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Turkish Military Coup

Turkey is quiet and apparently under tight military control following the military coup on 27 May. The military commander of Istanbul has lifted the daytime curfew, effective as of 1630 on 27 May, while continuing the night curfew from 2300 to 0400. In Ankara, the 24-hour curfew remains in effect but the city is reported calm.

General Cemal Gursel, who resigned as commander, Turkish ground forces on 5 May, has emerged as the leader of the new government. He is both chairman of the National Unity Committee-- the provisional government of the nation--and commander of the Turkish armed forces. In a statement to the public, Gursel has denied any desire to become a dictator, promising to prepare the country for elections and then turn the country over to the winning political party. Communiqués by the National Unity Committee have emphasized that the coup was not directed against any person or party and have promised that members of all parties will be treated in accordance with the nation's laws.

Other members of the National Unity Committee are General Cevdet Sunay, Lt. General Sahabettin Metel, Admiral Refet Arkun, Lt. General Muzaffer Alankus, and retired Colonel Cemal Yildirim, Istanbul leader of the Republican People's party (RPP). The position of the leader of the RPP, Ismet Inonu, is not yet clear, [redacted]

Nearly all of the political and military leaders of the previous government have been taken into "protective custody." Premier Menderes apparently was found near Eskishehir, where he had addressed a rally on 26 May, and was escorted to Ankara. [redacted]

Both Istanbul and Ankara, where considerable anti-Menderes sentiment had developed in recent weeks, apparently received the

news of the coup with joy. The citizens of Ankara, while confined to their homes, reportedly cheered passing army units. The new government claimed a "festive mood" prevails in Istanbul. It may be some time before the reaction of the rural areas, where Menderes enjoyed his greatest support, will be known, but it is unlikely that any serious opposition to the military government will materialize. [redacted]

