

# TURKEY NEWSLETTER



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

Issue No 79-80 February-March 1988

## **MIGROS STRIKE VICTORY**



## **WOMEN IN TURKEY - A YEAR OF STRUGGLE**

Pages 7-10.

# NEWS IN BRIEF

## CHILD LABOUR

According to the Turkish Ministry of Labour and Social Security in a report on 10th October 1987, there are 4.5 million children at work between the ages of 9 and 14.

Prime Minister Ozal's self-proclaimed 'economic miracle' is based on Turkey's 'plentiful and cheap labour'. What this means in human terms is that thousands of 9-14 year old boys and girls are working in the shoe factories of Gaziantep and the Cotton Mills of Cukorova to name but two areas.

One surprising fact revealed by the Ministry's report is that 90% of employers using children are perfectly within the law.



Children employed in car repair shops.



In January, there was more evidence of people's patience with the situation in Turkey expiring.

Attempts by the Istanbul local authorities to sweep-away the famous Fatih market ended following violent clashes between riot police and stall holders and customers.

At the same time, also in Istanbul when bulldozers moved into the Topkapi area to clear small shops which stood in the way of property speculators, shopkeepers clashed with riot police. As police battled their way into the area, the shopkeepers set fire to all their shops as a final protest.



## POLITICAL PRISONERS

The CDDRT is continuing a Solidarity with Political Prisoners in Turkey Campaign. You can help. Your or a group you are a member of can 'adopt' a political prisoner in Turkey. This means writing to the prisoner and maintaining contact. This helps both to raise the particular prisoner and her/his fellow prisoners' morale and put pressure on the regime to release prisoners.

Your help can bring great pressure too bear.

Many of these prisoners while still very young sacrificed everything to struggle for a better society in Turkey. Many of them have endured torture and ill-treatment. Help ensure there are no forgotten political prisoners in Turkey!

If you wish to receive more details of the political prisoners campaign, write the Political Prisoners Campaign, CDDRT, 85 Balls Pond Road, London N1, Britain.

**DÜNYA KADINLAR GÜNÜ**  
KUTLAMA GECESI

**INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY CELEBRATION EVENING**

1988 DATE  
12 MARY CUMARTESİ  
12th MARCH SATURDAY

1988 TIME  
SHOREDITCH TOWN HALL  
380 OLD STREET, EC1

OTOBUSLER BUSES  
8, 229, 35, 55, 149, 243.

KREŞ VARDIR  
CRÈCHE AVAILABLE

DUZİLEMEYİŞİNE ÖZGÜRLENDİRİLMİŞ  
İNGİLTERE TÜRKİYELİ KİMLİKSİZ  
KADINLAR BİRLİĞİ  
UNION OF TURKISH WOMEN  
IN BRITAIN  
118 RAMBOURNE ROAD, E15 6JH 011 488 13 30



SABAHAT AKKIRAZ  
MARIA TOLLY



## SCANDAL IN CYPRUS

Denktash- President of the self-styled "Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus" has found an ingenious way to silence opposition to himself and his masters - the Turkish army garrison in North Cyprus. He took the leader of the main opposition party, Ozker Ozgur of the Republican Turkish Party to court for calling him a "Godfather". Even though this is probably one of the mildest names given to Denktash in his long and slippery political career, it was enough for a tame court to fine Ozgur £100,000!.

This colossal sum could bankrupt Ozgur and his party. He told *Liberation*, the London-based anti-imperialist organisation; "We consider this a vicious attempt of the regime established in the North of Cyprus to quell the Opposition and silence the people, thus speeding the process of intergration into mainland Turkey. The repressive administration of Denktash depends on the Ozal Government in Ankara and the voting power of the settlers imported from Turkey..."

# NEWS IN BRIEF

## MURDERER TO STAY AT BUCKINGHAM PALACE

President Evren of Turkey, leader of the 12th September 1980 military coup and head of the ruling Junta between 1980 and 1983 is to pay a state visit to London in the summer.

Evren has presided over the blackest pages in modern Turkish history. During his attempt to turn the country into a monolithic fascist state hundreds of thousands of trade unionists, students, peace campaigners and political activists were "processed" through a system of systematic torture and military courts. Many died under torture, were executed or died "while trying to escape".

In the interests of obtaining a few arms contracts the British government has decided that Evren will get the full 'red carpet' treatment and be foisted on the Queen as her lodger for a few days.



## DAILY TRAGEDY

A 47-year-old council worker in Rize committed suicide on 9th December because he could not afford to look after his wife and 13 children. After 25 years of service with the local council Ismet Seven told fellow employees that he was going to die as a protest against high price rises. He then flung himself from the top of the council offices.

## AFTER THE SHOW

Following the November 30th General Election, the Turkish regime has announced staggering price rises of basic goods and services.

An attempt by the opposition Social Democratic Populist Party to stage a women's protest march against price rises on the 15th December was banned.

## LOOTING

Another sign of the poverty being inflicted on the people of Turkey was the looting of the central grocery depot in Istanbul on the 8th December.

After a fire partially damaged the warehouses crowds from surrounding shanty towns stormed the buildings carrying away food and household goods.

Riot police were unable to restore order. The warehouses were completely emptied.

## "DISTURBANCES"



Istanbul passengers storm buses.

In every day life in Turkey, indications of the growing anger of the people are ever more clear. Even supporters of the regime say there is a feeling of an impending storm.

Against this background all spontaneous actions by the people take on special significance.

This was shown on the 11th January in Istanbul. The municipality announced the doubling of bus fares as from rush-hour the same evening.

In response angry passengers gathered shouting slogans and stormed the buses refusing to pay more than the old fare.

Squads of riot police arrived but found the crowds too large and angry to make intervention possible.

The following evening, commuters waiting for suburban trains at Hydarpasa - Istanbul's biggest station - smashed the windows of railway board offices and attacked the railway management when delays were announced. Hand-to-hand fighting between passengers and riot police broke out.

## ACTION

On 31st December, militants from Dev Sol (Revolutionary left) attacked the headquarters of TISK (the Turkish Employers Union) in Taksim Square, Istanbul and escaped after pinning up banners and shouting slogans.

## SACKED

A police officer with 21 years service was sacked on the orders of the Turkish Ministry of the Interior for attending a rally of the legal Social Democratic Populist Party while he was on holiday.

## BANNED PUBLICATIONS

440 publications have been banned from entering Turkey since the military coup in 1980; 267 by the junta which ruled immediately after 1980 and 173 by Ozal's government.

## IRANIAN REFUGEES VICTIMISED

During a visit by the Iranian Prime Minister to Turkey last year, 36 Iranian refugees were handed over to the Iranian regime by the Turkish government as "a gesture of goodwill".

There are an estimated 1 million Iranian refugees in Turkey.

## TOO NEAR THE TRUTH

The State Planning Organisation in Turkey has been banned by the government(!) from publishing statistics.

This follows the organisation publishing figures which showed a sharp increase in inflation. These contradicted official government propaganda.

## ARMS DEPOT RAIDED



On the night of the 11th January, militants from TKKO (the military wing of the pro-Kurdish TKML) raided the arms depot of the 197th Infantry Battalion near Istanbul. They disarmed the sentries and took 10 guns.

Attempts by police to follow them

ended when the militants opened fire on the pursuing patrol car, killing one police officer and seriously wounding another.

In house searches and raids on working class suburbs since the incident over 200 people have been arrested by the security forces.

# TRADE UNION NEWS

## MIGROS STRIKE VICTORY

The strike by 1300 shopworkers at Turkey's only major supermarket chain ended in victory on the 31st December.

The strike, at the Migros stores - owned by Koc Holdings, (one of Turkey's largest monopolies), lasted 134 days. The workers were on strike against low pay (90 per month), long hours and harassment of trade union activists. Despite pressure from the regime and employers, and near starvation, the workers remained firm. In late December, the shop assistants' trade union - Tez-Koop-Is - called in negotiators from Turk-Is lead by Emin Kul to force Migros to settle.

The final settlement is one of the highest since the 1980 coup in Turkey. When new tax-free 'social benefits' are added to higher wages the Migros workers have achieved a pay rise of over 350%, back-dated to 1st May 1987!

One reason for the long and bitter nature of the strike is that the Migros workers settlement will set the pace for thousands of other workers employed by the Koc Holding.

As in other recent strikes in Turkey international solidarity played an important role in achieving victory and preventing the regime using the force of state against the workers. Migros workers received a large amount of moral and material support from the Irish Trade Union IDATU, Swiss Trade Unions, FIET (the clerical and administrative workers international) and trade unionists in Britain.

The strike leader, Aynur Karaslan was elected one of the '10 people of the year' by readers of the Turkish news magazine *Nokta*. She arrived to collect her prize accompanied by 20 fellow workers.

She said: "Since the strike we think and work as a collective."



A striking stationary worker and his family - "we went on strike because we did not have enough to eat"

## STATIONARY OFFICE STRIKE ENDS

Amid a feeling of dissatisfaction a strike by state stationary office has ended.

The workers - who were already poorly paid even by Turkish standards are to receive a 25% wage increase in the first 6 months and an 18% rise in the second plus a 50% rise in fringe benefits.

## LOADERS

The marathon transport loaders strike and lockout in Istanbul is continuing.

At the end of 1987 a desperate attempt was made to break the strike when an MP of the ruling ANAP party tried to set up a non-union warehousing firm.

MP Sadi Abbasoglu was allowed to use government warehouses and facilities for his company.

Striking workers ambushed the buildings of the firm, which is employing street toughs and gangsters. Fighting broke out. Police arrived and eventually forced the striking workers - members of the Transport Workers' Union, Tumtis - back to their buses.

In early January several employers signed deals with the union and ended the lockout. However, the notorious Transport Employers Federation (which has mafia connections), has used its "influence" to try and prevent the smaller bosses negotiating with Tumtis.

Local authorities under the Federation's "influence" sealed the warehouses of employers who had settled with the union. However, workers broke the seals, swept aside police attempts and started working.

The workers have negotiated a 223% wage increase.

Warehouse workers' clashes police and company thugs are now a daily occurrence.



Warehouse workers' determination to win grows victory



Striking loaders clash with police.

## NEW SECRETARY

Following the election of its President to parliament the progressive Petro-Chemical Workers' Union Petrol-Is, has elected a new president - Minar Caylan, the union's former General Secretary.

This is seen as a further strengthening of the union's progressive orientation.

# TRADE UNION NEWS

## BANK DISPUTE

Despite laws banning bank workers from striking in Turkey a big dispute has begun between the independent bank workers' union banksis and the giant Ak Bank.

Ak Bank is one of the most profitable private sector banks in Turkey. Yet it's workers are the lowest paid.

Though unable to strike, Ak Bank employees have begun a go-slow, canteen boycott and series of protest meetings.

## UNITY

In November Turk-Is held a joint meeting with Hak-Is (the small Islamic/social democratic trade union confederation). As part of the Turk-Is campaign to build greater trade union unity in Turkey, the two confederations have agreed to work together.

Sevket Yilmaz, President of Turk-Is said the two centres would work together on the basis of a platform of joint struggle against the employers and government.



Police break-up attempts by leaders of the independent union Otomobil-Is to protest at the sacking of over a thousand active members of their union.

## TEACHERS

Teachers in Turkey are banned from joining a trade union. However in December a group of teachers visited Turk-Is leader Sevket Yilmaz to ask for trade union help in forming a "Teachers Association".

## CONTRACT WORKERS

To avoid unionisation, increasing use is being made in Turkey at theoretically self-employed "contract workers". Contract workers are being employed in cleaning, post and telecommunications and construction.

The estimated 165,000 contract workers are not allowed to join trade unions and are barred from even Turkey's minimal social security benefits.

## GENERAL STRIKE CALL

Turk-Is leaders have announced the launch of a step-by-step campaign of industrial actions and protest leading eventually to a general strike in Turkey later in the year.

Turk-Is have given an ultimatum to employers and the regime to meet the workers' demands for an additional payrise this year to compensate for inflation and the recent massive price increases or face the first all-out general strike in Turkish history.

## NURSES' PROTEST



150 nurses at the privately-owned American Hospital in Turkey staged a big protest on 10th February.

They gathered outside the hospital and ate simit- (bread rings) a traditional food of poverty saying this was all they could afford on their wages.

Their union, Saglik-Is (the Turk-Is affiliated health workers' union) said that "while the hospital bosses get enormous profits, the staff are on starvation wages".

## SACKED

56 members of the glass workers union Kristal-Is have been sacked in Bozoyur for being active trade unionists.



Miners and families wait for the bodies of 8 miners who died after being trapped 175 meters underground on February 6th

## CONFESSION

The chair of the Association of Chambers of Commerce and Industry in an interview with *Milliyet* admitted that the economic system in Turkey is based on the maximum exploitation of workers.

He said "... we must press down on the workers. We can only be economically viable by cutting the workers' wages.

In fact, we spend less on wages than on interest payments. Only 17% of capital costs on average are wages".

## FASCIST ATTACKS

Workers at the Nursan factory (see *Turkey Newsletter No. 78*) staged another protest walk-out following their earlier action over the sacking of trade union activists. This time the workers walked out after a thug belonging to a group of 30 fascists recently hired by the management beat-up a worker.

## FASCISTS BY ANY OTHER NAME

The notorious fascist and gangster controlled 'trade union' centre MISK is to change its name to "Yurt-Is" in the words of one official "to erase our bad reputation.

## PRESSURE

Amidst increasing calls for a general strike, nine Turkish trade unions are preparing for emergency congresses. Great pressure is being exerted on the leadership of Turk-Is (Turkish Trade Union Confederation) itself to do likewise.

## DEATHS IN THE MINES

On average 35 miners die each year in industrial accidents in the Zonguldak coal mines alone. 8,000 are injured each year in the same way.

# KURDISTAN

## THE UNMENTIONABLE SUBJECT IS MENTIONED

January saw uproar in the Turkish parliament when Social Democratic Populist Party (SHP) MP Mehmet Eren in the course of a speech said: "There is a Kurdish question in Turkey". As hysterical MPs from the ruling Motherland Party (ANAP) rushed towards the rostrum in an attempt to silence him, Eren continued to point out that Kurds were prevented from speaking and writing their own language and that the Kurdish names of their towns and villages were being changed to Turkish ones.

Since the formation of the Turkish Republic it has been the most taboo subject to mention the existence of the 10 million Kurdish people in Turkey.

The situation of the Kurdish people, subjected to severe repression, and their land occupied by the bulk of the Turkish army has never before been raised so openly in the Turkish Parliament.

As Eren continued his speech fighting broke out in the chamber. One ANAP MP shouted: "These Diyarbakir (capital of Turkish Kurdistan) people should have passports to come here." SHP MP Canvar retorted that "we can beat them up (ANAP MPs) ... they are all past it".

Eren found support from 22 other MPs; now known as the "Kurdish Party". These MPs are either Kurdish themselves or represent constituencies with a large Kurdish population.



## DENIED TRAVEL

The town of Villa Real in Portugal made a twinning arrangement with the predominantly Kurdish town of Tunceli in Turkey.

The Portuguese invited the Tunceli Council leader to visit Portugal to celebrate the twinning. However, the Turkish Ministry of the Interior refused to grant the application to travel to the Council leader.

The Villa Real authorities commented that instead of calling Tunceli "sister city" they should call it "hostage city".



Militants from the pro-Kurdish TIKKO organisation based on mount Munzir celebrate the raid on an army base on the outskirts of Istanbul.

## ARMED CLASHES

Armed clashes between militants mainly from the PKK (Kurdish Workers Party) continued throughout January. As did mass trials of suspected Kurdish militants.

On the 2nd January 4 soldiers including an officer died in a PKK ambush in Siirt.

## CHANGED

700 names of towns and villages have been changed by the regime to obliterate their Kurdish or Armenian origin.

On the 22nd December 1987 the Turkish magazine 2000 published a list of names and asked "why not change the names of Istanbul and Ankara as well?"

## A PRISONER

Recep Marasli, editor of Komal publishing house is a 31-year-old Kurd.

He is serving a 36-year prison sentence in the notorious Diyarbakir Prison. His "crime", making "seperatist propaganda".



Raids by the regime's army continue throughout Kurdistan.



Alleged Kurdish militants killed by the security forces.

## EXHIBITION

An exhibition of photographs of life in Kurdistan in Turkey will be on show in the Union of Turkish workers' centre, 84 Balls Pond Rd, London N1, from March 24th until April 30th. Opening times 9am to 9pm Mondays to Saturdays.

The photographer, Richard Wayman took a series of striking photos while travelling through Turkey in 1987. Richard Wayman won second prize in the 1987 Observer David Hodge Memorial Award for young photojournalists on the basis of the photos in the exhibition.

These very atmospheric and truthful photos are well worth seeing.

## RIGHTS FOR WOMEN - DEMOCRACY FOR SOCIETY



The 'Woman Question' continues to be a growing issue in Turkey today.

The struggle of women in Turkey for their own rights and for democracy and freedom in general is continuing to grow.

Today in Turkey women's lives continue to be hampered not only by the legacy of attitudes from an Islamic past but by a discriminatory legal system. In addition, working class women bear their "fair share" of the intensive exploitation and poverty of the working class in Turkey. For Kurdish women there is the added burden of national oppression.

### LEGAL DISCRIMINATION

Despite improvements, women are still legally discriminated against. The Turkish Civil Code still contains articles such as; Article 159: "Work for women other than housework depends on her husband's permit...a wife may be engaged in work or a handicraft with her husband's explicitly or implicitly expressed permission". Or Article 155, which defines the role given to the husband as follows: "It is the husband who represents the unity of the act of marriage..." The same article limits the wife's role to "...the permanent needs of the home".

There is also the degrading provisions of the Turkish Penal Code Article 440 according to which a woman who is convicted of committing adultery can be punished with between 6 months to 3 years imprisonment. Whereas a man committing the same offence can only be punished if he brings an unmarried woman to his home where he lives with his wife.

### WOMEN FIGHT BACK

While middle class women in Turkey are in a relatively good position in practice, working class women are engaged in hard battles. The rising anger and militant spirit of working class women is recognised by friend and foe alike. In every

action against the regime whether in strikes, demonstrations, political prisoners actions or physical resistance to the security forces, women have been in the forefront.

The 'concern' felt by the regime and other reactionary forces at these developments has led to several steps being taken to divert the anger of women into 'safe' channels

One method has been to promote Turkey's "First Lady", the Prime Minister's wife Semra Ozal as the model "liberated working woman". Organisations she sponsors such as the *The Society for the Promotion of Women* function with state backing. Their policies are those of "tea and cakes" charity organisations 'helping' women from above by giving advice on frugal living, asking husbands to behave better, encouraging marriages, giving money or work to "deserving" poor women and generally trying to depoliticise them.

Semra Ozal and her like argue that there are sufficient rights for women. It is just their own fault or ignorance that they do not use them. Her work is unsurprisingly also backed by Turkey's financial holdings and monopolies.

Reactionaries including factions of the ruling ANAP party and fascist movements are also trying to build support for the Islamic "turban" movement among women. The aim is to divert women from the democratic struggle, reintroduce the veil for women (banned since the 1920s) and drag Turkish women back into the Middle Ages. Outside of some pro-Kohmeni middle class circles, fascists and some backward rural elements this movement has attracted little support despite repeated hypes in sections of the media.

Despite bans, a wide range of women's organisations have emerged in Turkey in the last two years. These include for the first time feminist movements modelled on those in Europe in the 1970s. They range from "separatist" groups to just more militant versions of Semra Ozal's type of organisation. Those who just argue that the problems of Turkish women

# WOMEN

are due to men in general or their own lack of consciousness and who don't make a habit of street demonstrations are often given official encouragement. An example of this were recent TRT (State TV) programmes in which they were allowed to express their views. This was highly unusual on TRT which is normally a monopoly of the ruling ANAP party.

Other women's groups concentrate on campaigning against serious issues such as wife-beating. They have taken cases to court, held demonstrations and in last October started street collections on petitions. This has led to big increase in support including from men.

The main trend among working women has been towards participation in trade unions and leading the resistance in the Gecekondu (shanty towns) to evictions.

The Gecekondu movement has caused the rapid politicisation of many women. The movement is lead by ordinary working women and housewives. In the last year it has leapt from a movement of largely passive protests and petitions to a stage where women are stoning the security forces and fighting barricade battles to defend their homes as almost a matter of routine.



*Semra Ozal: "Women and men cannot be equal".*

In the unions, women have stood alongside men on the picket lines and in most strikes.

The Turk-Is (trade union confederation) Women's Bureau, originally created largely as a sop to international trade union practice, has turned into a fast-growing and dynamic section of the trade union movement under the influence of rank-and-file working women.



*Women bear the brunt of the economic crisis.*



*Women are in the forefront of every major strike.*

The recent successful Migros shopworkers' strike was an example of a major strike lead by a woman (Aynur Karaaslan) who had been elected by a largely male workforce.

In the prisons women political prisoners braved beatings and ill-treatment to take an active part in last year's prison hunger strikes. Women also played the lead in setting-up the radical TAYAD (Association of Families of Prisoners and Detainees) which has transformed the whole political prisoners issue in Turkey.

Women in Turkey are definitely "coming out of the kitchen" and are fighting shoulder to shoulder with men both for their own rights and for general freedom and democracy.

## INDICTMENT

*Mass poverty caused by the regime's policies has lead to a big increase in prostitution.*

*According to a survey carried out by the Aegean University, the number of registered prostitutes has risen from 5,400 in 1980 to 338,000 in 1987 - a rise of 6,259%!*

*The survey reported that many of these women are looked on as wage-earners by their families and not repudated as in the past. Many return home after a day's work as a prostitute to husbands and children and lead a normal family life.*

*There has been a particular dramatic increase in rural areas along the main trucking roads. Young village women forced into "motorway prostitution" near Adana stoned journalists taking photographs of them. As one said "Food is so expensive I can't afford to eat... How can we eat? ...Ozal (Prime Minister) is responsible for this".*





## WOMEN PROTEST



The newly- formed Association of Women in Democratic Struggle (DEMKAD) staged an "empty pots and pans" demonstration on the 17th January in protest at colossal price rises announced by the regime.

DEMKAD is also fighting in support of political prisoners.

## WOMEN TAKE ACTION IN A COALFIELD

On 26th January a major protest reached its peak in the mining village of Alpagut.

Alpagut is famous in Turkish labour movement history. In the 1970s miners and small formers seized the coal mine and staged a work-in which demonstrated that the workers could continue production without management or owners.

The most recent action was caused by the mining company violating an agreement whereby in return for giving up their land for the mine, a villagers' trucking cooperative would have the contract to transport the coal. After the villagers had pooled their resources and brought trucks, the company gave the contract instead to a private trucking firm.

In anger the villagers (with the miners' support), blocked the entrances to the colliery with their trucks. When the paramilitary gendarmes arrived they retreated. However, the next day the village women returned and smashed the mine offices and equipment and fought with gendarmes. Out of 57 villagers arrested, 35 were women.



Gendarmes arrest village women and children



The women of TAYAD braved the truncheons of the riot police to speak out against the torture and detention of thousands of political prisoners

## SECOND CLASS CITIZEN

A woman who was sexually assaulted took her attacker to court where he was charged with attempted sexual assault and attempted rape. He was found guilty of molestation and given a six month suspended sentence. The High Court was asked to review the case and requested that the first charge against the defendant should not be dropped. The lower court rejected the appeal and the presiding judge recorded that "The behaviour or the victim was not acceptable to society; she has been divorced twice and is a woman of some experience."

The victim made a formal protest to the Committee for Judges over the judge's comments. A case was opened against them on the grounds that he had insulted the woman in a written form. She stated "Those who are here to dispense justice have insulted me on paper ... I have no right to seek justice purely because I have had two marriages. This kind of treatment is quite normal."



women protest against attacks on women



# WOMEN

## NEW ATTACK ON GECEKONDUS - WOMEN RESIST

With their customary 'humanity', the authorities in various parts of Turkey have chosen mid-winter to throw thousands of families out onto the streets.

As we have reported before in the Newsletter, most urban workers and poor live in "Gecekondu" (literally - "built in one night"). Gecekondu are illegally built 'Shanty Towns' - though the houses are usually more substantial than the name implies. They are normally the only form of housing working people can afford to rent or live in.

In the most recent incidents riot police and para-military gendarmes were sent into Gecekondu around the city of Izmir to clear the population while council bulldozers demolished their houses

In their 'enthusiasm' to clear prime building land for speculators, local authorities not only demolish 'illegal' homes but houses whose owners have title deeds.

In the Izmir clearances gendarmes and police met violent resistance from women who defended their streets with barricades, stoned the security forces and had to be dragged from their homes one by one.



*Gendarmes beat women and children resisting the demolition of their homes in Mersin.*

### GECEKONDUS IN TURKEY

Source: *Yeni Gundem* No. 73.

Year	Gecekondu houses	Gecekondu dwellers	% of urban population in gecekondu.
1955	50,000	250,000	4.7%
1960	240,000	1,200,000	16.4%
1965	430,000	2,150,000	22.9%
1970	600,000	3,000,000	23.6%
1980	1,500,000	5,750,000	26.1%
1983	1,250,000	6,250,000	26.2%



*Gecekondu*



*Well-fed council leaders and their protectors supervise the demolition of peoples' homes.*



*In the Gecekondu struggle women are the most militant.*

## “TORTURE IS NECESSARY FOR THESE ANIMALS”

We published below in full an interview in *Yeni Gundem* with Turkish lawyer Dogan Kurtulus. He gained notoriety when he defended the use of torture during the trial of officials of a progressive town council in late 1987.

This interview reveals the mentality of those who support the present regime in Turkey. The fact that the Turkish regime is preventing the Bar Association from disciplining Kurtulus reveals their real attitude to torture - whatever is being said for external consumption.

### Lawyer Bedri Dogan Kurtulus, “If the left was done away with there would be no need for torture”

In Turkey, where the subject of human rights is very much on the agenda, there is a lawyer who wants “militants” to be tortured. He even says that he would torture people himself, if he had the chance, without a second thought.

Bedri Dogan Kurtulus was born in Mardin and graduated from the law faculty of Ankara University in 1955. Kurtulus, who was chairman of the Ankara Central Justice Party in 1977, now lives on his farm near Ankara. During the “Hotel 47” trial at Mugla Central Criminal Court when one of the defendants, Ahmet Sahinkanat, claimed his statement had been obtained under torture, including a truncheon being forced into his anus, Kurtulus said: “If he didn’t get a truncheon I’m sorry.”

After this comment the defendant’s lawyer Ceyhan Mumcu reported Kurtulus to the Ankara Bar. The Bar banned Kurtulus from practising for 3 months.

The Justice Ministry over-turned the decision and now Kurtulus faces another hearing in front of the Ankara Bar’s disciplinary committee.

Lawyer Kurtulus answered Hatice Aydogdu questions.

*Q - You said about a defendant who claimed he had had a truncheon put up his anus, “If it wasn’t I’m sorry”. Why?*

*A - I used the word truncheon for Ahmet Sahinkanat. This person was a defendant in the Hotel 47 trial. Actually he didn’t get a truncheon. All his declarations are lies. He just said that to deny all the things he had confessed. As a matter of fact this guy deserved a truncheon. What’s this got to do with torture?. For this man even torture isn’t enough.*



*Bedri Dogan - “the incorrigible ones need torturing”.*

*Q - Would you tell us about the Hotel 47 trial?*

*A - In 1982 contracts were signed between Marmaris Council and Hotel 47 about its running. In 1984 there were local elections. Muharrem Elgin became the Mayor. He didn’t recognise the contracts of the previous council. We informed the authorities. I personally phoned PM Ozal. They didn’t want a political row so they did nothing. In the end I informed President Evren. He sent inspectors and those responsible were charged. Muharrem Elgin, his assistant and Ahmet Sahinkanat were arrested. This council was, like before the 12th September (12th September 1980 military coup) harbouring special squads and causing trouble. The trial got into a real mess. They persuaded one of my clients to retract his testimony. We couldn’t even send the dossier to the Supreme Court of Appeal. They started a case against me for compensation. I’m supposed to have insulted them.*

*The President played an important role in getting the trial opened. They were really annoyed about that. What they wanted to do was punish the President through me. They wanted to involve the President. As a result all the leftist lawyers in Ankara joined the trial. They accused me, the President and even the government.*

*Q - In your defence to the Ankara Bar you defended the use of torture.*

*A - The Ankara Bar is playing at politics. Do you just torture anyone? Of course not. But these people deserve it. People who don’t listen to the law, the incorrigible ones need torturing. It’s a matter of a country’s honour, of a society’s existence. When it’s a matter of a society’s very existence the individual is unimportant. Everything should be*

*done to the individual for the sake of society. Especially those who commit acts which damage society should be tortured.*

*In South-East Anatolia today they’re hunting people like animals. Shouldn’t we torture them? As it is, we aren’t, but we’re killing them, which is worse.*

*Q - You’re openly advocating that human beings should be tortured.*

*A - It isn’t right to torture human beings. First we must decide what a human being is. Everything that speaks and walks on two legs isn’t human. I don’t accept those who commit actions as human. They’re lower than animals. They shouldn’t even be defended in court. If society is one body, then an individual is a limb. They’re a gangrene for society. There is no other way but cutting them off and throwing them away.*

*Q - You say those who commit actions should be tortured. What is your definition of an action?*

*A - Acts against society, disrespect for the law, things which make life unbearable I call actions. Basically anything which is against the law I call action.*

*Q - As a human being how can you defend torture?*

*A - If you talk as you are talking now how can you get a criminal to admit anything? That is why in Turkey and other countries there is torture. The police, if they have the slightest suspicion, know that with a little beating they can get somewhere. If any criminals are being arrested in Turkey today it’s because of the use of sticks. I told the Bar exactly that. If we didn’t do this we wouldn’t be able to bring anyone to justice. Let’s be honest, we aren’t going to put them up in the Hilton. Let us beat them a little.*

# TORTURE

**The left must be done away with.**

*Q - If what you said were true, Bars wouldn't oppose torture. Torture is a crime against humanity.*

*A - I'm afraid to say that all the Bars in Turkey are leftist. If they want to play politics they should take off their robes. It's not on. They oppose torture to protect their friends. Those in prison, who get most torture, who commit the most crimes, are leftists. If there are 200 sentenced to death, 195 of them are leftists. It's like that all over the world. Because they want to take power through action. 95% of leftists are militants. Have you ever heard a rightist mention human rights or the Peace Association? They don't get to power through action. Groups interested in human rights are also socialist. I'm against the left and for the good of the country the left should be obliterated. If there was no left there would be no torture.*

*Q - The President and the Prime Minister both say they are opposed to torture. It is banned by the Constitution and Penal Code.*

*A - They do that for the Europeans. Don't the President and the PM know what's going on in Turkey? Whoever says there is no torture in Turkey is lying. Everyone knows but for political reasons we don't say it. Don't fall into the hands of the police. The laws weren't made for our society. They're all translations.*

*Q - If you made the laws would you legalise torture?*

*A - I wouldn't insert a clause legalising or illegalising it.*

*Q - As someone who has studied law would you personally torture people?*

*A - Without a second thought! One mustn't forget the pre 1980 era. I'm merciless towards militants.*

*Justice doesn't work automatically. To make them talk truncheons are necessary. That's what it's about. Torture is necessary for the society. In the meantime 20 - 50 people will die. That isn't important.*

*Q - Torture is forbidden everywhere, torturers are punished. If torture was necessary to find criminals wouldn't torture be legal?*

*A - Torture exists everywhere in the world. In America there are terrible methods. In Europe it's the same.*

*They say there's no torture but that's just polemic.*

*All over the world torture is banned, but only on paper, because society can't work any other way.*



**At a press conference in December, General Secretary of the Social Democratic Populist Party, Fikri Saglar, showed journalists party member Husnu Turan, who had been tortured with red-hot irons and given electric shocks by**

**police interrogators in Izmir earlier in the month.**

**Saglar also said that between the coming to power of the present government in 1983 and 1985, at least 78 people died under torture.**

## **MORE TORTURE CASES**

*In Istanbul, at the mass trial "TIKKO-3", defendants say that the military prosecutor of the tribunal, Erdogan Savaseri was responsible of tortures to which they had been subjected and asked the judges to open an investigation. But the claim was turned down by the military tribunal.*

## **16 MP's TORTURED**

**16 members of the present Turkish Grand National Assembly (parliament) have been tortured by the 'security' forces at some point in their lives.**

**While reading the government's new programme to the Assembly, Ozal claimed that his government was against torturing detainees, and added: "If he can bring me a well established fact, we shall pursue those responsible".**

**On these words, the new elected SHP deputy Ekin Dikmen, who had been tortured during his detention, shouted from his seat "If you want an example, here I am!"**

**Other opposition deputies joined the protest by shouting at Ozal:**

**"If you want more examples, ask it to your own deputy, Nurettin Yilmaz!"**

**As a matter of fact, Nurettin Yilmaz was a member of the Turkish Peace Association and subjected to several kinds of torture during his detention.**

## **BEATEN**

**On the 3rd January political prisoners in Ankara Central Prison staged a protest**

**against prison uniforms. In reprisal prison guards beat-up women relatives of prisoners as they waited to see them.**

## **MILITANT KILLED**



**On the 26th January, the Turkish press carried photos of the body of Maniyil Demir an Armenian and member of the Central Committee of the pro-Kurdish TIKKO movement. Police stormed a house in an Istanbul Gecekondu (shanty town) looking for TIKKO members. Maniyil Demir was "shot while trying to escape".**

**Also in Istanbul, Yasar Tahan, alleged member of the clandestine organisation "Acilciler", accused of placing explosives to some offices of the government party ANAP, alleged that during his interrogation he was tortured by policemen.**

**In Adana, five lawyers, addressing a petition to the Public Prosecutor's Office, claimed that their client, Ahmet Pekyen, had been subjected to torture at the police station on December 2, 1987, and the traces of torture were certified by a medical report.**

# TORTURE, TRIALS AND PRISONS

## FREEDOM OF THE PRESS

The editor *Halkin Kurtulus* (a banned left-wing journal) Hasan Selim Acan was sentenced to 331 years in prison in October 1987.

His 'crime' was "making communist and Kurdish propaganda. And attempting to divide the state".

In his defence H. Acan said "I am being judged for my ideas. This is not a 20th century trial" ... "When you use the words 'people' or 'worker' ..., that means you are making communist propaganda."

Now the prosecutor at the Istanbul No 2 Heavy Punishment Court is asking for a further 100 years for things written by Hasan Acan in 1967-77!



*Despite talk of 'democracy' and 'respect for human rights', repression against opponents of the regime continues.*

## DEMONSTRATIONS DEMAND FREEDOM FOR POLITICAL PRISONERS

On the 6th December, two demonstrations took place at almost opposite ends of Istanbul calling for the release of all political prisoners in Turkey.

The Human Rights Association called a demonstration in the Kadikoy district of Istanbul. At least 3,000 people attended calling for the abolition of the death penalty in Turkey and a general amnesty for political prisoners.

At the same time in the working class district of Byrampasa, TAYAD, the Association of Families of Prisoners and Detainees staged a protest rally attended by at least 2,000. The protesters called for freedom for all political prisoners and called for struggle against the regime.

A TAYAD member interviewed said: "We do not call for an amnesty but for unconditional freedom. Our children have committed no crime so they do not need to be 'pardoned' or 'amnestied'. They should be released immediately".

Both the Human Rights Association and TAYAD have begun petition campaigns to collect hundreds of thousands of signatures calling for freedom for the political prisoners.

## WHO IS IN CONTEMPT?



7 alleged members of the left-wing TKP(B) on trial in Istanbul State Security Court are dragged back to the cells and given 3 months including one month in the punishment cells for 'contempt of court'. They had protested at being forced to wear prison uniforms.

## RESISTANCE IN THE COURT ROOMS AND THE PRISONS

TAYAD - The Association of Families of Prisoners and Detainees - has announced that conditions have not improved in many prisons despite complaints to the authorities. TAYAD accused the prison authorities in Sinop, Diyarbakir, Amasya, Burdur, Eskisehir and Mersin of not even applying the regime's Justice Ministry's prison rules.

Three political prisoners have been on hunger strike in Sinop Prison since November 1987. Political detainees in Istanbul are also staging protest actions against being chained and handcuffed in court and being forced to wear prison uniforms (even though they have not been convicted).

Following the sentencing of nine Dev Sol (Revolutionary Left) defendants to 6 months imprisonment for tearing off their prison uniforms, 55 political detainees at the Sagmalcilar-2 Prison in Istanbul went on hunger strike from



TAYAD demonstration

December 22, 1987.

In support to this protest action, a group of parents of political prisoners too started on December 24 a hunger strike in Istanbul. This action of 50 hunger strikers was joined later on by the members of the Association of Women in Democratic Struggle (DEMKAD).

## RELEASED

Poet and political prisoner Nevzat Celik has been released from prison. His poetry had developed while in prison since 1981.

PEN - the 'International Writers' Organisation had conducted an energetic campaign for his freedom



*In January the police and army carried out wide spread raids and searches in working class districts of Istanbul looking for suspected left-wing militants.*

## "ROUTINE" TORTURE

At the end of November in the city of Van a motorist made the fatal mistake of parking his car in a place normally used by a plain clothes policeman. He compounded his 'error' by getting into an argument with the policeman. He was taken to the city police station. Three days later the police announce he had died after an 'accident'. His wife claims he was tortured to death

# STUDENTS

## STUDENT STRUGGLE CONTINUES DESPITE REPRESSION

Students in the larger cities of Turkey are continuing to fight against the oppressive education system presided over by the notorious YOK (Higher Education Council), and the restrictions on students' rights to form associations.

The attitude of the authorities to student associations/unions was summed up by the Rector of Karadeniz University who told a meeting of rightist students "I will not let these communist b.....s into my university".

Rigid police supervision of students continues. Every small protest by students at their living and studying conditions is branded by the regime as "subversion" and "anti-state activities"



*Police drag protestors away.*



### ARRESTS



Istanbul Technical University students were brutally arrested during a sit-down protest on 8th January.



*Students boycott canteens in protest at the anti-democratic education authorities.*

### THE MIDNIGHT KNOCK

On January 10th, plainclothes political police burst into the Fatihkoy student hostel in Istanbul in the middle of the night. They arrested a member of the Executive Committee of Marmara University Students' Association.

The next day students staged a sit-down protest against the fact that the university authorities had deliberately left the hostel doors unlocked so that the police could break-in without a warrant.

### 'PIRATE PROTEST'

Groups of students gathered in the Istanbul Technical University and Bayzit Square in the centre of the city. Without warning they began to shout slogans against the recent price rises announced by the regime and for democracy. They disappeared before the political police arrived.

This protest was reminiscent of the student actions of the 1970s. The so-called 'pirate protest' has become a popular method of staging demonstrations despite bans by the regime.

On the same day police stormed two university campuses to break-up protest canteen boycotts by students.

On January 13th students gathered in Cagaloglu street (Turkey's Fleet Street) to read a statement against police breaking into student dormitories in the night and taking away suspected student association activists. The meeting ended with plainclothes political police arresting 60 students.



The next day a group of students who had gathered in the same place to read out a statement dissociating themselves from the previous day's demonstration were also set-upon and dispersed by the police!

### PROTEST



*Students protest at attempts by the police to pressure them into becoming informers.*

# CDDRT NEWS

NINE YEARS FIGHTING FOR DEMOCRACY IN TURKEY

## CDDRT SOCIAL

**Date:** Saturday, 26th March 1988  
**Time:** 6.30 until late  
**Place:** Union of Turkish Workers Hall,  
 First Floor,  
 84 Balls Pond Road  
 London N1

- \* Live Turkish folk dance and music
- \* Turkish food
- \* Bar
- \* Music
- \* Literature and handicrafts stalls
- \* Exhibition
- \* Raffle

<b>BUSES PASSING HALL</b>	<b>OTHER BUSES</b>
/30, 38, 277, N96, 400.	Essex Rd: 73, Dalston Junction: 22, 48, 67, 149, 243, N83, 76, Mildmay Pk: 141, 171.

**ADMISSION FREE**

## CONGRESS

At the 4th Biennial Congress of the Committee for Defence of Democratic Rights in Turkey in March 1987, it was resolved, that in view of the rapidly changing situation in Turkey, the CDDRT should in future hold an annual congress or AGM. The 1988 Congress (AGM) will take place on Saturday, 26th March 1988, at the Meeting Hall of the Union of Turkish Workers, 1st Floor, 84 Balls Pond Road, London N1.

The Congress will begin at 11am and end at 5pm to be followed by a social at the same premises.

All individual members of the CDDRT and delegates from the affiliated organisations can attend, submit resolutions and nominations, vote and be elected. Visitors are also welcome.

Resolutions should reach the CDDRT's office not later than two weeks before the Congress.

During the Congress there will be guest speakers, videos, literature and craft stalls.

I/We\* wish to apply for delegate's credentials/visitors tickets\* for the CDDRT 5th Congress. (£1 per credential or ticket). Please find enclosed £ for credentials/visitors tickets.

Name .....

Address .....

\*Delete which does not apply.  
 Return to: CDDRT 84 Balls Pond Road,  
 London N1 4AJ.

### CONSTITUTION OF THE CDDRT

1. The name of the organisation shall be the Committee for Defence of Democratic Rights in Turkey (the CDDRT)
2. The aims of the CDDRT are as follows:  
 End all vestiges of 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 anti-democratic regime.  
 Totally oppose the regime's 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 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.
4. Congress is the highest body of the CDDRT and shall meet every year. 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.
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 at least fortnightly and be responsible for the day to day work of the CDDRT.
7. Local Branches of the 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.



Price: 95p

## Affiliate to the CDDRT

Annual affiliation fees are: national organisation £25, local organisation £10, individual £6.

To the Committee for Defence of Democratic Rights in Turkey.

I/we\* wish to affiliate to the CDDRT and enclose a cheque/PO for £

Name .....

Address .....

Date of Affiliation .....

\*Delete as applicable. Includes subscription to **TURKEY NEWSLETTER**

Return to the CDDRT, 84 Balls Pond Road, London N1 4AJ, Tel: 01-254 0387.

## Subscribe to **TURKEY NEWSLETTER**

Subscription rates are:	Bulk rates per issue:
Britain & Ireland £3.00pa	50 — £5.00, 100 — £8.50
Europe & Mideast £4.00pa	200 — £15.50, 400 — £28.
Rest of World £7.00pa	All inclusive of postage.

I wish to subscribe to *Turkey Newsletter* for one year and enclose a cheque/PO for £

Name .....

Address .....

Subscription to commence on .....

Return to the CDDRT, 84 Balls Pond Road, London N1 4AJ.

# REVIEWS

## A MAGNIFICENT STEP FORWARD

### ISHA BULLETIN



The Migros strike is over  
Voice of solidarity from Ireland  
Türks issue a terse press statement  
Interview with the President of Petrol-İs

FORTNIGHTLY BULLETIN OF NEWS AND  
INFORMATION FROM TURKEY

February 1st saw the launch of a significant step forward in the strengthening the links between Turkey's organised workers and the international labour movement. The newly founded Labour and Trade Union News Agency (ISHA) in Istanbul launched a fortnightly English language Bulletin.

The *ISHA Bulletin* is an ambitious project aimed at providing the international trade union and workers' movement with detailed news and views of the resurgent trade union movement in Turkey.

The first issue certainly lives up to the founders' aims. This superbly designed publication contains an exclusive interview with the new President of one of Turkey's most powerful trade unions - Munir Ceylan of Petrol-İs (Petro-chemical workers).

Also in this issue of the bulletin is an interview with Aynur Karaaslan on the victorious outcome of the Migros shopworkers' strike, press statements and news from various trade unions (both independent and affiliated to Turk-İs). The bulletin also contains a look at health and safety conditions of workers in Turkey.

The *ISHA Bulletin* aims to provide a voice for all Turkey's trade unions, reflecting their views and giving the international trade union movement an accurate and up-to-date account of the struggle of the Turkish labour movement for freedom and democracy.

In our view, for anyone really interested in the development of the Turkish trade union and labour movement this publication is indispensable.

The effort, sacrifice and finance needed by ISHA's dedicated band of journalists and trade union activists to produce this publication is clear to anyone with even a vague idea of conditions in Turkey. We appeal to all friends and supporters of democracy in Turkey to subscribe to *ISHA Bulletin*.

### Subscription rates are:

*Individuals:* £ 15 (\$25) 6 months,  
£ 23 (\$40) 1 year  
*Others:* £ 18 (\$30) 6 months,  
£ 29 (\$50) 1 year

Send subscription payments (with name and address) to the account of:

A. Mardin  
Yapi ve Kredi Bankasi  
435 Kucuklanga Subesi  
Hesap No:5664-8  
Aksaray, ISTANBUL  
Turkey

### DOCUMENTS

At the end of 1987, the socialist group in the European Parliament published a pamphlet: *The Socialist Campaign for Human Rights, disarmament and Development Cooperation*.

This interesting work reviews the activities of the group on human rights issues including Turkey and briefly states the policy of the group on these questions.

Copies are available from:  
The British Labour Group, 2 Queen Anne's Gate, London SW1

### UNILEVER

The Transnationals Information Centre produce *Unilever Monitor* - a newsletter which reports on this massive monopoly.

*Unilever Monitor No.4* (December 1987-February 1988) looks at the company's involvement in the Turkish tea industry. Of particular interest is the relationship of the growing tea industry to the forced resettlement of many villagers - Particularity of Kurdish people.

### TURKEY NEWSLETTER



84 Balls Pond Road,  
London N1 4AJ