



Committee for the Defence of Democratic Rights in Turkey

NEWSLETTER

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WORKERS UNDER FASCIST ATTACK

Turkey under a fascist junta is of concern now not simply because 12 September marks the first anniversary of the fascist coup. The fascist coup and its junta came after years of attack on the working class movement — an attack mounted by Turkey's finance capital in order to relieve its catastrophic economic performance and place the burden of its difficulties wholly on the shoulders of Turkey's workers.

Before the fascist coup

A process of fascisation preceding the fascist coup and preparing for it, using Articles 141 and 142 of the Turkish Penal Code as well as a mounting toll of assassinations by fascist death squads of the National Action Party (Grey Wolves). Terror tactics proved ineffective, however, and on the contrary workers continued to defend their rights vigorously. A factory occupation in Izmir in February 1980 was supported by the local community to the extent that it took the army two weeks to oust the workers. When Kemal Türkler, President of Maden-İş (metalworkers trade union) was murdered last summer over 1/2 million came out on strike the next day.

Finance-capital in uniform

The National Security Council (NSC) headed by Chief of Staff General Kenan Evren took over in a fascist coup on 12 September 1980. Voice of America was the first to be given and to announce the news.

Ever since 1960 the Armed Forces Mutual Benefit Fund (OYAK) has taken 8% of all officers' salaries — and Turkey has the second largest armed forces in NATO. OYAK is firmly established in Turkey's economy and connected to international finance-capital in joint undertakings such as with Renault and International Harvester.

The armed forces, therefore, acted also on their own behalf as part and

parcel of Turkey's finance capital in moving to institute fascism and destroy the rising working class movement.

Attempt to consolidate fascism

Tens of thousands were arrested in the first days after the fascist coup. The total detained is now over 100,000. DISK, the leading and only real trade union confederation, was closed down, its leaders arrested and tortured and its assets seized without compensation. Most recently, the prosecution has demanded death sentences in the trial of 52 DISK Executive and other leading members — under the "Mussolini" laws: Articles 141 and 142. This number includes both the President, Abdullah Baştürk, and the Secretary General, Fehmi Işıklar. (Abdullah Baştürk was formerly an MP of the Republican Peoples Party — affiliated, like the British Labour Party, to the Socialist International.)

Already 10 persons have been executed, well over 20 are officially reported to have died under torture, and death sentences have been passed on 100 — these sentences are only awaiting ratification. Quite apart from these horrifying facts, it has been well

established by Amnesty International and progressive lawyers that torture is widespread and systematic. Every day new arrests are made following information extracted under torture.

Atatürk's bloodstains

Everything done by the fascist junta is justified with reference to the creation of a new Atatürkist ideology. Atatürk, a name meaning Father of the Turks, was the first president of the Republic of Turkey. He developed his ideas in periodic massacres of the Kurds. Revelling in the memory of the then recent genocide of the Armenians, Atatürk and his elite subjugated Turkey's Kurds in the 1930's. With talk of "Happy is he who can call himself Turk" and prohibiting the Kurdish language, 10 million citizens were denied their nationality whilst division of Turkey's working class was fostered. Atatürk's ideas of class collaboration are very appealing to Turkey's fascist junta. Atatürk biographies, writings and doings appear in every newspaper, television schedule and school (and, of course, in the prisons). Atatürkism



lends itself well to the development of fascist ideas.

Working class life

As before the coup, so now under the fascist junta, unemployment is around 25%. As before the coup, so now inflation is rampant — running at an official 40%. As before the coup, many die on the streets — official figures are 40 a month: the Chairman of the Progressive Leatherworkers' Trade Union was shot dead in Istanbul at the end of July. Now workers' rights are being taken away: there is no right to strike. The yellow trade union confederation Türk-Iş decides nationally with employers on all agreements. What tame union organisation there is exists to impose policies decided over the heads of workers and to ensure labour discipline.

After international pressure had been brought to bear, the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), to which the TUC is affiliated, decided to suspend Türk-Iş from membership, especially after its General Secretary, Sadık Şide, had been made Minister of Social Affairs in the fascist junta's government.

Destruction of democracy

The Constitution was abolished and Parliament was closed down after the fascist coup. All MP's are to be prohibited from re-entering political life, even when the new fake Constitution is introduced some time this autumn. The new assembly of tame legislators will only take decisions acceptable to the National Security Council (the fascist junta).

The need for solidarity

CDDRT has been campaigning for solidarity with Turkey's workers ever since the fascist coup on 12 September 1980 (and even before that against the fascisation of the state). It enjoys the support of the Turkish organisations in Britain encompassing workers, students and progressives. What is important now is that our vital efforts will be all the stronger the more British trade unions take an active role in the solidarity struggle. For this reason affiliation of local, regional and national trade union bodies is essential to the development of this Committee. Such trade union bodies are also urged to protest the DISK trials to H.E. The Ambassador, Embassy of the Republic of Turkey, 43 Belgrave Square, London SW1 and to General Kenan Evren, Head of State, Cankaya, Ankara, Turkey. We expect to send observers to the DISK trials and would welcome any financial assistance specifically for this purpose.

TÜRK-IS AND THE ICFTU

At the end of last month, the ICFTU passed a resolution condemning Türk-Iş General Secretary, Sadık Şide's participation in the junta's government as minister of Social Security and decided to suspend Türk-Iş membership to its body until the 15th August. After this date, Türk-Iş's membership would either be cancelled, or, if there had been a change in the conditions of its suspension, reinstalled.

The ICFTU's decision has to be seen in the light of mounting protests of world public opinion regarding the obliteration of all democratic trade-union rights and freedoms following the fascist coup of 12th September last year, the mass arrest, torture and killing of trade-union activists and leaders, the ruthless crushing of the entire genuine trade-union movement. 52 leaders of DISK (Revolutionary Trade Union Confederation) are charged with "trying to establish a trade-union dictatorship", a charge for which the death penalty may be invoked. Under these conditions collective bargaining has become nothing but an empty ritual of rubberstamping the junta's economic programme. One noteworthy 'exception': For what must be the first time in the entire history of the TU movement, a review of wage-levels of workers in road-water-electricity public works found that the workers were in debt to the employer of something in the order of 30-35 thousand TL each! (As

CDDRT Newsletter had pointed out at the time, the so-called generous 70% rise in all wages declared by the junta shortly after the coup, has turned out to be nothing but an advance payment of the regular wage.)

Türk-Iş, a yellow trade union was the only trade union confederation left untouched after the 12th September fascist coup. In a bid to 'cleanse the country of all extremism' the junta banned both DISK and MISK, the latter being the meagre results of the fascist NAP's attempt to organise itself among the working class, and the former being the second-largest, after Türk-Iş. Immediately after the coup the junta declared that Türk-Iş General Secretary had been appointed to its government, thereby binding all TU activity firmly to the state.

Türk-Iş's immediate reaction after the ICFTU decision was to temporarily suspend Sadık Şide's post as General Secretary and appoint another member of the ruling junta's government, Kaya Özdemir, the Minister of Education. Later, however it revoked this decision and retained Sadık Şide, presumably realising that replacing one minister with another would make no difference to the ICFTU decision.

It is the duty of all trade-unionists world wide to continue lobbying the ICFTU and to keep up their fraternal support and solidarity for DISK and the working class of Turkey.

Mobilise Support!

The military junta which seized power in Turkey last September is now showing its face as a fascist dictatorship. Parliament has been abolished, political parties and activities abolished. The TURKISH PEACE MOVEMENT has been suppressed; and the latest outrage is the trial of a number of trade unionists with the threat of death sentences. The Western media have disguised the real purpose of the junta with suggestions that it had taken power to suppress terrorism from the left and the right. In fact, all the progressive organisations had denounced terrorism. The junta has itself launched attacks against all progressive and democratic organisations and has agreed with the USA to increase military expenditure so that no less than 20% of the budget goes in arms. Monetary measures have led to high unemployment and sinking living standards.

We must mobilise support for the struggle of the Turkish peace workers who are continuing their fight in defiance of the ban; we must also demand that all negotiations for Turkish entry to the EEC are halted until democracy is restored.

From British Peace Assembly Newsletter

Support this Resolution!

NO PERSECUTION IN BRITAIN
Submitted to Labour Party Conference
by: Hazel Grove Constituency Labour Party.

"This Conference notes with concern the plight of Turkish nationals living in the United Kingdom, who are being subjected to intense pressure and harassment by the Fascist government in Turkey through the withdrawal of their student status.

"Conference considers that these moves are intended to secure the deportation of such people, and that, if they are forced to return to Turkey, they will be subject to imprisonment or death.

"Conference calls on Her Majesty's Government to ensure that the Home Office resists such moves, and ensures that all Turkish nationals living in fear of persecution by the Turkish government are allowed to live a free and peaceful life in the United Kingdom."

Worker's Letters from Turkey

Dear friends,

We are two friends working in Istanbul. We want to write about the situation in our workplace and some other issues.

Our workplace is a small factory. We work not 48 hours but 60 hours. In spite of bad working conditions we are paid only 7000 Turkish lira per month (about £35 — Newsletter). This money is not enough for any of our needs. With this money, shall we feed ourselves? Shall we be clothed, or shall we pay our rent? This wage is no answer to any of our problems: in brief, the state of all working people is grave.

Fascist generals say "Work, work and work". They do not talk of workers' standards of living. This junta of generals is openly siding with the bourgeoisie, with the exploiters, protecting their profits. The head of the junta, Kenan Evren, is lying by saying "We are friends of the workers", "We will give workers their rights", "Our worker brothers". They are putting up prices again and again.

We understood that this junta of black generals can only be brought down by the organised force of the people. Not by the actions of a few or by curses. We will smash this junta for want of bread, freedom, work and a happier life. We will fight for this aim.

Those who ask for their rights, workers, those fighting for democratic rights are all represented by the black generals as anarchists, terrorists. Radio, newspaper, television etc are all in their service. But in spite of all this they will not succeed!

Istanbul

... While the fascist junta is setting the basic wage as 10,000 Turkish lira (£50— Newsletter), monthly shopping for a family of four for groceries alone is about 15,000TL (£75). After recent price increases this will be over 17,000 TL. People cannot stand this pain anymore. Living conditions have completely deteriorated.

Ankara



"Did we ever get to Greece?"
"I don't think so... we must still be in Evren's hands!"
Eleftherotypia 4.7.81

Junta's Friends in Greece

Before the Greek people realised what was going on, four Turkish political refugees had been returned to the Evren Government by a branch of the Greek Security Services, originally set up by the Greek Junta of 1967-74 and, if the Greek Government is to be believed, functioning without its knowledge. This happened in June.

But directly the matter became known, the Greek people understood at once that this only proved what they had always suspected — that after seven years the Greek Junta's Security apparatus was still in operation; and they came out on to the streets in protest demonstrations. The whole of the Opposition Press likewise supported the cause of the Turkish political refugees.

In a pre-election period this has visibly shaken the Government which has disclaimed all knowledge and the head of the Security department con-

cerned has been obliged to resign. Six more Turkish refugees have since dared to try the same escape route and the signs are that they will not be returned. One, a soldier, Mustafa Orhan, was given a formal three months' sentence for entering Greece without papers and has since been released and transferred to a camp for political refugees near Athens. Five more are held in the town of Komotini and of these the names of three are known: Alagida Goner, a worker from Istanbul; Aishe Ismail, a dressmaker, from Istanbul and Ismail Kiran, building worker, from Erpistan. The Greek Committee for Solidarity with the Turkish Resistance has sent a lawyer to deal with their case.

by **Marion Sarafi**

Marion Sarafi is a long-established friend of Greek democracy and a member of CDDRT's General Council.

Miners support CDDRT

Annual Conference of National Union of Mineworkers unanimously agreed the following emergency Resolution on Turkey and decided to affiliate to CDDRT nationally.

"Conference condemns the military dictatorship in Turkey for its persecution of the DISK Trade Union and the threat of death penalty made against 52 of its officials. We urge a complete cessation of all aid and support to the regime by the EEC and by the British Government.

"Conference further calls upon the British Labour and Trade Union Movement to mount a massive wave of protest in order to save the lives and secure the release of our brother trade unionists in Turkey and for the restoration of the democratic process in that country".

A protest to emulate

Dear General Evren,

I was very concerned to hear of the arrest and trial of 52 DISK Trade Union leaders in Istanbul, where the prosecution is demanding the death penalty for Trade Unionists whose only "crime" has been to try and speak up on behalf of and obtain reasonable wages for the working class in their country.

I urge you to intervene on behalf of these Trade Unionists and other political prisoners who are facing torture and death for their belief in basic trade union rights and democratic freedom for all people, and I ask you to ensure all charges against them are withdrawn and order their release.

All the EEC Member States are strongly opposed to the imprisonment of any person because of that person's political or trade union activities.

Alf Lomas, MEP.

(Alf Lomas has also sent a similar letter to the Turkish Ambassador)

International Day Against Fascism

A bare week from our publication date, on Sunday 13 September 1981, a very important initiative takes off. The International Day Against Fascism, a joint venture of this Committee, the Chilean Anti-Fascist Committee and the El Salvador Solidarity Campaign, begins on that day at the Camden Centre, Bidborough Street, WC1. Here there will be a Rally chaired by *Ernie Roberts, MP* (a member of CDDRT General Council) from 5pm. Speakers include *Ken Livingstone*, Leader of the GLC, *Roberto Vargas*, representative of the Frente Democratica Revolucionario (El Salvador), and *Bob Wright*, Assistant General Secretary of the AUEW — Eng.

7pm sees the start of a Solidarity Concert bringing together artists from Latin America — *Pueblo, Raul Valencia* — and Turkey — *Melike Demirağ*. Tickets for this are £1.50 each and can be obtained from any of the three organizers.

Executions and Death Sentences

The fascist junta has executed two more left-wingers, Ismet Şahin and Mustafa Özenç were hanged at 3am on 20 August 1981, thus bringing to 10 the number of persons executed since the fascist coup. Courts subservient to the fascist junta have so far handed down over one hundred death sentences — all now awaiting ratification. Hundreds more progressives are on trial for their lives. Democratic public opinion must mobilize to prevent further executions by the fascist dictatorship!

Send protests as indicated at the end of the main Newsletter article.

Banned

Due to the current Home Office ban on demonstrations in London, CDDRT cannot now hold the intended March on 13 September. However, we shall hold a picket outside the Embassy of the Republic of Turkey at 43 Belgrave Square, London SW1 on *Saturday 12 September 1981 from 3.00 pm to 4.30pm*. Please bring your banners.

Nigde Events

For the inhabitants of Helvedere, a small village in central Anatolia, the spring water they have in very precious. They drink it, use it for irrigation and for their cattle. Recently, however, it was decided that Aksaray, a nearby town, should have use of that spring.

Local Authority officials went to the village. Since most of the young men of the village are working in Europe as guestworkers, the women, children and old men were the ones who had to stand up against this, and, in fact, prevented the takeover. The authorities replied with reinforcements. They still could not persuade the villagers. More soldiers came from towns in the area. This time they struck on a Friday when the men were in the mosque. Shots were fired. One dead, two shot and wounded, women and children beaten. 42 villagers, mostly women, were arrested.

But the water still could not be appropriated. Now the villagers are facing charges of resisting the authorities. One wonders if the authorities will ever face charges of illegal possession!

This incident was exposed because many from that village are in Britain. How many similar incidents go unnoticed and unreported?

Sponsors to date include

Frank Allaun, MP
Joe Ashton, MP
Tony Benn, MP
Andrew Bennett, MP
Sid Bidwell, MP
Bob Cryer, MP
Ken Eastham, MP
Geoffrey Edge, MP
Bob Edwards, MP
Fred Evans, MP
Martin Flannery, MP
John Golding, MP
Les Huckfield, MP
Bob Hughes, MP
Roy Hughes, MP
James Lamond, MP
Bob Litherland, MP
William McKelvey, MP
Jim Marshall, MP
Joan Maynard, MP
George Morton, MP
Stan Newsens, MP
Stan Orme, MP
Reg Race, MP
Jo Richardson, MP
Ernie Roberts, MP

Ernie Ross, MP
Dennis Skinner, MP
Richard Balfie, MEP
Roland Boyes, MEP
Richard Caborn, MEP
Kenneth D Collins, MEP
Brian Key, MEP
Alf Lomas, MEP
Dave Aaronovitch, Pres. NUS
Colin Barnett, Sec., NW TUC
Stan Cole, AUEW NC
Harry Conroy, Pres. NUJ
Lawrence Daly, NUM
J. Davidson, NW Dist. Sec. FTAT
Beryl Huffinley, Sec.,
Yorks and Humberside TUC
E.V. Hughes, Vice Pres. NW TUC
Alex Kitson, TGWU
Mick McGahey, NUM
Alan Sapper, ACTT
Bob Wright, AUEW
APEX — Holborn Branch
ASTMS — Manchester HS Branch
AUEW — Kingston District
AUEW — N. Manch. District
AUEW — Sheffield District

GMWU 115 Manch. Branch
NALGO — Hackney Branch
NUM
NUPE
NUR — Manchester
TGWU
TGWU Reg. No. 1
UCATT — NW Region
Cambridge & District Trades Council
Hackney Trades Council
Leeds Trades Council
Cities of London & Westminster Trades Council
Rotherham Trades Council
Stockport Trades Council
Waltham Forest Trades Council
GEC Openshaw JSSC
Ardwick CLP
Hazelgrove CLP
Runcorn CLP
St. Helens CLP
Wavertree CLP
LPYS
NOLS
Communist Party of Great Britain
Association of Cypriot Women in Britain
KNE — Communist Youth of Greece (org. in Britain)

Portuguese Communist Party
(org. in Britain)
Cyprus Students' Soc. — Man. Univ.
Organisation of Supporters of Iranian
People's Fedaii (Maj) — Britain
Committee for the Defence of
the Iranian Revolution
Iraqi Student's Society — UK
(Branch of GUSIR)
Kurdish Students' Society
in Europe (UK)
Students' Union
UMIST — Students' Union
Man. Poly Students' Union
Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation
London Co-op Political Committee
Lord Fenner Brockway
Mgr. Bruce Kent
Arthur Latham
Robert J. Longuet
William Pomeroy
Marion Sarafi
Gordon Schaffer
E.P. Thompson

What is CDDRT?

CDDRT works to build solidarity in the struggle against fascist oppression of the working class, democratic and revolutionary movements in Turkey; against the genocide of the Kurdish nation; and against the expansionism of Turkey's finance capital, presently experienced by the peoples of Cyprus.

CDDRT considers it is necessary to campaign vigorously within the labour and trade union and student movements, organising demonstrations and meetings, to stop torture of political prisoners and ensure their release, bring an end to the violent judicial attack on DISK trade union confederation leaders and members, and prevent the consolidation of fascism in Turkey.

We call for an end to military rule, freedom for all democratic organisations, withdrawal of Turkey from NATO and cessation of all military, political and economic support, and an end to the occupation of Cyprus.

Wider sections of public opinion are becoming aware of the situation of the people of Turkey under the fascist junta. Ensure that you and your organisation play their part: *affiliate to CDDRT NOW!*

Affiliation to CDDRT

Help fight the barbaric regime in Turkey. Affiliate to the Committee for the Defence of Democratic Rights in Turkey (CDDRT). Cost of affiliation for one year: national organisations £20 (can be negotiated), local organisations £5, individuals £2.

Name
Address

Send to: CDDRT, 29 Parkfield St., London, N1. Tel: 01-226 3401 (Make cheques or postal orders payable to CDDRT).