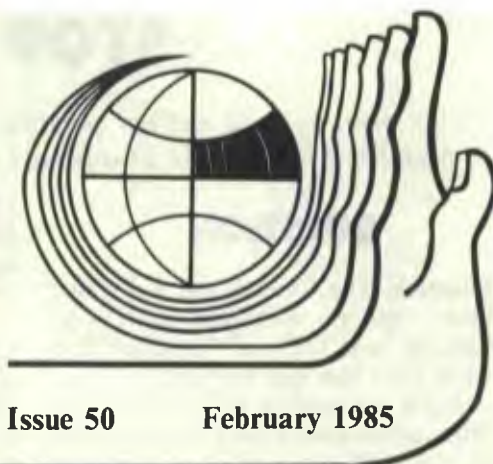


TURKEY NEWSLETTER



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

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February 1985

'PIRATE' BROADCAST INTERRUPTS TURKISH TV NEWS

THE VOICE OF THE WORKERS

An unprecedented 'pirate' broadcast by the underground opposition to the regime interrupted the 8.15 pm evening news on Turkish Television on the 31st January. Nearly two million viewers in the Istanbul region saw their TV screens go blank followed by a 10 minute broadcast by "*Workers' Voice*".

Snatches of the song "The Internationale" were interspersed with calls to overthrow the anti-democratic regime through revolution, for "bread, freedom and a just peace". The announcers told listeners that rights will not be given by the regime, they must be taken by the people, and called on the working class to lead the struggle for democracy.

This was the first time in Turkish history that such an event has occurred.

Troops were rushed to the TV station, the

authorities thinking that it had been "seized by the communists". Nobody was found.

The army and police have begun a house-to-house search of working class districts of Istanbul.

Turkish Television has only one channel and the broadcast was made during peak viewing time.

The Martial Law authorities in the Istanbul region have ordered a complete ban on all reporting by the media of this "incident".

This event marks a new departure in opposition to the reactionary regime in Turkey. It demonstrates the increasing confidence and strength of the internal opposition. 1985 is a year when all genuine democrats must step-up their efforts to support those who, despite savage repression, are raising the voice of democracy under the very nose of the brutal regime.

ST P THE EXECUTI NS!

We print below a written question submitted to the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Ten Member States of the European Community by Alf Lomas MEP and their reply.

QUESTION

Question: The Council will know that there were no executions in Turkey between June 1983 and 7 October 1984, when Ilyas Has was executed.

Since the civilian government took office in December 1983, responsibility for the ratification of death sentences has been passed to the parliament — the Turkish Grand National Assembly. After a death sentence is passed, various legal procedures follow, with the death sentence going to the Judicial Committee of the Parliament and, if approved by the Judicial Committee, it then goes to the Parliament for ratification. This latter procedure can take place within a

matter of a few days, as in the case of Mr Has, whose death sentence was ratified on Friday, 5 October, and he was then executed on Sunday, 7 October.

At present, there are 30 death sentences awaiting ratification, five of which have already been approved by the judicial Committee. A further 400 death sentences are at varying stages of legal proceedings.

The sudden ratification of Mr Has's death sentence and his subsequent execution has caused considerable alarm and concern, in view of the number of other prisoners under the threat of the death sentence, and with a great many mass political trials about to end.

Will the Council use their influence and intercede with the Turkish Govern-

ment and authorities, in order to prevent a resumption of executions, and to support the campaign which is growing in Turkey for the commutation of death sentences and the abolition of the death penalty?

ANSWER

Reply: While the use of the death penalty as such in Turkey has not been the subject of discussion in European Political Cooperation, the Ten particularly regret on humanitarian grounds the recent executions and death sentences in that country. The concern of the Ten regarding the current human rights situation in Turkey is well known.

CDDRT USA REPORT

CDDRT CHICAGO BENEFIT A GREAT SUCCESS

The 28th October 1984 witnessed CDDRT Chicago's benefit showing of Yilmaz Güney's film — 'YOL' (The Way). 225 people attended the showings and many went to the receptions afterwards at which the current situation was discussed.

The event was a further mile stone in the rapid development of the CDDRT in Chicago.

These photos show the lively reception following the CDDRT-Chicago's showing of 'Yol'.

CDDRT — CHICAGO ADDRESS

Readers of *Turkey Newsletter* in the USA can contact CDDRT-Chicago Through Committee for Defense of Democratic Rights in Turkey:
Box 90, 924 W. Belmont Ave., Chicago, IL 60657.



NEWS IN BRIEF

FIRST STRIKE IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR

A significant strike has taken place at the TESTAS plant in Ankara.

This is the first strike since the 12th September 1980 coup in a publicly owned enterprise.

TESTAŞ manufactures taxi meters.

224 workers are taking part in the strike.

NEW WEAPON SYSTEM

Following a meeting of the "Turkish-American Joint Defence Group", it was announced that the USA is to provide Turkey with a \$50 million credit to enable the Turkish army to purchase advanced weapon systems including Rapier missiles. Further more the USA is also to provide \$30 million to develop two NATO Bases in Turkey.

STRIKES NOW, STRIKES TO COME

No clearer indication that a new mood and a new situation in Turkey is developing is needed than the monthly roll-call of strikes breaking-out or pending. Despite the efforts of those Trade Union leaders who have collaborated with the junta, the unbearable cost of living and level of exploitation is forcing ever more workers to take action.

Sackings are the order of the day. In many cases sacked workers are owed colossal sums in back-pay which employers try to avoid paying.

In İzmir Aykurt, 86 workers who were dismissed from their jobs are owed 200 million liras. In Afsin Elbistan, 4900 workers were owed 610-million liras.

Meanwhile, because of the laws restricting both strikes and collective bargaining, wage talks involving over 100,000 workers have reached an impasse.

Despite repressive laws a strike involving some 300 workers employed by the Eston Concrete Pole Works is under way and the Forestry Workers' Union is due to call out its members on strike at 5 workplaces in various centres.



Testaş workers picket. Their victory in the first public sector strike.

TEN MORE CONDEMNED TO DEATH

At the end of 1984 the Turkish regime announced the lifting of Martial Law in seven provinces, but simultaneously announced the imposition of a 'state of emergency' in five of them. 11 other provinces have had a state of emergency lifted and four have had the state of emergency extended for a further period.

At the same time the government claimed in a three-month period to have arrested 1,055 "extreme leftists" — "six of them dead". It also reported 20 "armed clashes" in the 'eastern provinces' ie. Kurdistan.

TÜRK-IS GENERAL COUNCIL - CRISIS GROWS

On 27 December 1984, the General Council of Turkey's only trade union centre held an expanded meeting.

The meeting lasted several days and was marked with bitter disputes and tension. This has its source, in the growing demands by workers for action to regain their living standards and rights.

Some Trade Union leaders proposed actions such as boycotting collective bargaining negotiations, working to rule, silent marches and holding rallies. The extreme right-wing leader of the Türk Metal Union, Mustafa Özbek, accused his fellow trade union leaders of

"hankering after the pre-12th September situation and the 'Internationale'".

GIVING WITH ONE HAND TAKING WITH THE OTHER

At the end of 1984 ten members of the 'Turkish Peoples' Liberation Front' were sentenced to death by an Istanbul Military Court.

The trial involved 197 defendants. Apart from the death sentences 25 people were given life imprisonment and 71 received jail sentences of up to 23 years. Among those sentenced was Mr İsmet İmset the former Ankara correspondent of United Press International (UPI). He received a sentence of 4 years and two months plus a further period of 16 months internal exile.

ARMING

On January 9th a further step was taken by the Turkish regime in its efforts to become a Middle East gendarme and to penetrate foreign markets.

On that day the agreement were signed establishing Turkey's own military jet engine industry. The "Turkish Aircraft Engine Industry Corporation" is to be financed by the Turkish Air Force Support Foundation, TUSAS the Turkish Aviation Association and the US General Electric Company. This cosy partnership will enable Turkey both to strengthen its own Air Force and penetrate the lucrative Middle East market, especially in the repair of US supplied jets. Turkey is also about to take delivery of twelve F5 fighters bought from Norway.

CYPRUS MANOEUVRE BACK-FIRES

For many years now the 'Cyprus problem' has been an international crisis point. The recent talks between Greek and Turkish Cypriot leaders under United Nations auspices and their subsequent collapse have once more brought the Cyprus question to the fore.

As we have pointed out before, the prime obstacle to a resolution of this question is Turkey.

The 1974 invasion of the island by Turkish troops was an attempt by Turkey to expand, to in effect become an imperialist state by force of arms. No so easy in the latter half of the 20th century — particularly if you are not a major world power!

Turkish regimes in an effort to either consolidate their position in Cyprus or at least use northern Cyprus as a useful bargaining counter in relations with other countries, have resorted to many manoeuvres.

The recent negotiations must be seen in this context. They were turned into a manoeuvre engineered by Ankara which misfired and once again exposed the true nature of Turkey's 'interest' in North Cyprus. In 1983 the United Nations once more demanded the withdrawal of Turkish occupation forces from Cyprus. Denktas, "leader" of Turkish Cypriots responded by threatening to form an "independent" state. The UN Secretary General responded by proposing an agreement to both Denktas and Kyprianou. Kyprianou accepted the offer but Denktas went ahead and proclaimed the 'Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus.'

This move however, produced an adverse reaction internationally. Not even the close "Islamic brother nations" of Turkey were prepared to recognise this "state" and the position of Denktas and his masters in Ankara became ever more difficult.

When UN Secretary General Perez de Cuellar put forward proposals in 1984 for reviving the inter-communal negotiations, Denktas and Ankara had no alternative than to accept. Refusal would have led to utter exposure. However, by accepting they hoped to create a situation whereby either

the Greek Cypriots would be forced to recognise de facto division of the island or, justify UDI in Northern Cyprus.

Before the 17th January summit there were preliminary talks between Denktas and Kiprianou. These were aimed at defining the issues to be discussed and the frame-work for the Summit. On some questions outline agreements were reached and on others it was decided to put them on the Summit agenda.

On the eve of the Summit Denktas began to proclaim that the outline agreements tentatively put forward in the 'talks about talks', constituted a signature-ready draft agreement. On top of this he put forward conditions on other aspects, (ie his demand for in effect a permanent Turkish army garrison on the island), that locked the door on possible concessions. At the end of the Summit Denktas left declining to set a date for further negotiations.

Immediately, Turkey began a propaganda campaign putting the total blame for the failure on Kyprianou, with headlines such as "Cyprus summit collapses because of Greek side's intransigence" — ad nauseam. Ankara has gone so far as to claim that Denktas's views were identical to those of the UN Secretary General and that the Turkish position virtually received total international support, both bare-faced lies.

On the contrary, everywhere it is being said that the 'agreement-loving attitude of Denktas and the Turkish regime was a manoeuvre designed to give a false image, to throw the ball into Kyprianou's court. Turkey had in effect said to the Greek Cypriot side "here is our position, agree with it or no deal".

As soon as the talks collapsed Denktas even announced that the small concessions he had been prepared to grant, (7% of land returned to Greek Cypriots, and on the Constitution), were no longer on offer.

Despite Turkey claiming the whole episode as a vindication of its position. (And the fact that the continued militarisation of Cyprus suits NATO's interests). The whole manoeuvre has been exposed. Denktas and his masters' sudden innocent surprise at the collapse of the talks brings to mind the old phrase "methinks he does protest too much".

Turkey's attempt to cover its colonial designs on Cyprus with international support has again failed.

POLITICAL PARTIES – FOREIGN RELATIONS

Recent months have witnessed a flurry of activities as Turkey's 'legally permitted' political parties have sent emissaries to Europe and beyond to establish contacts with foreign political parties.

Quick off the mark was SODEP, (Social Democratic Party). Its vice president Muzaffer Seraç and Ankara province party chairman Onur Kumbacıbaşı went to Austria and other West European countries. While in Austria, Mr Seraç received the Bruno Kriesky Award for Services to Human Rights awarded by the 'Human Rights Foundation'. The real purpose however was to have talks with the Austrian Socialist Party. From there they went on to have talks with the West German Social Democratic Party and the Trade Unions. The essence of all these talks was how SODEP can prepare for membership of the Socialist Interna-

tional, a delicate point is that the official Turkish affiliate is the suppressed CHP-Republican Peoples Party of Bülent Ecevit.

ANAP (Motherland Party) — the ruling party is also preparing to send a delegation to Europe. ANAP's aim is to try and join the European Union of Conservative Parties. To this end they plan to have talks with the German Christian Democrats and the British and French conservative parties.

Apart from SODEP the other 'permitted' opposition party — DYP (Correct Way Party), is out to contact various foreign political parties. Not only the same conservative parties as ANAP is chasing but also the Bulgarian Peasants' Party and various US Senators. DYP has also taken to receiving foreign 'friends' at their headquarters in Turkey.

The two parties directly created by the Junta — the HP (Populist Party) and MDP (National Democracy Party) have not developed foreign contacts. This is because the junta has always viewed any foreign party contacts with suspicion, believing that they lead to 'harmful developments' in Turkey.

One of the aims of the 'joint action' mounted by the major parties to establish foreign contacts seems to be to strengthen their own positions in the growing power struggle within Turkey as the crisis grows.

It is also clear that these parties are engaging in this operation with the aim of fooling European public opinion into believing that Turkey is well on the road to democracy. And, by associating themselves with established west European political parties try to legitimise themselves internationally.

TURKEY – MONETARIST DISASTER

Following the 1980 coup Turkey — like Chile, was held up as a showcase for the application of monetarist policies. The results are now apparent for all to see.

Prime Minister Özal has almost undeviatingly pursued a monetarist policy both as Finance Minister under the Junta, (when he was nominated by the international bankers' magazine 'Euromoney' as its "Economic Minister of the Year"), and now as Prime Minister. Last year for example, Özal began selling off Turkey's public utilities — even including Hydroelectric Dams, toll-bridges and roads.

If we look at some of the main aims of monetarism; bringing down inflation, enhancing export capability we see in Turkey a catalogue of failure. The two great aims of the coup had been to suppress the struggle of the working class and to change the structure and level of the Turkish economy — to solve the economic crisis at gun-point. The economic aim has failed.

On the inflation front, in 1981 Özal projected that inflation would be down to 10% by 1984. When he became Prime Minister he changed the aim to 25% by the end of 1984. Now the real results are in. Two sets of figures have been produced by government bodies. According to the State Statistical Institute inflation is running at 53%. The Treasury and Foreign Trade Institute on the other hands says inflation is at 57%. If we bear in mind that Turkish

government institutions have a tendency to 'underestimate' undesirable figures, we must draw the conclusion that Turkey's real inflation rate is somewhere in the region of 60% to 70%. This does not include the effect of massive increases in Post and Phone charges, air fares plus the 11th rise in petrol prices in 1984 at the end of the year.

In Turkey 1985 was also heralded by the imposition of VAT at 10% on almost everything, which was passed on to the consumer immediately.

The friends of the regime in Turkey must also be disappointed by the truth behind Turkey's 'export boom'. If we leave aside distortions in some figures caused by the Gulf War, which has led Iran to import many of its supplies through Turkey, almost the entire increase in exports is due to the shrinkage of the home market.

Any economic gains have therefore been made at the expense of the working class whose real wages have fallen to 1963 levels.

The failure of government policy led to the closure of over 1,000 businesses in the first half of 1984 alone. Investment in manufacturing industry has declined steadily and industry is working well below capacity. Following the coup there had been some rise in utilisation from 51% to 62% but this was entirely due to the banning of strikes and increased worked exploitation. Since

then there has been no significant increase.

The truth is there for all to see. Even Mehmet Yazer, General Secretary of the Union of Chambers of Industry and Commerce remarked.. "investment has failed to pick up and unemployment continues to rise. Industrial productivity remains too low". Remarks which caused Özal to accuse Yazer of the unlawful act of "indulging in politics."

The reality of all this for working people of Turkey can be seen in brief items appearing almost daily in the press. Such as parliament is 'concerned' about almost daily rent rises. Statistics show that 80% of married school teachers have to do other jobs to make ends meet. A report from Adana tells of a cut-price bread market in the town where stale or badly baked bread is sold for 15-25 Liras to people with large families or unemployed who can't afford the new bread at 40 liras a loaf. Or Geyve were the state hospital (50 beds) has only one doctor and no X-ray equipment. When the doctor is away the hospital has to close. The magazine 'The Middle East' in a recent economic survey of Turkey if anything underestimated the situation when it wrote "After four years of military sponsored monetarism. Turkey appears to have reached an economic impasse."



REGIME CRUMBLES – OPPRESSION INCREASES

On the 28th January, Turkish newspapers carried the announcement that on 24th December "23 youth militants of left-wing organisations" had been arrested in Istanbul.

They are accused of trying to organise themselves and of preparing and distributing pamphlets, leaflets and posters.

This case demonstrates two main things: Firstly, that as the regime crumbles, in a desperate effort to stem the growing mood of popular discontent, it is intensifying repression. It also shows that despite 4 years of savage repression the youth remain with heads raised unsilenced.

BONN'S AID TO TURKEY

Reprinted from 'The Middle East Magazine' of November 1984.

Turkey will receive a neatly-wrapped German military aid package after all, writes Manik Mehta. On 5 October the German Bundestag (parliament) endorsed release of a military aid package for Turkey recommended by the Foreign Relations Committee. The final obstacles in the path of the 14th instalment of German military aid — worth DM130 million over a period of 18 months — will be cleared when the budgetary resolutions are passed.

After the German government's assessment report on Turkey last February, the Bundestag approved Bonn's intention to continue financial and military assistance to Turkey. But payments were withheld until the Bundestag could discuss the aid in the framework of the overall 1985 budget.

The government can dispense financial aid in the form of credits worth DM130 million a year, but military assistance requires approval of the Bundestag.

Parliamentarians of Bonn's conservative-liberal ruling coalition considered that Turkey was on the "road to democracy" — a precondition for the release of military aid. But the Social Democratic Party (SPD) did not consider the present situation as "sufficiently conducive to democracy."

The environmentalist Green Party, which categorically rejected any form of military assistance, proposed sending a Bundestag delegation on an "inspection visit" to Turkey. But the proposal failed to win support. Instead, the Bundestag accepted an invitation from the speaker of the Turkish Parliament for an "information visit".

The SPD's spokesman on foreign affairs, Karl Voigt, pointed out that basic human rights were still curtailed. "Those who maintain silence on the curbing of human rights in Turkey undermine the credibility of Nato," he argued. Bonn's coalition should not adopt a "selective human rights policy" with one standard for human rights violations in communist countries and another for violations in Turkey and El Salvador.

A spokesman for the Greens stated: "Martial law has so far been lifted in only a few Turkish provinces. Turkey is waging a war against the Kurds on its own soil." Conservatives refuted this.



MOTHERS ON TRIAL

Three years imprisonment is being demanded by the prosecution for the ten women pictured above, whose trial has just begun. They are the mothers of political prisoners. Their 'crime' is that on 19th May 1984 (Turkey's "Youth Day"), in the middle of the wave of hunger strikes sweeping Turkey's prisons, they laid wreaths on Atatürk's monument in Istanbul. The wreaths carried inscriptions calling for an

amnesty for political prisoners and an end to torture in the prisons.

In the eyes of the regime the mothers' silent protest constituted a "public demonstration without official permission" thus the call for three years imprisonment!—. However, repression will no longer stifle the growing struggle for democracy.

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IN TURKEY**
through the eyes of
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CONSTITUTION OF THE CDDRT

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

- The Executive Committee shall consist of the General Secretary and such other members as the General Council may decide. The Executive Committee shall meet at least fortnightly and be responsible for the day to day work of the CDDRT.
- Local Branches of the CDDRT are formed with the approval of the General Council.
- This Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds majority at a Congress.
- The General Council may call, or upon request by two-thirds of affiliated national organisations shall call, a Special Congress.

CDDRT General Council

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Richard BALFE, MEP
John M BLOOM
Philip BRAY
Sandra HODGSON
Aif LOMAS, MEP
Aydin MERIC
Stan NEWENS
Ernie ROBERTS, MP
Alan SAPPER
Marion SARAFI
Faik SINKIL
Tijen UGURIS
Martin UPHAM
Bob WRIGHT
and one representative each from:
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Union of Turkish Progressive in Britain
Union of Turkish Women in Britain
Union of Turkish Workers

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GMWU 22 Bury Branch
GMWU 115 Manchester Branch
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STIRRINGS IN THE FACTORIES

According to a statement by Türk-İş, since the ban on sackings was lifted, an average of 2,400 workers are being sacked every month. The dismissals are mostly for trade union — related reasons. Surely enough, the boss of the Atlı Zincir Machine Works, Tekin Aliner for example, openly admits that it is “due to trade union movements”. The Atlı Zincir boss answers a question on the subject as follows:

“This is a workplace. You have to work here. The two workers that we dismissed were making the other workers restless. We dismissed them in order to bring peace and quiet to the workplace.” (*Nokta*, issue 43).

In the legal press, on the one hand a hue and cry is being raised that unemployment is ruining lives, and on the other and workers are being told, “For heaven’s sake, such and such number of workers lose their jobs each week. Keep quiet, do not get mixed up in any ‘funny business’, or you could get the sack.”

In other words the horror story told from time immemorial to deter workers from fighting for their rights.

The greatest progress achieved by trade unionism in Turkey on this point was to secure an interpretation favourable to the workers of the 13th, 17th, and 24th articles of the laws governing job dismissals on the basis of the mass struggles during the 1970-1980 period. In addition, sackings could be further limited by inserting extra clauses into collective bargaining agreements. The present situation is far behind this point. During the period of fascism (1980-83), the Supreme Arbitration Council weeded out the articles dealing with job security. In the present balance of power, the 13th, 17th and 24th articles of the employment law are not interpreted in favour of the workers. But their strength and muscle remain. Today Turkey is rapidly advancing towards a head-on clash between the workers and their enemies. The indications of this are bubbling up in every area of life. In the first place there is the changing atmosphere in the factories.

In the immediate aftermath of the 12th September coup, the word of the shift leaders and management stooges was law. Experienced workers termed these types “General

Evren’s heroes”. Today these “heroes” are discredited, and have returned to their old tightrope acts. They are trying to maintain a happy medium between the workers and management.

There are many signs that the workers’ initiative is increasing in the factories. However the legal press is consciously trying to suppress this type of news. Nevertheless, some very serious tendencies do manage to find their way into the papers. For example the following veiled words from a sacked worker to a journalist tell us a lot: “There are people wandering about the factory. If anything happens, we will get the blame.” (*Nokta*, issue 43).

Indeed tension is mounting in the factories. People have begun to wander around and approach workers. The employers are scared stiff that “something will happen”.

Türk-İş President Şevket Yılmaz, whose duty in life is to report the mood of the workers to the government, is in a panic. He obviously feels he is not getting the message across. In every new speech he describes the force of the impending storm in ever more horrific terms:

“A great crisis has struck our working life. *Things are not going well*. These problems should be resolved now so that the social peace of Turkey tomorrow is not destroyed today.” (*Tercüman*, 23.12.1984). Yılmaz has “discovered” that the Public Sector Collective Bargaining Council, which has the public sector in a stranglehold, is not a legitimate institution, and he is pleading with the government to abolish it, lest they cannot hold the workers back any longer:

“The government is causing a reversal in the economic and social interests of the workers through this illegal attitude. I publicly condemn this attitude. If non-observance of these laws becomes more widespread tomorrow, no one will be strong enough to reap the whirlwind. The government should recognise this major error in their thinking and show the virtue of correcting their error.” (*Tercüman*, 23.12.1984).

There is great tension in the factories. The patience of the workers with the treatment they have received since 1980 is running out.

**TURKEY
NEWSLETTER**



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