

Contents

- ABDULLAH ÖCALAN HANDED OVER TO TURKEY WHERE HE FACES A DEATH SENTENCE
- ANKARA: ECEVIT FORMS A MINORITY GOVERNMENT
- BLOODY REPRESSION OF DEMONSTRATIONS BY THE PEOPLE OF IRANIAN KURDISTAN
- IS RUSSIA REARMING THE IRAQI REGIME ?
- EVIDENCE BY KURDISH LAWYER ROJBIN TUGAN BEFORE LAWYERS COMMITTEE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, NEW YORK
- AS WELL AS
- BRIEFLY - THE PRESS REVIEW

ABDULLAH ÖCALAN HANDED OVER TO TURKEY WHERE HE FACES A DEATH SENTENCE

THE long peregrination of the chief of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) ended on 15 February in Nairobi, Kenya, where he had been in hiding at the Greek Embassy for the previous twelve days. Öcalan who had, on 16 January, left Rome of his own free will *«so as not to further embarrass the Italian government and to avoid causing the break-up of its fragile coalition»*, had been trying, in vain, to find asylum in

Belorussia, Russia, Greece, and the Netherlands. All the European countries, as if by common agreement, had decided to close their air space to him and deny him any access to their territory. On 1st February the Greek Admiral Naxakis had brought him to Athens from St. Petersburg in a private plane and had tried to force the hand of the Greek government into giving asylum to the Kurdish leaders who was being subjected to a veritable manhunt.

Fearing Ankara's unpredictable reactions, going even as far as armed conflict, the Greek Foreign Minister, Mr. Pangalos, had decided to expel this undesirable guest as quickly as possible.

It was thus in the care of the Greek authorities that Öcalan was sent to Nairobi *«pending his finding an other host country»*, according to the official Greek version. Why Nairobi, a stronghold of the Israeli MOSSAD, and opération centre of the CIA which, since the bomb attacks on the American Embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, have

maintained over a hundred agents in the Kenyan capital? No credible answer has been advanced by Athens, which nevertheless, denies any prior arrangement with the Americans over Öcalan's fate. The fact remains that the very day Öcalan arrived in Nairobi, Ankara was informed. By whom? At first it was MOSSAD was mentioned, since it was they that had advised the Turks of the PKK leader's departure from Damascus and arrival in Moscow. The Israelis denied this. However the Americans, after an official denial, recognised (see pp 163 and 182 of the Press Review) that they had played an active part throughout Öcalan's wanderings and during its Kenyan epilogue. On 4 February they informed the Turks that Öcalan might be handed over to them «soon».

On the same day, the top officers of the Turkish State met to decree a series of measures for the repatriation and imprisonment of the Kurdish chief. The hardest part, for the Turkish government was to find a plane whose range allowed it to fly non-stop to Nairobi. The Americans saw to all the rest: forcing the hand of the Greeks into handing the Kurdish rebel over to the Kenyan police and getting the Kenyan authorities to put him onto the Turkish Special Services plane kept apart from the rest at Nairobi airport. *«The Kenyan police led me to the airport stating that they were putting me on a plane bound for Holland. The Greek Ambassador, after a meeting with the Kenyan Foreign Minister, had assured me that everything was now settled, that the Netherlands government had accepted to grant me asylum and that I*

could safely leave Kenya. Once aboard this plane, that I thought was Dutch, I was greeted by a hooded commando which, in Turkish, wished me «Welcome to Turkey». They bound and drugged me. I woke up during the flight. The plane landed twice, probably in Israel and Northern Cyprus. Then they brought me by helicopter to Mudanya and, from there, to the island of Imrali», Öcalan told his lawyer, Mr. Okçuoglu, during their first meeting on 25 February.

Why did Washington render such outstanding services to the Turks? Since the peace agreement signed between the two Iraqi Kurdish parties in September 1998, which envisaged the election of a Kurdish regional Parliament and government, Ankara hasn't stopped grumbling about the spectre of the emergence of a Kurdish state under American protection and threatening to normalise its relations with Baghdad. Moreover, going still further in this blackmail, Prime Minister Ecevit, well known for his pro-Saddam sympathies, had invited the Iraqi Vice-President, Tariq Aziz, to Ankara. The Americans probably saw the danger of the Turks refusing them continued use of their Incirlik air base, a key point in the American military arrangement for encircling and destabilising Iraq. By deciding to make Ankara a gift of Öcalan, its Public Enemy N°1, Washington would have sought to soothe Turkish fears about the creation of a Kurdish State, reinforce the Turco-American alliance and; at the same time strike a blow at the PKK which was opposing the normalisation of the situation in Iraqi Kurdistan and American policy in Iraq.

Öcalan's arrest, announced by the Kurdish network MED-TV a few hours after his departure from Nairobi unleashed a wave of Kurdish demonstrations throughout Europe and the Near East. More or less everywhere Kenyan, Greek, Israeli and Turkish Embassies or Consulates were targets of sometimes violent occupation. In Berlin, the Israeli police opened fire on Kurdish demonstrators trying to force an entry into the Israeli Consulate, and killed 4 Kurds. In London, a young Kurdish girl tried to burn herself to death. In Iran, Kurdish demonstrators shouting slogans attacking Turkey and the Islamic Republic were machinegunned by the police at Urmiah, Mehabad and Sanadaj. In Turkey, suicide attacks caused many deaths (see p 3 of the Press Review). In a statement read over MED-TV, the PKK presidential Council announced «the extension of the war to all regions, all military, economic and tourist targets of Turkey and called on their supporters in Europe to avoid violence and to demonstrate in accordance with the laws of their host country.

The Öcalan affair also provoked government crises in Greece, where three Ministers were obliged to resign, and in Kenya. In Israel, many voices were raised demanding that everything should be done to avoid letting it seem that the Jewish State was the enemy of 25 or 30 million Kurds in the Near East.

In Turkey the arrest of Öcalan gave rise to violent and noisy ultra-nationalist demonstrations around the themes of «Turkey is Great», «Turkey is

Indivisible», «Death to the PKK», «Death to Öcalan» etc. The media abandoned themselves to an orgy of nationalist and militarist propaganda within weeks of the General Elections. The authorities announced a quick trial to which foreign observers and journalists would not be allowed to attend. Several European countries, including France, expressed the hope for an «equitable trial» for Öcalan, while knowing that he would appear before a State Security Court which is not considered to be an independent and impartial tribunal by the European Human Rights Court.

Since his forced return to Turkey on February 16, A. Öcalan has been held on the Island prison of İmralı. After 7 days detention, he was brought before a judge who ordered his arrest. Since then he has been in solitary confinement and kept in complete isolation from the world. The whole island has been emptied of all other inhabitants and declared a forbidden area. Only those people authorised by the Armed Forces General Staff can use a ferry, manned by soldiers, to visit the island. These are security personnel or teams from the military and civilian intelligence services and the judges and public prosecutors responsible for his interrogation. On 24 February, two of his lawyers were authorised to visit him in the presence of two hooded officers of the Turkish Special Forces, a judge and a clerk of the court. The visit lasted 20 minutes. The two lawyers were only allowed to question their client on his state of health and the circumstances under which he was

kidnapped. Subjected to death threats from elements of the police and extreme Right groups, the lawyers, on 26 February held a press conference to say that they would refuse to defend Öcalan if the government did not ensure their protection.

The following is a Statement by Semsî Kilic, one of ERNK's European Representatives, which was delivered to MED-TV regarding the kidnapping of the PKK Chairman Abdullah Öcalan from Kenya.

PKK leadership left Italy on January 16th based on the negotiations and agreements with the Italian Government. For days, we held discussions with representatives sent directly by D'Alema on the future [of our leader]. Certain decisions were reached then. They were working on the issue of how Italy could find a third country where our leader would have a chance to stay. D'Alema and the Italian government made promises. However, at this point, our leadership did not want to exert any more pressure and stretch the kindness and hospitality of the Italian Government and people. Considering the possibility of a collapse of the Italian government, our leader changed his mind. He decided to leave Italy for a while to allow the legal process regarding his asylum to take place in an amiable atmosphere. He hoped that the [Kurdish] initiative [to find a peaceful, political solution to the Kurdish question] set in motion among the member nations of the European Union following his arrival to Europe, would proceed in a more receptive manner.

Our leadership went to Russia on January 16th. He was planning to return to Europe after a short stay in Russia. He wanted to go to Holland. He wanted to appeal to the International Court of Justice to expose the genocide of the Turkish State in Kurdistan. He wanted to reveal the true nature of the Turkish state. His search was continuing. Until January 29, 1999, our leader stayed in Moscow. On January 29, our leadership left for Athens in order to return to Europe. Negotiations resumed with authorities in Athens. As you can guess, these talks were held initially with the Greek Prime Minister Simitis, the Minister of Foreign Affairs Pangalos, the Minister of Internal Affairs Papadopoulos, the Public Minister and the Chief of the Intelligence. Given this and other negotiations conducted with the knowledge of these personalities, trusting our long work in Athens, we considered them to be of help in international relations to promote the rights of Kurds for self-determination.

I would like to stress that I do not blame the Greek government as a whole, but name only certain individuals for participating in this international conspiracy. However for us, as time passed, as the events unfolded, the details of, both, the direct participation of these Greek personalities in the conspiracy spearheaded by Turkey, the CIA and the MOSSAD and their provision of intelligence to the above, became clearer.

Until January 30th, these authorities made promises, as usual, to provide guarantees to our leader. They were always positive. They said they could do many things, but that they needed time. [For example], they guaranteed that they would mobilize the

world public opinion and the European Union. It was on the guarantees of these [Greek] circles that our leader decided to go and stay for a certain period of time in another [European] country. Later on, he would return to [Italy, Greece or Holland] from this temporary shelter to continue his European mission.

The Greek authorities, the Greek European country, that talks with the government [of that country] were held. Guarantees [clearance] had been obtained, and that there was no problem. He could move. After this guarantee, our leader said we could set off on our journey now. We could go. To tell you the truth, it was hard to read the feelings of our leader at that moment. However, let me state this: from our observations and reading of the situation and having known the leader, [I could see that] he had sensed most of the things [the turn of the events]. We had told him that [this journey] could end up in Ankara, that this could be a plot. He said personally also that this was the last step of the conspiracy. Our opinion was that the moment we left the building, Chairman's journey might end up in Ankara, that we should never leave. Our leader said this: «Even if we stay, if they [the conspirators] have such a plan [preparation], as these guys [Kenians, Greeks] also said, they will finish us off tonight.» «They will definitely do this,» he said. With foresight, our leader had in fact seen most of the developments that came. Our Chairman became very well aware of [the trap] that the Greek representatives such as Simitis and Pangalos and some others [had set up]; and what the guarantees [they gave, meant] and [why] Simitis and Pangalos were trying

constantly to calm [us] through direct phone calls and [saying] that everything would be all right. The leadership was aware of this charade. That is why, he continuously struggled to calm down the four of us who were protesting and constantly trying to prevent him [from leaving]. He struggled for more than one hour trying to calm us down. He was aware of it. Because we had stayed with him for days and for days we had wondered if this were the last leg of the conspiracy. [As time passed], the forces that were involved in the plot became more and more apparent, they were becoming more and more visible. No one wished for this to be true, of course. Before departure, they told us that we would go in a convoy, although none of us believed it much. As soon as the leader climbed into the car, before we had a chance to go in our car, they sped and all cars got separated from each other. When our car arrived at the airport, we saw our leader in his car. We moved behind his car. And came to a stop in front of a door which had «the Police» inscribed on it. All at once, policemen came running toward us from all directions. They surrounded the car of the Party Leadership, turned it around and spirited it away. We could neither get out of the car, nor move it because the place was packed with policemen. Three policemen accompanied our leader in his car. They [other policemen] took us inside the international airport and dropped us there. They dropped the Greek Ambassador's car somewhere else. This was [a maneuver to disperse us] so that for a long time, we would not be able find and join each other. However, we ran where we had seen him last. But it was too late. He was nowhere to be seen. With the Ambassador, we returned to where we had left our friends. The

Ambassador was calling and trying to get hold of various circles, but interestingly enough, he was not able to get hold of anyone. Only once, he was able to get a hold of Pangalos. We stuck close by and listened to understand. Pangalos ordered him «to abandon those around him [i.e. us] there and disappear.» But the Ambassador did not abandon us there. We stayed there for a while and tried to find out. Then, we returned to the Embassy. Those who participated in this international conspiracy against our Party's Leadership, collaborating with Israel, the MOSSAD, the CIA and Kenya wanted to eliminate every one of us as well, after shipping our leader to Turkey, in order to get rid of eyewitnesses. They wanted to leave the four of us to the mercy of the Kenyan police or to the Mafia or to whichever forces to shroud this event in total mystery and silence. But they failed. One of the policemen who returned to Greece, made a public statement as soon as he returned. He stated that he was sent [to Kenya] by his government and he was supposed to anaesthetize Mr. Ocalan and to drop him off at a certain place where the Turkish National Intelligence Organization would come and pick him up. He stated that he was ashamed to become part of an undertaking of this sort, but that he was not a traitor. He would not betray either the Kurdish nor his own people. This was a person [the Greek policeman] who belonged to the intelligence service of Greece and had been accompanying Mr. Ocalan for some time now. No one wanted to be a partner in this game with the - which I call - GLADIO segments of the Pangalos-Simitis government. [Pangalos and some in his Government] are with the GLADIO that carries out such international operations.

Our leader was kidnapped in this way and handed to the Turkish State. It is interesting to note that [even during these developments], Papadopoulos unceasingly tried to eliminate the eye-witnesses and to curb them from coming into Greece. All of Pangalous' messages, his directives [to the Embassy authorities], as far as we can read the situation, are in the direction of eliminating eye-witnesses like us. We hear this, we feel this from around. At all costs, Pangalous wants to eliminate us and not to send us anywhere else. Because the eye-witnesses have a lot to tell. The Greek Ambassador is preparing to leave here, the Kenyan government is putting constant pressure to force him out. Those who participated in this plot should be condemned by the Greek people and by the world public opinion. Our people must know these details. However, knowing these facts should never lead to violence. We must take this into consideration. The latest talks, the latest views of our leader was to transform the PKK, to transform the National Liberation Struggle in Kurdistan, in all its greatness, with all its power into a political movement. All of his efforts were in this direction. This last trip was going to be to Holland, he was going to the court at Hague and with a great trial, expose the Turkish State, expose the crimes of the Turkish State, even though he knew that this last trip might very well be the last leg that concluded the international conspiracy. He had messages to Germany. He wanted the German government to stop its 15 year old criminalization policy toward our people. He wanted Europe to see that European efforts to label and prosecute the PKK as a terrorist group was at the bottom [of the violence]. Germany was leading such efforts and that Germany

should review its criminalization policies. That Germany should be more sensitive, more constructive in its messages to the movement. He was even saying this during the last days

Since the German government wants to try me, since it claims that it has incriminating documents, we will go to Germany. We would like to see how the German government will put us on trial, how the trial would end. We would like to prove our innocence, and the innocence of our people and our party. Our leader was serious about going to Germany, to be part of such a trial, such an educational opportunity. We did an investigation of this. We talked with our lawyers for hours. We sent messages to our lawyers in Holland about this matter. Our leader was ready for such a court, for such judicial processes because he believed that, with it, all truths would come out. He surely was ready for this.

Host Suna Canan, Question: OK, I would like to go back to the last day, to the day when Mr. Ocalan was kidnapped in that collaborative manner with the Turkish State. You said that you talked to a friend and the friend told you that everything was OK and there was nothing to worry. Can you tell us, if at all possible, who this friend was?

Surely, we will reveal the identity of such friends, these circles that we called friends. I don't know his family name, but his first name was Andonis. He was a businessman. He travels with a diplomatic passport. He deals with trade in these countries. He should be accountable for the things he told

us. He also should go forward to the public and tell his people as to what really happened. He must tell the world public how he was part of this betrayal. There are others who refused to become part of this plot. They stood with us. And they tried their best not to be part of this betrayal. Even if it cost them their lives, they refused to become part of such betrayal.

Host Suna Canan: OK, Ms. Kilic, Kenya is a place where MOSSAD and the CIA abound and move freely. Especially, after the bombings of 1998 in Kenya, more US intelligence units were placed there. The US made a public statement recently to the effect that it did not directly participate in the kidnapping of Mr. Ocalan to Turkey. How do you evaluate the role of the US in this plot? If I am not mistaken, the US and Greek officials were holding talks a few days before the PKK Chairman went to Kenya. What do you have to say on this subject?

The US government claims that there was no direct involvement. This may be true, but there is an indirect involvement through the CIA. The US acknowledges involvement through mobilization of its intelligence services in collaboration of the Turkish government. The US is indeed in the thick of this. Israel is also heavily involved in this operation.

[Greece or Kenya] is under their control. And through their collaboration this project succeeded. I remember the statements of the Press Secretary and Government Spokesman of Greece. They all aimed to eject our leader from the Embassy. Pangalous' pressures were increasing. The Pangalous government lied by stating that

Mr. Ocalan left the Embassy on his own initiative. This is a lie. They propagated such a lie in order to absolve themselves in the eye of the public. This was not true at all. If it need be, the content of negotiations [with Mr. Ocalan] can be released by those who took part in them. There is data, evidence in this area. There are also taped telephone conversations. When these are

revealed, people would be able to see the truth. Some states will see how they were deceived. They will see how meaningless, how unjust it was to deceive us, to deceive the Kurdish people. Greek authorities claim that our Chairman left the premises on his own. This is not true. They are trying to cover up the trail. This is our opinion.

In an interview published by the Financial Times on 18 January, Mr. Ecevit announced his intention of asking for urgent aid from the IMF to face up to \$24 billion for servicing the Turkish national debt. He also considered that «the time had not come» for acceding to the cultural claims of Kurdish moderates and that only «a reduction of PKK terrorism» could lead to «a more relaxed atmosphere allowing them to envisage other measures».

ANKARA: ECEVIT FORMS A MINORITY GOVERNMENT

ON 11 January 1999 the Turkish President approved the new government formed by Mr. Ecevit. Made up solely of members of his own Democratic Left Party (DSP – «left» nationalist) which holds 61 of the 550 seats in Parliament.

On 5 January, the Army publicly called on the political caste to pull itself together and to «form a government with the least delay». As this call also stressed the Islamist danger, the Generals' injunction was perfectly clear: to form a government that would exclude the Islamist Virtue Party.

Mrs Çiller (DYP), after referring to «a plot against parliament» finally gave her party's approval of a minority coalition led by Bulent Ecevit, nationalist leader of the tiny «Democratic Left» Party (DSP) which enjoys the favour of the Army, although a few weeks ago she categorically rejected such an «undemocratic solution». The member of Parliament, Y. Erez, charged with the task of forming a cabinet on 6 January,

immediately handed in his resignation. President Demirel then appointed Mr. Bulent Ecevit as Prime Minister «with the least delay», thus fulfilling the Army's wishes.

For his part, Deniz Baykal, leader of the Republican People's Party (CHP), after railing against the Turkish President who, he said, now only acts as a solicitor, going through the legal procedures to carry out instructions coming from somewhere else (i.e. the Army) also decided to support an Ecevit cabinet.

On the strength of this support, the new cabinet won a vote of confidence on 11 January 1999 by 306 votes to 188 against (43 members absent and 1 abstention) thus temporarily ending six weeks of political crisis. In recent statements, Mr. Ecevit had assured all concerned that his government would be «patently secular» and would preserve «with vigilance» the reforms of the founding father of the Republic, Mustafa Kemal «Ataturk».

The new Turkish government led by Bulent Ecevit does not have a single woman minister, – which doesn't surprise the feminists who have been struggling for several years against the male monopoly of power in Turkey: «It's an unacceptable state of affairs» protests Nuran Talu, member of the Society for the promotion of women candidates (KA-DER) after the presentation of Bulent Ecevit's purely masculine cabinet. Although women have had the vote since 1934, at the time of the single party, today they make up only 2% of the 550 strong Turkish parliament. Not a single one of the 76 provincial governors is a woman and only 0.4% of the mayors. The previous government, led by Mesut Yilmaz (Motherland Party, ANAP), had two ministers – however, it reduced the number of women in its leadership from 5 to 1 at its last Congress. Exasperated, KA-DER has launched a campaign to push 55 women into Parliament at the next general elections, thus hoping to bring them up to 10% of the M.P.s.

They have a tough struggle to face:

according to an opinion poll published this month, 28% of the Turkish electorate don't feel any need for more

women in politics and 21% even say they would never vote for a woman.

BLOODY REPRESSION OF DEMONSTRATIONS BY THE PEOPLE OF IRANIAN KURDISTAN



AFTER Abdullan Öcalan's arrest, the Kurdish population of Iran organised peaceful demonstrations to express its solidarity with its Kurdish brothers in Turkey. The demonstrators did not limit themselves to shouting slogans against the Turkish regime and those of other countries directly or indirectly implicated in this kidnapping. They also denounced the repressive policy the Islamic Republic had carried out for 20 years against the Iranian Kurdish population and demanded justice and respect for their elementary rights. The government forces then brutally intervened.

Here is the score of these events:

- 18/19 February at Urmiah: 3 killed, 17 wounded, 250 demonstrators arrested.
- 18 February at Bokan: several dozen arrests
- 18 February at Mehabad: 5 killed, 13 wounded, dozens of arrests

- 18 February at Merivan: thousands of people came out onto the streets shouting slogans such as «Down with the terrorist regime!», «Down with the anti-Kurdish regime!», «Justice for the Kurdish people!» and some other slogans attacking the States implicated in Mr. Öcalan's kidnapping.

- 18 and 20 February at Sardashte: the police and commandos of the Iranian intelligence arrested dozens of demonstrators

- 19 and 20 February at Kamiaran: 2 killed, many others wounded, about 150 arrested

- 18 and 19 February the population of the towns of Chino, Piranchahir, Makou, Salmas, Baneh, Paveh, Kermanshah, Sazez and Diwandara also came out onto the streets to protest against the atrocities committed by the police against the population of other Kurdish towns of Iranian Kurdistan. Dozens of people were wounded and hundreds arrested.

- 19, 21 and 22 February at Sanandaj (capital of the Province of Kurdistan): In this town, from the first day the demonstrations became protests against the Islamic Republic regime. For three days, over 50,000 demonstrators, with empty hands, faced the government forces who called in Army helicopters. The repression was merciless: over 30 killed, nearly 60 wounded and a thousand arrested.

For two weeks a state of siege was decreed in the towns of Sanandaj, Karmiaran and Mehabad. The arrest of «suspects», suspended for some time because of the municipal elections, has since been resumed in full. The bodies of those killed were only returned to their families after night-fall, and funerals were forbidden.

It should be said that, because of the total blackout imposed by the Iranian regime on any information regarding Iranian Kurdistan since the 80s, these tragic events have not been reported. IRNA, the National Press Agency, only made a brief allusion to them on 22 February, saying that some hundreds of people, who had gathered in Ferdoussi Avenue to demonstrate, were dispersed by the police.

IS RUSSIA REARMING THE IRAQI REGIME ?

THIS rumour has been current for some time. In its 14 February issue, the very sober London Sunday Telegraph published a long article signed by its Foreign Editor, Con Coughlin, on «Russia's secret agreement to re-arm Saddam».

The following are the principal extracts from this article, which had considerable repercussions:

Russia has signed arms deals worth more than £100 million with Saddam Hussein to reinforce Iraq's air defences. The move will pose a serious threat to British and American planes enforcing Iraq's no-fly zone.

In a blatant breach of the UN arms embargo, the Russians have agreed to upgrade and overhaul Iraq's aging squadrons of MiG jet-fighters and restore Iraq's air defences to combat readiness, diplomatic sources in Moscow have told The Telegraph.

The arms deals constitute a serious challenge to British and American attempts to force Baghdad to honour its commitment to dismantle Iraq's weapons of mass destruction. It will also strain Moscow's relations with Britain and the US at a time when President Boris Yeltsin is desperately seeking international assistance for Russia's beleaguered economy.

British and American jets have been involved in almost daily military

confrontations with Iraq since Operation Desert Fox, the air strikes unleashed against Saddam's military infrastructure by Britain and the US at the end of last year.

The Iraqi armed forces have so far failed to shoot down any Allied warplanes because they have to rely on out-dated and unreliable equipment. However, the Russian deal to upgrade Iraq's air force and anti-aircraft missile batteries will bring Iraq's air defences up to pre-Gulf war levels.

Apart from earning much-needed foreign currency, Russia's decision to provide Iraq with military assistance was approved by Prime Minister Yevgeny Primakov in retaliation for Operation Desert Fox. Russia bitterly opposed launching air strikes against Iraq to punish Saddam for not co-operating with UN weapons inspectors.

The Foreign Office said yesterday that it had received reports of the arms deals, which were being investigated. Officials privately confirmed that the deals had been approved by Moscow. A senior Foreign Office official said: «It is almost beyond belief that a Permanent Member of the Security Council could authorise such a flagrant breach of the UN arms embargo. It indicates that Russian relations with Iraq have become a great deal closer since Mr Primakov became Prime Minister.»

Ahmad Murtada Ahmad Khalil, the Iraqi Transport and Communications Minister,

signed the arms deals in Moscow on January 13 and 14 after a visit to Russia by Tariq Aziz, the Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister, in December, days before Operation Desert Fox was launched.

Two weeks before British and American warplanes launched a series of devastating air strikes against Iraq last December, Tariq Aziz, the Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister, flew to Moscow on an urgent mission.

Following a preliminary round of discussions at the Russian Foreign Ministry, Aziz was taken to meet Yevgeny Primakov, Russia's newly-appointed Prime Minister. This was one occasion when the Russian Prime Minister could dispense with the formalities of high office. The former Soviet spymaster and Arabist is no stranger to Saddam's inner circle. As a young diplomat in Baghdad in the 1970's, he became a personal friend of Saddam Hussein. The friendship blossomed after Saddam became President in 1979, even though Primakov suffered no delusions about Saddam's true character.

He later wrote: «I could not help being struck by Saddam's toughness, that often verged on cruelty, a will that often bordered on wilfulness, a readiness to push his way towards his goal at any price, combined with a dangerous unpredictability.

During that period Primakov also became well-acquainted with Aziz, so that the veteran Iraqi negotiator was guaranteed a warm welcome at the Russian Prime Minister's office.

It was at that meeting in Primakov's office

on December 7 Primakov gave Aziz the go-ahead to commence negotiations on a wide-ranging arms deal with Russia's most prestigious arms manufacturers, details of which are published exclusively today in *The Telegraph*.

A month before Aziz's visit, a comprehensive shopping list of Iraq's military requirements had been submitted to the permanent representative in Baghdad of Rosvooruzheniye, the Russian government arms export concern, by the Iraqi Military Industrial Commission (MIC). Senior members of MIC travelled to Moscow as part of Aziz's delegation and, with Primakov's approval, were allowed to visit the headquarters of the Map-MiG Company, makers of Russia's legendary MiG jet-fighters, and Avtoexport, a major exporter of military vehicles and spare parts.

The talks in early December, however, were mainly exploratory. It was only after the US, with Britain's active backing, launched Operation Desert Fox, later in the month, that the Iraqis and Russians moved quickly to complete the deal.

Officially, Primakov demonstrated his extreme displeasure with the Anglo-American action by withdrawing Russia's Ambassadors from London and Washington. Unofficially he approved a £100 million plus arms deal with Iraq.

On January 10 this year, Ahmed Murtada Ahmed Khalil, Iraq's Transport and Communications Minister, flew to Moscow with representatives of Iraq's MIC. During the next four days the delegation visited a

number of Russian defence plants, including three factories in Nizhniy-Novgorod that manufacture MiG spare parts, and Fazotron in Moscow, which develops weapons-control systems.

Murtada then signed a number of arms contracts which were personally approved by Russian First Deputy Premier, Yuri Maslyukov. The contracts, if honoured by the Russians, will bring Baghdad's air defence capacity to a level unachieved since the Gulf war.

British and American diplomats are already deeply suspicious about Russia's close relations with Iraq, especially after it was discovered that Russian members of Unscm tipped off Saddam Hussein about which locations particularly interested the weapons inspectors, giving the Iraqis time to move banned equipment before the inspectors arrived.

The Iraqis are unable to hit British and American jet-fighters because the shortage of spare parts and technical expertise means most of their MiGs are not operational. Much of Iraq's air defence missile system was destroyed during the Gulf war. The wide-ranging arms embargo against Iraq has made it impossible for Saddam to buy effective replacements.

There is nothing that would please Saddam more than to be able to shoot down an Allied aircraft, capture its crew, and parade them before the Iraqi media, as he did with the two RAF crewmen – Flight Lieutenants John Nichol and John Peters – shot down over Iraq during the Gulf war.

The deals signed in Moscow last month,

which are to be implemented later this year, will give the Iraqis that capability.

The only serious obstacle standing in the way of a speedy implementation of the arms deals is Iraq's ability to pay. While Moscow's decision to re-equip Iraq's armed forces was taken in retaliation for Operation Desert Fox, Russia's arms industry desperately needs the business. At present it is estimated that Iraq owes the Russians seven billion dollars – mainly for civilian supplies provided since the imposition of UN sanctions.

To ensure that Iraq fulfils its part of the deal, the Russians have insisted on a cash-on-delivery arrangement. Saddam will raise the hard currency to pay for Russia's military technology by increasing Iraq's oil-smuggling operation, details of which were given exclusively to *The Telegraph* last year by Iraqi defector Sami Salih. Since Salih's defection, Saddam has changed the smuggling route from Iran to Syria, but the arrangement remains highly lucrative.

The Russian Foreign Minister, Igor Ivanov, denied the Sunday Telegraph's «allegations» saying they were «a provocation» that «smelt of the disinformation networks of the Cold War» and stated that «Russia is scrupulously adhering» to all its commitments under U.N. resolutions on Iraq, but the paper returned to the attack in its 21 February issue. It first of all quoted a Russian military expert, Pavel Felgengauer, who wrote that, without Russia support, the Iraqi armed forces would resemble those of the Congo or Somalia. «without trousers and only armed with Kalashnikovs». The paper refers to

Russian Defence Ministry sources, according to which the deals with Iraq were effected through banks and dummy companies in Turkey, Jordan and the Balkans.

Meanwhile the Anglo-American forces continue their strikes against Iraqi military objectives in the Northern and Southern air exclusion zones «in response to Iraqi provocations».

Washington also talks of its determination to overthrow Saddam Hussein and is seeking the support of the states of the region for this project.

This consists, essentially, of providing arms for Iraqi opponents agreeing to engage in such a military operation. A list of five Iraqi opposition groups has even been drawn up by the American Administration. Amongst these are Barzani's KDP and Talabani's PUK, both of which have refused any such military aid, as well as the Teheran based Shiite opposition. The Iraqi opposition consider the American plan lacks credibility since the Americans refuse any direct military commitment themselves, in particular of ground operations.

you what I experienced in Hakkari, two years ago, as the first woman to practice as a lawyer, and some concrete examples of what my clients have suffered () On 14 September 1998, in the bus taking me to Diyarbekir to take part in a trial, I was struck by a sergeant of the specials because I had asked the reason for the checks being carried out; this happened near the town of Bismil. He struck and insulted me in front of all the troops to whom he turned soon after and asked «Sons, did I strike this woman?» to which as a man they answered «No, commander». I thought I had annoyed him because, in a line up of 40 people I was the only one (as a lawyer) to ask him a question. For this reason I complained about him – the file is still under consideration, in the prosecutor's office in Diyarbekir () Imagine what other people suffer if a lawyer is treated this way () The village of Koprucuk, administratively attached to Hakkari, was encircled by troops in the night of 5 May 1998, following guerrilla actions in the neighbourhood. The village men were carried off into detention, the women and children turned out of their houses so as to empty the village. The men remained 8 days in detention, two of the houses were burnt down by the troops the very same night, with all the household goods inside, and they banned anyone from entering or leaving the village. The men returning from detention had, on their bodies, signs of the tortures inflicted on them by the troops. I visited one of them, Yusuf Ciftci, in hospital, where he confirmed to me that he would not file a complaint about the torture: «No, I won't file a complaint. Who could I accuse and before whom? The State belongs to them, the judge and those who tortured me as well. In the end I will the

EVIDENCE BY KURDISH LAWYER ROJBIN TUGAN BEFORE LAWYERS COMMITTEE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, NEW YORK

MRS. Rojbin Tugan, a young lawyer from Hakkari, invited to New York by an American NGO, describes her impressions of the New World in these terms: «Very Dear Colleagues, I have been in the United States for about two months, and I am still as astonished as every at what I see here. I have not see a single soldier in your streets – and there aren't many policemen either. Those who are there don't aim their guns at you. Armoured cars and tanks don't advance on you, and helicopters don't invade your skies. Your days don't end at 4 p.m. of an afternoon. Your evenings are not spent sleeplessly and fearfully wandering «When will they come to take me away?» People don't tremble at the sight of policemen or soldiers. There is no fear of the State in your streets. When you travel from one town to another you

are not stopped for identity checks and searched several times in succession. No doubt all this comes from your conception of natural rights of human beings. All human beings should benefit from those rights but, for someone like me who has spent the major part of my life under a totalitarian regime, freedom is defined by the sort of rights you possess. Personally I savour these rights temporarily in passing, but my clients don't even dream of seeing them – they are not even aware of the existence of such rights (). I come from a country that has been burnt, demolished and destroyed () For myself, I try to exercise my profession of lawyer, to ensure that the law is respected in a country where my language, my given name, my culture are all banned and where they try to make people disappear, a country where injustice and lawlessness reign () I would like to tell

only one found guilty and I'll have to face even more trouble afterwards» () On 5 June 1998 a group of this village's inhabitants visited me in my office. The Hakkari garrison commander, Muzaffer Sen, had ordered them to leave their village and collect their belongings before 9 June 1998 () Following the repression and threats all the clients from this forcibly deserted village, except Mr. Hasan Can, withdrew their complaints. My client,

Hasan Can, was twice detained and threatened by the garrison commander – they wanted him to withdraw his complaint too – Mr. Can stated to me that he had decided to carry this case through to the end. This case of a village emptied was a first, in the Hakkari region, to be brought before the European Human Rights Court, the State's pressure and threats on my client and myself were accentuated ()

AS WELL AS

• **ASSESSMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN TURKEY FOR THE YEAR 1998.** The Turkish Association for Human Rights (IHD) has made public its assessment of violations for the year 1998. It deplored that there was no noticeable improvement:

- Number of persons detained.....	42,991
- Number of arrests	3,659
- Number of persons tortured	498
- Number of «unsolved murders»:.....	192
- Number of extrajudicial executions and deaths under torture:	192
- Actions against civilians:	91 killed, 185 wounded
- Number of persons «disappeared»:.....	29
- Number of villages and hamlets forcibly evacuated or burnt down:	30
- Number of press organs, trade unions, associations and parties banned ..	152
- Publications seized and banned:	331
- Number of prisoners of conscience:	132

On 10th February IHD published a new assessment of Human Rights violations committed in January 1999, which reads as follows:

- Number of persons detained:	1,381
- Number of arrests and tortured:	91
- Number of «unsolved murders»:.....	12
- Number of journalists detained:	13
- Number of audio-visual organisations suspended by the RTUK:	3
- Publications legally banned:.....	4
- Prison sentences passed for freedom of thought	30

BANNING OF A MODERATE PRO-KURDISH PARTY, THE DKP

The Constitutional Court decided, on February 26, to ban the Democratic Party of the Masses (DKP) formed by Mr. Serafettin Elçi, a former Minister of Public Works. In its ruling, decided by 6 votes against 5, the Court considered that this party, by evoking the existence of a Kurdish language and identity in Turkey was attacking the indivisible unity of the Turkish nation and the territorial integrity of the country. The DKP brings together Kurdish intellectuals and democrats, well known for their hostility to the PKK, who are trying, by peaceful means, to advance the cause of the recognition of the Kurdish identity. The banning of such a moderate party shows, once again, that the Turkish authorities remain determined to forbid any form of political or cultural expression to their Kurdish citizens. Commenting on this iniquitous decision, the editorial writer Sahin Alpay wrote in the 2 March issue of Milliyet «The ruling that bans the DKP, the principal party of the Kurdish political movement struggling for a democratic solution to the Kurdish question in the framework of Turkey's unity and integrity, is a heavy blow to the cause of democratisation of Turkey and the search for a solution to its N°1 problem».

• **LEGAL PROCEEDINGS TO BAN PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC PARTY (HADEP) STARTED THREE**

MONTHS BEFORE GENERAL AND MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS. On Friday 29 January 1999, Vural Savas, Public Prosecutor at the Court of Appeals started proceedings before the Turkish Constitutional Court to ban the People's Democratic Party (HADEP), which he accuses of having «organic links» with the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK). The 56 page indictment accuses HADEP of «being totally under the PKK's control and or organising activities in accordance with instructions from the Central Committee» of that organisation and or acting «as an organisation for recruiting armed activists for the PKK».

With only three months till the General and municipal Elections, HADEP, which is the only political party in the field that supports a peaceful and political solution to the Kurdish question is facing the same reprisals as its predecessor, the Party for Democracy (DEP), which was banned in 1994 or the Prosperity Party. Several cases are already pending before the State Security Court against HADEP and its leaders, including Murat Bozlak, its President, who was jailed mid-November last. He had been arrested with over 700 pro-Kurdish activists who had demonstrated their support for Abdullah Ocalan, then under house arrest in Rome.

HADEP, which won 4.5% of the overall vote during the 1995 General Elections, is not represented in Parliament as it failed to pass the 10% national threshold. But, in certain areas, and in particular in the Kurdish regions, such

as Diyarbakir, Siirt, Mardin, Sirnak and Hakkari, it secured about 50% of the vote, although it had only been created a few months earlier (in May 1994). Anxious to secure those votes at the next General elections, the political parties that enjoy the Army's good will are obviously rubbing their hands with glee. According to Mr. Yusuf Alatas, one of HADEP's lawyers, the proceedings *«nevertheless do not prevent HADEP from taking part in the elections, but a clear message is being sent to the electors not to vote for it since, in any case, it will be banned () The same message is being given to any parties that might form an electoral alliance with it»*. Mr Alatas considered that *«the proceedings were more political than legal»*.

Moreover the Turkish President, Suleyman Demirel, created another uproar by declaring himself in favour of changing the present electoral system for one including two rounds. Since Mrs Tansu Çiller's True Path Party (DYP) opposed this, the system will not see the light of day for these elections. To those who questioned the reasons for this last minute electoral manoeuvre, the President answered frankly in the daily paper *Hurriyet* of 3 February *«If, on the morning of 19 April, Turkey declared municipalities in the West carried by Fazilet with a narrow majority, say 20%, and critical regions like the South-East captured by mayors with separatist sympathies, don't come and tell me I didn't warn you»*.

• **AFTER SEVENTEEN YEARS, THE FILM «YOL» IS FINALLY SHOWN IN TURKEY.** The famous film «Yol», the,

masterpiece of Yilmaz Guney, the Kurdish film director, which won the Palme d'Or of the 1982 Cannes Film Festival, was screened on Friday 12 February, after having been banned for seventeen years. All the works of this outstanding film producer - books, articles and films - were banned in 1982 and the negatives of over 100 films that he had directed or in which he had acted were then destroyed by the Turkish authorities. The film director himself had to flee from Turkey while on prison leave in 1981. A left-wing writer, actor and film director, co-founder of the Paris Kurdish Institute, he had been stripped of his Turkish citizenship and died in exile in France in 1984. His body lies in the famous Paris cemetery of Père Lachaise.

«Yol» describes the fate of five prisoners on a week's leave from jail, and the political, cultural, and economic pressures upon them. More broadly, the film deals with the Kurdish question. The author wrote the scenario while behind bars and directed it, like the unforgettable «The Flock», through his assistants. Fearing a fresh censorship for *«separatist propaganda»*, the Guney Foundation, which wants to rehabilitate and reconcile the film director's reputation in present day Turkey and which initiated this showing, had to cut a scene in which the action's location is indicated in large red letters as «Kurdistan».

Fatos Guney, the film-makers widow, stated *«we had to make a sacrifice, otherwise the film would still be unable to be shown for another seventeen years»*.

Then she added *«I would have adored to see the film come out in Turkey»*.

• **RAGIP DURAN,**
CORRESPONDENT FOR THEZ
FRENCH DAILY LIBERATION,
RELEASED. Ragip Duran, Turkish
correspondent for the French daily
Libération, former collaborator of AFP
and the BBC as well as several Turkish
dailies, was released on Wednesday 27
January 1999, after seven and a half
months detention for an article he
wrote on the Kurdish problem. The
Istanbul State Security Court had ruled
that the comment that appeared in the
pro-Kurdish daily Ozgur Gundem
(since banned) that accompanied an
interview with Abdullah Ocalan, leader
of the PKK, violated article 7 of the
Anti-Terrorist Act, banning any
propaganda for separatism.

The release of the journalist, honoured
by many Human Rights defence
organisations, is in no way due to a
sudden enlightenment of the Turkish
authorities, nor or some new respect for
freedom of expression, but simply to
the fact that R. Duran had already
served three quarters of his ten month
prison sentence.

*«In Turkey there are two sorts of
journalists: the State journalists and the
rest, who run many dangers - of being
spied upon or killed, like Ugur Mumcu and
Metin Goktepe. It wasn't I who burnt and
destroyed those (Kurdish) villages. Nor was
it I who killed Mumcu, Anter, Goktepe»*
stated Mr. Duran. Ugur Mumcu, a
very popular columnist on the daily
paper Cumhuriyet, had been the author

of many articles on the extreme right
and had denounced the links between
the Turkish mafia and the State. Victim
of a bomb attack in Ankara, he died on
24 January 1993. His assassins are still
at large. Metin Goktepe, a journalist on
the staff of the left-wing daily Evrensel,
was beaten to death by policemen
while covering the funerals of two
detainees who had been killed.

• **GREEN PARTY AGAINST THE
SUPPLY OF ARMoured VEHICLES
TO TURKEY.** The Greens, coalition
partners of the Social Democrats in the
German government, stated their
reservations about a fresh delivery of
several hundreds of armoured
transport vehicles to Turkey, on the
agenda of a Security Council meeting in
Bonn on 11 January 1999. According to
the German daily Frankfurter
Rundschau, several German firms
specialising in arms production
submitted a request for authorisation to
export to Turkey «200 armoured
transport vehicles, first step towards
the delivery of 1,800 more» to the
Security Council Angelica Beer,
Defence spokesperson for the Green
Parliamentary group, questioned by the
Frankfurter Rundschau described such
an eventuality as «a political
catastrophe» so long as problems
linked to the respect of Human Rights
in Turkey remained unresolved. The
(Green) Foreign Minister, Joschka
Fisher is equally opposed to this project
- he had, in fact, specified when
nominated to the post that he wanted
to pursue a new foreign policy.

**SEVERE REPORT BY COUNCIL OF
EUROPE ON KURDISH QUESTION
IN TURKEY.** A report (January 25,
1999) drawn up by the Parliamentary
Assembly of the Council of Europe
severely criticised Turkey for violations
the rights of the Kurds. The reporters
called for the undertaking of
constitutional reforms and asked the
Turkish authorities *«to accept the idea
(...) of a dialogue on cultural rights for the
Kurds»*. The reporters, Andras Barsony
and Walter Schwimmer studied the
human rights conditions in Turkey, the
amendments to the Turkish constitution
and the rights of *«Turkish citizens of
Kurdish origin»*.

According to the report, freedom of
expression of Kurdish media is
extremely limited, numerous Kurdish
publications have been banned and
access to other Kurdish publications is
difficult. The reporters also considered
that terrorism could, doubtless, be
«progressively mastered» in this region if
the Turkish authorities granted the
Kurds the protection provided for
national minorities by the European
Convention on Human Rights.

~~The report welcomes some progress~~
observed over the last three years - the
right of detainees to see a lawyer, access
to medical examination and restriction
of the period of detention without
charges being made. But it adds that
*«concern at the persistence of cases of
torture and inhuman treatment seems
justified, in view of information
communicated by the Diyarbakir lawyers
association and by Human Rights NGOs»*.

Furthermore, the reporters stressed that Kemalism has begun to play an ambiguous role in Turkish society and that many actions undertaken in the name of Kemalism, the official state ideology, have distanced Turkey from the countries of Europe.

Messrs. Barsony and Schwimmer regretted that they had been turned away from the Ankara Central Prison without being able to meet Leyla Zana and the three other Kurdish former Members of Parliament of the Party for Democracy (DEP - banned) jailed for 15 years.

• **DOCUMENTS: ANTI-ITALIAN DEMONSTRATIONS ORCHESTRATED BY NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL.** The weekly Hevi, then the daily Ozgur Politika, have just published a series of «confidential documents» from the Turkish National Security Council on the organisation by the Turkish authorities of a series of actions in Turkey and abroad against Italy, the PKK and its chief. Each of these documents indicates the nature of the action to be undertaken, the participants to be mobilised (Trade Unions, associations, intellectuals, religious industrial or sports institutions), the time-table and location of the action and the Ministry appointed to carry it through. In fact, a veritable «order of battle» such as generals love to draw up. Amongst the supporting documents are included dispositions regarding measures to be followed by Trade Unions, representatives of civil associations and

societies, the families of Levantines living in Izmir, public figures who had received medals for their work on Italo-Turkish relations. The National Security Council (MGK) saw to it that these measures were carried out at very short notice in Europe.

The most striking example of this was the fact that the appearance of whole pages of advertisements by Turkish Unions, in particular TURK-IS (Federation of Turkish Workers Unions) and DISK (Federation of Revolutionary Turkish Unions), TOBB (Turkish Employers Federation) in Italian (La Stamp), German (Suddeutsche Zeitung) and American (International Herald Tribune) newspapers on the PKK's crimes resulted from one of the actions decided by the National Security Council. Another directive calls for the use of the Directorate of Religious Affairs, but also representatives of minorities in Turkey (Armenians, Jews, Greeks) to intervene with the Italian Government and the Vatican. Then there was the implication in these actions of the mothers of martyrs (members of the security forces killed in action against the PKK) and the football world, the aim being to «ensure that the mothers of martyrs, through demonstrations and press statements protest against the terrorist organisation and its leader». Always in the same line of thought, in regions strongly sympathetic to the PKK and thus having produced many «martyrs» (Sirnak, Cizre, Yuksekova, Cukurca, Yozgat, Kirsehir, Kayseri) the planning of «meetings and demonstrations () and in appropriate locations, putting forward the

families of martyrs, especially the mothers, wives and children()».

• **DISPLACED KURDS NO LONGER BELIEVE PROMISES OF RETURN TO THEIR VILLAGES.**

Questioned by an Islamist M.P. (the Virtue Party - FP) regarding the Kurdish region of Turkey still ruled by emergency decree and where millions of Kurds have been displaced, the Turkish Minister of the Interior, Kutlu Aktas, gave some figures on the situation. According to Mr. Aktas, out of 11 prefectures under the State of Emergency (OHAL), consisting of 55,303 households, 830 villages and 2,363 hamlets, 385,262 people were forced into exodus because of the regional situation [Editor's Note: according to a report drawn up in 1998 by a Parliamentary Commission on internal migration in Turkey, the figure was 3,824 villages and hamlets. and the number of displaced persons around 3 million] Various projects and actions announced since 1995 to «encourage» the return of these families, crammed into shanty towns round major cities in conditions of extreme destitution, have only had a very marginal effect, since only 24,451 people are said to have returned to their land. In this region, where the Army and the police are a law unto themselves, and where arbitrary rule and terror reign supreme, the Kurdish peasants, chased off their land do not believe the declarations of the civil authorities and are waiting for peace before daring to return to their destroyed homes.

• **WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO DISAPPEARED PEOPLE?** Like the

May Square Mothers in Argentina, mothers, called «*the Saturday mad-women*» have been tirelessly meeting, every Saturday since May 1995, in front of the French Lycée of Galatasaray, in Istanbul, to get an answer to this cruel question «*Where are our children?*». To date, no action has been able to last so long, or mark so durably Turkey's daily news. According to official sources, about 560 people are reported missing, and yet the Director General of the National Police continues to state that no one has disappeared.

Nimet Tanrikulu, founder member of the Turkish Human Rights Association (IHD) contradicts these statements and stresses that the phenomenon of disappearances appeared since the 1980 coup d'état: «*According to our estimates, the number of disappearances is over 2,000. The whole world agrees that disappearances during detention are one of the most serious violations of human rights. But, in our country, there are hundreds of mothers who don't know what has become of their children (...) We are determined to get clarification of the fate of those who have disappeared, and punishment of those who are guilty*» he said.

Since the beginning of their protest, that is for 190 weeks, the «Saturday Mothers» have never had permission to assemble. Over the last few weeks the police has started to take them into detention before they start their demonstration. For the first Saturday of 1999, the President of the Istanbul branch of IHD, Mr. Eren Keskin, a lawyer by training, and 5 of the mothers were removed by the police.

• **THE FATE OF SOME YOUNG PEOPLE IN TURKEY.** An article in the Turkish daily *Milliyet* of 3 January 1999 raises the fate of some young victims of the Turkish police and courts.:

The first case concerns Umit Kanli, a student at the Egean University Conservatory. Some days after the riots of Gazi, in 1995, Umit was arrested in front of his college and detained for «possessing posters and destruction of a cash distributor with Molotov cocktails» (Editors Note: Despite the statement in evidence by a bank official that the fire was caused by an electric fault of which the Fire Brigade had long before been advised). Following the beatings and torture he had suffered, Umit and a friend of his Baris Yilderim, were plunged into a prolonged coma, and their health is still affected. Despite which the State Security Court sentenced then to 12 and a half years jail for «membership of an illegal organisation».

In another case, Ismail Gokee, Secondary school student of 15 years of age, from Nazilli, was taken into detention and sentenced to 12 and a half years jail for «membership of an illegal party» (because of his age the sentence was later reduced to 7 and a half years jail). As for Ibrahim Gullu, 22 year old University student, a death sentence was demanded although the only evidence against his was the deposition of a policeman that Gullu had forcibly disarmed him. (Editors Note: The weapon in question was not found on him five minutes after his arrest).

As for the young people of Manisa, who had unrolled a poster in the Turkish Parliament to protest against the increase in University fees, they each received over ten years jail for «membership of an armed organisation» - without the slightest material evidence. Today they accuse the police of having savagely tortured them.

The case of Sinan Demirbas, a student at Elazig University, arrested and assassinated by the police after being taken into detention, had a conclusion worthy of Turkish justice. The police station maintained, in its report, that he had died from a fall in the staircase. Five years later a policeman confessed to having killed him during his detention.

The trial of Baki Erdogan, also dead while in detention in 1993 at Aydin, ended by the sentencing of the Provincial Assistant Police Director. of the Divisional Director and of 5 policemen to 7 years, 6 months and 20 days in prison. But they are still free and carrying out their duties.

The death of Serkan Eroglu, found hanged in the toilets of his University was at first presented as a suicide, but the autopsy revealed the presence of chloroform in his blood and so brought to light the fact that Serkan had been put to sleep and then hanged. It was thus a disguised assassination.

Finally, over three years have gone by since the death of the young journalist Metin Goltepe, who was arrested, tortured and assassinated while in

detention. All the policemen implicated in this murder were identified - and are still free.

• WASHINGTON REFUSES TO GUARANTEE LOAN FOR PURCHASE OF ARMORED VEHICLES BY TURKISH POLICE.

The public opinion campaign, waged for several weeks past by American Human Rights Defence NGOs against the sale of American armoured vehicles to the Turkish police has just won an important victory.

The American government has just refused to allow this sale to be financed by Extumbank, the bank asked by General Dynamics, that wishes to sell 140 armoured vehicles to the Turkish police. Exumbank, warned by the NGOs, had asked the State Department whether such a transaction was a violation of the Leahey Law in so far as certain units of the Turkish police had been accused of torture and other Human Rights violations. The State Department had asked it to refuse the requested loan. The Leahey law, adopted in 1996, bans the granting of American public funds for transactions liable to help foreign security forces involved in Human Rights violations.

• ANOTHER FORMER MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR THE PARTY FOR DEMOCRACY (DEP) BEHIND BARS. Naif Gunes, former Member of Parliament of the Party for Democracy (DEP, pro-Kurdish) for Siirt, was arrested on Tuesday 9th February 1999, by the Turkish authorities as soon as he stepped onto Turkish territory. Placed

in detention, there has been no information on his whereabouts. Mr. Gunes left Turkey for Germany before DEP's dissolution by the Turkish

Constitutional Court in June 1994. He was not a member of the «Kurdish Parliament in Exile».

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THE FIRST DELIVERY OF PATRIOT MISSILES TO TURKEY. (A.F.P., 20 January 1999), p.37.

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OCALAN IS AT ATHENS AIRPORT, ACCORDING TO TURKEY. (A.F.P., 1 February 1999), p.49.

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MOSCOW TO DISCUS ARMS PURCHASES. (A.P., 4 February 1999), p.59.

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F-16 FIGHTERS TURNED AWAY FROM BELGIUM A PLANE SUSPECTED OF CARRYING ÖCALAN. (A.F.P., 5 February 1999), p.59.

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