On October 25, 1989 Dursun Karataş (Akyol, 2010) and Bedri Yağan escape from Bayrampaşa prison in Istanbul (Kuyaksil, 2004:2013) and this escape becomes a new source of morale and motivation for the organisation. They initiate the new period of armed actions. Because of the extortions and robberies carried out during its recovery process after 1990 they have committed, the organization didn't have a financial problem anymore (Işık, 2013:39). Dev-Yol provided theoretical and practical military guerrilla training for its militants in Beqaa Valley in Lebanon between the years of 1990 - 1992 and settled some of these militants in cell houses in country and Istanbul upon their return to Turkey (Terör Örgütleri ve Tunceli'deki Yapılanması, 1997:31). However, when Sabahat Karataş, Dursun Karataş's spouse and Niyazi Aydin and Sinan Kukul from central administration committee are captured dead in the operations of security forces in 1991-1992 (Hürriyet Gazetesi, 1992; Cumhuriyet Gazetesi, 1992; Milliyet Gazetesi, 1992), internal criticism begins within the organization. After escaping from Bayrampaşa Prison in 1989, Dursun Karataş, Bedri Yağan (Middle East supervisor of Dev-Sol), Aslan Şener and İbrahim Bingöl go to Germany and Dursun Karataş manages the organization from there. He was captured at his home he uses as the central quarters and imprisoned in the basement (Hürriyet Gazetesi, 1992; Cumhuriyet Gazetesi, 1992; Milliyet Gazetesi, 1992). This causes a great chaos and separation within the organization. After this incident Bedri Yağan and his group is called "***the Coup***" and Dursun Karataş and his defenders are called "***Leadership (Nepotists)***". This split leads to armed internal conflict within the organization (Öznur, 2004: 1505-1567). The Coup accuse Dursun Karataş of bringing the organization to the point of dissolution with his decisions, using the revenues of the organization personally, buying villas, being a womanizer, imitating Abdullah Öcalan and arbitrarily employing a private translator (Demirel, 2001:327). After Bedri Yağan is killed in the operation carried out by the security forces in Istanbul on March 6, 1993 (Demirel, 2001:346), the leadership group takes control of the organization again. After the struggle within the Dev-Sol was won by the leadership group, the organization was dissolved for a while. After recuperating from the internal conflict and chaos, the organization decides to establish a party instead of renewing all staff. In the first congress of the organization held in Syria between March 30 - May 9, 1993, Dursun Karataş was unanimously selected as the Secretary General and the name of the organization is changed to the Revolutionary People's Liberation Party-Front (DHKP-C) (Alkan, 2002:69). According to this dual structure, political (politik ve siyasi aynı şeydir) activities were going to be performed by the Revolutionary People's Liberation Party (DHKP) and military activities by the Revolutionary People's Liberation Front (DHKC) (Işık, 2013:40). Dursun Karataş, the founding leader of the terrorist organization, explains the foundation of DHKP-C as follows (Karataş, 1995:6);

*"Beginning of our movement goes back to 1974. Those are the years of absorbing and*

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*owning THKP-C. The years of 1977-1978 was the period when preparations to re-establish THKP-C were initiated. In this period, we have also demonstrated the ideology and practice of THKP-C to the masses and learned how to lead these masses. They were the years we have experienced September 12, 1980, betrayal, learned resistance, and falling and standing up again. We knew our friends and enemies better and improved our consciousness of power. 1985-89 were the years we have learned to retreat and gather strength. 1990 was the year when we put the breakthrough into practice and accelerated our march on the way towards revolution. We have seen the exposed face of war on July 12, 1991 and become aware of the consequences if we don't abide by the rules of this war. April 16-17, 1991 were the days we have experienced the honor of resisting in a war, learned and taught that those who have faith in socialism and who love their country and people cannot be defeated under no circumstances, and when the Revolutionary Left has become immortalized in the eye of masses. September 13, 1992 was the day when internal enemies have become external ones and attacked us to destroy our organization. On that day, we have seen how the imperialists, their local collaborationists, enemies wearing the mask of a friend unite, surround and destroy us. Those were the years we have fallen into carelessness regarding what the internal enemies can do."*

After becoming a party in 1993, DHKP-C wants to perform sensational actions to announce its foundation and make itself heard. Their first targets were the District Governorship and Police Headquarters in Bahçelievler, Istanbul (Demirel, 2001:403-404). But when these actions fail, the organization kills the former Minister of Justice, Mehmet Topaç in his office in Ankara on September 29, 1994 (Milliyet Gazetesi, 1992 and Cumhuriyet Gazetesi, 1992). Following this assassination, DHKP-C officially announces its foundation with their bulletin no. 1 on October 7, 1994 (Demirel, 2001:403-404). The biggest action of the organization after this date was infiltrating the headquarters of Sabancı Holding in Levent, Istanbul. Three militants, one of whom was a woman, kill the Board Member of Sabancı Holding, Özdemir Sabancı, General Manager of Toyota-Sa, Haluk Görgün and secretary Nilgün Hasefe (Demirel, 2001:403-404).

One of the greatest turning points for DHKP-C was death of Dursun Karataş who was the founder of the organization, carried out all kinds of illegal activities for its development and regarded as a charismatic leader by the militants of the organization in the Netherlands from cancer on 11.08.2008 (Hürriyet, 2008). His corpse was brought to Turkey on August 14, 2008. The funeral was held the next day in Hacı Bektaş Veli Gazi Culture Foundation Djemevi (Bünyamin, 2015:170-191) in Gazi District, İstanbul where DHKP-C was very powerful and buried in the cemetery in Gazi District (Cumhuriyet Gazetsi, 2008). After the death of Dursun Karataş, the struggle for leadership has begun within DHKP-C and Ümit İlter was selected as the secretary general. Various terrorist activities of the organization also continued in his period but upon capture of Ümit İlter

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and Caferi Sadık Eroğlu, who was in charge of the activities in Turkey on 27.02.2019 in the secret shelter in the basement of İdil Cultural Center, one of the legal shell companies of the organization ([www.ahaber.com.tr](http://www.ahaber.com.tr), 2019) the organization was entered an inertia-waiting period. Today DHKP-C is led by a *council* composed of Zerrin Sarı, the lawyer girlfriend of Dursun Karataş, officer of armed wing, Hüseyin Fevzi Tekin and operative militants of the organization ([www.sabah.com.tr](http://www.sabah.com.tr), 2019). Being responsible for many acts of terrorism following its foundation, DHKP-C have also cooperated with other active marginal left-wing organizations from time to time. Actually, these organizations have always been in contact, even if limited, from the time of Dev-Sol. In spite of the fact that the organization was generally more organized and active in western provinces of the country and Black Sea Region, it has always referred to the respect they have for Alevism and Alevi values in Central Anatolia and to Kurdish origin of their leader, Dursun Karataş, in Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia regions (Karataş, 2010:40). DHKP-C was regarding the separatist terrorist organization PKK (Kurdistan Workers' Party) extremely ethnic nationalist in terms of their ideology but even so, it has attempted to associate with them in 1994 (Demirel, 2001:278-279). Even though these attempts have failed, both organizations have acted together, especially in the country side of Tunceli province (Sol Terör Örgütleri, 1997:161). Collaboration of these two organizations was not as good as they wanted in the field but they cooperate in the actions they perform in prisons. They jointly plan all actions through the "***Central Prison Coordination***" *they have established in prisons* (Sol Terör Örgütleri, 1997:162-169). PKK wanted to move its militants who got stuck in the eastern rural of the country and its task force to Black Sea and metropolises through the powerful organization of DHKP-C.

### **Aim and Strategic Objective of the DHKP-C Organization**

From the time of Dev-Sol, the aim of the DHKP-C has always been to destroy the existing constitutional order in the country with an armed struggle and establish a Marxist-Leninist Communist system (Alkan, 2002:70). In accordance with the organizational ideology, conditions for a revolution are in existence in Turkey. However, a powerful organization and mass power are necessary to destroy the dominant bourgeois powers which try to prevent the revolution and protect the system. In order to form this power, a strategy should be formed (Sol Terör Örgütleri, 1997:87-88).

The strategy selected by the Marxist-Leninist organization to raise the awareness of the masses and make them ready for the revolution was the "***Politicized Military War Strategy***" (PMWS) based on armed struggle (Devrimci Halk Kurtuluş Partisi (DHKP) Programı, 1995:3). Practical applications of the politicized military war strategy are the *People's War* method used during the revolutions in Cuba and Nicaragua (Korkmaz, 1999:119). However it is stated in DHKP-C's program that some differences required due to the conditions in the country should be taken into consideration when applying the

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PMWS in Turkey. These differences are below (Karataş, 1996:413; Sol Terör Örgütleri, 1997:89-93):

- 1) People's war will follow the *Pioneering War* based on armed propaganda.
- 2) People's war will be based on the "*Principle of United War*" which ensures dialectic integrity of rural and urban areas.
- 3) Since imperialism dominates the most secret and remote corners, it is difficult to establish "*Liberated Areas*" at the onset of people's war.
- 4) The basic fighting forces in the People's War will be workers, peasants and the petty bourgeoisie.
- 5) The basic organizational principle of people's war is the idea of "*Unity of Political Military Leadership.*"

Organization considers ***Pioneering War*** compulsory to actualize PMWS (Terör Örgütleri ve Tunceli'deki Yapılanması, 1997:40). Because in societies dominated by capitalist and imperialist bourgeois forces, there is an "***Artificial Balance***" between the people and the state (Kozaklı, 2007:501). DHKP-C is a party which will relieve the people of this artificial ideological and economic environment created by the state, force the masses to seek for radical solutions, make the state recognize the existence of a powerful organization and raise awareness of the people or an organization which struggles for these purposes. The main form of struggle to achieve this will be armed propaganda (Karataş, 1996:414; Sol Terör Örgütleri, 1997:90). The DHKP-C terrorist organization, which chooses the form of armed action, has caused more armed terrorist incidents than other illegal left-wing organizations. Proportions of marginal and destructive left-wing terrorist organizations in total actions between 2003-2007 are as follows (Demirci, 2011:211);

Name of Armed left-wing Organization	Rate of Performed Actions (%)
DHKP-C	42.4
MLCP	30.7
TKP-ML	6.5
MCP	5.3
Other	15.1

### **Acts of Terrorism of DHKP-C Organization**

Taking the decision to be a party in its 1st Congress held in Syria in 1993, DHKP-C have performed hundreds of acts of terrorism until today to achieve its goal and numerous civilian Turkish citizens have lost their lives in these actions. The actions of the Party after its foundation are as follows in chronological order ([www.ozelburoistihbarat.com](http://www.ozelburoistihbarat.com), 2019 and [www.yenisafak.com](http://www.yenisafak.com), 2019);

<b>DATE OF ACTION</b>	<b>PLACE OF ACTION</b>	<b>TERRORIST ACTION</b>
<b>September 29, 1994</b>	Ankara	Murdering former Minister of Justice, Mehmet Topaç
<b>January 1, 1995</b>	İstanbul	Raiding Koç Holding's warehouse
<b>June 9, 1995</b>	İstanbul	Killing the police officer named Rüştü Erdem who was on guard duty in front of the TPP (True Path Party) building in Şişli.
<b>September 29, 1995</b>	İstanbul	Killing the soldiers named Tarkan Yağcı and Serdar Öztürk who were on guard duty at the entrance of the Provincial Gendarmerie Regimental Command with crossfire in Maslak.
<b>January 9, 1996</b>	İstanbul	Killing the Board Member of Sabancı Holding, Özdemir Sabancı, General Manager of Toyota-SA Haluk Görgün and secretary Nilgün Hasefe.
<b>January 3, 2001</b>	İstanbul	As a result of a suicide attack on Şişli District Police Department, a civilian and the assailant were killed and 7 people were injured.
<b>September 10, 2001</b>	İstanbul	A suicide attack was organized at the police point in Beyoğlu. Along with the terrorist, police officers Halil İbrahim Dogan, Tuncay Karatas and an Australian tourist named Amanda Rigg died in the attack. 17 police officers and 6 citizens were injured as a result of the attack.
<b>June 16, 2012</b>	İstanbul	Police officer named Zekeriya Yurdakul was killed.
<b>July 21, 2012</b>	İstanbul	A police officer was injured as a result of commencing fire on patrolling police officers.
<b>September 11, 2012</b>	İstanbul	A suicide attack was organized at 75th Anniversary Police Station. Police officer named Bülent Özkan lost his life along with the terrorist and 7 persons were injured.
<b>December 9, 2012</b>	İstanbul	An attack was organized at 75th Anniversary Police Station.
<b>December 11, 2012</b>	İstanbul	The police officer named Mücahit Daştan was shot and killed in Gaziosmanpaşa.
<b>February 1, 2013</b>	Ankara	The security guard named Mustafa Akarsu got killed in the suicide attack organized at USA Embassy.
<b>March 19, 2013</b>	Ankara	Simultaneous attacks were organized at the Ministry of Justice and headquarters of JDP (Justice and Development Party).
<b>September 21, 2013</b>	Ankara	General Directorate of Security and outbuildings were attacked with rockets.
<b>March 12, 2014</b>	İstanbul	A young man named Burak Karamanoğlu was killed in a fight between opposing viewers due to Berkin Elvan's funeral.
<b>April 24, 2014</b>	İstanbul	A citizen named Ferhat AMAL, who allegedly sold drugs, was shot and paralyzed.
<b>July 30, 2014</b>	İstanbul	DHKP-C didn't allow the supporters of Peoples' Democratic Party (PDP) to open a booth an armed conflict took place. 16-year-old İbrahim Öksüz died.
<b>August 14, 2014</b>	İstanbul	Fire opened with long barrel weapons at Kartal Courthouse and a security officer was injured; a police car was raked through in Yenisahra.
<b>January 1, 2015</b>	İstanbul	Two hand grenades were dropped at Dolmabahçe Palace

<b>February 26, 2015</b>	İstanbul	Two people who were allegedly selling drugs were killed and one person was injured.
<b>March 10, 2015</b>	İstanbul	A person allegedly selling drugs was beaten on the street, and seriously injured person died.
<b>March 31, 2015</b>	İstanbul	Public Prosecutor Selim Kiraz who was ruling the case of Berkin Elvan was taken hostage in his office in Çağlayan Courthouse and got killed.
<b>April 1, 2015</b>	İstanbul	As a result of the attack on the Police Department with grenades and guns, one police officer and one civilian were injured.
<b>May 18, 2015</b>	Adana-Mersin	Party buildings of PTP were bombed.
<b>June 16, 2015</b>	Elazığ	Elazığ-Pertek road was closed to traffic in commemoration of Berkin Elvan.
<b>March 3, 2016</b>	İstanbul	One police officer was injured in the grenade attack organized at the Riot Police Branch Office.
<b>March 30, 2016</b>	Tunceli	Grenades were dropped at the entrances to Governorate and Courthouse.

### **Conclusion**

Terrorism aims to shake, wear out and take down the administration of a country politically, socially and economically by putting fear in the hearts of its citizens. Turkey has been systematically exposed to destructive and separatist terrorist activities as of 1960s. Particularly the left-wing terrorist activities obsessively living on ideological sources such as DHKP-C still continue even though their intensity, dimensions and tactics change from time to time. The left-wing terrorist organizations which have regarded the liberal freedoms brought along by the Constitution of 1961 as an opportunity to spread their ideologies have brought the left-wing protest movements rising in the world due to the effect of cold war to Turkey. Discussions on the method among various left-wing groups which claimed that they did not create the desired effect on the public via the press and associations, TİP (Workers' Party of Turkey) was not effective on legislative power even if it got into the parliament and socialist revolution cannot be actualized in this way result in ideological and physical separations. Particularly the radical student groups who understand that the revolution was impossible with lawful means begin to advocate that armed actions would provoke disturbance and chaos in the country and prepare the environment for a revolution.

Many armed organizations advocating Marxist-Leninist doctrine were founded under the influence of student leaders like Deniz Gezmiş, Mahir Çayan and İbrahim Kaypakkaya in the 1970s. The armed acts of terrorism such as extortion, plundering, bank robbery, kidnapping and bombing begin to occupy the country's agenda intensively. Following the military memorandum of 1971 and implementation of martial law, the majority of the leaders of radical left-wing organizations are eliminated and their militants are imprisoned. acts of terrorism show a decrease in this period to some extent but they begin to rise again after 1975. Upon enactment of the partial amnesty law in 1964 and generalization of this law for all prisoners by the Constitutional Court, numerous militants

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are released from prisons. In 1978, Turkey is on the verge of a civil war covering almost all social stratum. Every day, dozens of people were involved in violent acts due to their opposite opinions and hundreds of criminal incidents were occurring. In order to end this chaotic environment which was allegedly the reason of the coup on September 12, 1980, members of all political parties and civil society organizations were suppressed by the military government and tens of persons were imprisoned. In this period, particularly the left-wing organizations undergo a process of introversion or destruction. After the military coup, passive members of Dev-Sol become active again after their leader Dursun Karataş escapes from prison in 1989.

Leaders of Dev-Sol, who obsessively believe that a Marxist-Leninist revolution would still take place in Turkey, provide military training for their sympathizers in Beqaa Valley, Lebanon to ensure the change by force of arms and settle them in rural areas and metropolises. Security forces launch successful operations on the organization which wants to carry on extortion, plundering and armed actions and many militants were either killed or captured. The heavy losses of Dev-Sol initiate discussions, leadership race and disintegration within the organization. When rivals of Dursun Karataş are killed by the security forces, Dursun Karataş becomes the leader of the organization after a short internal feud and continues to lead the organization from abroad until his death.

The organization converts into a party in 1993, changes its name to DHKP-C and violence continues. When the cold war came to an end and Soviet Union was collapsed, the organization has lost its ideological reference point and consequently head towards getting other reference points to survive. The sympathizers of Dev-Sol were previously pursuing an ideological unity rather than paying regard to any ethnical or sectarian difference but today it is observed that they emphasize the origin of DHKP-C's leader more frequently and center upon the Alevi citizens who feel that they have been treated unjustly for long years beginning from the Ottoman era. Beginning to make discriminating and trouble creating publications based on Alevi-Sunni discussions, the organization is after recruiting Alevi sympathizers and militants and establishing a dynamic and permanent social base and use it. All left-wing demonstrations in the metropolises in the country are staged in the districts where Alevi citizens live under the leadership of DHKP-C. Regardless of their religious sects, corpses of the militants killed in the operations of security forces were brought to Djemevis and their funerals turned to agitative propaganda and the majority of the militants on the run and in prisons were Alevi citizens. Consequently DHKP-C has become a sectarian organization besides being an extreme left-wing Marxist-Leninist destructive terrorist organization.

The reason why the leader of the organization, Dursun Karataş was easily travelling to European countries, the security was provided for him, easily financed and easily communicated with the country was that the support provided to him by the intelligence

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agencies of some allies which don't want Turkey to be more powerful. Some terrorist attacks organized at places which are not strategic targets for the organization because it is the contractor of these foreign intelligence services.

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