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Police and Politics in Turkey

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Abstract

This paper investigates the degree of political involvement in the Turkish police organisation with a special reference to promotion and transfer applications of the police officers. Two data sets were employed in the research, one of which reflects the biographic information, promotion and transfer history of 300 police directors. The second probes the perceptions of officers from different ranks about promotion and transfer applications. It is shown that there are serious deviations from the rules. Political interference seems to be the most important reason for out-of-rule applications in promotion and transfers.

Introduction

The origins of this study lie in the widespread problem voiced by high-ranking officers about promotion and transfer applications in the Turkish police organisation. Serious deviations from the rules are reported with regard to promotions and transfers. The reported intensity of these deviations suggested the existence of external factors interfering with the rules regulating the promotion and transfer of police officers in general and senior police officers in particular. These deviations are explained mostly by the involvement of politicians in the organisation. This paper investigates first the extent of the alleged deviations and second the perceptions of the officers about these applications.

The Turkish police have a highly centralised structure. At the top of the structure, there is the Ministry of the Interior with the highest authority. The General Director of Security, head of the police organisation, is appointed by and accountable to the Minister of the Interior. Under the control of the General Directorate and in harmony with national territorial divisions, there are 80 provinces, each of which is headed by a four-star director. Each province, in turn, has sub-divisions in districts and small towns. Local police stations in the districts are the lowest level in the structure. More than 170,000 police officers, spread all over the country, make up this huge national police force.

In accordance with this centralised organisational structure, policies and decisions are made at the center, namely the General Directorate of Security. The main reason for adhering to such a system is the common belief that problems such as political unrest, terrorism and drugs can be tackled more effectively by a centrally controlled police force. Although some writers argue for the decentralisation of the police[2] and point out some trends in this direction (Aydin, 1996), the dominant characteristic of the force is still highly centralised.

Having a centralised administrative structure for the police system has vital implications for the police-politic relationship. Being accountable to a civilian elected minister means that the police force is under the total control of the ruling party, of which the Interior Minister is a member. Aydin describes the situation by noting,

The police are under the full control of the party led government...All policing matters are the responsibility of the Minister of the Interior in Turkey. The minister has a great role and power in policy making; he is the only police authority (Aydin, 1996:78,79).

In a country where the principles of democracy are not fully established, this situation itself becomes an invitation to the politicians of the ruling party to interfere with the police organisation in order to accomplish various goals in their respective provinces. This point is exemplified by the fact that whenever the government changes, there is a complete overhaul among the top police officers in the organisation.

Centralised police administration controlled by politicians is not unique to Turkey. On the contrary, it is quite prevalent in other countries. The most notable examples of political interference have been observed in nations which follow Marxist ideology. According to Boyley, '...external control of the police by a political party is one of the key features in the communist states' (Cited in Fu 1994:278). For the communist states, the army and the police are the two pillars of the government. They have been regarded as the sharp weapon of the proletarian dictatorship, which should be kept under the 'absolute' control of the party.

This politicisation turns the police into one of the party's coercive instruments. Not only the priority of police work but also daily police operations are determined by the party. As is the case in China, the police became 'a 'mighty' force with a limitless discretionary power'. (Bowden, 1978: 186). However, it should not be overlooked that the Chinese police were unable to become an autonomous body within which matters pertaining to policing were determined. It is clear that 'mighty' refers not to the Chinese police but to the party which controlled it. The Chinese police seem to be 'a lion trapped in an iron cage'. It is obvious that acquiring power through a political power constitutes the biggest bottleneck in the long run for the autonomy of the police.

Some decentralised police forces, however, are not immune to political influences. Writing about the decentralised American Police[3], Walker notes,

The quality of the American police service in the nineteenth century could hardly have been worse. The police were completely unprofessional and police work was dominated by corruption and inefficiency... The source of these problems was politics... Politics influenced every aspect of policing: personnel standards, law enforcement priorities, corruption and police 'reform' (Walker, 1983: 7).

Walker further indicates that 'Police corruption was a direct product of political influence. It was not limited to the police, however, the entire criminal system and all of the city government was pervaded by corruption' (Walker, 1983: 7).

Moore, in his work about Australian police managers where he followed a similar methodology to Reiner's (1991) famous study on chief constables, remarks in connection with Victoria that 'there is a tendency to interfere more than in the past' (Moore, 1994: 211). Regarding New South Wales, he notes that 'there clearly is a trend towards increased ministerial involvement in aspects of police management; this will remain a very significant issue over the next few years' (Moore, 1994: 211).

Reiner documents in detail the relationships between politicians and constables in Britain. Despite the continuing struggle between the chief constables and the politicians, which resulted in greater politicisation (the 1959-1981 period) or depoliticisation (from 1981 on) of the police force at different periods, he firmly points out that

...there has never existed in this country any police force at the disposal of the central government, powerful enough to coerce the nation at large. Our national police has always been of the people and for the people (Reiner, 1985: 17).

From his explanation, one draws the conclusion that the type of political system in a country dictates largely the type of police in that country. '...the police sub-culture is by no means radically distinct or deviant in its values from either legal or popular morality...The police are broadly representative of the population' (Reiner, 1985: 175). On this point, Casamayor notes that 'a police system cannot be transformed from top to bottom unless the society it serves is transformed as well...If the American police pay too little heed to the law, certainly their countrymen do the same'[4] (Berkley, 1969: 197).

One can certainly multiply examples of politics interfering with policing but the point is that no matter which form the police system takes (centralised or decentralised), politicians show an insatiable appetite for control of the police who are delegated authority by the state to use their considerable power. Despite disclaimers by police authorities concerning the mixing of police and politics[5], they are in some sense interlinked to each other and inseparable. The role that they play in society places them right in the middle of the politics. '...the police

actually make policies about what laws to enforce, the extent to which they should be enforced, against whom, and on what occasions' (Cox, 1996: 48). However, the crucial distinction is drawn by Reiner between being political and being politicised. "Policing may be inescapably *political*, but it may not be *politicized* i.e. the center of overt political controversy over its manner, tactics or mode of operation and organization." (1985:3) The latter may be true, to some extent for Britain, but overt politicisation of the police is still prevalent in many countries[6], including Turkey.

Turkey presents a rather different case in terms of the degree of political interference, which place her somewhere between a communist system and some of the European systems. There are undeniable indications of interference by politicians in the Turkish police organisation. The almost complete overhaul of police directors in provinces and other important posts following a change in government (which has become a frequent phenomenon of Turkish politics), as well as the prevalent belief among high ranking officers that in order to get a promotion and become the security director of a province one has to have the support of the politicians of the ruling party, show how strongly politics is mingled with the policies of the police force. It is almost traditional now that every Minister of the Interior, even if from the same political party as his predecessor, appoints his own man as the General Director of Police. Parliamentarians of the governing party use their power to change the security directors of their respective provinces. To show the intensity of these changes it will suffice to compare Ankara with the Leicestershire Police Department in England: 35 security directors have worked in Ankara in the 65 years since its establishment in 1930 whereas only 8 directors have worked in the Leicestershire Police Department in 159 years since its inception in 1839. (Cerrah, 1998: 63-64).

Some preliminary information about promotions and transfers is in order before taking up the data analysis. Rules governing qualifications, transfers, duties and responsibilities, salaries and fringe benefits and other matters of the public officers are defined clearly in the Constitution (Item # 128) in general and the Law of Public Officers (Law # 657) in particular. In addition to these general legal arrangements, there is a specific regulation (No. 92/3393) accepted by the Council of Ministers on 6 August 1992 to govern promotions of security service personnel. Another regulation (No. 93/4633) accepted by the Council of Ministers on 9 July 1993 regulates rank, career development, titles, educational degrees, administrative posts, waiting periods for promotion, seniority, and principles of training for deputy inspectors.

Administrative ranks start with deputy inspector after graduation from the Police Academy followed by inspector, chief inspector, superintendent and director. Directors are of four kinds, from one-star to four-star. Four-star directors are called first degree directors, three-star directors are called second degree directors and so on.

Personnel regulation, Item # 9, sets the minimum waiting period at three years for promotion to the next rank. Until 1988, promotions were regulated by rules dating from 1937, in which the waiting period had been specified as three years. In 1988 and 1993, the waiting period was extended simply because of the fact that there was an excess in the number of personnel in the higher ranks. This excess number of officers prevented promotion to the higher posts which were already filled and thus not available. The problem became crucial especially for three-star directors. Three-star directors who found themselves in this situation either resorted to the courts or tried to get the help of pressure groups in order to get their delayed promotions.

The waiting period is specified as three years for directors both in the present and earlier regulations. One difference between the earlier and present regulations is that the earlier ones gave priority to merit first then seniority, while the present ones gives priority to seniority first then merit. The other difference between earlier and present regulations is that an examination was required before promotion in the earlier regulation, while there is no requirement for examination in the present one. The exam requirement has been replaced by the evaluation of two committees in the prevailing regulation. The first, the Central Evaluation Committee assumes the evaluation of personnel up to director level while the second, the Higher Evaluation Committee, is responsible for the evaluation of directors. Members of both committees are high-ranking police officers. Given the composition of the committees, it is rather naive to expect independent and objective evaluation from them.

In short, there is no screening whatsoever for the selection of the officers who are up for promotion. A graduate of the Academy (which is a four-year university level school) becomes a deputy inspector following graduation and he/she is promoted to the next higher rank every three years. Thus, from the lowest rank to the highest, he/she is not subjected to any

objective selection process. It is this automatic promotion system that is mainly responsible for the accumulation of a great number of officers in the higher ranks. The lack of personnel planning coupled with the lack of any screening process makes the situation even worse. The important point is that this lack of a selection process and the large number of police officers waiting to be promoted makes the police force more vulnerable to external interferences.
Applications for promotion in other countries can be described as more objective and democratic. Regarding the English promotional system, it can be said that promotion in the police is strictly on merit - every man or woman starts at the same level with the same basic training and the same opportunities. In America, the earliest process was the use of the ballot box. In the majority of jurisdictions today, there is some kind of reliance on the popular vote to obtain some element of community involvement. Although many officers, particularly sheriffs, still have to seek election, the majority of senior police ranks are filled by transfer. The power of transfer frequentlylies with the mayor of a town or city and occasionally with a standing committee of the city council (the legislative body). The police forces of almost all countries in the world have some type of screening and evaluation for promotions. Turkey seems unique with its system of automatic promotion despite the fact that there are rules to regulate advancements. The problem is that these rules are not applied to each officer equally.

Data Collection and Sampling Design

Two sets of data were used in this study. The first relates to four-star security directors. At the time of data collection, there were 333 four-star directors in the force. Information on promotions and transfers was gathered from different sources including the Police Journal, the Official Gazette and internal communication notes as well as the officers themselves. Information about members of the same rank were obtained and double-checked with the help of other members of that rank who were available for interview. Although it took a long time, information for a total of 300 security directors was gathered. Including more than ninety percent of the directors in the sample assures that no serious bias is introduced due to exclusion of thirty-three directors.
The second set of data was collected by survey research conducted among officers who were chief inspector and above in rank. The target population was delineated as such for two reasons; 1) they are the ones who will be subjected to critical transfers and promotions in the near future and 2) they have relatively more experience in the force which guarantees that valid and reliable information about police practices will be obtained. A random sampling design was employed to select 306 of the 7300 police officers in the specified ranks and working in different provinces of Turkey[7].

Promotions and Transfers

The aim of this section is to show 'out-of-rule' (not according to the rules and regulations) applications followed in promotions and transfers in the police organisation. These out-of-rule applications will be determined based on the rules which are supposed to govern officers' promotions and transfers. Not only the description of such applications but also their quantity will be addressed. After discussing out of rule applications, they will be related to other factors such as the politics within the organisation and outside political influences. The prime interest will be delineating the areas where political interference is more likely to be encountered.
The first data set used in this section pertains specifically to career information such as present rank, educational history, promotion and transfer history, commendations and reprimands received during service. Promotions and transfers will be given priority over the other aspects of career development since they entail serious injustice for the officers as well as the organisation in general. Such injustice may have colossal implications not only for the functioning of the police officers but also for the organisation itself.
One of the most significant overall indices for out-of-rule applications is the waiting period between ranks. According to the rule, the waiting period for the next promotion is three years for each officer except for the inspector class. Checking the time spent between ranks will enable us to see if there is any deviation from the established rules. Table 1 presents the average number of years waited before promotion for each successive rank and the amount of time taken to reach the final rank taking into account interim ranks.

	Average Periods (years)	Standard deviation	Coefficient of Variation
A.			
Dep. Ins. to Ins.	2.93	.71	.24
Ins. to Chief Ins.	2.68	.81	.30
Chief Ins. to Super.	3.02	.83	.27
Super. to One-star	3.38	1.12	.33
One-star to Two-star	2.47	1.47	.59
Two-star to Three-star	2.98	1.88	.63
Three-star to Four-star	3.35	2.70	.81
B. To			
Inspector	2.93	.71	.24
Chief Inspector	5.62	.86	.15
Superintendent	8.64	1.23	.14
One-star director	12.01	1.51	.13
Two-star director	14.33	2.13	.15
Three-star director	17.01	2.66	.16
Four-star director	18.46	3.66	.20

Table 1: Average Waiting Periods Between Ranks

Panel A reports the average waiting periods for successive ranks. It is obvious that none of the means is exactly three years. Had the rules been applied strictly, all the means would be equal to three. Probably more important than the means is the standard deviation and the coefficients of variation which gradually increase as the rank increases. This is an indication of serious variations in the waiting period for promotions. That is, some officers wait much longer than others while some wait less than their rank mates do. As the increasing standard deviations and coefficients of variation indicate, such injustices get even worse as the officers move up higher in the hierarchy. Taking the size of these statistics as a measure of injustice, it is possible to claim that there is more injustice in the upper echelons of the hierarchy.

Panel B reports the cumulative waiting periods, taking the rank of deputy inspector as the base. The averages then summarise the mean period until an officer reaches the highest rank. Again, if the rules governing promotions were observed, the means would have increased by three starting from three. In other words, we would expect the means to follow

the pattern of 3,6,9,12,15,18 and 21 respectively. The means observed in the table do not match this expected pattern, meaning that the three-year rule was not followed. It is also worth noting that the officers were promoted earlier to all ranks except promotions to superintendent and one-star directorship.

It seems that the deviations from the rules have worked for the benefit of the officers. The system became such that it enabled officers to be promoted earlier than the rule required. This phenomenon can be explained by standard deviations that indicate differential treatment applied to some officers. The increasing size of the standard deviation as the rank increases shows that differential treatment is more common at the top of the hierarchy. Consequently, some officers get to higher ranks much earlier than their rank mates do. It is striking to observe that some four-star directors reached this point in as little as 13 years while others reached the same point in 28 years. It is also interesting to note two points: a) the share of injustices (as indicated by the coefficients of variation) is lower in general than the ones reported in Panel A and b) they show an increasing trend starting with one-star director rank. The reason for the first point is the fact that certain officers receive support only a few times in their career which is offset in the long run due to changing governments. The reason for the second point is that the one-star director post is the starting point where officers need support to get promoted to a higher rank, which gradually decreases in number. Higher standard deviations and increasing coefficients of variation for the three- and four-star directors indicate the degree of differential treatment in promotion practices.

An alternative way to catch such out-of-rule applications is to look at the month during which promotions are made. The rule states that promotions should be made during the summer months. Table 2 provides frequencies of promotions for each rank. As the table shows, promotions were given in every month of the year, which applies to all ranks. A careful look at the table will readily reveal that the time of promotion was concentrated in the months of October, June, July, November, December and August. It is quite surprising to see that even the simple principle of avoiding the resettlement of officer (promotions are coupled with transfers) during the autumn months is not observed. Following the highest percentages underlined, one can see that autumn is the season for promotions. Promotions in summer months are generally observed for deputy inspectors who graduate from the Police Academy in June. The percentages in the table clearly indicate that the rule has not been followed with regard to promotion time.

	Rank							
Month	DI	I	CI	SI	1 Star	2 Star	3 Star	4 Star
January	.7	6.9	3.1	4.6	13.3	4.9	2.1	6.7
February	.7	6.3	3.3	2.8	4.9	3.4	3.4	1.8
March	1.0	7.3	7.3	2.8	7.3	3.9	12.4	11.7
April	1.0	4.5	13.6	7.0	4.2	5.4	9.0	14.8
May	.3	.3	1.4	3.5	2.4	2.9	3.4	2.5
June	30.9	9.4	1.7	10.9	12.9	6.8	1.4	4.2
July	26.4	20.5	21.6	7.4	5.2	7.3	12.4	6.0
August	.7	2.1	3.5	11.6	12.2	12.7	13.8	17.3
September	17.7	8.0	2.4	7.7	4.9	13.2	13.1	11.3
October	15.3	16.0	31.4	17.9	6.3	15.1	12.4	10.6
November	2.1	13.5	3.1	9.1	7.0	21.0	6.9	6.4
December	3.1	5.2	7.0	14.7	19.2	2.9	9.7	6.7

Table 2: Month of Promotions by Rank

Place of duty where the promotion is received also exhibits interesting deviations from the expected pattern. In a sense, distribution of place where promotion was received gives the distribution of ranked officers among the provinces. Therefore, it also gives clues for the general distribution of the officers in Turkey.
Given the number of provinces in the country it seems formidable to look at the distribution of the officers in the provinces. In order to make the presentation of findings easier, only the provinces with higher percentages will be included. The following table summarises the findings with regard to provinces where officers received promotion by rank groups (inspectors, superintendents, and directors). (Since percent of responses in multi response technique is used, the percentages in the table do not add up to 100.)

Province	Inspec.	Superint.	Directors	4-star	Total
Adana	1.0	1.1	1.7	.7	1.3
Ankara	48.0	36.8	37.6	42.7	47.0
Antalya	-----	1.1	------	------	-----
Aydin	-----	------	2.1	2.1	1.1
Balikesir	-----	1.1	1.3	1.0	1.0
Bolu	1.2	1.1	-----	.3	------
Bursa	1.2	-----	1.6	1.0	1.3
Denizli	-----	1.1	-----	.3	------
Diyarbakir	-----	1.8	1.5	.7	1.2
Edirne	-----	1.1	-----	.3	------
Elazig	-----	1.8	1.5	1.7	1.3
Erzincan	1.0	-----	-----	.7	-----
Erzurum	-----	1.1	1.0	1.4	------
Eskisehir	-----	-----	1.3	.7	------
G.antep	-----	-----	1.7	.7	1.0
Gumushane	-----	-----	1.0	2.4	------
Hatay	1.0	1.4	-----	.3	------
Istanbul	13.6	13.7	8.0	2.1	10.0
Izmir	7.1	8.1	3.9	2.1	4.9
Kars	1.2	----	1.1	1.0	1.0
Konya	1.3	1.8	1.2	.7	1.2
Malatya	-----	-----	1.4	2.1	-----
Manisa	1.4	1.8	1.1	-----	1.0
Mardin	-----	-----	1.3	1.7	-----
Sakarya	-----	1.1	-----	.3	-----
Samsun	-----	1.4	1.3	.3	-----
S.Urfa	1.0	1.1	-----	-----	-----
Van	-----	1.1	-----	-----	-----
Zonguldak	1.5	1.8	1.1	1.0	1.1

Table 3: Place of Promotion by Rank Groups (Percent of Responses)

As the column for the inspectors reveals, almost half of the inspectors (48%) were promoted in Ankara, followed by Istanbul (13.6%) and Izmir (7.1%). The same situation is also valid for superintendents: 37 percent were promoted in Ankara, followed by 14 percent in Istanbul and 8.1 percent in Izmir.

For directors, Ankara is still the province with the highest concentration. Of all the one-star to four-star directors, 38 percent indicated that they were promoted in Ankara while 8 percent were in Istanbul and 4 percent in Izmir. When only the four-star directors are taken into account, the percentage increases from 38 to 43 percent. However, this is understandable since the majority of the four-star posts are located in Ankara.

This disproportionate concentration of officers in Ankara is due to: 1) lack of any objective criteria in distributing officers to the provinces, such as population size and number of crime incidents (Istanbul, which is three times larger than Ankara, does not have even one-third of the officers that Ankara does), and 2) the desire of the officers to work in Ankara to receive additional benefits such as meeting politicians and high ranking police officers, both of which could be instrumental in getting promoted.

The departments at which officers work also exhibit certain patterns, which create bottlenecks for promotions in the organisation. Since certain departments are only available in some provinces, the departments that officers work for are necessarily related to the place of duty. The following table presents the officers' department by their rank at the time of promotion.

Department[1]+	DI	I	CI	SI	D1S	D2S	D3S	D4S
100	10.8	19.0	17.0	17.3	21.1	14.5	-----	-----
101	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	10.4
102	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	16.0
104	14.6	-----	------	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
130	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	41.0
133	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	13.5
150	74	75.1	76.1	72.3	70.9	50.9	38.8	-----

[1]100 represents General Directorate of Security, 101 Research, Planning and Coordination, 102 Inspection, 104 Police Academy, 130 Security Director of Province, 133 Police Colleges and Schools and 150 Province Security Directorate.

Table 4: Department Promotions by Rank

Only the departments with percentages over 10 are included in Table 4. The General Directorate of Security is the place where all but three-star and four-star directors received their promotions. As the next two rows indicate, none of the lower ranking officers were promoted in either the Research, Planning and Coordination (RPC) Unit or Unit of Investigation (I), that serve as a reservoir for directors who are taken off active duty after being promoted to four-star. As expected, a large portion of directors (41%) were promoted to four-star when they become Director of Security in provinces. Police schools, where 39 percent of the officers received their promotion, seemed to be potential places for promotion to three-star director rank.

On the basis of which department and where officers get promoted, certain biases can be introduced into the promotion system depending on the way the organisation is structured,. Regarding the place of promotion, bias is obvious, for example, Ankara, where more than one-third and less than half of the officers of all ranks work and are promoted. Although the

existence of the General Directorate of Security in the capital can explain certain portion of this excess number of personnel, it also tends to cover up the main reason, which is the unseen benefits of being in close proximity to politicians and influential high-ranking officers. It is not always the case that politicians initiate out of rule applications; just the opposite, officers are the ones in many cases who request favours from the politicians. No matter who initiates the process, their cooperation ends up with an out of rule application, which is mutually beneficial to both parties. Working in Ankara creates an ideal place for such cooperation.

Perceptions about Promotions and Transfers

The aim of this section is to evaluate perceptions (whether done by the rules or out of rules) of the police officers working in chief inspector and higher positions concerning transfer and promotion applications. In the previous section, deviations from rules regarding the promotions and transfers of directors were presented. The issue of how these deviations are perceived in the force is as important as the deviations themselves since they relate to the morale and code of ethics of the organisation.

First we should indicate how qualified these officers are in terms of being subjected to unjust applications themselves. With respect to their rank 22.5 percent are chief inspectors, 14.8 percent superintendents, 11.1 percent four-star, 21.1 percent three-star, 22.1 percent two-star and 8.4 percent one-star directors. Chief inspectors have 8.5 years of experience while four-star directors have 26.3 years. On the average, they have 16.4 years of experience in the force. With respect to the number of provinces where they have worked, the average for the sample turns out to be 4.6 provinces. Chief inspectors have a mean of 2.7 provinces while four-star directors have 5.8. Three-star directors have a higher average (6.5) than four-star directors do, which is unexpected. Actually four-star directors should have had the highest average. In order to check the relationship between years on the force and the number of provinces worked in, the Pearson correlation coefficient is calculated to be 0.62. Although this is a strong correlation, we would expect an even higher correlation. Less than perfect correlation implies that some of those who were promoted have not necessarily changed their province. In fact, there are four-star directors in the sample who have never been transferred to any place outside of Ankara in their entire career.

As for promotions, in order to check if there is any deviation from the rules governing promotions, the last rank of the officers in the sample is crosstabulated with their previous rank. The results indicated that 10 two-star and 2 one-star directors moved up to four-star rank, without going through the intermediate ranks. Similarly, among the superintendents, 1 moved up to three-star and 14 moved up to two-star rank skipping the intermediate ranks. This surprising finding was recognised as not unusual in the organisation by the high-ranking officers with whom the findings of this research were discussed. In an effort to explain this phenomenon, commendations received by those officers who skipped ranks for successful operations were investigated and no significant relationship was found between rewards and skipping rank.

As it is clear from the discussion above, the officers in the sample experienced out-of-rule applications themselves, which qualify them for further investigation. The important issue from our perspective is to know how the officers in the sample perceive promotion and transfer applications in terms of their being applied or being violated. To probe the general perceptions about transfers and promotions, the respondents were asked two questions. Table 5 presents the mean responses for the general perception of transfers and promotions by rank.

Since the lower number represent rules not being observed, it is possible to claim that all have little confidence in rules being applied in the organisation. The perception of the three-star directors is the lowest which is understandable since there are few four star posts available for them to move up. Understandably, four-star directors have the highest esteem for the transfer applications since they have already reached the highest rank in the hierarchy. One-way Anova results indicate that the differences observed in the perception of the officers in various ranks are not significant ($F= 1.09$; $d.f.= 5, 294½$ $p=.36$). That is, respondents in all ranks are skeptical about the proper application of transfer rules in the organisation.

	Transfers (mean)	Promotions (mean)
Chief inspector	4.1	6.6
Superintendent	4.5	6.2
One-star director	4.6	6.4
Two-star director	4.0	4.4
Three-star director	3.8	4.4
Four-star director	4.7	6.0
Total	4.2	5.5

Table 5: General Perception of Transfers and Promotions by Rank.

As for promotions, respondents in two ranks, namely two-star and three star directors, have the lowest perceptions about promotions being done by the rules. These two ranks are particularly important from the point of view that they are the intermediate steps before reaching the highest rank in the hierarchy. As pointed out earlier, the higher one moves up in the hierarchy, the harder it is to get promoted. So the higher the officer moves up, the more he is exposed to difficulties in getting the next-higher rank. Probably this is true for every organisation, but what is different and unusual in the Turkish case is the fact that since there is no screening whatsoever in the earlier ranks, every graduate of the Police Academy becomes a candidate for a four-star post.

Time spent in the service is one of the important factors in the development of perceptions about promotions. The longer a police officer serves in the organisation, the more experience he will gain about his own and others' promotions. The Pearson correlation coefficient is calculated in order to see the strength of association between years served and the general perception. Pearson r[8] turned out to be -0.26, which implies that the longer one serves in the organisation, the more negative a perception one develops about promotion applications. At this point, it is a rather curious matter to probe how much the negative perceptions of the high-ranking officers stem from their own experiences or their knowledge about the promotion experiences of others. The data set does not allow the question to be answered fully. However, it sheds light on the relationship between perceptions in general and an officer's perception of his own promotions.

	General perceptions of promotions										
	Out of rules								By rules		
Perception of own prom.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total
Out of rules	28.1	7.0	13.3	8.6	21.9	4.7	10.2	4.7	___	1.6	100
By rules	5.1	2.3	5.6	4.5	15.3	6.8	14.1	20.9	13.0	12.4	100
Total	14.8	4.3	8.9	6.2	*18.0	5.9	12.5	14.1	7.5	7.9	305

$X^2 = 82.5$ df=9 p = .00001 Somers' D = .59

Table 6: General Perceptions of Promotions by Perception of Officer's Own Promotions.

The underlined modal percentages in the rows indicate that those who experienced out-of-rule applications in their promotions have negative perceptions of promotions in general. Conversely, those who were not subjected to any unjust application had positive perceptions about promotions in general. This suggests that if the organisation handles the promotions of officers according to the rules, the officers will tend to have positive perceptions about promotions in general[9].

Thus far, attention has been paid to the perceptions of transfers and promotions separately. Since promotions are related to transfers, one may expect some similarity among their perceptions. In order to see if there is any association between the two perceptions, the Pearson correlation coefficient was calculated and found to be 0.44. (An alternative statistic is Spearman Rho, which is 0.43.) This is a moderately strong correlation which suggests that perceptions about transfers and promotions are somewhat related.

What happens to this association between the perceptions for transfers and promotions, if their personal experiences in these processes are taken into account? The correlation coefficient between the two perceptions drops to .35 after controlling for the effect of personnel experiences. This is crucially important since it points to the existence of a relationship between perceptions about transfers and those about promotions, independent of the personal experiences of the officers. No matter what the experiences of the police officers, half of them believe that rules are not followed in either transfers or promotions.

An officer may not have been subject to unfair or unjust promotions himself but cannot help but think that one day he may experience such an out-of-rule promotion. A question in the questionnaire, especially formulated for those who are in the lower ranks in the hierarchy, probes the likelihood that they may be subjected to such unjust promotion applications. The majority of the officers (73 percent) indicated the possibility that they would be subjected to such out-of-rule applications while only 27 percent indicated no possibility for such applications in their promotions. This finding also has serious implications for the organisation as a whole. Almost three-quarters of the respondents had fear or anxiety about their promotions. In order to evaluate how this fear varies according to the rank of the officers, Table 7 provides the necessary percentages.

	Rank[1]					
Fear	CI	SI	D1S	D2S	D3S	D4S
Yes	70.1	75.0	72.0	79.7	82.0	44.4
No	29.9	25.0	28.0	20.3	18.0	55.6
Difficultyof Promotion[2]	2	3	4	4	8	9

[1] CI stands for chief inspector, SI for superintendent, D1S for one-star director, D2S for two-star director, D3S for three-star director and D4S for four-star directors.
[2] Median values.

Table 7: Fear about Promotions and Perceived Difficulty of Positions by Rank

In all 82 percent of the three-star directors have anxieties about their promotions, which is quite meaningful. Serious promotion problems are experienced in promotion from three-star to four-star due to the limited number of four-star positions in the organisation. The second most worried groups are the two-star directors (79.7 percent), followed in turn by superintendent (75%), one-star directors (72%) and chief inspectors (70.1%). There is no need to mention four-star directors since they have already reached the highest rank in the organisation. What is interesting here is the existence of the widespread anxiety among all ranks except four-star directors. What can one think of an organisation in which at least 70 percent of the officers at the higher administrative posts share an anxiety about their promotions?

Increased concentration of the worried officers in higher ranks agrees with the officers' thoughts about thedifficulties of each position. The officers were asked to rank difficulty level of each rank with regard to promotions. The average difficulty levels are summarised in the last row of Table 7.

A clear-cut trend for increased difficulty (1 stands for very little difficulty, 10 for very much) is observed here. In other words, difficulty of promotion increases as the rank increases. Incorporating the previous findings with this enables us to see why there is a widespread anxiety among the higher-ranking officers.

On the grounds of these findings, it might be argued that the organisation has to take precautions to alleviate this common anxiety felt by high-ranking officers regarding promotions. Policies designed to solve or alleviate the problem will also contribute to lessening the influence of the political interference.

Certain promotional policies have been applied successfully in the army for many years. One is objective screening at certain ranks and the other is early retirement with all fringe benefits. The idea of adopting the same system comes up frequently in the conversations of the police officers. Longing for the promotion system applied in the Army itself indicates the awareness on the part of the police organisation regarding not only the seriousness of the problem but also the willingness to curb it. A question investigating how they evaluate the usefulness of the promotion system applied in the Army for the police organisation is included in the questionnaire. It is no surprise that the overall average is 8 on a scale ranging from 1 for 'not useful' to 10 for 'useful'.

Officers working in all ranks believe in the usefulness of the Army Promotion System for the police organisation. For the reasons spelled out earlier, three-star directors consider the Army system as vital (their mean is 9) for the police organisation. Interestingly, even four-star directors who are already at the top of the hierarchy place quite an importance (their mean is 8.4) on the usefulness of the Army system for the police. The higher mean values for the three higher ranks (8.3, 9.0 and 8.4 respectively) actually reflect how serious the police officers see the problems related to promotion in the organisation.

Promotions, as indicated earlier, are related to the province and the department worked in. It is believed by some that having worked in certain provinces and certain departments contributes to promotion to higher ranks. In order to check the importance attributed to the province and department worked in, they were asked if the province and department is important for promoting to higher ranks: a little less than two-thirds (64 percent) of the officers saw the province and department worked in as helpful for further promotion. Responses given to the complementary question of 'For which rank are they more important ?' indicated that the province and the department worked in are important for directors, followed by inspectors and superintendents. The explanation given above accounts, to a great extent, for why there is so much struggle among the police officers to get located in certain provinces.

External Interference on the Organisation

External interference in the police organisation is by no means limited to politics and politicians. There are other groups that can also influence the functioning of the organisation, the implications of which may be detrimental or beneficial for the police. The officers in the sample were asked about the extent to which pressure groups negatively influence the policing profession. They agreed on the negative influence of the pressure groups on policing profession (the mean for the sample is 7.7 on a scale ranging from 1 for 'very little' to 10 for 'very much'). Does the rank of the officers make a difference in evaluating the negative effects of the pressure groups? The answer is no. There is no statistically significant difference among the officers holding different ranks according to One-way Anova results. ($F=1.5$, $df=5$, 293, $p= .17$). However, chief inspectors have the highest mean value (8.2) for the negative effects of the pressure groups while one-star directors have the lowest mean value (7.2).

The complementary question probes which of the pressure groups have the most negative effect for the policing profession. Response categories included Human Rights, Feminists, Employer Unions, Worker Unions, Politicians, Mafia, Media, Ideological and others. The respondents were asked to rank them in terms of their negative effect on the profession. Politicians ranked first with 69 percent in terms of their negative influence on the police, which was followed by Human Rights groups (17%) and Media (13%). This is the most important finding of this research, as it explains the reason for most of the deviations documented above. This confirms the alleged role of politicians.

The officers also reported positive effects of the same groups. Ranked by their importance, the positive influence groups are Human Rights, Media and Politicians. It is important to note that the officers are not prejudiced against certain pressure groups, which is obvious in their delineating the very same group as having both negative and positive effects on their organisation.

What is more important from our point of view is the particular instances where an officer is promoted or transferred with the interference of such pressure groups. The question formulated to probe such involvement reads as 'Were any of the pressure groups mentioned above influential in your own transfer / promotion?' Surprisingly more than one-third of the officers (35%) revealed the fact that a pressure group had interfered in their transfers/promotions. Given the sensitivity of the question, we can predict the real number as higher than the one found here. As it is, this is quite alarming for the independent functioning of the organisation. More than one third of the high-ranking administrators were transferred or promoted under the influence or with the help of various pressure groups.

The most drastic implication of out-of-rule applications in transfers and promotions is the possibility that an officer may consider quitting the police force as a reaction to these unjust and unfair treatments. One of the questions probed if they ever thought of resigning from the policing. More than half (56 percent) said they had considered leaving the organisation, which is extremely important for the overall evaluation of the police force. Discontent seems a continuing state of being in the police, since a similarly high percentage (46%) was reported by Academy students who said they would have preferred to be student in a different higher education institution (&OUML;zcan and Caglar, 1994).

Conclusion

The involvement of various groups in police matters is undeniable in Turkey. The recent incident at Susurluk, which indicated police, Mafia and politician cooperation brought more evidence for the existence of close ties between politicians and police. Even the recent change of the General Director of Security upon the personal intervention of the Minister of Interior herself shows how deep and intense this relationship is. The overnight decision by the Interior Minister to replace the present security director with his own candidate and the changing of the security director of another province upon the insistence of a member of parliament of the ruling party show how the personal desire of politicians can override even the established rules of the state regarding the appointment of high level bureaucrats.

Based on the evidence provided by various studies as well as this one, there are grounds to believe that in countries where the laws are not applied effectively and equally, it is almost

impossible to keep the police organisation completely independent of interference from external forces and mainly from politicians.
A law abiding society, where the rights and responsibilities of politicians and police are drawn clearly and enforced properly, may lessen the potential clashes between politicians and police by making the rules of the game open and transparent. In countries like Turkey, where democratic principles are not settled and internalised fully, it is natural to observe serious deviations from the laws regulating the work of politicians and police. A point that is crucial to remember in this connection is the fact that the police force is a mirror of society. One cannot expect a law-abiding, accountable and professional police organisation in a country where there is no respect for the laws. Problems mentioned regarding the Turkish police organisation are also true for other organisations in this country. This explains why drastic changes in police organisations always follow similar changes in societies.
Although the prescription of a more democratic society is a seemingly potential solution, there are some simple precautions, which could alleviate the immediate problems. First, the number of students accepted to the Police Academy should be reduced and entry requirements should be more restrictive. At present, any student graduating from the Academy is a candidate for a four-star post since there is no screening procedure applied whatsoever in promotions between ranks. Second, and complementing the first, standard screening procedures should be implemented in the promotion system so that only the successful officers will be promoted to the next rank. It will then be possible for the organisation to select the required number of officers for each rank, which will certainly prevent an accumulation of officers at certain ranks. Third, an early retirement alternative should be introduced for those who cannot move up because of the limited number of available posts. All these precautions will make the police organisation more professional, more accountable and inevitably more democratic, which will lessen considerably interference from outside, especially by politicians.

Notes

1 The authors would like to thank the General Directorate of Security for permission to conduct the survey. This research was financed by the AFP 96 01 02 02 Fund of Middle East Technical University.

2 Refer to Berkley's (1969) The Democratic Policeman for the discussion on centralisation-decentralisation issue.

3 Refer to Fosdick 1972 and Walker 1983 on the American police, McKenzie and Gallagher 1989 for the comparative study on the American and British police forces.

4 Casamayor concludes by saying that 'The dismaying features of the American police mirror, in short, the dismaying features of the nation that has created them' (Berkley, 1969:198).

5 Refer to Lambert (1984) for the traditional formulation and counter arguments of the police role.

6 Refer to Wiebrens 1990 for an illuminating Dutch account of transferring of a purely technical issue of police personnel re-allocation into a political issue.

7 For more information about sampling design, refer to Gültekin (1997).

8 Taking the ordered nature of the present rank and general perception variables into account, the researchers also calculated the Spearman Rho statistic, which turned out to be -0.24. This is in agreement with the Pearson r statistic.

9 Probability of X^2 (Chi-square) indicates the existence of the relationships between general and particular perceptions about promotions. Somers' D was used to measure the strength of the association between the two variables, and was found to be strong.

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