



Committee for the Defence of Democratic Rights in Turkey

NEWSLETTER

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The army commanders seized power in a fascist coup on the morning of 12th September in Turkey, a NATO member which accommodates on her territory more than one hundred US nuclear, air and communications bases. The consolidation of fascism in Turkey will mean a bloody dictatorship against the people within the country and the pursuit of an aggressive adventurist policy against neighbouring countries. Turkey under fascist rule will be a constant danger to peace in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East.



CND DEMO SPECIAL ISSUE

Threat to peace in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East

Fascism in Turkey

On September 12th, Turkey's army commanders seized power in a fascist coup. The generals immediately abolished The Constitution, Parliament, banned all parties, trade unions and associations. Chief-of-Staff General Kenan Evren proclaimed himself Head of State and his five-man junta, the National Security Council (NSC), gave itself absolute executive, legislative and judiciary powers. The NSC appointed government is largely for the sake of appearance. The NSC has empowered itself to draft and endorse laws and can overrule all government decisions.

For years, the warmongers of NATO have been calling for the "strengthening of its Southern flank". Especially over the last year, NATO developed the issue into a campaign to "save Turkey", which has "a strategic importance for the West". Turkey has become the bastion of imperialism in the Middle East since the collapse of the Shah's regime. It was indispensable for NATO - ministers of finance rushed to raise credits and aid. The local allies of imperialism in Turkey have been seeking for a long time to overcome its inability to rule the country in circumstances of a profound economic and social crisis. This was exacerbated by the rising struggle of the masses against increasing exploitation and oppression. The fascisation of the state was advancing for years; all that was necessary was to shed the parliamentary veneer and establish an open military dictatorship. With NATO's approval and help, the last qualitative step in this process was taken. First news of the coup was given on the Voice of America Radio by the US Secretary of State.

Today the mood of the people in Turkey is such that no dictatorship defending such narrow class interests can survive for a long time without winning over some sections of society. Thus, the junta is at pains to look as if it is doing something against individual fascists and fascist organisations, to project a middle-of-the-road image. If the Hitler gang had to use "anti-capitalist", "socialist" demagogues, this fascist junta has to add "anti-fascism" to its demagogues.

Today the mood of world opinion is such that no government can easily pursue warmongering policies openly. Therefore, it is neither surprising nor contradictory that the fascist junta seems to be advocating detente. If the Hitler gang had to talk about "peace", this fascist junta has to add to that demagogue principles of the Helsinki Final Act.

The enemies of the people who are playing their last trump cards are cunning and patient. It is eye-opening to reflect on the visit of General Kenan Evren to Iraq in April 1979. Explaining the aims of his visit Evren said, "the purpose of this visit is not political as some circles have suggested. It is purely to develop relations between the armed forces of our countries. I believe that the relations between the two armed forces will increase after this visit and this will benefit Turkey greatly" (*Tercüman*, 15 April 1979). *Tercüman* informs us that the talks "dwelt on certain problems common to the two countries", and that "views were exchanged on possible joint actions regarding these problems" (*Tercüman*, 16 April 1979). "The Turkish authorities have given assurances that military measures will be intensified on our south-eastern borders and that border crossing will be prevented, in the face of developments which threaten the future of the region" (*Tercüman*, 18 April 1979).

And upon the visit of General Evren to the USA in June 1979, Hikmet Bil wrote the following in *Hürriyet*: "You may be certain that Atatürkism shall prevail once again. Turkey will suffer inconvenience, the people will wait in queues. But the country will retrieve its honour". Together with this article, *Hürriyet* presented two letters from its "readers". The first was printed under the title "Atatürk must be reborn", the second, under the title "1981 will give birth to a new leader".

The mouthpieces of imperialism were preparing public opinion for things to come. The people of Turkey are not only inconvenienced in queues, but are suffering in jails, torture chambers and factories turned into forced labour camps.

"The Turkish army will guarantee the welfare and happiness of the daughterland Cyprus which is an integral part of Turkey"

General Kenan Evren, from the letter to the government of the Turkish Federative State of Cyprus, Times, 17 September 1980).

Some of the major US basis in Turkey



Key to the map

-  NATO erken uyan ve izleme radar istasyonu NATO early warning and radar tracking station.
-  A.B.D. haberleşme istasyonu US communications station.
-  A.B.D. füze ve nükleer deneme dinleme başı US missile and nuclear testing and listening station.
-  A.B.D. nükleer silahlar depolama başı US nuclear weapons depot.
-  NATO hava başı NATO air base.

State at war against the people

— The National Assembly and the elected government are dissolved. The Constitution is suspended. Trade Unions are closed down except those under state control. Trade union leaders are arrested. Martial law is extended across the country. All municipal councils are disbanded and mayors are removed from office.

— In the first week of the coup, more than 10,000 are arrested.

— Continuous army operations in the Kurdish regions in Eastern Anatolia; villages are raided, some are evacuated, towns are sealed off.

— All strikes are banned. Workers who are late are sent back home. Those who fail to turn up for two consecutive days are liable to prosecution. Workers who do not work at a satisfactory pace can face charges at martial law courts.

— Martial law commanders are able to appoint and dismiss all categories of civil servants, scrutinise all communications, including private letters; censor the press, ban all meetings and close any association that might still function.

— There is to be virtually unlimited detention without trial. There can be no appeal on sentences of less than three years. Security forces have the right to shoot to kill at their own discretion anyone who acts suspiciously or fails to respond to an order.

— Journalists who “intentionally propagate erroneous, unfounded or exaggerated information in a manner that could create alarm or excitement among the public” will be jailed from six months to two years. If the offence has been committed “in concordance with a foreigner” the sentence will not be less than a year, and if it has been committed by way of the media the sentence will be doubled.

— Anyone in possession of bombs, dynamite, daggers, flick knives, swords, scimitars, bayonets, throttling chains and cheese cutters are liable to 30 years’ imprisonment.

— Two people hanged, 16 more awaiting hanging. Sentences are passed in court sessions lasting only a couple of hours.

— Wanted posters are appearing everywhere. Citizens are encouraged to denounce anyone or anything suspicious to martial law authorities.

— During the population census on 12th October 45 million people were confined to their homes. Census officers accompanied by two armed soldiers carried out house to house searches in every part of the country.

“... We are against dictatorship.” (General Kenan Evren, the military dictator of Turkey, Milliyet, 16 October 1980).



Solidarity Grows

Lord Anthony Gogard...“full solidarity and support in the present time of bitter oppression” ... “the struggle continues”.

James Lamond, MP, your work is “more urgent than ever”.

CPGB Northern District Committee: “The ruthless imposition of the martial law across the country, the arrest and detention of communists, trade unionists and any voice of opposition represents a grave threat not only to the Turkish people but to peace loving and democratic forces the world over”.

Ernie Roberts, MP: ...“my support is your determination to restore democracy”...

Bob Cryer, MP: “...Turkey is having a vestiges of democracy removed by the military intervention.”

International Association of Democratic Lawyers: “... protests against the military coup d'etat which took place in Turkey, their proclamation of state power on the territory, the dissolution of the parliament and of the political parties and the suspension of the trade unions.

The Association condemns this attempt against the democratic rights and the fundamental rights of the Turkish people.

The Association expresses its solidarity with the democratic forces of Turkey.”

Mr. Lionel Murray, TUC General Secretary, “In the light of the reports that trade union federations have been banned, that trade unionists have been arrested, and that strikes have been prohibited, we join with other national trade union organisations in urging that freedom of association should be fully respected in Turkey, and that trade union organisations, their members and their leaders should be allowed to carry out their legitimate activities without interference or intimidation.”

Liberation sent a telegram to the Turkish Embassy and the government in Ankara protesting the coup and the arrests of opposition leaders, and calling for their immediate release.

Stop Press ...

Manhunt

— Eleven were shot dead by the security forces in one week, 5 in Hakkari, 2 in Adana, and 2 in Istanbul. Two were killed by torture while in police custody. One torture victim (Ahmet Karlangac), the police claim, committed suicide “by banging his head several times against the cell wall.”

Retirement and redundancy payments

— A new law has been “endorsed” by the NSC to reduce payments even further. They must not exceed 7.5 times the minimum monthly wage per year. At present, that is equivalent to 40,500 Turkish Lira, which is hardly enough to cover expenses for one month for a poor family. The law *specifically excludes* those who are laid off for “*just*” reasons. One need not doubt that the employers will find such excuses to sack workers nearing retirement in order to avoid any payments. Thus increasing even more, to near 50% on Turkish workers those who are not even entitled is any form of pension.

Are the borders open

— Yet another violation of the United Nations Convention On Human Rights: Anybody who fails to obtain a special stamp on their passports stating that they are politically safe, will not be allowed to travel abroad. The magic words on the stamp are: “*Not Interrogated For Political Reasons*”

Mass arrests

— Even under the strict censorship imposed upon the press, it is not possible to cover up the atrocities of the military rule completely. According to reported figures: in the past week 929 were arrested, 383 in the Kars region, 225 in Balikesir, 39 in Adana, 33 in Kurdistan, and 244 in miscellaneous places. No one should doubt that these figures are grossly underestimated.

Freedom of press

— Translator Sadi Ozansu has been sentenced to 7 years and 6 months “heavy” imprisonment at the Istanbul Martial Law Command Military Court. He was charged with “making propaganda for the domination of the one social class over another” (from Article 142 of the Turkish Penal Code) by *translating* Ernest Mandel’s “Introduction To Marxism” (*Milliyet*, 16 October 1980).

MP’s face trial

— This month another 30 MPs are to be tried. Severe charges have been brought against nine of them.

Sponsors to date

Eddie Loyden, MP
Dennis Skinner, MP
Sid Bidwell, MP
Geoffrey Edge, MP
Stan Newens, MP
Andrew Bennett, MP
Fred Evans, MP
Roy Hughes, MP
Stan Thorne, MP
Joe Ashton, MP
Martin Flannery, MP

Jo Richardson, MP
Jim Marshall, MP
George Morton, MP
Ernie Roberts, MP
Bob Hughes, MP
Joan Maynard, MP
Bob Cryer, MP
Alf Loamas, MEP
Richard Caborn, MEP
Lord Fenner Brockway,
Allan Sapper ACCT.

London Co-op Political Committee
Communist Party of Great Britain
New Communist Party
Communist Party of Portuguese (org.
in Britain)
KNE — Communist Youth of Greece
(org. in Britain)
Hackney Trades Council
AUEW — Kingston District
Arthur Latham
William Pomeroy

Affiliation to CDDRT

Help fight the barbaric fascist regime in Turkey. Affiliate to the Committee for Defence of Democratic Rights in Turkey (CDDRT). Cost of affiliation for one year: national organisations £20 (can be negotiated), local organisations £5, individuals £2.

Name
Address

Send to: CDDRT, 28-29, Parkfield St., London N1. Tel: 01-226 3401. (Make cheques or postal order to CDDRT).