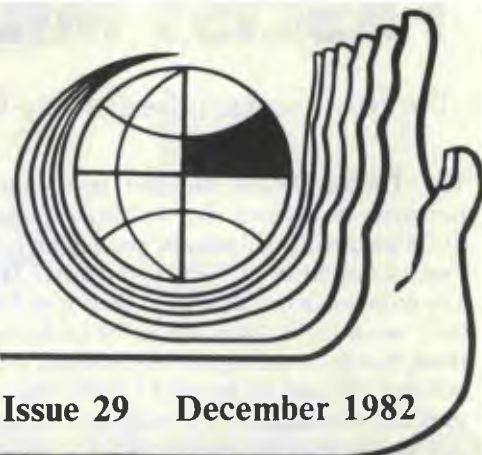


# TURKEY NEWSLETTER

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



Issue 29 December 1982



## REJECTION OF FASCIST CONSTITUTION

In a straw poll conducted by the London based Union of Turkish Workers the new fascist Constitution in Turkey was rejected by 495 votes to 106. The announcement of this result was greeted by tumultuous applause at this Committee's Rally on Sunday 7 November.

(continued on back page)



# FASCIST MILITARY ATTACKS PEACE

By Enis Coşkun, Secretary-General of the Turkish Peace Association Committee

The Turkish Prime Minister says that in Turkey only terrorists are accused. But we have a question to him: Are all those arrested intellectuals, particularly, the leaders of the Peace Committee of Turkey, terrorists? They haven't shown any criminal activities except their love for world peace and their work for it. Appeal against such arrests motivated by these baseless and unjust accusations were refused by the military tribunal on March 15, 1982. This decision has a very onerous connotation for peace and detente.

## Peace Committee Indicted

As a matter of fact, the following arguments have been enumerated in the decision of the military tribunal:

—having demanded the withdrawal of foreign military forces from Cyprus in the final communique of the "International Conference for Peace, Security and Cooperation in the Mediterranean Region", in which the Turkish Peace Committee participated,

— having urged the ending of the occupation of the island in the course of the conference in solidarity with Cyprus, convened by the World Peace Council, before the establishment of the Turkish Peace Committee,

— having created a public opinion opposed to NATO, to the military accords with the US and to foreign military bases in Turkey,

— having written in the report of the Istanbul Bar Association, presented at the National Peace Conference, that it is impossible for the cold war to persist,

— having struggled for a world without war and without exploitation and having pointed out that the arms race runs counter to this struggle,

— having celebrated the anniversaries of the birth of Nazım Hikmet.

And that the aforesaid are all actions which impede the authority of the state and the government and adversely affect public order."

(...)

## Death for Democrats

### Fascists Released

13 people have been executed since the junta came to power.\* At present, death sentences for 29 people have been forwarded to the National Security Council for approval and in the cases carried on in military courts the death penalty is asked for 3,000 more.

While democratic forces are coming under even more severe persecutions, the military court is releasing one by one the top leaders of the fascist Nationalist Action Party, the main source of terror before September 12 and the culprit in the murder of thousands of democrats.

According to the report "Human Rights League" between 12 September 1980 and 24 January 1982 in Turkey 170,958 persons had been arrested which included 102 MPs, 79 journalists, 92 lawyers, 6,758 officials etc.; in fact 46,721 political personalities. Amnesty International has declared that 70 persons had been killed under systematic torture of junta and the Turkish government has accepted that *only* 15 of them have been killed. On the other hand, in the same period, over 500 persons were killed on the streets by the police and soldiers.

\*This number had reached 17 by the end of November 1982.

## Workers Attacked

The military coup of September 12, 1980 banned DİSK\*\* and its affiliates, whose membership reached 600,000 and who played an important role in the trade union movement in Turkey after its foundation in 1967. The junta confiscated all their properties. Their members were deprived of all trade union guarantees and rights. Leaders and shopstewards of DİSK were arrested. They were tortured for months and not permitted to see either their families or their lawyers.

In the announcement to the press, the prosecutor claimed that DİSK was an illegal organisation, which aimed to undermine the constitutional regime, violating articles 141 and 142 of the Penal Code, articles which have been taken over from the penal code of fascist Mussolini. Parallel to continuing investigations, the DİSK case will include up to 2000 people, as the prosecutor states in his indictment.

In the case, DİSK leaders are charged for all the trade union and democratic activities DİSK carried out since its foundation. The prosecutor asks the death penalty for these leaders. According to him, DİSK is an illegal(!), clandestine (!) organisation, which strived to abolish the Constitution of the Republic of Turkey and to establish a Marxist-Leninist regime by

- carrying out strikes,
- organising May Day demonstrations, taking a stand against the fascist danger,
- participating in and cooperating with the international trade union movement,
- staunchly defending the trade union and democratic rights of the working class,
- condemning class conciliation, and,
- working to obtain further rights for workers.

Thus the military prosecutor accuses not only DİSK leaders, but all lawful activities in which hundreds of thousands of workers took part.

*This article is taken from the case study report by Enis Coşkun given at the International Seminar on Human Rights Arms Buildup and World Peace held in New Delhi on 25 April 1982.*

\*\*DİSK is the abbreviation of Devrimci İşçi Sendikaları Konfederasyonu, which translates as Revolutionary Trade Union Confederation.

## Computer firm says 'NO'

"When a Mr Kerim rang in we prepared ourselves to be helpful — until we found out what he wanted. Mr Kerim was looking for advice on choosing a microcomputer to help the Turkish Military Police.

"Now, since the military takeover a year or so ago Turkey's record on human rights has not been the best in the world, by quite a distance. And besides, someone in the office remembered seeing *Midnight Express*.

"So we gave Mr Kerim the politest equivalent of the *Sun's* famous 'Up Yours Galtieri', made our excuses, and hung up." (*Microdecision*, September 1982)

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# WRITERS DEMAND RIGHTS

The Turkish sociologist İsmail Beşikçi was sentenced to 10 years in prison in March this year. (See July 1982 *Turkey Newsletter*.) His crime was in having referred to the Kurds in Turkey — 20% of Turkey's population — as a separate ethnic group. The evidence for his crime was in a letter sent to the President of the Swiss Writers' Union in August 1980, in which he had denounced, "Turkish universities which follow the official ideology (and thus) give up scientific truth and deny the reality of the Kurdish nation."

Three national writers' unions recently protested this persecution by Turkey's fascist junta, and we reprint their protests here:

**To His Excellency President Kenan Evren, Ankara, Turkey**  
The Writers Guild, the leading body of professional writers of books, films, radio and television in the United Kingdom, has learned that the Turkish author Dr İsmail Beşikçi has once more been imprisoned, and is now being held in the military prison in the city of Gölcük.

He has been sentenced for his defence of the ancient language and culture of the Kurdish people; not for any political act or any incitement to the use of force.

The Writers Guild of Great Britain, a non-political body, calls upon you personally, Mr President, to order the release of Dr Beşikçi, and thereby help to regain the respect of all writers and journalists working in the mass media in the English speaking world.

Yours sincerely

Ian Curteis

Chairman, Committee on Censorship  
Writers Guild of Great Britain

General Kenan Evren  
The Presidency  
Ankara, Turkey

The Authors League, comprising 11,000 authors and playwrights, has learned of the confinement of Dr. İsmail Beşikçi in military prison in Gölcük. We deplore this violation of human rights and intellectual freedom and urge his immediate release.

for the Authors League of America  
Harrison E. Salisbury  
Edward Albee  
Anne Edwards  
John Hersey  
Toni Morrison  
Peter Stone  
Barbara W Tuchman

General Haydar Saltık,  
Martial Law Commander,  
Istanbul, Turkey

Dear Sir,

On behalf of the members of the Australian Writers Guild — a Professional guild of Australian Playwrights and Screenwriters — we wish to urge you to release from prison Mr Beşikçi whose plight has been brought to our attention.

As fellow writers and citizens, we are concerned for the rights of others to be free to express their opinion and to create, record and add to the culture of their own country and to the world in which we live.

We appeal to you and your colleagues to re-consider the plight of this prisoner of conscience.

The career details of Mr Beşikçi prove him to be, not a greedy exploiter and destroyer of his fellow man, but rather a courageous man concerned with the welfare of his people.

We urge you to accord him the basic human right to freedom.

Finally, our concern for this prisoner is not merely that of fellow writers, but the concern of Australians for the human rights of the Turkish and Kurdish people.

Yours sincerely,  
Angela Wales,  
General Secretary  
Australian Writers' Guild

## CONSTITUTION OF THE CDDRT

- The name of the organisation shall be the Committee for Defence of Democratic Rights in Turkey (CDDRT).
- 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.
- 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.
- 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-option.

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.

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Manchester University  
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Ernie Roberts MP (Chair)  
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.



# PHONE THE EMBASSY!

Friday 4 December will mark the first anniversary of the start in İstanbul of the trial of 52 leaders of DİSK (Revolutionary Trade Union Confederation).

The prosecution has called for the death penalty for all defendants (see article on p2). Since then, on 8 October 1982, ten DİSK researchers have been added to the trial and the death penalty demanded for them, too. And a *further* ten defendants (making a total of 72 on trial) face up to 10 years in jail.

CDDRT is calling for a massive solidarity protest on 24 December this year in the form of a phone-in to the Embassy.

We want representatives of organisations and individuals to **telephone the Embassy on 24 December between 10am and 1pm**. Ask to speak to the Ambassador to give your protest about this continuing trial of working class leaders in Turkey, to demand that the case be dropped and that all the DİSK members be freed. Be polite but firm. If you get a response of any kind we should be glad to hear about it — by letter.

You may prefer to write. If so, your letter should go to: HE The Ambassador, Embassy of the Republic of Turkey, 43 Belgrave Square, London SW1. **This is the Embassy telephone number 01-235 5252.**

## REJECTION OF FASCIST CONSTITUTION

Continued from front page

Well over 280 people packed the Rally, entitled *No Fascist Constitution*, which was held in the Rio Cinema, Dalston, London on the same day that the Referendum was being held on the Constitution in Turkey.

A member of CDDRT's General Council, **Richard Balfé MEP**, chaired the lively event. First speaker was **Ernie Roberts MP**, who read a hate letter he and Tony Benn received from local Turkish fascists. Ernie declared, "I know what democracy is. I know it is the right of people to choose their own government freely in elections. That is what I want to see in Turkey."

**Alf Lomas MEP** was next. He said "This Constitution proposes to limit the scope of the trade union movement... (which is to be) ... banned from political

activity." There will be, "a ban on trade union organisation at the workplace ... compulsory arbitration ... limits on strikes." Even if the Constitution is passed\*, "that will not be the end of the struggle. An opposition is growing both within Turkey and outside. ... People are more and more understanding the disgusting manner in which the Turkish fascists are carrying on their oppressive regime."

**Jim Moody**, General Secretary of CDDRT, called on everyone present to do what they could to defeat fascism in

Turkey as it was an enemy of working people the world over.

**John Bowden** made the final speech. As a lawyer he was able to destroy many illusions about the new fascist Constitution. His conclusion was that, "This Constitution can only be dealt with and overthrown by the Turkish working class. ... I look forward to the day when we will not have any more of these phony constitutions!"

Following the Rally there was a Benefit Filmshow of Yılmaz Güney's *Düşman (The Enemy)*.

\*The final result of the Referendum in Turkey was given on 10 November 1982. It showed 91% in favour of the fascist Constitution. This was not surprising since it was compulsory to vote, voting took place in front of armed guards, and votes were cast

openly using cards of different colours for 'YES' or 'NO'. (The voting figures announced showed a discrepancy of 60,007 between total valid votes and the sum of 'YES' and 'NO' totals.)

## Affiliate to CDDRT

Organisations and individuals accepting the aims of CDDRT (see Constitution) are eligible for affiliation. Annual affiliation fees are: national organisation £25, local organisation £10, individual £5.

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