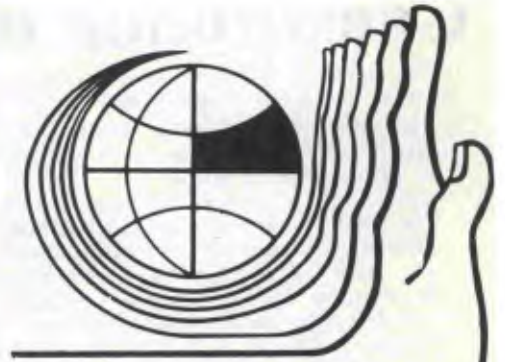
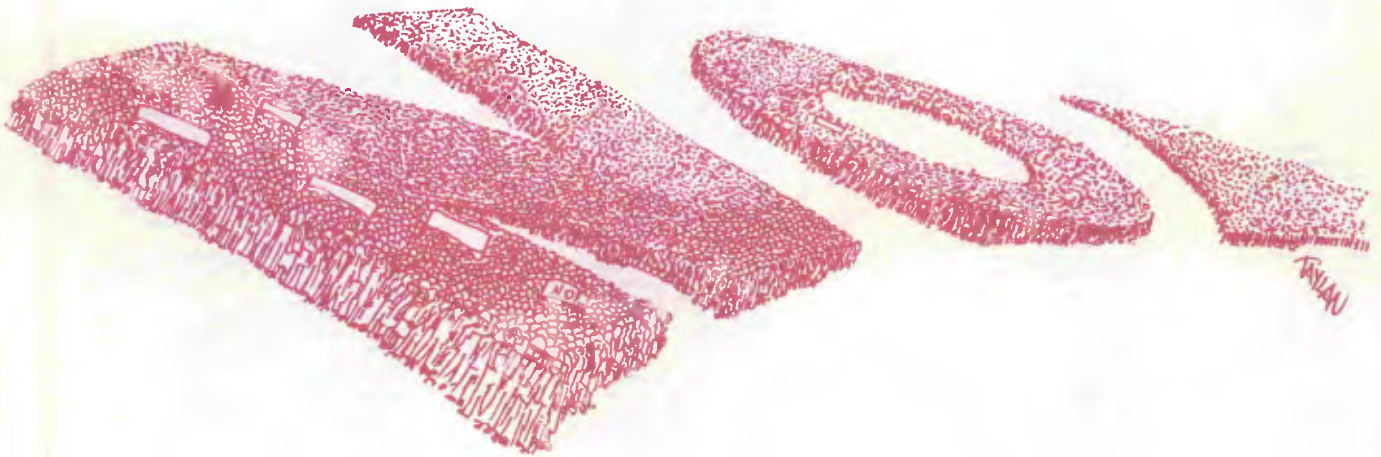


# TURKEY NEWSLETTER



Monthly publication of the Committee for the  
Defence of Democratic Rights in Turkey

Issue 28 November 1982



# Constitution of CDDRT

1. The name of the organisation shall be the Committee for Defence of Democratic Rights in Turkey (CDDRT).
2. The aims of CDDRT are as follows:  
End military rule, martial law, torture and executions.  
Release of political prisoners.  
Freedom for all democratic organisations.  
End national oppression of the Kurds and national minorities.  
Stop expansionism; end the occupation of Cyprus.  
Withdraw Turkey from NATO and close all NATO bases.  
No military, political or economic support for the fascist junta.  
Totally oppose junta harassment of overseas opponents.  
Organise solidarity on the basis of the foregoing utilising every means at our disposal.
3. Organisations and individuals accepting the aims of CDDRT can apply to affiliate. Such applications are subject to the approval of the General Council. Affiliation fees shall be set by the General Council and become payable from 1 January each year.
4. Congress is the highest body of CDDRT and shall meet every two years. It shall consist of delegates from Branches and affiliated organisations, and individual affiliates. Congress shall elect the

General Council and consider reports and motions. The conduct of business shall be on the basis of Standing Orders approved by Congress. Pre-Congress arrangements are the responsibility of the retiring General Council. Each Congress shall decide the size of the General Council.

5. The General Council is the continuing body of Congress and shall meet quarterly. It shall appoint the Executive Committee which is responsible to it. The General Council shall have the right to co-opt.
6. The Executive Committee shall consist of the General Secretary and such other members as the General Council may decide. The Executive Committee shall meet weekly and be responsible for the day to day work of CDDRT.
7. Local Branches of CDDRT are formed with the approval of the General Council.
8. This Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds majority at a Congress.
9. The General Council may call, or upon request by two-thirds of affiliated national organisations shall call, a Special Congress.

## GENERAL COUNCIL OF CDDRT

Richard Balfe MEP, John Bowden, Alf Lomas MEP, Stan Newens MP (President), Gerry Pocock, Reg Race MP (Treasurer), Ernie Roberts MP (Chairperson), Alan Sapper, Marion Sarafi, Bob Wright, Jim Moody (General Secretary), and one representative each from the Turkish Students' Federation of the UK, Union of Turkish Progressives in Britain and the Union of Turkish Workers.

## LOCAL BRANCHES:

East London CDDRT c/o 236 Morning Lane, London E9 6RQ.

Leicester CDDRT c/o 15 Bulwer Rd, Leicester.

Manchester CDDRT c/o Eric Hughes, 137 Dickenson Rd, M14 5HZ.

For branches in all other localities, please contact CDDRT, 29 Parkfield St, London N1 OPS.

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## Affiliate to CDDRT

All organisations and individuals accepting the aims of CDDRT (see Constitution above) are eligible for affiliation. From 1 January 1982 the cost of affiliation for the year is: National organisation £25.00, local organisation £10.00, individual £5.00.

I/we apply for affiliation to CDDRT and enclose a cheque/PO for £

Name .....

Address .....

Return to CDDRT, 29 Parkfield St., London N1. Tel: 01-226 2668

# FASCIST COURTS AFTER MORE BLOOD

The trial of several leading members of the Revolutionary Trade Union Confederation (DİSK) reaches its eleventh month in November. On October 8 a new development occurred. 19 additional defendants from the formerly separate "Specialists' Case" joined the DİSK defendants in the main case, who are the DİSK leadership.

The trial of the 19 DİSK "Specialists" opened on 8 October 1982, when they were charged with "participating in unity of action and united front activities of DİSK", and assisting the organising of DİSK. The 19 had been employed by the DİSK Research Institute. After a two year wait in jail the fascist junta has decided to start the trial.

Both cases are under Martial Law Court No. 2 in Istanbul, and following the example of the main DİSK trial, death has been demanded for 10 of the new defendants. Up to 10 years imprisonment has been demanded for the other 9, under Article 146/1 of the Turkish Penal Code. Included in the 10 facing death are Ahmet Yıldız, a former politician, and Teoman Öztürk, President of the now-banned Association of Architects and Engineers.

By the precedural decision invoked the total number of defendants in the reconstituted DİSK Trial is therefore 72, of which 62 face the death penalty. Meanwhile a further 2000 DİSK members are still in jail awaiting trial.

## ... and at the peace leaders trial

Under the same Martial Law Court as the cases of DİSK and both wings of the Communist Party of Turkey (TKP), the 27 leaders of the Turkish Peace Council are on trial. By mid-October the questioning of two defendants had been completed and their lawyer, Prof Çetin Özek, asked that they be released on bail.

The Court, meeting in the Atatürk Student Hostel, agreed to release one defendant on bail, Niyazi Dalyancı, a journalist. But it turned down the application on behalf of Professor Metin Özek, of the Psychiatry Department, İstanbul Faculty of Medicine.

## PRISON PR TEST

BIRKOM (Anti-Fascist Unity Committee of Turkish Organisations) has announced 40 prisoners in a military prison in Diyarbakır have been on unlimited hunger strike since 15 July. Their hunger strike is their last means to gain attention for their demands: Abolition of torture and inhuman detention conditions. Prisoners in Diyarbakır are exposed to extreme tortures and atrocious detention conditions which have led to serious health problems.

On 25 May, Amnesty International (AI) requested the Turkish government to allow an Amnesty International delegation including doctors to enter the military prison in Diyarbakır in order to see for themselves how the prisoners are treated. To date the Turkish government has not acted upon the Amnesty International letter.

Five imprisoned members of the Kurdish Workers Party (PKK) (Kemal Pir, Mehmet Hayri Durmuş, Mustafa Karasu, Bedrettin Kavak and Ali Çiçek) have died under the tortures of the military police. A prisoner called Aziz, who had financially supported prisoners was himself then arrested, and has been killed through torture. Now his family will have to pay 3 million Turkish Lira (£12,000) to get his body. Seven other prisoners (Fuat Çavgun, İzzettin Aktaş, Fevzi Yetkin, Ali Haydar Yetkin, Selâhattin Tekinalp, Hamza Tekeş and Müslüm Ay) are in coma. The prisoners Mehmet Şener, Muzaffer Ayata, Hamit Baldemir, Ali Rıza Altun are also in bad health.

The neurologist Cemil Tanrıverdi, who had declared that the prisoners in the Diyarbakır Military Prison had been tortured, was killed at home at the beginning of September by two members of the Turkish Secret Service, MIT (military judge Emrullah Kaya and Captain Esat Yolsaran). The prisoners' lawyer, Hüseyin Yıldırım, who had protested several times against their treatment has also been attacked by officers of MIT. They threatened him that if he once again visited his clients in prison he would suffer the same fate as the murdered Cemil Tanrıverdi.

BIRKOM requested that all democratic bodies human rights committees write to the Turkish Military Government, calling for the admission of the Amnesty International delegation to the military prison and for better detention conditions. Write to: General Kenan Evren, Milli Güvenlik Konseyi Başkanı, Çankaya Köşkü, Ankara, Turkey.

## Hull Peace Mov

Hull & North Humberside Campaign for European Nuclear Disarmament is to be congratulated on its resolution for this month's CND National Conference.

"This Conference notes:

- i) that on September 12th 1980 an anti-democratic repressive military regime installed itself in Turkey, and that it shows no serious intention of relinquishing power;
- ii) that the regime has arrested and imprisoned peace protesters because they are seen as posing a political threat;
- iii) that Turkey is an established member of NATO;
- iv) that Turkey's abuse of human rights has led to the country being taken to the Human Rights Commission of the Council of Europe by several Scandinavian countries and by France;
- v) that the USA is the largest aid donor to Turkey, and has pledged its full support for the military regime;
- vi) that Britain has maintained its full support of Turkey, blocking a previous attempt in the Council of Europe to condemn the regime, and that the UK still provides economic aid to Turkey through OECD.

"This Conference believes:

- i) that the example of Turkey shows that NATO is ready to stand by without condemning the repression of democratic forces, including the Peacer Movement,
- ii) that the British Government should follow the example of other countries in bringing the Turkish Government to trial, should openly condemn the Turkish Junta, and should immediately withdraw all economic and military aid;
- iii) that the repression of the Peace Movement in Turkey provides the USA with an enclave free from peace protests, enabling the USA to site nuclear weapons which may be rejected by the rest of Europe.

This Conference resolves to pursue a campaign to bring to light the plight of peace protesters and sympathetic political detainees in Turkey, and to bring pressure on the British Government to withdraw its support for the Turkish Junta, notably by supporting its expulsion from the Council of Europe."

# BRITISH TEACHERS TO FILL VACANCIES

Töb-Der, the Teachers' Association, was Turkey's main teaching association before the fascist coup of 12 September 1980. It was banned after the coup and thousands of its members were arrested, brutally tortured with the result that some died.

On 3 August 1982 "Five out of seven Executive members... of Töb-Der were given eight years in jail by Ankara Martial Law Military Court No.2." (*Milliyet*, 4.8.82) Their offences were allegedly committed between 1976 and 1978, the period during which there was a very strong working-class movement in Turkey.

## Teachers arrested

As soon as the fascist junta seized power all democratic organisations including Töb-Der were banned and their leaders arrested. This was the first step — then came a general attack on education. "It has introduced strict new requirements for Atatürkist indoctrination in high schools, has ended university autonomy, replaced elected university officers with appointed ones, and developed a national standard curriculum for all higher education." (*Guardian* 4.8.82).

On the 6 November 1981 a new Higher Education Law was passed creating the Higher Education Council (YÖK). It has abolished most of the existing decision-making bodies in the universities of Turkey, from department committees to senates. And in the first week of August 1982, rectors who were selected from amongst those nominated by the Council replaced their elected predecessors.

Turkey's 12,000 university teachers are now subject to the Higher Education Council. As from the summer of 1982 all administrative appointments and faculty promotions are decided by the Council and new faculty appointments will be approved by it. "On 20 October, by drawing lots in Ankara, all vacant teaching posts in all universities will be filled by rota. Those who do not agree the rota... will be considered as having resigned... Professors and assistant professors... who have not completed 8 years will be included." (*Milliyet*, 23.9.82)

The criteria involved appear to be known only to Professor İhsan Doğramacı, the President of the Council, himself nominated by the military. He was the former Chancellor of Hacettepe

University in Ankara and is an ex-Executive Committee member of the "Committee For the Strengthening of the Turkish Police Service"!

## No academic freedom

The council is eliminating academic freedom in both teaching and research. Hence the implementation of a national standard curriculum. The council disguises its aims by saying that it is merely "facilitating transfers among universities". The financial autonomy of the universities that is the mainstay of their scientific autonomy is also being eroded.

An amendment to the Higher Education Law published this April went further in stating that the Council might terminate the contract of any faculty member if it felt that he or she was "unsuccessful" in his or her position. The interpretation of the word "success" is left to the discretion of the men appointed by the junta. No precise definition has been provided. There is no appeal against such decisions. "That latest provision has been widely interpreted as a prelude to a wide-spread purge in the university system. It is rumoured that the authorities are considering dismissing 3,000 (about a quarter) of the country's university teachers." (*Guardian*, 4.8.82)

## Understaffing

After the coup in 1980 educational establishments became seriously understaffed for several reasons. Firstly, a substantial number of teachers were arrested by the junta for their part in democratic activities. In particular, their academic instruction was branded as "Communist propaganda", the very target of the junta's anti-democratic laws. For example, the military authorities arrested the economist Professor Sadun Aren this August, claiming that his classes in macro-economics amounted to Communist propaganda.

Professor Aren was taken to a military jail. He was a leading member of the now-banned Turkish Workers' Party (TİP) and was an advisor to the Revolutionary Trade Union Confederation (DİSK). Last year during his imprisonment because of his connections with DİSK he was beaten and tortured. Should Professor Aren be convicted of spreading left-wing propaganda in his class-notes he would face a jail sentence

of 7½ to 15 years.

Secondly, some teaching staff have left the universities out of dissatisfaction with the lack of scientific autonomy; those who refused to be brow-beaten into reporting their academic findings along the lines approved by the junta.

Thirdly, financial reasons forced other academics out of the campuses. Since 1978 the salaries of academics have declined by 50% in real terms. In Turkey, salaries for university lecturers are now about £150 a month.

## British teachers

The Higher Education Council has made its latest move, in an attempt to fill the university staff shortage, by importing to Turkish universities teachers made redundant by British Government policies. Professor Doğramacı, referring to the fact that 5,000 university teachers have been made redundant in Britain said, "Education in universities is universal. Recession in England has become useful to us. We will bring to Turkey those university officials who are unemployed and who will be of use to us." (*Milliyet*, 25.8.82) He explained that staff were especially required in the Bosphorus University, the Middle East Technical University and Hacettepe Medical Faculty since English is the medium of instruction in all three institutions. He followed it up with a caution that these posts might only be temporary. Against the background of the attacks by the fascist junta on university staff, their organisation Töb-Der and the educational system as a whole, Professor Doğramacı can perhaps afford to sound arrogant for after all he does have 140 billion Turkish Lira (£560M) at his disposal!

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# NO FASCIST CONSTITUTION

By Y Metin, Leicester CDDRT

November 7 is Referendum Day in Turkey. The fascist Constitution seeks to formalise the counter-revolution, the striving of the finance-capital of Turkey "to save the regime" via open dictatorship. Hence its rejection is imperative. The struggle for democracy is focused on the Constitution: rejection of the fascist Constitution, exposure of the apologists for the junta, and the case for a genuinely democratic Constitution (since a democratic constitution corresponds to a democratic state).\*

What are the circumstances in which the Referendum will take place? Any debate, comment or opinion opposing the junta has been banned for longer than two years. "Any comment on the past, present and future of the country is strictly banned", asserted Decree 52 of 12 September 1980. The draft Constitution was presented to the junta-appointed Consultative Assembly in early August this year. This Constitution attempts to structure the two years' practices of the fascist junta to accomplish a fascist state.

Decree 52 was replaced by Decree 70 in June to permit debate in the Consultative Assembly. The draft got rubber-stamped there and was sent to the National Security Council (the formal name of the five-men junta where power is concentrated).

The junta is to endorse the draft and publish it on the 21 October. As late as 3 October General Evren stated, "if you trust us you say 'yes' to the Constitution we prepared — well half of it, we haven't been able to prepare all of it yet".

The daily *Milliyet* reported that a further Decree will come into effect on 25 October. This states that "any comment, criticism or propaganda which could be

\* Detailed criticisms of the draft Constitution were published by CDDRT in *Turkey Newsletter* of September 1982 and in a special flyer "Fascist Repression Will Not Gag Turkey's Working Class" by Faik Sinkil of the DİSK Solidarity Committee in Britain. Copies of either are available from CDDRT office at 25p each (or both. 35p) postfree.

interpreted as 'No to the Constitution' is banned; however, positive propaganda, comment or criticism on the Constitution is permitted"! In other words, say 'yes' or else...

On the 5 September 1982 while a house-to-house registration of electors was carried out under curfew this was an opportunity to detain "undesirable" elements, too. Registration involved identification checks on each and every individual. Anyone born in 1960 or earlier is compelled to register as a voter. Anyone who fails to register faces imprisonment for from 3 to 6 months and a fine of not less than 5,000TL (£20), or being disenfranchised for 5 years. Some who were not registered on the day for one reason or another still queue outside offices to avoid incurring the penalties and retaliations.

3 to 6 months imprisonment, over 5,000TL fine and disenfranchisement for 5 years apply for failing to vote, too. Endless retaliation would follow as Evren has already clarified "Those who say 'No' to our Constitution are the same as those we have been putting into jail... we will continue to fight them" (in Burdur on 3 October 1982).

Turkey's people are not alone in facing such oppression. The people in El Salvador had their identification cards marked when polling at the elections. We also know what the Chilean people went through when they went to the polling booths; the Chilean fascist junta claimed that the people endorsed their 1980 Constitution. The people of Brazil will face similar blackmail a week after the referendum in Turkey.

Rejection of the Constitution is imperative. The junta has already made clear that they will carry on ruling no matter what. The significance of rejection is in the rallying of democratic forces against fascism. Rejecting the Constitution is the defiance of oppression. A 'No' vote will strengthen and further the struggle for democracy.

## LET US HEAR HIM!

Yilmaz Güney is Turkey's foremost film-maker, but "this exemplary artist" (David Robinson, Film Critic of *The Times*) has been refused entry to Britain.

He has acted in, written for, and directed films since 1958. His work has gained him massive admiration amongst working people in Turkey for its depiction of real people and their troubles. But not from afar, as a participant.

That was why Turkey's fascist junta was so enraged when he escaped from prison in Turkey. Then his latest film *Yol* (*The Way*) was awarded the Palme D'Or at the Cannes Film Festival, while he was in France!

Twelve years of Yilmaz Güney's life

have been spent in prisons on spurious charges. It was his latest conviction on trumped-up charges that gave Britain's Tory Government the opportunity of appeasing the fascist junta and reversing its previous position of allowing him into Britain.

In order to reverse that decision and have him come to Britain for November's London Film Festival (where *Yol* will be shown) we must bring great pressure to bear. CDDRT's Yilmaz Güney Campaign has had a petition circulating for some time. Return completed petition forms to arrive no later than Saturday 6 November. Write to your MP, to the Home Secretary and to us.



B Hubschmid, Zürich

Yilmaz Güney

# JUNTA CONDEMNED

Delegates to this year's Labour Party Conference in Blackpool once again had the opportunity of finding out more about the current situation in Turkey under the fascist junta. The splendid Baronial Hall in the Winter Gardens resounded to condemnation after condemnation by participants in CDDRT's successful fringe meeting entitled *Turkey — Solidarity With the Democratic Struggle*.



Stan Newens, MP

Stan Newens MP, chairing the meeting, opened with these comments:

"... If in Britain and in other countries of the world there is no concern shown about the military regime in Turkey and whatever it chooses to do... that regime will feel much more confident to deal out more dastardly treatment than would otherwise be the case.

"I know for a fact that the Turkish regime is very concerned about the amount of pressure which is being developed in this country. We have had an approach — those MP's like myself who have been concerned about this matter — from the Turkish Ambassador to speak to us and to explain to us what was occurring, and to endeavour to set our fears at rest.

"I have continually pressed the Government on these issues along with a number of my colleagues in the House of Commons. I have here a letter from Lord Belstead dated 17 September 1982 in which he says,

*'I share your concern about recent developments in Turkey, but I cannot endorse what you say about the attitude of the Turkish government and*

*what they are trying to achieve, nor your comparisons between the regime in Turkey and that in Argentina.*

*'We continue to make the Turkish authorities aware through confidential exchanges of our concern over reports of human rights violations and the need for a rapid return to democracy. But I do not believe there is a case, as you advocate, for our refusing to provide Turkey with economic assistance. Her continuing economic recovery is a vital element in the restoration of a stable democracy. Prejudicing the former could also prejudice the latter.'*

The fact that Lord Belstead finds it necessary to say that he shares my concern, the fact that they are making (as he says) confidential expressions of concern about human rights in something which we should take heart from; and we have to press that all the harder."

**Bill Deal**, President of the Fire Brigades' Union, was the first speaker. He said there are 52 DİSK\* leaders on trial for their lives... since before Christmas. Ten more colleagues in the trade union movement have joined them this month. 2000 shop stewards, trade union activists — people like myself — in the movement in Turkey are on notice that they are going to be tried..."

Bill said that the charges against the DİSK leaders "really need thinking about, because the first is for being in favour of peace. The second is being against fascism and the third is for being part of a class organisation! These people are on trial for their lives for doing what we take as the normal, everyday part of life: attending such a Conference and expressing such views..."

## Fixed Constitution Referendum

"When they go along to vote it will not be as we in this country go along to vote. ... You will actually pick up a coloured card, whether it be blue or yellow, and identify yourself instantly as either being in support of the Constitution or opposed to the Constitution!... In the Constitution it says that there will be no forced labour... 'but if we get some kind of an emergency you will work anyway'! ...

"The Constitution also talks about trade unions in Turkey. ... It says they

\* DİSK is the abbreviation of Devrimci İşçi Sendikaları Konfederasyonu, which translates as Revolutionary Trade Union Confederation. DİSK was the only real trade union organisation in Turkey before the fascist coup on 12 September 1982, since when it has been banned.



Bill Deal

may in no way pursue political aims. ... The trade union movement ... turns around political aims! ... They may not strike 'contrary to good will'. ... How you have a strike that is not 'contrary to good will' seems to me absolutely impossible. ...

"There are certain trade unions ... that exist inside Turkey. And they have just made an agreement with the government. What it means is that the minimum wage for people in Turkey is going to be increased to our equivalent of £40.00 a month. ... It requires, for a family of four in Turkey, £120.00 a month ... to feed them ... a *shanty* is going to cost you the minimum wage per month! ... There is nothing you can do about it because you cannot strike. ...

**Alf Lomas MEP**, started his speech by congratulating CDDRT on organising the meeting, "I am pleased to be here, to associated myself with this campaign and at the same time sad that it is necessary that we have to campaign on an issue like this. A sad period in the history of Turkey since the fascist coup of two years ago, where arrests and torture and death is now commonplace, now a regular feature of life in that country.

## Peace campaigners

"First of all, on the question of the arrests of peace activists. Who are these people? Are they some dangerous elements in society who are a threat to the well-being of Turkey? It reads almost like a roll-call of respectability, if you look at the people who have been arrested! ... a former Ambassador; the President of the İstanbul Bar Association; the president of the Turkish Medical Association; Vice-Councillor of İstanbul Academy of Political Science; President of the Rural Coops Association; lecturers; educationalists; teachers; a poet; theatre director; painter; writer. These are people from

# AT LP CONFERENCE

society who have decided, just as many people in this country have, that they believe the questions of peace are important enough to campaign for them.

The main aims of the peace organisation in Turkey are these: to reduce arms spending — and Turkey is now the fourth in the world with regards to the percentage of GNP it spends on armaments. So there is a good case for a campaign to reduce arms spending, to abolish nuclear weapons, for peaceful coexistence, to end racism and colonialism, to implement UN Resolutions. ...



Alf Lomas, MEP

And yet the people who are fighting for this programme, that one would think have the support of most ordinary people in Turkey, are now in jail. ...

“What this draft Constitution is going to do is: first of all the trade unions ... are not going to be allowed to express support for political organisations or to have any political aims or activities. There is going to be a ban on trade union activity at the workplace; and we know in this country that this is one of the essential features of trade union activity; the shop stewards, the convenors, the factory floor meetings. If there is a strike and it is not settled in 60 days there will be compulsory arbitration. The decision will actually be imposed upon the trade union movement. So much for free collective bargaining.

“In small firms there is going to be the same problem: the draft Constitution denies the right for collective bargaining in workplaces where less than 10 workers are employed. ... In Turkey, 88 out of every 100 workplaces

have less than 10 workers. So a huge part of the industrial workforce would be denied even the elementary right of collective bargaining. You can only have strikes provided that they do not affect capital, provided they do not affect society.

“It is a very, very dangerous and reactionary Constitution. ... There has got to be immense international pressure in support of the people of Turkey on this question. ...

## European Parliament

“Although there is a right-wing majority in the European Parliament, ... with an alliance of Socialists and Communists, there are some issues in which we can involve and get the support of some of the more progressive-minded Christian Democrats, Radicals and Independents. ...

“At the beginning of this year a very strong resolution was carried by the Parliament condemning the death sentence on the 52 leaders, condemning the military coup d'état in Turkey, condemning the present violence in Turkey, calling for the immediate release of political detainees, and reiterating its request for all financial aid to Turkey to be stopped until such time as democracy is restored there. ...

## Fascist government

“Of course the action of fascist governments follows a classical, traditional line. You first of all attack the leading politicians who are the biggest threat to you: communist leaders, socialist leaders — put them in jail. Then you move on to the trade union leaders, and you start putting them into jail. Then you move on to other progressives who are attacking your fascist policies, you put them into jail.

“It is classic; it is exactly what happened in Nazi Germany, it is exactly what happened in fascist Italy, in Franco Spain. It is the traditional, classic attack by fascism on the organised working class. **And it is going on apace now in Turkey. We have got to fight back with full force using every instrument we can: British trade unions, European trade unions, European Parliament, Socialist Parties throughout Europe.**”

David Blackman, Deputy General Secretary of the Socialist Group in the European Parliament, gave a firsthand account of the fascist junta's hostility to unwelcome delegations.

“We were just about to get on the



David Blackman

place and we had a message from Ankara: Ecevit had passed a message to the EEC Office there, which had been making appointments for us. He said, 'I have had a Colonel call on me saying that "anything that any Socialist speaker says in the debate next week in the European Parliament will be directly attributed to you and will be held in evidence against you." ... I am afraid we cannot see you under those conditions.'

“We went; what happened? The security police were waiting outside the lawyers' doors... when we went into ... lawyers' offices in Istanbul. ...

“This is our experience, and it has in fact given the lie to the apologists who are going to use this 'great' Referendum — a fraud — there is going to be no political debate. ... We have managed, in a little way, to prove the lie of one of the things they were saying: that the left stays outside and criticises.”

Jim Moody, General Secretary of the Committee for Defence of Democratic Rights in Turkey, spoke about the Labour Party's current position on Turkey (see *Turkey Newsletter* issue 27) and briefly mentioned the various trials proceeding in Turkey: the DISK 52, Peace leaders, Kurds, cooperators, MP's, political activists.

He then went on to discuss activity organised by CDDRT in Britain, particularly around the fascist Constitution. Jim urged the widest support for the Rally and Film Benefit in London on 7 November (see back page), the day of the Referendum on the draft Constitution. Finally, he called on all those present to do their utmost in helping to establish further local Branches of CDDRT, in the way that has been done recently in Leicester and East London.

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# **Fascist Repression Will Not Gag Turkey's Working Class**

**by Faik Sinkil,**

**DISK S ilarity Committ e in Britain**

Two years have passed since the fascist junta came to power in Turkey. For the working people these years have brought hunger and destitution. During this time even the smallest stand in defence of rights has been put down with terror.

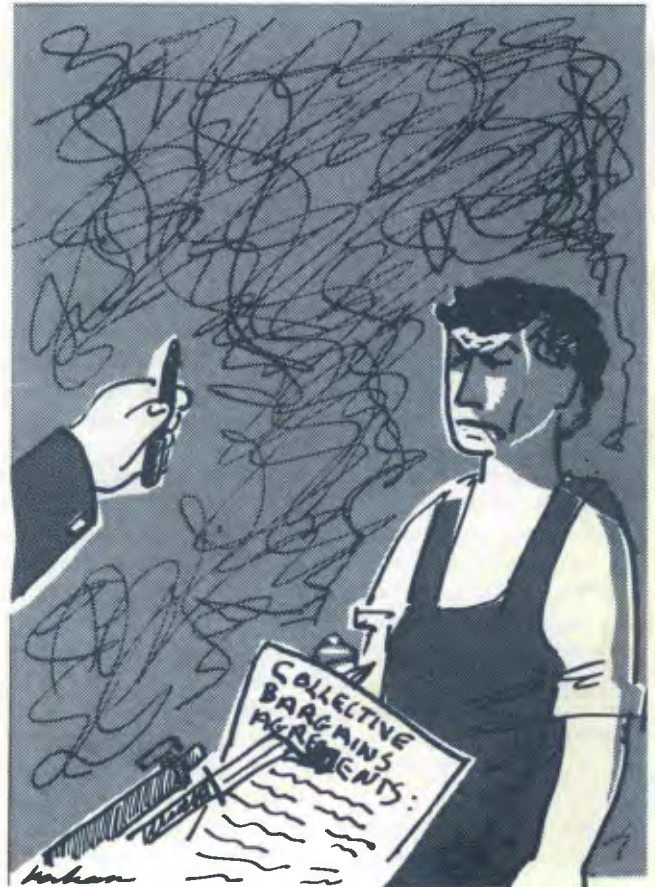
When it came to power, the fascist junta said that following a short period of austerity the economy would be back on its tracks by means of the measures it was going to adopt.

For two years the fascist junta has imposed compulsory sacrifices on the workers and working people. However, neither has the economy been put right nor have stable conditions been created in the country.

Recent events have shown graphically the depth of the crisis in Turkey. It is clear that without rallying the voluntary sacrifice and the creative energy of the people, no government can overcome this crisis. The only government which can achieve this is a government of the working class. The only way is for the working class to march on the road to socialism shoulder to shoulder with all the working people.

#### **Capitalist Crisis:**

Turkey's finance capital is facing serious difficulties despite two years of a barbaric reign. The largest brokers, "Banker Kastelli" have gone bankrupt having swindled close to 20,000TL from the people. Its proprietor, Mr. Cevher Özden has escaped to Switzerland. The new Minister of Finance Mr. Kafaoğlu is concerned that all banks are on the threshold of bankruptcy: "If the position of the banks is not rectified within two months the government will be obliged to resign. This will be such a catastrophe that it will bring



about the collapse of all banks in Turkey.”

The crisis is affecting all sectors of the economy but the textile industry is particularly hard hit. The press is full of reports of factory closures. Recently one of the largest and most of modern textile factories, “Güney Sanayi” was also declared bankrupt and could only resume production after heavy state subsidies were injected.

It appears that the new minister of finance has rolled up his sleeves to rescue firms in difficulties. However, in the context of the Turkish economy this will only boost production in the banknote printing industry! In July, in the aftermath of the collapse of Kastelli the money supply went up by 66,000M TL. This represents an increase of 17%. Considering the number of the enterprises queuing outside the Ministry of Finance pleading for rescue it is not hard to predict that the rate of inflation is going to soar in coming months.

Turkey does not have the resources of the Germany of the 1930s. Even the most barbaric fascist methods are not enough to rescue the Turkish economy.

With the economy in the doldrums it is becoming clear that the fascist junta is preparing new measures against the working class and the working masses.

#### Minimum Wage Poverty

In a speech in Zonguldak, one of the most important working class strongholds in Turkey, Evren (Head of State and head of the junta) said that they too realised the impossibility of living on the present minimum wage and promised an increase as soon as possible. Next, negotiations took place between Türk-İş, the only remaining legal trade union organisation, and the government. It was then reported in the press that Türk-İş — a typical example of yellow trade unionism — had agreed to increase the minimum wage to 10,000TL.

However, today just the food bill comes to 30,000 TL for a family of four. In Istanbul the rent of a shanty town hut without running water and inside toilet is 8,000 to 10,000 TL. This being the case, a minimum wage of 10,000 TL gains a grave significance beyond that of exploitation of the working class and the working masses. This means the physical annihilation of the working class of Turkey.

Retirement and redundancy allowances is another area where the fascist junta has carried out revisions to the disadvantage of the workers. In a country where there is no unemployment benefit and where unemployment has reached proportions unimaginable in the West the vital importance of redundancy payments cannot be over-emphasised.

The issue of redundancy payments was one of the focal points of the trade union struggle before 1981. The workers could keep redundancy payment abreast with inflation through pay negotiations. One of the first acts of legislation of the fascist junta was concerned with the exclusion of redundancy payments from the brief of pay negotiations. Retirement and redundancy payments were tied to the minimum wage. Thus, a redundant or retired worker would no longer be compensated according to his last pay packet. The lump sum would from now on be calculated on the basis of the current national minimum wage and the number of years in service. With this imposition, a right won by the working class through years of struggle and marked by bloody confrontations was snatched away overnight — at the point of a bayonet.

However, the fascist junta cannot even tolerate the tie-up



*Some of the 52 DİSK defendants in the dock.*

between the compensation payment and the minimum wage because as the law stands now, the minimum wage must be raised every two years (albeit nominally). Türk-İş and the government are now seeking an alternative measures. So a further round of trimming is in sight for the redundancy /retirement bonus which has already been skinned to the bone in 1981.

These issues are being raised here only as examples of the general attack on the working class which, of course, goes much further.

In a country where thousands of working class leaders are languishing in prisons; where 52 trade union leaders are on trial facing the death sentence; where all democratic organisations, associations and all trade unions except for yellow ones, are closed down and terror is being waged on revolutionaries, progressives and democrats; where there is no parliament nor political parties, the fascist junta reigns supreme. It is poised to mount attacks on the working class and the working people as the economic crisis bites deeper. It has to intensify fascist repression in its attempt to resolve the crisis in favour of Turkey's finance capital.

One of the clearest indications of this intensifying repression is the draft of the new constitution which will be put to a referendum in November. The new constitution is supposed to facilitate a democratic transition but it embodies measures for the institutional and legalisation of



fascism. Once this constitution is ratified "Constitutional fascism" will have been established.

#### Constitutional fascism

Now, let us examine some aspects of the draft constitution. Under Article 26 "The freedom to express and spread ideas" it is said that *"everybody has the right to express ideas and views verbally, artistically and by other means on their own or jointly"*. However, what follows is in stark contrast: *"The exercise of these freedoms may be restricted with the aim of protecting professional secrets, the exposure of secret state papers, or preventing untrue and ultimately information which would effect economic activity... protecting youth from harmful movements and behaviour."*

The kind of freedoms in store for Turkey is quite clear from the contents of this Article which will also apply to the press. For example a newspaper which reports the possibility of the bankruptcy of an enterprise can be closed under the terms of this Article for spreading *"untimely"* news. Before putting pen to paper a journalist will first have to judge whether his article will affect the economy (the Article does not even say whether only an adverse effect constitutes an offence) or whether it is a timely article.

A concept of *"prevention of crime"* has been introduced into a number of Articles. According to this the state is empowered to close trade unions, associations, and

newspapers and to carry out arbitrary arrests. The concept of prevention of crime extends boundless powers.

In this constitution allowance is also made for forced labour — almost forgotten history in the civilised world. Article 17 starts with the words *"No-one can be made to work against his will. Forced labour is banned."* But ends with the following, *"under conditions of emergency, services demanded of citizens, physical and mental labour pertaining to areas of national interest is of the nature of execution of duties and does not constitute forced labour."*

Now let us see what constitutes conditions of emergency. The draft constitution cites *"conditions of deep economic crisis"* and *"the emergence of serious signs of violent movements"* to justify the declaration of conditions of emergency by the government for six months. This can be extended by decision of the parliament.

In a country which has been through a serious economic crisis since the 1970s, where every demonstration, May Day celebration, strike, and work to rule is labelled as a terrorist action, it is a cheap ploy to declare conditions of emergency and to enroll the masses for free labour in aid of the state. If this draft is approved the work camps of Hitler will be exhumed as constitutional labour camps. And this will not be forced labour since that is banned by the constitution!

#### No Real Unions

The contribution of this constitution to workers' rights (!) is similarly as democratic. *"... trade unions cannot pursue political aims, cannot practice politics, cannot be supported by and cannot give support to political parties... cannot use their funds for purposes outside their charter..."* (Article 56)

*"... strikes cannot be conducted in a manner contrary to good will, against the public interest and in a way which will destroy national wealth. When a strike is postponed by the decision of the Cabinet the High Arbitration Committee will arbitrate."* (Article 58) *"Strikes are banned in workplaces employing less than 10 workers."* (Article 59)

Where politics begin and end is a subject open to debate. For example, today it is politics to say that "a minimum wage of 10,000 TL is a paltry sum which spits in the face of the working class." The working class is entitled to the democratic right of entering into politics to pursue its interests by means of trade unions under both capitalism and socialism.

It is another farce to assert that strikes will be conducted in a manner of good will. Naturally all employers will take the view that strikes result from ill will directed against their interest. Can one find a single employer in this world who will say that workers go on strike for just reasons and that it is an act of good will? It will be constitutionally incumbent on any administration to ban strikes because they are not acts of good will!

The constitution also stipulates that strikes and lock-outs (lock-outs are now to be the constitutional right of employers) which have extended over 60 days will be resolved by the High Arbitration Committee. By the relevant Article strikes extending over 60 days are banned. Whereupon the strike is resolved by a government-appointed committee! And they still have the audacity to declare in the constitution that the workers have the right to strike.

The ban on strikes in work places employing less than 10 is opening boundless opportunities for the employers. It is quite feasible in middle size factories to divide shop-floors into independent units for administrative purposes, each seemingly employing less than 10 and thus conveniently overcome the headache of strikes.

Finally, according to this constitution, *"politically*

*motivated strikes, solidarity strikes, general strikes, factory occupations, working to rule and protests and picketing are forbidden."*

These are some of the points in the constitution which will affect workers' rights. Any constitution embodies the form of organisation of a state: this constitution, resting on an anti-democratic, fascist understanding from top to bottom, is altogether in keeping with the spirit of the fascist junta which has usurped power by force and aims to institutionalise fascism in Turkey.

The working class of Turkey has a strong tradition of struggle for democratic rights. In contrast to Turkey's capitalist class, which for various historical and social reasons was not nor could it ever be truly democratic, the working class has defended democracy from the 1960's onwards and has lost many of its members in this struggle. The working class and the working people of Turkey who share the same interests are against this shameful caricature of a constitution. The working class of Turkey will not be gagged in the face of attacks on their rights, the capital trial of the DİSK leaders — and the imposition of constitutional fascism in Turkey!

*Faik Sinkil is an activist of Maden-İş, the Metal workers' Union, which was a key affiliate of DİSK (Revolutionary Confederation of Trade Unions.) He is now the representative in Britain of the international DİSK Solidarity Committee.*



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