

TDN 17-18 JAN 87 P.1

Fundamentalists march!

Turkish Daily News

ISTANBUL—A crowd of about 1,000 men marched from Sirkeci, past the office of the Istanbul governor and the Iranian Consulate building, raising their fists, shouting and screaming "Moslem Turkey... Women should not be uncovered."

Islamic fundamentalism has become a hot topic in Turkey since late 1986 with a State Council decision ruling that head covering and wearing clothing from head to toe in the Islamic tradition were against the secular norms of the Turkish republic and symbolizes Islamic fundamentalism.

President Kenan Evren, at that time, immediately informed the Higher Education Council (YÖK) of the issue and asked the council to abide by the laws of the country.

The development was a decision by YÖK prohibiting the wearing of headcovers and head-to-toe garments and a warning from President Evren in Adana which urged Turkish nationals to beware of the fundamentalist tendencies in the country which even had attempted to infiltrate the Army.

After the YÖK prohibition against the wearing of headcovers, most of the female university students uncovered their heads and started to attend courses. However, some students refused to do this, some went further and sent protest telegrams to President Evren and Premier Turgut Özal. Some even staged protest rallies, as was the case in Konya on Thursday.

One of the students who sent a protest telegram to Premier Özal testified at the Ankara Press Prosecutor's office yesterday on charges that she slandered the prime minister. She came to the prosecutor's office with her head covered.

However, until yesterday, no large scale protest marches were staged.

Observers, noting that the September 12, 1980 military takeover was triggered by a pro-Islamic fun-

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Fundamentalism

a speech at Istanbul-Reklam building in Cağaloğlu, branding the head-cover ban in universities a breach of human rights. However, the marchers passed by the building and proceeded towards Beyazıt and none of them entered the building where Erbakan was speaking.

In a related development, in Bursa, a religious course teacher was arrested yesterday for insulting President Kenan Evren. The teacher, Şehit Yusuf, had claimed in a telegram to President Evren that the "turban ban" hurt the Moslems of Turkey.

The duty court of Bursa disclosed that she was arrested.

Later, the crowd gathered in front of the Beyazıt Mosque and chanted "Mücahid (Fighter for the religion) Erbakan" as the former politician

damentalism rally in Konya in early 1980, expressed worries over the possible repercussions of yesterday's rally which could not be brought under control by the police force alone, but required the assistance of the Army.

Police Superintendent Unal Erkan was closely monitoring the proceedings. However, a 50-man plainclothes police force was not sufficient to calm the crowd. A military armored personnel carrier was sent to the aid of the police.

According to eye witnesses, a few of the marchers were slightly injured by the truncheons of the security forces.

As all these were happening, Necmettin Erbakan, the leader of the now-defunct Islamic fundamentalist National Salvation Party, was giving

walked out the mosque where he performed his noon prayer.

Police later detained some marchers for staging an unauthorized rally.

Akbulut denial

Meanwhile, the Turkish minister of internal affairs fielded questions of journalists in Erzurum about rumors that the Islamic fundamentalists have also infiltrated (like those in the military schools as President Kenan Evren has disclosed) to the police force. He said that such reports and rumors were totally unfounded.

The minister stated further: "We do not believe that the religious fanatics have leaked information to police colleges and academies. There is discipline in these schools and can-

didates are accepted to these institutions following lengthy investigations. If we ever reach the conclusion that the police cadets are deliberately put into these schools we have come to some very wrong calculations."

Attack on hostel

Meanwhile, the Turkish dailies also reported on Friday an attack on a military student's hostel in Ankara by a group of 20 unidentified "fundamentalist" militants. The hostel officials confirmed the incident, despite the denials of police authorities. The officials of the hostel told the Anatolia News Agency that a group of 20 bearded men raided the hotel late Thursday night, smashed some windows and later ran away.