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RÉSUMÉS

This article has two central areas of concern. The first involves the analysis of how the basics of the ideology of the Nationalist Action Party (NAP) of Turkey (1969-1981) drew some strength from the fascist potential of the political traditions of the Kemalist period, but at the same time deviated from it. The second argument, however, demonstrates the deep impact the party had on the course of Turkish democracy. It was a party with a narrow superficial power base and was sustained artificially in the political scene by the objective historical conditions in the crucial decade of 1970s. This second contention implies that the NAP was a conjunctural phenomenon with no hope of a long-term success in Turkish political landscape and had therefore to adopt a radical ideological content and a strategy of action to come and stay in power. Furthermore, and more important, what kept it going was not any authentic and pressing needs emanating from the grass-roots of its constituency, but the strategy of the dominant political forces on the centre-right. The following analysis of these two arguments is heavily based on the primary sources related to the NAP.