



Committee for the Defence of Democratic Rights in Turkey

NEWSLETTER

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The developments in Turkey since the military coup on 12th of September is rapidly demolishing the democratic facade the generals are trying so hard to present to the outside world, exposing that the true character of the regime which is being established is fascism. The destruction of all democratic institutions was witnessed during the last two months. No two figures quoted by the generals of the National Security Council for arrests are the same.

It is also becoming clear that one of the most important objectives of the fascist junta is to strangle the national liberation movement of the Kurdish people. This process is accompanied by a revival of Kemalism and an upsurge of Great Turkish Nationalism in a desperate effort by the junta to mould for itself a mass basis.

A scene of brutality from the aftermath of 12th March 1971 coup. It is worse today.



**NATIONAL OPPRESSION
AND FASCISM IN TURKEY**

Consolidating fascism in Turkey

Quest for an ideology

Since the coup of 12th September it is becoming more evident that the developments in Turkey is going to have an increasing impact on the Middle East and Eastern Mediterranean.

In the early days of the coup, the Generals managed with some success, to exploit the confusion generated by the impending chaos, as the country drifted towards the civil war. This development had resulted from the rising struggle of the masses against increased exploitation and oppression, and the inability of the local allies of imperialism to rule.

Many were only too ready to accept that the struggle between the Justice and Republican People's Parties representing different sections of the bourgeoisie lay at the roots of the crisis, with terrorism from the ultra-right and ultra-left merely aggravating it; therefore, perhaps stability could be restored by the army taking a strong grip on the reins of government.

Such illusions provided imperialism and its local allies with the opportunity for bringing in their army openly to the war they were waging against the working class and the Kurdish national liberation movement and yet still project a benevolent image to the world. How long will their rule last will depend on many factors. However, the means they have to use to implement their programme expose their true nature. World democratic opinion is increasingly becoming indignant at the atrocities of the junta, as it tries to resolve the socio-economic crisis in the interest of monopoly capitalism, that is establishing fascism in Turkey. The growing solidarity throughout the world with the forces of democracy in Turkey fighting against the military dictatorship is certainly making things difficult for the junta and will accelerate its fall.

The objective circumstances which provided the army with a seemingly easy victory is also the source of their difficulties in consolidating the regime. There is no easy remedy for the economic crisis. It was recently announced that there will be power cuts six days a week. The most optimistic official estimate of the inflation rate is no less than 9% per month. Queues even for cigarettes (and remember that this is a major tobacco producing country) is a familiar scene in every day life. The working class is not yet defeated and crushed in a way say as in the aftermath of the Spanish Civil War. Despite that the entire command structure of the army was subordinated to the junta intact, their inability to rule in unity of interests is becoming more and more apparent. Statements about the possibility of the return of the Justice Party and Republican Peoples Party back to politics are followed by statements that they will not repeat the mistakes of the Juntas of 1960 and 1971 (in the former a constituent assembly was formed whereas in the latter Parliament and the political parties were kept open) while the *New York Times* is advising that they should take their time and yet some spokesmen of the monopolies are demanding even more immediate and harsher measures. ("...the target is now smaller but the distance is shorter... What we wish is that The Council should not lose its unity and union... Not with considerations of "What the West will say" but not to be infected with the disease pertinent to regimes which had seized power by force, you should make haste". — *Tercüman*, November 8, 1980) Every move the junta makes for achieving the corporative social and state system of fascism is widening the base of the opposition to this brutal regime.

The fact that fascism did not ascend the power as a mass movement from below like in Germany but is being established from above by means of the military junta poses to the generals the difficult task of creating a mass basis a mass movement now. This requires a suitable ideology. "We founded the Fascist Party, many years passed, during which we had no ideology. We saw the danger and set forth to protect the state, our ideology developed step by step during this struggle", wrote Mussolini. The character of the regime dictates a similar course to the fascist junta in Turkey. Thus a revival of Kemalism and an upsurge of Great Turkish Nationalism were witnessed during the last two months. The choice is a historically-objective one:

a) Ever since the emergence and growth of monopolies and their seizure of state in Turkey the necessity to expand and acquire colonies became a structural necessity for the ruling class. The invasion of Cyprus was a consequence of this. Ecevit was branded as the second Atatürk, then. Now that is forgotten and General Evren is presented as the Second Atatürk. The need for expansionist policies remains and bellicose chauvinism is the required ideology to enable the implementation of this policy.

b) In Turkey today, there is a national question, the Kurdish question. The Kurdish nation is an oppressed nation within the borders of Turkey which makes up almost a quarter of the total population of 45 million. Turkish Kurdistan was forcibly annexed by the Turks. It is a land where joint exploitation of its riches together with the Kurdish ruling class is proceeding at an ever increasing rate. Turkish Kurdistan is an internal colony of Turkey.

There is not a single government in the history of the Republic which did not try consciously and consistently to strangle the Kurdish national liberation movement. The Junta's policies will be a natural extension of these policies carried out in an extremely violent way. The ground was being prepared for some time. In 1978 reactionary *Tercüman* was writing: "The situation in the east is very tense. Military detachments have been sent to Agri and Iğdir regions". *Hürriyet* quoted Chief of Staff saying, "Divisionism in the East will be prevented". While this intensive propaganda continued, a series of preparations and rehearsals were taking place. The "Flying Gendarmes" manoeuvres which took place on the second week of September 1978 where gendarmes conducted an exercise for annihilating a Kurdish village were the first step. Then the Grey Wolves of the Nationalist Action Party prepared to massacre Kurds in Elazığ, Sivas, Malatya, Erzincan, Kars and Agri. Events in Iran and the Kurdish question were discussed, and plans made during the NATO and CENTO meetings held in November 1978. The deportation of 150,000 Kurds from their lands and their transport to "resettlement zones" in Iraq at the end of 1978 simultaneously with the Kahramanmaraş Massacre in which over 100 people were killed was no coincidence. In January 1980, Chief of Staff General Kenan Evren (now the military dictator of Turkey) and the four services commanders presented a memorandum to the government which said: "Our nation can no longer tolerate anarchy, destructiveness and secessionism, those who abusing the broad freedoms granted by the constitution, sing the *Internationale* instead of the national anthem... It is obvious that the basic element in restoring democratic peace and tranquility is gathering all counteryment in an indivisible whole around the inspiration and drive of Atatürkist nationalism, national consciousness and ideals." And there is no reason to assume that they might have changed their minds.

The rise of Great Turkish nationalism

"In conviction of Turkish nationalism which find its meaning in the epigram, 'how happy I am to be Turk'... I am convinced that we shall find conclusive solutions to our economic and social problems, too."

"No evil aspiration.. will be able to harm the Republic of Turkey and it will be bound to disintegrate in the face of the unequalled might and steel will of the Turkish nation, whose hearts are filled with Ataturk belief and patriotism".

"Every Turk, raising Ataturk ideology high like a flag all his life, will lead his country and nation to the goals he pointed."

(Gen. Evren, "Message on the Republic Day", "Milliyet", 31st October, 1980).



"The circle is getting smaller and smaller. The outermost villagers are killed quietly and instantly by bayonet.

When one does manage to shout, the villagers run forward. Then the massacre begins. The screams of woman and children are interspersed with the sound of bomb explosions. One by one, all of the villagers are killed...

"In five minutes..., it is all over.

"The commander termed the exercise, conducted in an area (in Kurdistan. "Newsletter") where less than 20% of the population speaks Turkish, a success."

(An account of Flying Gendarmes Manoeuvres; "Cumhuriyet", 15 September, 1978).



"Kanath J-78" code name for massacre



"Kars (a town near the Soviet border, "Newsletter") is Turkish. For years she bears the pride of being Turkish... Our blood is Turkish all. Nobody can divide this country without first trampling on our dead bodies including mine... If anybody wishes to do so, just try it... Turkey's heart beats in this frontier region."

(From General Evren's speech during "Winter-79" Manoeuvres; "Tercüman", 5 March, 1979)

"Those aspiring to impair the union of the country will be exterminated!"

(PM Admiral Ulu's first public speech in Hakkari, Kurdistan. "Tercüman", 9 November, 1980).



Massacre in Kahramanmaraş

STOP PRESS ...

The "new" constitution

The "new" Constitution drawn out by the Generals and published recently is very much the same as the old one except that it contains 6 new articles which give the junta the right to give their own interpretation to any article, to change it or to replace it.

The new emergency law measures

The new emergency measures issued recently entitled the provincial governors to assume all powers of the martial law authorities. Anyone who kills a civil servant will be sentenced to death. If a state of emergency is declared, the police and soldiers will be authorised to kill anyone without fear of prosecution.

Prison as big as Turkey

According to new decrees issued by the junta those who have lost their passports will not be entitled to a new one for 5 years... New lists are being drawn by the police to ban those who are suspect of political activities from receiving passports. Those who have not completed their military service will also not be allowed to leave the country. New passports are being printed and all passports will have to be exchanged with the new ones very soon.

Display your flag

Izmir Martial Law Authority made the display of the Turkish flag obligatory on the Day of the Republic, 29th October 1980. This is part of the new "Campaign for Consolidating Respect to the Flag". Consequently, 13 workplaces and 11 households were charged for not complying with the new decree.

The "mayor" of Izmir, a lieutenant general appointed by the fascist junta, said: "special teams made serious and successful inspections throughout the city and consolidated the love for the flag in our people."

Junta's secret service abroad

According to a news item which appeared in the daily *Milliyet* on November 10, a "Control Committee" is being set up within the National Security Council "to track and discredit the propaganda disseminated in foreign countries against Turkey".

The activities which are currently being carried out in other countries by the notorious National Intelligence Agency (MIT) will be taken over by this new department. This is a new move by the Junta to suppress the opposition abroad. The penalty for "discrediting the junta in six months and it is doubled if it is committed by conveying discontent to a foreigner and doubled again if done by way of media."

Who is defending Turkes

300 barristers including the former legal consultant to the chief of the National Intelligence Agency, Sahabettin Homris, applied to defend Turkes in court. Mr Homris is the father in law of Turkes's daughter.

Please resign quietly

It seems that the Generals were annoyed by the publicity given to the resignation of Bulent Ecevit from the leadership of the Republican Peoples Party. In a statement issued by the junta, it was argued that the leader of a party which is banned can not publicly resign. A decree which followed this affair, curtailed the period which anyone can stay as the leader of a party down to three years! It shouldn't amaze anyone if they also decree that they cannot resign before three years is up.

MP's on trial

According to *Milliyet*, 24 different charges were brought against 35 "ex-members" of Parliament. The prosecution is demanding 1 to 6 years imprisonment for Ecevit and Demirel. Meanwhile, Erbakan is facing charges of smuggling heroin.

Former Minister of the Environment Serafettin Elci, who is of Kurdish origin, is charged with propagating "racism" and Kurdish "Nationalism". Mr Elci is in custody.

"Those who sing 'Internationale' instead of the National Anthem"

Trade union leaders, shop stewards and some workers, altogether 18 people are now arrested by Istanbul Martial Law Authorities for singing the *Internationale* during the 23rd AGM of the Metal Workers' Union of Turkey on December 1979. Warrants have also been issued for 5 workers who were in the choir. The Army Commanders made a special point of hunting down "those who sing the *Internationale* instead of the National Anthem" ever since singing of the *Internationale* by the students in August 1979 at the opening the ceremony of the Middle East Technical University in Ankara.

Manhunt

12 were shot dead by the security forces during the last week, 8 in Mardin (Kurdistan) and the rest in different parts of Turkey.

Arrests

General Saluk announced on 30th of October that 6,900 people were arrested so far whereas a few days later Ministry of Interior was quoting the figure as 4,417. According to these reliable(!) sources 1,648 were arrested only during the last week. The true figure of the total number of arrests is more likely to be over 40,000.

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