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THE SINGER AHMET KAYA HAS DIED IN PARIS



AHMET KAYA, the famous Kurdish singer died of a heart attack in Paris on 16 November at the age of 43.

Born on 28 October 1957 at Malayata in a Kurdish family, Ahmet Kaya committed himself, from an early age, to the political struggle for socialism and the rights of the Kurdish people. In the course of years he became the best known musician of protest songs and "authentic music".

Adulated by millions of Turks and Kurds who identified with his committed songs, that spoke not only to their hearts but to their intelligence as well, he was elected Best Musician of the Year in 1998. During the Prize giving ceremony, in February 1999, before the TV cameras reminded the audience that he was Kurdish and that he intended to also compose a song and make a film clip in Kurdish. This statement of his intentions earned him an

almost on screen lynching, detention and legal proceedings.

Persecuted, subjected to a series of charges for his 'criminal opinions' before the State Security Courts of the Turkish State, and liable to several years imprisonment, Ahmet Kaya was obliged, in June 1999, to go into exile in France. On 10 March 2000, one of his trials resulted in a sentence of 3 years 9 months imprisonment for "separatist propaganda" arising from a concert given in Berlin in 1993.

a resolute fighter for freedom, a lover of justice, Ahmet Kaya, to the very end and despite a terrible home sickness, wanted, uncompromisingly, to defend his ideals at the price of enormous personal and family sacrifices.

His death is an immense loss for the Kurdish people, for music and for the world. His powerful voice will be missed by millions of Kurds and Turks ground down and marginalised by the Turkish regime.

Fearing provocations by extreme Right gangs and harassment by the Turkish police, his family decided not to repatriate his mortal remains. *"Ahmet was not angry with Turkey. He opposed a system that threatened him with 13 years jail for his opinions and his songs and which forced him into exile. He had stolen nothing, had killed no one, was one of the biggest contributors to the country's inland revenue. His only crime was to demand equality of rights between Turks and Kurds, respect for Kurdish identity, for human dignity and freedom of expression. He died for this. Out of respect for his ideas and for his conception of dignity, I decided to bury him in Paris. He will rest there until Turkey becomes a democracy worthy of the name and until the day that Turkish public TV channels broadcast Kurdish music"* declared Mrs. Kaya at a Press Conference at the Kurdish Institute on 18 November.

The funeral took place on 19 November. The ceremony began at 11 am at the Kurdish Institute, of which he was an honorary member, where a mortuary chapel had been set

up. Thousands of Kurds and also many Turks, Armenians and French people came to pay their respects and sign the book of condolences. Starting from the Kurdish Institute, the funerary procession reached Père Lachaise at about 3 pm making its way laboriously through a crowd of about 15,000 friends and admirers who had gathered from all corners of the European continent. After speeches by Kurdish, Turkish and French public figures and by his wife, in accordance with Kurdish tradition two singers, Sivan Power and Ferhat Tunç, sang Kurdish elegies. Then Ahmet Kaya was buried accompanied by his own songs, sad and poignant, on death in exile and on freedom. His body lies a few yards from that of his friend, Yilmaz Güney, the great Kurdish film director, author of *Yol* who also died in exile.

The Kurdish satellite TV channel, Medya TV, broadcast Kaya's funeral live. During the broadcast, the streets of Kurdish towns and villages in Turkey were deserted. Most shops were closed. In many towns of Iranian and Iraqi Kurdistan there were also commemorative meetings which thus gave Ahmet Kaya the status of a national symbol of struggle for Kurdish freedom and identity.

As for the Turkish media, despite the dissident artist's immense popularity, they conformed to the instructions of the police and Army authorities by providing only a minimal coverage: broadcasting of factual information and some

extracts from interviews with family and friends, but no special programmes or broadcasting of his songs.

Finally, braving the disguised Turkish censorship, some friends of the deceased artist have just created an Internet site in Turkish (www.amhetkaya.com). For its part, the Kurdish Institute displays detailed information about Ahmet Kaya on its Internet site in French and English (www.institutkurde.org).

Below, by way of an *In Memoriam* are extensive extracts of an article by the Turkish democratic writer, Ahmet Altan, who, in the weekly *Aktuel* of the November 23, wrote in memory of the deceased artist:

He had just entered his forties and been sentenced to a life he disliked, in a country "whose alcoholic drinks I don't even enjoy". "I miss my home" "How I miss the glasses of raki shared with friends on my veranda, heated by a brazier with a broken leg" he used to say. But he was banned from returning home, because he had said "I want to sing in Kurdish". Then he had feverishly sought friends in the places of exile, which made even harder the road of return. If he had been born into a stronger, more robust society, it would have noticed his solitude and his infantile anger, so clearly felt in his revolted speeches and his songs, sung with clenched fist raised, and it would have embraced him once more.

We have all heard, without wincing, the song beginning with the words "On my death" — words that only assume their full meaning on the death of their author.

The other evening the rebellious head of Ahmet Kaya was saying on the screen "On my death, let no one say, behind my back that he didn't love his country. Myself, I love this country from Ardahan to Edirne".

It was a man who expressed himself before me. "On my death..." "On my death, let no one say that he didn't love his country" (...)

Who should an artist, who sang the songs of this country imagine that some would say, after him: "He didn't love his country"...

One evening, taking the mike, he had said "I am going to sing in Kurdish". For this innocent phrase he was branded a "traitor", sent into exile and insulted, to finally die in the prime of his life.

The first stone on the road to his death was that phrase "I am going to sing in Kurdish". He didn't even know how to speak Kurdish, but he was angry, in an infantile but foreseeable way. He loved to compose, to sing, to drink and talk amongst friends, unheedingly, with the sort of sweet liberty natural to children. (...)

In fact, he was like a great child, like all those who devote themselves to art, and, like many others in this country, he carried within him the wounds of his childhood and youth, the painful wounds that led him, at times to rage against society as a whole.

In an outburst he said "I am going to sing in Kurdish". And for these words we sent him into exile. We sentenced him to wander alone through the streets of cities "where he didn't even know the rain". He strolled through streets that were foreign to him, without ever passing a familiar face or smelling a well known odour.

During all those months, he abandoned himself to his loneliness. Whereas he was used to affection and admiration, he was left loveless. Each time more carried away, he made speeches which still further distanced him from the land he loved so much.

People were coming to forget this brilliant musician, and as if he was a political leader to note every one of his remarks, to make him bear another identity. The adventure that began with "I am going to sing in Kurdish" became more and more perilous.

After hundreds of songs, written, sung, listened to by millions of people, the man who had expressed the joys and sorrows of the men and women of this country had become "a traitor" for having wished to "sing in Kurdish". Through all his acts and gestures, all his remarks; step by step they set about hunting him to prove, yet more surely, his "treachery".

As for him, he saw he was being driven into a dead end but, out of sheer rage, he ran all the faster along this road. Each time faster and still faster yet.

After the stormy songs and speeches came dreary walks through streets where even the rain was foreign to him.

He missed his home. He missed his country. He came to realise that he would never be able to return to all the things he missed. And it hurt him (...)

There where he was born, people were afraid of words and songs. He had given these people sons of their joys and their sorrows, but today these same people would not forgive him. He had said "I am going to sing in

Kurdish" — and he had been sent into exile. While the rulers of his country branded him as a traitor, he probably felt that he himself had been betrayed by those who had formerly loved and admired him, by his friends and fellow citizens.

He took part in political meetings. He sang with this clenched fist held high. Even though the way back became ever harder, he was unable to control his fury. He was a singer. He was childlike. Zouled to the quick. (...).

He died in the arms of his wife and daughter, in a country whose language he could not speak. He died suddenly. He died like a child. Like all those who die in exile, he died devoured by loneliness. He has been buried in a country he didn't know. For saying he wanted to sing in Kurdish, he died abandoned. (...)

The danger of his singing in Kurdish has now been avoided. Ah! if only I knew how to sing — I'd sing a song in Kurdish for him. A song about loneliness, another about death. A song that said: "Love the children who sing". A song that would tell of someone whose last wishes were "On my death do not say I didn't love my country".

I could have sung a song in Kurdish for him — if I only knew how to sing. But he was never able to sing the song I am unable to sing. In a country where he didn't know the rain, he died alone, impetuous and melancholic.

There remains only a song that has not yet been sung but is waiting to be... Perhaps one day, on the day when that song will be sung, then perhaps he will forgive us.

THE EUROPEAN UNION OFFERS TURKEY A “PARTNERSHIP FOR MEMBERSHIP” THAT IGNORES THE KURDS

THE European Commission showed itself very critical of Turkey, reproaching it of continuing to disregard Human Rights but, at the same time, offering it “a *partnership for membership*” to help it progress. The annual progress report of the Commission on the candidate members, published on 8 November, is very severe regarding the Human and Minority Rights situation in Turkey. “*Many aspects of the global Human Rights situation remain worrying*” stresses the report. “*Torture and ill treatment are far from eradicated*” “*conditions in the prisons have not improved*” and “*freedom of expression as well as freedom of association and meeting are still regularly subject to restrictions*”. As for minorities, the European Commission is concerned that “*all Turks, whatever their ethnic origin*” should enjoy “*the same cultural rights*”. “*The situation in the South-East, where the population is predominately Kurdish, has not changed substantially*” notes the report.

However, so as not to offend the notorious “Turkish sensitivity” regarding the Kurdish question, the “*partnership for membership*” avoids any mention of the words “Kurd” or “Kurdish” or any allusion to the Kurdish minority, thus, in practice, “striking its colours” and

dodging the recurrent resolutions of the European Parliament on this issue, in particular the resolution of 12 June 1992 on the “*rights of the Kurdish people*”, passed practically unanimously. Clearly the Kurdish victims of massive and systematic violations of Human Rights in Turkey no longer even have the right to be described as such. Failing to ‘Europeanise’ Turkey, the Commission is ‘Turkising’ itself by submitting to Turkish official censorship, at the risk of arousing bitterness and despair amongst the 15 to 18 million Kurds in Turkey and the one million already living in the Union, from France to Sweden where they are, nevertheless, recognised as such, with their language, their identity and their culture in the majority of the member states of the Union.

Before the European Parliament, to which he went to present the report, Gunter Verheugen, the European Commissioner for enlargement, considered that “*Turkey must improve the situation of the Kurds and put an end to the State of Emergency in the four South-Eastern provinces*”. He described as “*violations of Human Rights*” the ban on “*the use of the Kurdish language in broadcasting*”. He also expressed the E.U.’s concern about the “*role played by the Army in political life through the National Security Council*”. Mr. Verheugen

felt it necessary to stress that one of the priorities of the “*partnership for membership*” was also to achieve “*the lifting of the State of Emergency in the South-East of the country and the recognition of cultural rights of ethnic minorities*”

The report, moreover, recognises that the granting of candidate status to Turkey, at the Helsinki summit in December 1999, created a dynamic for change in Turkish society and “*stimulated the forces for reform*”. “*The report on torture drawn up by the Turkish National Assembly’s Human Rights Commission is a concrete example*” stated Mr. Verheugen who also recalled that in September 2000, the Turkish Government had set “*priority objectives*” for reaching the political criteria required for membership of the Union.

Unlike the other twelve candidates, the report excludes the possibility of opening negotiations for membership with Turkey, which therefore remains just a candidate for membership. To help it to achieve its objectives, the European Commission proposed to Ankara “a *partnership for membership*” which would draw up a package of short and medium term priorities, in the political and economic fields, that Turkey will have to reach to fulfill the membership criteria.

Turkey welcomed the European Commission’s programme even as it stressed that it would ignore a passage on Cyprus. “*Turkey refuses the establishment of a link between its membership of the EU and the*

Cyprus issue and is determined to maintain its position " declared Sükrü Sina Gür, Turkish Government spokesman. İsmail Cem, Turkish Foreign Minister, for his part, stated that the paragraph on Cyprus *"had no validity for us"*. Ankara had insisted that the issue of the island, divided since the Turkish Army's occupation of its Northern third in 1974, should not appear in the document.

The People's Democratic Party (HADEP – pro-Kurdish) sharply criticised the European Union or having avoided the use of the words "Kurd" or "Kurdish" in its programme. *"The EU has not used the word 'Kurdish'. We consider this a lack. When there is a problem concerning a certain community, this problem should be defined by its name"*, said a HADEP communiqué. Despite this criticism, HADEP described the document as *"satisfactory"* overall, and considered that *"the achievement of these reforms will contribute to the democratisation of Turkey"*. In the opinion of Human Rights Watch, the *"partnership"* is not sufficiently clear and detailed on the issue of Human Rights.

Furthermore, the report by Philippe Morillon on Turkey's application for membership of the European Union, adopted by a very great majority on 14 November by the Foreign Affairs Commission, considers that Turkey does not, at present, fulfill the Copenhagen criteria and repeats its proposal for setting up discussion forums bringing together political leaders from the European

Union and Turkey as well as representatives of civil society.

The report urges the Turkish government *"to intensify its efforts towards democratisation, particularly its efforts regarding the separation of powers (in particular the impact of the Army on political life) and to apply the United Nations Conventions regarding political social and cultural rights it has recently signed"*.

Furthermore, the Foreign Affairs Commission demands that *"concrete measures for the protection of minority rights"* be added. Pending a reform making the Penal Code compatible with the principle of freedom of expression, it calls for an amnesty for Press "offenses". Similarly, the moratorium on the death sentence must be maintained pending rapid abolition.

The Foreign Affairs Commission recalls its concern for the recognition of the basic rights for the identities that make up the Turkish mosaic and, recalling the tragic past of the Armenian minority, calls for support for the

latter by the Government and National Assembly. It also demands that *"a peaceful solution, that respects Turkey's territorial integrity accompanied by indispensable political, economic and social reforms"* should be sought for the Kurdish conflict.

But the point that upset Turkey most was the Cyprus question. The Commission called upon *"the Turkish Government to [take part], without preconditions, in discussions between the Cyprus communities, Greece and Turkey so as to reach a negotiated, global, just and lasting settlement which would conform to the Security Council resolutions and the recommendations of the U.N. General Assembly"*. The Commission demands that Turkey *"withdraw its occupying forces from the Northern part of Cyprus"*. From Ankara's point of view, Cyprus is the knottiest part of the issue. The Turkish authorities have always said that they would not accept the linking of their membership, in any way, to the resolution of the Cyprus problem. And for a good reason – they want to keep the status quo ...

ANKARA : 4TH HADEP CONGRESS ; A NEW PRESIDENT AND NEW LEGAL PROCEEDINGS



ON 26 November, the People's Democratic Party (HADEP) elected its new President, Murat Bozlat, at a congress held under strong police and legal pressure. Murat Bozlat had already once Presided over the Party, before M. Demir, who was one of the

6 candidates who withdrew in his favour. M. Bozlat had been obliged to leave his post after being sentenced to jail for "separatist propaganda" last February. "We are following a policy of dialogue which is rallying all of Turkey" declared Mr. Bozlat to an excited audience, only a fraction of

which had been able to find room in the 3,000 seat indoor sports stadium. Over 50,000 people had travelled to Ankara (supervised by some 2,000) in 1,300 specially hired coaches to attend this congress – the fourth since the party was created in 1994.

Following this Fourth Congress, HADEP, which is already facing a threat of being banned for “organic links” with the PKK, was subjected to another investigation by the Ankara State Security Court. Many diplomats and representatives of European parties came for the Congress, including Miss Feleknaş Uca, a German Member of the European Parliament of Kurdish descent who tried to speak in Kurdish from the platform – but was prevented. A government inspector attended the Congress to officially report on its proceedings. Former Italian Prime Minister Massimo d'Alema sent a message that received great applause. The delegates also observed a minute's silence in memory of Ahmet Kaya “*who has left for the land of stars and flowers*”.

On the eve of the Congress, the HADEP leadership denounced a wave of arrest in their ranks. The President of the Adana Provincial organisation was called in for questioning, with eight of his assistants on 23 November. Fatih Sanli, and the principle officers of his party were released on the evening of the 24th, but four other members remain in jail and will be tried by the State Security Court for “help and propaganda on behalf of an illegal organisation”. The

Provincial Secretary of HADEP, Ahmet Yildiz, said that the summonses had begun in the province on 19 November, 48 hours before Ocalan's appeal to the European Human Rights Court. Mr. Yildiz also denounced the police pressures being exercised in the provinces of Hakkari, Van and Siirt, where the transport companies were obliged to refuse to hire out their coaches and where buses were unable to do their rounds.

On 14 November, the President of the People's Democratic Party (HADEP), Ahmet Turan Demir, was sentenced to six months jail for “*separatist propaganda*” by an Izmir State Security Court. “*Mr. Demir was sentenced for having made a speech*

containing separatist remarks in 1998 while he was Izmir provincial leader of HADEP” stated his lawyer Mr. Sedef Ozodogan.

According to the charge sheet, Mr. Demir, in his speech, promised to “*our martyrs who guide us along the road to freedom, to reach the objective to which their aimed as soon as possible*”. The court considered that he was alluding to the fighters of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK). But, according to Mr. Ozodogan he was alluding to the Kurdish political leaders who have been killed, not to PKK activists. Last

In February and in June last, Mr. Demir had already been sentenced to one year, and then to 3 years 9 months imprisonment on similar charges.

THE HEAD OF THE TURKISH INTELLIGENCE SERVICE: “EVERYONE ELSE HAS USED OCALAN – NOW ITS OUR TURN TO USE HIM”

ON 28 November, Senkal Atasagun, head of the Turkish Intelligence Service (MIT), in the course of an exceptional Press Conference given with the Prime Minister's approval, expressed himself in favour of Kurdish language television as a means of countering the “propaganda for independence of the Kurds”. The authorisation of Kurdish language broadcasts is the subject of a lively debate in Turkey since the publication, on 8 November of a European

Commission document listing the political and economic reforms Turkey has to carry out if it wants to join the E.U. Several of its items cover the Kurds (without directly naming them) and one of them calls for the lifting of the bans against the use of their mother tongue. But the National Action Party (MHP – neo-fascist) is opposed to Kurdish language broadcasts, regarding that they would stimulate aspirations for independence. The Prime Minister, Bulent Ecevit, recently stressed that the government would have to rapidly consider

this matter, and his Deputy, responsible for European affairs, Mesut Yilmaz, of the Motherland Party (ANAP) has argued in favour of broadcasts in Kurdish. Moreover, after the capture of Abdullah Ocalan, the MIT drew up a report for a National Security Council (MGK) meeting on 25 February 1999 in which it detailed the measures that would have to be taken in the Kurdish region. The report, which also includes cultural measures, had shaken the MGK at the time but many consider that the recent MIT statements follow the same trend.

In rare discussion with the Turkish press, Senkal Atasagun stressed that: "Medya-TV, which follows the line of the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) is watched by large numbers of people in the South East. It deforms reality. Would it not be better to compete with it?" The Medya-TV satellite broadcasts can be received all over Turkey.

Still on the same theme, Mikdat Alpay, the MIT's number two, who took part in the Press Conference, recalled his year's service on the Urfa criminal courts in 1965 to stress that at that time they had needed an interpreter for Arabic and Kurdish to understand the local population and that "this situation hasn't changed today. If you want to win over the people you must be able to be understood by them. But how is this possible? By sign language? If you want to win them over you must reach them. Their mother tongue is Kurdish. How

are you going to explain the facts to them in Turkish? We must be able to use Kurdish in the greater interest of the Turkish Republic in the same way as we have used Ocalan. So we must not consider this as if it is something we have been obliged to do, but something we want to do. Look – a theatre company playing in Kurdish and committed to Kurdish nationalism is one thing ± the use of the Kurdish language by the State to be understood by its citizens is something completely different. The Turkish Republic is incapable of winning the hearts of their mothers. According to some research, 60% of the mothers in the region do not know how to speak Turkish. We have never set up a system to win them over. This State does not know how to talk to mothers. If we had succeeded in winning them, the problem would never have lasted to our times."

Moreover, Mr. Atasagun stated that the position of the all-powerful Turkish Army was "100% in accordance with ours" and that the opposition to Kurdish language broadcasts came "principally from the politicians". "The Turkish Security forces have made a specially concerted effort. But time is short. This man (Ocalan) has been here for about two years already, but the majority of the things that should have been done have not been... We must abandon our habit of blaming the foreigner and outside factors when we have to share responsibility for our own mistakes. We must look inside ourselves more..."

Questioned as to whether the different components of the State had previously been made aware of the MIT's position, Mr. Atasagun stated: "When we were asked, we gave our views – the same as we have explained to you. We are equally opposed to the execution of Ocalan... Because it is not in Turkey's interest. It is not that we are afraid of the consequences of his execution, of clashes and chaos. But simply that Ocalan is more useful to us alive. Everyone has hated Ocalan. Why should we not, now, use him ourselves in Turkey's interest?" Furthermore, according to the MIT chief, the PKK, that announced a cease fire and the withdrawal of its troops in September 1999, "will continue to be a threat so long as it continues to have 4,500 men under arms abroad and 500 inside Turkey".

Following the statements of the intelligence services, the Prime Minister, Bulent Ecevit declared "those in command of the MIT are acting with full knowledge of the situation. That is why Atasagun's statements should not surprise us and should be beneficial". The MHP sharply criticised these statements through the defense Minister, Sabahattin Çakmakoglu who said "I do not think that this commits the Government".

The media evidently gave wide coverage to the MIT chief's statement, made following the HADEP Congress and in an atmosphere of strong popular feeling aroused by the death of Ahmet Kaya, driven into exile because he wanted to sing in

Kurdish. In the view of some editorial writers, S. Atasagun is Turkey's Andropov, who is not veiling the country's realities for ideological reasons

Reacting to all this, Mehmet Ali Birand wrote in his column in the *Turkish Daily News* of 29 October : "If this is the situation then who is opposed to it?... Seen from the outside, the Democratic Left Party (DSP) and the Motherland Party (ANAP), both coalition partners, seem to have a positive reaction whereas the National Action Party (MHP) as well as the Army are against... Now the MIT gives a counter argument and announces that the Army shares its views. And,

thanks to the Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit's statement it is clear that this declaration was made on the Prime Minister's instructions. It remains to be seen if the Army really does share these views. The Director of MIT meets the Chief of Staff every week and gives him his opinions. He is far too experienced to speak in this way before the press in a matter likely to be hotly contested in the General Staff... Ecevit is trying to weaken the MHP and the Army... Failing an intra-governmental decision, he is using the State institutions. That is our democratie à la Turca... Its not too serious. Lets take a few steps on certain questions – if not one way, then another.

and our informants " added Mrs. Roth. While saying she understood the need for some security during the visit of foreign members of Parliament to the Kurdish region, Mrs. Roth considered that the police had gone over the top. The German Ambassador to Ankara had to approach the Turkish Government to smooth the way and the Turkish police then kept at a discrete distance.

In the course of her visit to Diyarbakir, Mrs. Roth met Feridun Çelik, Mayor of Diyarbakir. Echoing the statement of the Turkish Deputy Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz, she declared "*The road to Europe goes by Diyarbakir... That is why I consider the Mayor of Diybekir as important as an ambassador*"

CLAUDIA ROTH'S VISIT TO LEYLA ZANA

INVITED to a conference in Turkey on 21 November organised by Initiative Against Crimes of Opinion, Mrs. Claudia Roth, German Member of the European Parliament and our own Vice-President, was allowed to visit Leyla Zana at the Ulucanlar Prison in Ankara, but was prevented from visiting the other three Kurdish former M.P.s imprisoned in the same jail. Mrs. Roth had been refused this visit last year.

Mrs. Roth also met Hikmet Samu Türk, Turkish Minister of Justice, Mesut Yilmaz, Deputy Prime Minister responsible for relations with the European Union, and Mehmet Akgül, President of the Parliamentary Human Rights Commission. Mrs. Roth and the German

delegation that accompanied her were then due to visit Diyarbakir, Mardin and Batman. Mrs. Roth stressed, in all her discussions, the progress that needs to be made with regard to democracy and the respect for human rights in Turkey.

In Diyarbakir, Mrs. Roth had a "rather violent argument" with the Turkish police in Diyarbakir. A team of policemen set about following the German Parliamentary Human Rights delegation every step of their way, continually filming them and taking notes of their discussions with the people they met on 23 November.

The five M.P.s in the delegation became indignant at what they perceived to be "*checking on us*

On her return, at a Press Conference given on 27 November, Mrs. Roth said "*There is no development regarding Human Rights in Turkey. But we will support Turkey's application for membership of the E.U. once the necessary reforms have been carried out. The Kurds must benefit from the rights of all minorities and their cultural identity must be preserved*".

Mrs. Roth's visit and statements provoked sharp criticism in Turkey, including from the Foreign Minister Ismail Cem who said her remarks were "disturbing and absurd". The press was unleashed against this "*insolent German woman*". The director of the daily *Sabah* called on the government to "*silence this German woman who claims be able to give us lessons*".

READ IN THE TURKISH PRESS : DON'T HANG OCALAN !

THE examination of Ocalan's appeal began on 21 November at the European Court for Human Rights. Over 21,000 Kurds and Turks demonstrated in Strasbourg in separate processions. Ocalan's supporters brought together, according to the police, 18,500 demonstrators, come with their wives and children from the four corners of Germany (Editor's Note: 100,000 according to the organisers). The opposing, sparser, procession mobilised about 2,800, according to the police.

The following article by Mehmet Ali Birand, a journalist on the English language Turkish daily Turkish Daily News, well illustrates the points of view and expectations of the different protagonists in the Ocalan case. Here are extensive extracts from the article entitled "We already know what the verdict will be" :

" Abdullah Öcalan's application to the European Court of Human Rights has resulted in a "first". For the first time ever, all parties in the case are expecting the same outcome.

The Kurdistan Worker's Party (PKK) is expecting the same thing...

Turkey is expecting the same thing...

The court is expecting the same thing...

Everybody both expects and wants the trial to go on for as long as possible. Everybody is acting with

different motives but with the same aim in mind.

If the verdict goes as expected, it will go like this:

"Turkey did not try Öcalan in accordance with all articles in the [European human rights] agreement..." What follows this sentence is even more important...

Ruling that Turkey did not try Öcalan in accordance with all articles in the agreement is going to mean that the European court will suffice itself with pointing out that the execution of a man not given a fair trial will be in contravention of the agreement... The rest is up to Turkey. Öcalan will either be given a retrial or will stay in prison for life.

Turkey does not want to execute him.

Turkey wants the European court to rule Öcalan's trial null and void and to call for a stay of execution.

Most of the country's leaders believe in the necessity of hanging Öcalan; they just do not express this belief openly.

You can even quite comfortably include the senior members of the Turkish Armed Forces (TSK), the National Intelligence Organisation (MIT) and the Interior Ministry among these people.

You might be surprised to learn that a large number of Nationalist Movement Party (MHP) members are of the same opinion.

They know that Öcalan's execution

will cause chaos in Turkey and severely disrupt the peace that has been so difficult to achieve. Nobody wants to rock this boat and return to a new state of war. Those who are in the minority are not able to make themselves heard.

The only problem that the Turkish political and security structures have is the possibility of others granting a stay of execution to Öcalan. Nobody has the courage to stand up and say, "It is in the national interest not to hang him". Some are afraid of losing votes and are thinking about the reaction of the grieving families of fallen soldiers.

It is for this reason then that Turkey both wants the trial to drag on...

The PKK think the same way but for entirely different reasons. The organisation knows that should Öcalan be executed they will fall into even greater disarray. Öcalan has a symbolic quality. His execution will destroy this mystique and will see the start of a major internal power struggle. Furthermore, in spite of everything, Öcalan has a certain influence within the EU. This will also be lost if he hangs.

Along with this there are those within the PKK who want Öcalan out of the way permanently... They believe this will provide the PKK with a reason to fight on.

With the exception of a small minority, the majority of the PKK wants the European court to overturn the execution order.

With the exception of those with ill intentions, the powers in the region (including Syria, Iran and Iraq) all want to see Öcalan saved from the gallows. They all have the same reason too. They know that with

Ocalan's execution the PKK will come back to life and the return to a state of conflict will disturb all of them. Their relations with Turkey will become strained again...

The European court knows the symbolic nature of this case and the repercussions its verdict will cause. It

knows that should it rule, "Turkey gave him a fair trial", then Ankara will be forced to hang him, as much as it doesn't want to. This is because the agreement allows Turkey to do this...

For all these reasons then you can see now what the verdict is going to be."

AS WELL AS...

• THE EUROPEAN HUMAN RIGHTS COURT FINDS TURKEY GUILTY OF VIOLATION OF LIFE.

On 14 November, the European Human Rights Court found Ankara guilty of "violation of the right to life" of a man who disappeared after his arrest by the police in 1993 in Cizre. The petitioner, Besir Tas, alleged that his son, Muhsin Tas, who disappeared while in detention, had been killed by the police, who had also tortured him. Mr. Tas, who lives in Tarvan, also complained that no effective investigation had been carried out into his son's disappearance.

The Court, which did not consider the charge of torture proven as regards Muhsin Tas, nevertheless considered that there were grounds for "presuming that he had died after his arrest by the police". It also concluded that no investigation "had been carried out regarding his disappearance at the time".

Furthermore, the Court found Ankara guilty of "torture and of inhuman and degrading treatment" of Besir Tas, considering that the latter had suffered from the

authorities' behaviour that they judged indifferent and insensitive.

The European Judges granted £ st. 20,000 damages to the heirs of Muhsin Tas, £ st. 10,000 moral damages to the plaintiff and £ st. 14,795 for legal costs.

Ankara has paid \$ 3 million over the last 5 years for 45 cases in which it was found guilty by the European Court for Human Rights. The majority of the cases related to Kurdistan, 14 for violation of freedom of expression, 7 for "unsolved" murders, 6 for torture and degrading treatment, 3 for unfair trial, 2 for banning of a political party, and 2 regarding the composition of the State Security Courts (DGM).

• **A MESSAGE OF COOPERATION FROM SADDAM HUSSEIN TO THE TURKISH GOVERNMENT.** Turkey is engaged in an increasingly intense flirtation with Saddam Hussein. The Turkish Press has announced a further phase in the relations between Baghdad and Ankara, which claims to

have lost \$ 40 billion since the embargo was imposed by the United Nations.

Thus Tunca Toskay, Turkish Minister for Foreign Trade went to Baghdad on 30 October with a delegation of eleven people, including Fuat Miras, President of the Chamber of Commerce and of the Turkish Stock Exchange, thus inaugurating the first flight to Iraq by the Turkish National air carrier (Turkish Airlines). They were welcomed with great pomp by Mohammed Saleh, Iraqi Trade Minister. Iraqi President, Saddam Hussein delivered a personal message to the Turkish Government: "You have pushed the European borders right up to our gates. You do not need to go looking for natural gas thousands of kilometres from here. Our resources in oil and natural gas are at your disposal and our ports are yours".

Turkey decided to alter the status of its diplomatic representation in Baghdad to allow "humanitarian flights" to the Iraqi capital, to open a second border crossing point and re-establish rail traffic between the two countries. Ankara is to supply technical equipment to Iraqi civil aviation and also train its personnel in exchange for which services supplied to Turkish Airlines will not be charged.

• **THE TURKISH COURT OF APPEALS CONSIDERS THAT A NEWS REPORT IN KURDISH IS NOT A CRIME.** The 10th Chamber of the Turkish Court

of Appeals, on 16 November, ruled that the "partial" broadcasting of conversations in Kurdish in the course of a news report on television was not a violation of Turkish law. In this case, the RTUK (the Turkish TV watchdog), informed by the Diyarbakir Directorate of the Police, had complained that CAN-TV a local Diyarbakir channel, had allowed some remarks in Kurdish to slip into a programme in Turkish. The Court of Appeals justified its "lenient decision" by the fact that "the programme in question had only contained an infinitely small part in another language than that of the official language, Turkish".

• **THE TURKISH PARLIAMENT PROLONGS THE STATE OF EMERGENCY IN FOUR KURDISH PROVINCES.** The Turkish Parliament, on 21 November, decided to prolong the State of Emergency existing in 4 Kurdish provinces, whose lifting is one of the measures required by the European Union for Turkey's eventual membership.

The provinces involved are Tunceli, Diyarbakir, Hakkari and Sirnak. The measure applies for four months, as from 30 November. The state of emergency is thus renewed for the 41st time.

The decision came on the same day as the European Human Rights Court began examining a complaint filed by the PKK chief, Abdullah Ocalan, sentenced to death in Turkey in June 1999, for separatism and treason. The PKK had, in September 1999, officially ended its armed struggle to

secure the creation of an independent Kurdish State at Ocalan's request, but the Turkish Army is determined to continue hunting down its fighters to the end, unless they surrender to it.

The lifting of the State of Emergency is amongst the "medium term" political measures demanded by the "application partnership" set up by the European Commission. The 4 provinces have been placed, since 1987, under the rule of the office of the State of Emergency Governor in Diyarbakir, responsible for coordinating the fight against the PKK.

• **THE TURKISH GENERAL STAFF AUTHORISES, AS AN EXCEPTIONAL MEASURE, JOURNALISTS TO VISIT IRAQI KURDISTAN.** Some of the most prestigious Press Agencies, such as Reuters, the BBC and AP have been authorised, by the Turkish General Staff, to visit Iraqi Kurdistan, according to the Turkish daily *Milliyet* of 19 November. Turkomen leaders explained this exceptional authorisation declaring "authorisation was given to show the existence of Turkomen in Northern Iraq as well as Kurds". The second Turkoman Congress began in Irbil on 15 November. The journalists had been refused permission by the Turkish army at the time of the first Congress.

• **ARMS: BOEING WINS A \$ 1.5 BILLION CONTRACT WITH TURKEY.** Turkish Prime

Minister, Bülent Ecevit announced, on 27 November that Turkey had finally negotiated a \$ 1.5 billion contract with the American firm Boeing for the supply of at least six radar control planes (AWSCs) to strengthen its capacity for radar surveillance and control of the country. The first delivery is planned for 2003. The prime Minister also specified that, in the event of failing to reach agreement with Boeing, negotiations would be opened with the American firm Raytheon Corp.

• **READ IN THE TURKISH PRESS: THE MILITARISM OF THE TURKISH PRESS.**

On the occasion of the appearance of his new book, "Medyamorfoz", the well known Turkish journalist and academic Ragip Duran, granted an interview with the daily paper *Yeni Gündem*, which appeared in its 27 November issue. Here are some extracts:

Q: In your book, you particularly stressed the militarism of Turkish media. What can a Turkey that is candidatr for membership of a civilian European Union do with a militarist media?

A: The origin of the media's militarism lies in the fact that they are politically and ideologically tied to the Armed Forces General Staff. The militarism of the Turkish media is noticeable not only in what it publishes but in its internal organisation. The main front page heading and even of a news item on page seven is directly decided through the lips of whoever is the top man on the paper. In other words, newspapers are run in exactly the same way as a barracks. I would

even say that the papers are more militarist than the Defence Ministry. If Turkey really envisages such a membership (to the E.U.) it must organise the demilitarisation of society as a whole, the media included.

Q: In Turkey, the press organs' relations with Ankara influence editorial policy. The concept of "media groups" has given way to that of "interest groups". Are there other countries where this takes place so blatantly?

A: This is not specific to Turkey. The representatives of political parties also have the right to express their opinions. But the difference is that, in Turkey, the media are not linked to the government but to the State. For example, during the Refahyol coalition {**Editor's Note:** The coalition government between Mrs. Çiller's True Path Party (DYP) and Necmettin Erbakan's Prosperity Party (the since 'disolved' islamist Refah)} as acolytes of the secular Atatürkist cult, they succeeded in laying the ideological basis of the post-modern type of *ccup d'état* with

the help of the Turkish Army. There is yet another Turkish particularity in that the independent media are entirely committed to the State. If you hide the names of the most important papers and of the journalist writing the articles, you would be completely unable to tell in which paper an article appeared. Because they all say exactly the same thing. All try to pour out the politico-ideological orientations of the State and make ideological propaganda. There is an appalling poverty in all this. Everyone feeds from the same trough. And that trough is the official ideology. But Turkish official ideology is neither very rich nor varied nor is it liberal and democratic. This situation tends to screw everyone into their place in society. This cannot occur in the West. Obviously, in the West each paper has its own ideological preferences, but they are all different from one another.

• **THE EUROPEAN HUMAN RIGHTS COURT FINDS TURKEY GUILTY OF VIOLATION OF THE RIGHT TO LIFE.** On 14 November, the European Human Rights Court found Ankara guilty

of, in particular "violation of the right to life" of a man who disappeared after his arrest by police in Cizre. The appellant, Besir Tas, alleged that his son, Muhsin, who disappeared while in detention, had been killed by the police who had also tortured him. Mr. Tas, who lives in Tatvan, also regretted that no enquiry had been carried out into his son's disappearance.

The Court, which did not find proved the accusations of torture on Muhsin Tas, nevertheless considered that there were grounds for "presuming that he had died following his arrest by the police". It also concluded that "no investigation had been carried out into the disappearance at the time".

Moreover, the Court found Ankara guilty of "torture and of inhuman and degrading treatment of Besir Tas, considering that the latter had suffered from the behaviour of the who, it considered had been indifferent and insensitive about his concern.

Turkey and Russia promise closer cooperation

Turkey Update November 1, 2000

Long time rivals, Turkey and Russia appeared determined to leave aside their differences and concentrate on developing cooperation during the recent three-day visit by Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov. "We want cooperation instead of competition with Russia," Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit said after talks with his Russian counterpart.

There are indeed many areas where the two neighbors share common interests. Turkish contractors are very active in Russia while Moscow is Turkey's main supplier of natural gas. Commercial exchanges between the two countries reached \$2 billion in the first six months of this year, an increase of 70 % compared to the same period last year. Energy cooperation was one of the main focus during the Russian premier's visit. Kasyanov travelled to the Black Sea port of Samsun to inspect the site of the ambitious Blue Stream pipeline project which, by 2007, will supply 16 billion cubic meters of much needed natural gas every year through a pipeline running under the Black Sea. First output is expected at the end of next year. In the meantime, to alleviate Turkey's acute shortage, Moscow plans to export more gas through the existing pipeline which meanders through Ukraine and Eastern Europe.

The Turkish government, which has already agreed to buy electricity from Georgia, also discussed with Kasyanov the possibility of buying 100 million Kwh per month from Russia through the Georgian grid. Due to a severe drought which has affected the production of hydro-electrical power, Turkey faces an unprecedented electricity deficit this winter. Officials have already warned the Turkish public that compulsory power cuts may be necessary. While the Blue Stream will help Turkey overcome its energy shortfall, it will also increase its dependence on Moscow. The US administration, as well as many Turkish officials, favor a rival project, the Trans-Caspian Pipeline or TCP, which would bring natural gas from Turkmenistan through a pipeline under the Caspian Sea. The project, which would allow Turkey to diversify its energy sources, is still under consideration but its implementation is likely to be delayed by the Blue Stream which got under way much sooner than expected thanks to Russia's determination.

The TCP is further threatened by an agreement signed between Turkmenistan and Russia. On this issue, Ankara and Moscow's interests diverge sharply. The implementation of the deal is still conditional upon Ashkhabad and Moscow reaching an agreement on price, but it could divert most of Turkmenistan's natural gas supplies through Russia.

After the fall of the Soviet Union, Turkey tried to develop strong ties with the Turkic republics of Central Asia. President Ahmet Necdet Sezer recently toured the region, stopping in several capitals for talks focusing on energy and security. The American government has supported Turkey's efforts in the hope of anchoring the former Soviet states in the Western camp and reducing their political and commercial dependence on Moscow. The Clinton administration has strongly backed an expensive oil pipeline project between the Azerbaijani capital Baku and the Turkish terminal of Ceyhan, which would allow crude from the Caucasus to reach Western markets through Turkey. The plan, deemed costly by oil companies, is opposed by Russia which wants Azerbaijani oil to be exported through its Black Sea port of Novorossisk. Turkey's efforts in Central Asia have had limited success, although Ankara has established strong ties with Caucasus states such as Azerbaijan and Georgia. Russia's influence in the region is on the ascendant again thanks to a diplomatic offensive launched by President Vladimir Putin.

The Russian prime minister said there was plenty of scope for understanding between Turkey and Russia. "In some areas which could be seen as a point of rivalry such as energy and others subjects we are moving towards partnership." Russia also hopes to become a major supplier of military equipment to Turkey. A Russian-Israeli consortium bid for a \$4.5 billion helicopter deal, which seems likely to be won by the American firm Bell. Contentious subjects were also discussed. In the past, the Turkish government had accused Moscow of supporting the Kurdish rebels while Moscow viewed with suspicion Turkey's sympathy for the Chechen fighters. Now that a degree of calm has been restored in Chechnya and in Southeastern Turkey, both countries have agreed to cooperate more closely on "terrorism" through regular contacts between their security forces. Political instability in the Caucasus may well strain Turkey and Russia's ties again in the future but for the time being strong commercial interests seem to dominate their relations.

New Iraq Policy: Yes, More Mr. Nice Guy U.S. Forbears on Oil Pricing, Now on 'No Fly' Zone; Why Martyr Baghdad?

Wall Street Journal
November 1, 2000

By Neil King Jr. and Bhushan Bahree

WASHINGTON-If Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein is looking for a fight with President Clinton, he's not going to get one. Not this week, at any rate. The Clinton administration said yesterday that it has no problem with Iraqi plans to begin domestic commercial flights within the country's northern and southern "no fly" zones. And on Monday, the U.S. put up no resistance to an Iraqi ultimatum to the United Nations that all Iraq's international oil sales be conducted in euros and not dollars.

The U.N. agreed to Iraq's demand, removing the threat of an interruption of petroleum exports from Iraq. The U.S. acquiescence on both counts adds to a lengthening list of recent Iraqi victories on the sanctions front as countries around the world seek better ties with Baghdad. The steps also illustrate how far the U.S. is willing to go to avoid the repeated dust-ups that have characterized relations with Baghdad since Iraq invaded Kuwait in 1990. The Clinton administration has done its best to keep a lid on confrontations with Iraq, trying to keep the issue out of the news and thus out of the presidential campaign. With Election Day less than a week away, that desire is even more intense. However, U.S. officials also acknowledge that the administration's hard line toward Baghdad, including once-frequent strikes against Iraqi military sites, has strained international cohesion within the United Nations and helped build sympathy toward Iraq, even among many of Washington's allies.

The U.N.'s agreement to Iraqi demands on oil contracts, made late Monday by the U.N. Iraq Sanctions Committee, came soon after Iraq agreed to extend its deadlines for the switch in currencies to Monday from today. But the end of this arcane dispute can only be a prelude to others, oil-industry analysts say. Even though Iraq has been exporting increasing quantities of oil under U.N. regulations for the past four years, it is only now that the spare production capacity of all other petroleum producers and exporters adds up to less than Iraqi exports. That gives Iraq newfound leverage in any negotiations, because the U.N. would be loath to provoke Iraq into suspending oil exports. Iraq's no-fly zones, which are patrolled by U.S. and British jets, have served for nearly a decade as a cornerstone of U.S. efforts to contain Saddam Hussein. The U.S., Britain and France originally imposed the flight restrictions after the 1991 Gulf War. But U.S. officials now say they have no objection to Iraqi commercial flights within the zones so long as the U.N. is notified of each flight 48 hours in advance. Besides, they say, commercial flights in the area weren't prohibited in the first place and pose no threat to people on the ground.

Enforcing the no-fly zones, a task that has fallen increasingly in recent months to Air Force reserve pilots, costs the U.S. \$1 billion a year. Pentagon officials said the presence of commercial jets wouldn't make its mission significantly more difficult. "It will cause us to make sure that we are doubly sure of what we are seeing. It is by no means a show stopper," said Craig Quigley, a Pentagon spokesman. He said the Pentagon's biggest concern is that the Iraqis themselves might mistakenly shoot down one of the commercial jets. "The Iraqis tend to fire fairly indiscriminately," he said.

Before Iraq can resume flights, it would have to retrieve and refurbish its commercial planes from Iran and Jordan, where they were scattered before the Gulf War. [Ed: Reuters, from Baghdad, Oct 30, reported that flights would begin Sunday.] Jordan would likely accommodate any request from Baghdad to take the planes back, but that might not be the case with Iran, which fought a long and bloody war with Iraq in the 1980s. Iraqi Airways officials have said in the past that commercial flights could begin within a month. Though the airline hasn't operated for a decade, pilots and engineers train on outdated simulators and take apart and reassemble old engines. Iraq appears to be taking care to avoid overt confrontations, oil analysts say, because it wants to continue exporting oil and keep its market share and the confidence of its customers. Still, that doesn't prevent Saddam Hussein from thumbing his nose at the U.S. and trying to increase his appeal in the Mideast by standing up to Washington. Iraq has some help from such permanent members of the U.N. Security Council as France, Russia, and China, which would like to see an end to the sanctions. Indeed, it was France that insisted the U.N. sanctions committee had no authority to block Iraq's demand that it be paid in euros. Saddam Hussein's ultimate aim may be to cause a rift on the issue of sanctions between Britain and the U.S., the two permanent members of the Security Council that have taken the hardest line on the matter.

Meanwhile, Iraq is pushing Russian and Chinese companies to flout U.N. sanctions by developing some of its oil fields. The Russians and Chinese, who have signed contracts to develop some fields, apparently haven't been willing to contravene U.N. rules. Now, Iraqi oil officials are indicating that these contracts may no longer be valid, implying that the fields could be given to someone else to develop. The Iraqi state-run weekly al-Rafidain has quoted oil minister Amer Mohammed Rashid as saying that Baghdad planned "alternate measures to develop the oil fields" because the Russians and Chinese "have been reluctant to honor their commitments." On another front, the U.S. has also fought to prohibit the sale of any technology to Iraq that might help it strengthen its military or build weapons of mass destruction. The U.S. argues that those core sanctions remain firmly in place. —Greg Jaffe in Washington contributed to this article.

Amid Mideast Violence, Iraq Reaps the Benefits

Arabs Angry at West Show Their Support

By Susan Sachs
New York Times Service

CAIRO — A growing number of Arab entertainers, intellectuals, politicians and business people have been flying off to Baghdad over the past two weeks, thumbing their noses at international sanctions and giving the Iraqi government a shower of publicity after its 10 years of near isolation.

The collective enchantment with Iraq is a spillover from the recent outbreak of Palestinian-Israeli violence, which has prompted a resurgence of public support for the idea that the West, led by the United States, behaves badly toward the Arab world.

That has never been far from the oratorical surface. But again, to the obvious satisfaction of the President Saddam Hussein of Iraq, the rallying cry for people from across the Arab political spectrum is "double standard," a shorthand reference to what is seen as U.S. reluctance to hold Israel to account for its treatment of Palestinians.

To express their disaffection, in a dozen instances, people in Lebanon, Egypt, Syria, Libya, Yemen and Jordan have not only embraced the Palestinian cause but have also chartered airplanes to fly to a hero's welcome at Saddam International Airport. Iraq reopened the airport in August as a challenge to the UN sanctions imposed after its invasion of Kuwait in 1990.

The latest to bow to the public mood was Prime Minister Ali Abu Ragheb of Jordan. He flew to Baghdad on Wednesday to attend a trade fair aimed at "promoting the good relations between the two countries." Mr. Ragheb, who took 100 Jordanian journalists and politicians with him, is the highest-ranking Arab official to arrive by air since the embargo went into effect.

In the view of the Clinton administration, some of the flights have violated the sanctions because they did not deliver aid for civilians or did not receive advance UN clearance. Other countries, notably France and Russia, have argued that civilian flights were never specifically banned, although no one tested the point until recently.

Some who have recently made the journey say the point is to contrast U.S. support for the Israeli government of Prime Minister Ehud Barak with U.S. opposition to lifting the embargo on Iraq.

"We are sending a message to Barak and Sharon that we shall not stand with our arms tied while you are killing Palestinians," said Mohammed Moneib, a Cairo lawyer who organized a flight to Baghdad last weekend for about 150 Egyptian celebrities, referring to the Israeli prime minister and to Ariel Sharon, head of the opposition Likud party in Israel.

Iraq has responded to the recent gush of Arab political succor by stepping up its campaign to have the sanctions lifted or to undermine them. It announced Monday that the state-owned airline, Iraqi Airways, would resume some domestic service on Nov. 5.

The airline canceled all internal flights in 1992 when the United States and Britain instituted "no-flight" zones aimed at protecting rebellious Kurds in the northern part of Iraq and Shiite Muslims in the south from attacks by Iraqi military planes and helicopters.

With stronger Arab public support, Iraq has also found a newly receptive audience for its assertion that it is the only true defender of Arab and Palestinian interests.

Over the past week, Iraq has been sending food and supplies for the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. And as Arab doctors have flown in with medicines for Iraqis, the Iraqis welcomed a Palestinian plane that brought several people wounded in clashes with Israelis to Baghdad for medical treatment.

Still, the public clamor of support is unlikely to translate into open sanctions-busting by Arab governments, most of which have urged the United Nations to lift sanctions but have pledged to follow the international rules.

Arab governments also have decidedly mixed views on Mr. Saddam.

While several of the smaller Arab states have re-established diplomatic relations with Iraq over the past few years, the West's main allies, like Egypt, have not reopened their embassies.

The Iraqi president's constant badgering of his fellow Arab leaders has not helped relations. After the emergency Arab summit meeting last month to respond to the Palestinian-Israeli violence, the Iraqi government urged the overthrow of Arab governments. The demand was particularly stinging because the Arab League's invitation to Iraq to attend a summit meeting was the first in nearly 10 years.

Arab governments will nevertheless

be obliged to take account of the public mood and to offer support for the Iraqi people, said Soliman Awaad, director of multinational relations in the Egyptian Foreign Ministry, adding: "We are under tremendous pressure from public opinion — and I'm not confining this to Egypt only, but all through the region as well as from our civil society — which is being promoted by the West and the UN."

The sanctions on Iraq have become a constant irritant at the United Nations, particularly between Security Council members with different views on how to measure Iraqi compliance with the requirement that it no longer produce or store any weapons of mass destruction. Iraq has refused entry to weapons inspectors.

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"Darker clouds, a few gleams yet"

(Turkey's Rights Situation Viewed)

Nov 2nd 2000 The Economist

ANKARA - THE European Commission is poised to announce a list of the conditions Turkey has to meet before it can start negotiations to join the EU. Chief among them is the need to take some clear steps to improve its human-rights record. Hopes that things would improve under the coalition government led by the left-leaning Bulent Ecevit, who took over the prime ministership a year and a half ago, have so far proved largely empty. The EU's acceptance of Turkey last December as an official candidate for membership has not helped, either. "Things are not only as bad as ever; in some departments they are getting worse," says Yavuz Onen, who chairs Turkey's Human Rights Foundation.

Mr Onen's pessimism will have grown after the unexpected ejection last week as head of parliament's human-rights commission of Sema Piskinsut, a member of Mr Ecevit's Democratic Left party. During her three years at its helm, Mrs Piskinsut and the commission have issued a series of courageous and widely publicised reports which have deeply embarrassed the government and its security forces with their graphic descriptions of torture. During her impromptu inspections of nearly 600 prisons, Mrs Piskinsut (who was a doctor before going into politics) interviewed nearly 9,000 prisoners, examining some of them herself. Facing down the policemen who guard its entrance, Mrs Piskinsut brought into parliament torture implements she had collected from police stations, such as the "Palestine hanger", from which prisoners are hung by their arms. They remain on display in her office.

Despite the public outcry, Mr Ecevit has yet to explain why Mrs Piskinsut lost her job. Most Turks believe that the prime minister removed her from her post after being badgered by hardliners within Turkey's security forces. Open references to the security forces' alleged role in heroin trafficking will not have helped Mrs Piskinsut's case.

The chairmanship of the human-rights commission is now set to pass to the right-wing Nationalist Action Party, a partner in Mr Ecevit's coalition, which plans a "new approach" by examining "human-rights abuses in Chechnya, Belgium, Sweden and Norway". Turkey's generals, who like to shape politics through the seats they occupy on the National Security Council, share this party's belief that some of the reforms sought by the EU would eventually lead to the dismemberment of the Turkish state.

Now the generals are presumably hoping that Turkey's first Islamist prime minister, Necmettin Erbakan, whom they squeezed out of office in 1997, will be sent to jail after his conviction under article 312 of the penal code for "inciting religious and ethnic hatred" in a speech he made six years ago in the predominantly Kurdish province of Bingol.

Turkey's 12m or so Kurds have not fared much better. For all the EU's exhortations, their hopes of being allowed to set up their own schools and radio and television stations are unlikely to be realised any time soon. Three Kurdish mayors elected last year are among scores of Kurdish politicians facing trial over allegations that they colluded with the violent separatists of the Kurdistan Workers Party, the PKK. Their party, HADEP, faces a constitutional ban on similar charges.

Yet the scene is not wholly bleak. The death sentence passed on Abdullah Ocalan, the PKK's captured leader, has not been carried out. Turkey's justice minister, Hikmet Sami Turk, has promised that the death sentence will be scrapped altogether at the end of the year. Mr Ecevit and his coalition partners are discussing an amnesty, also by the end of the year, for thousands of prisoners, including political ones. Even better, perhaps, human-rights groups readily acknowledge that, although torture remains widespread, both the number of people who die while in police custody and the number of "mystery killings" have steadily declined over the past four years. Indeed, they have all but ceased since Mr Ocalan's renunciation in September 1999 of his armed fight for Kurdish independence.

For many Turks, the most encouraging development of all was the election in May of a former constitutional court judge, Ahmet Necdet Sezer, as Turkey's new president. The increasingly popular Mr Sezer has repeatedly spoken of the need for constitutional and democratic reform. He said it eloquently in parliament last month, when he argued that Turkey ought to raise its standards of democracy "not because the EU is demanding these changes, but because this is what all Turkish citizens deserve." Plucky Mrs Piskinsut was among those clapping hardest at the end of his three-hour speech.

* * * * *

Foreign Firms Flock to Baghdad for Trade Fair

Agence France Presse November 2, 2000

BAGHDAD: Sanctions-hit Iraq hosted hundreds of companies from 45 countries on Wednesday at the opening of its annual Baghdad international trade fair, after many of the participants flew in despite a UN air embargo.

Organisers boasted a turnout of more than 1,500 firms, a record for the 10 years that Iraq has been under sanctions for its invasion of Kuwait.

An unprecedented tally of 14 ministers and senior officials from Arab countries took part in the opening ceremony of the 33rd edition of the fair, one of the organisers told AFP.

The fair, opened by Iraqi Vice President Taha Yassin Ramadan, saw eight countries make their debut: Armenia, Belgium, Brazil, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Romania and Venezuela.

Two Syrian ministers were among the last to fly in, raising to eight the flurry of flights into Baghdad since Tuesday, while Jordan's Prime Minister Ali Abu Ragheb was due later Wednesday.

Abu Ragheb is the first Arab head of government to visit Iraq since the 1991 Gulf War, further easing its isolation.

"This is all a large qualitative step for Iraq which has managed to break the embargo," said a western diplomat posted in Baghdad. "The large turnout and number of planes have turned Baghdad into an open capital, not one under siege."

Since Baghdad airport reopened in mid-August, more than 40 planes have landed carrying humanitarian aid as well as businessmen and politicians, in the face of a stony silence from Washington. The United States had condemned the initial Russian and French flights that opened the floodgates.

In time for the fair, Russia sent 250 deputies, oil executives and other industrialists by plane, while more than 100 French companies are taking part in the 10-day exhibition.

British Foreign Office minister Peter Hain on Tuesday criticised the stream of solidarity flights, saying they benefited only President Saddam Hussein and not the Iraqi people. "Those that are instituting commercial flights and other such measures have to ask themselves: 'Are they actually helping to end this conflict, or are they helping to perpetuate it by maintaining the present regime in power?'" said Hain.

The fair has this year been put under the banner of the intifada, the uprising in the Palestinian territories, and there were several enormous posters of Al-Aqsa mosque and Palestinian "martyrs" killed in clashes with Israeli forces.

A giant portrait of Saddam, in military uniform, took centre stage behind the main rostrum to be used for speeches.

Alongside was a painting of Saladin, a Kurdish warrior who commanded Egyptian and Syrian troops in the Muslim victory in the 1187 battle for Jerusalem and who hailed from Tikri, the same town as the Iraqi leader.

Foreign businessmen and investors will be jostling for position in the Iraqi market, lured by a country of 22 million people with the world's second largest oil reserves after Saudi Arabia. Iraq has since late 1996 sold crude under UN supervision in a humanitarian programme which authorises the exports to finance imports of food, medicine and other essential goods including oil industry spare parts.

With world oil prices running high and a UN cap on export levels scrapped, the programme has generated a windfall this year, although most of Iraq's contracts still have to be approved by a UN sanctions committee.

Grabbing the initiative, Iraq has stepped up efforts to erode the sanctions and it plans to resume internal flights on Sunday. Baghdad has also decided to switch to the euro for its foreign trade transactions, including oil exports, after dumping the dollar as the currency of an enemy state.

Syria and Iraq, meanwhile, plan to reopen their oil pipeline later this month, in apparent defiance of the sanctions regime, the Middle East Economic Survey reported on Tuesday.

* * * * *

Susurluk Key Players Still Active on 3rd Anniversary

2000'de Yeni Gundem 03 Nov 00

by Bircan Degirmenci

The date is 3 November 1996. The place is the Susurluk District of Balıkesir. There was a car accident, in which a Mercedes and a truck were involved. Three people died and one was severely injured. Even though at first this seemed like a usual traffic accident, it was immediately determined that this was a very important "accident." This is because a police superintendent and a deputy were together with a person, on whom the Interpol had issued a red bulletin.

This was the snapshot of the murky state in Turkey. The incident was reflected to the media as an explosion. Every single day a new name was added to the Susurluk scandal, which revealed the network of sordid relationships in Turkey. The Prime Minister's Supervision Council established the Susurluk Commission. A great number of well-known people -- from politicians to bureaucrats -- were mentioned in the Commission's report. A year after the incident, the Istanbul DGM [State Security Court] Chief Prosecutor's Office brought a suit against these people. The trial of 14 people still continues.

The hearings turned into the meeting places of the suspects, who dressed as if they were going to a cocktail party and who arrived at the courthouse in their brand new cars. These actors who laughed with happiness and made joyful remarks during the hearings were lifted on the shoulders of the people after the hearings. People cried out slogans such as "Turkey is proud of them!"

The Susurluk scandal, which clears every new name that is added to the file, continues.

The Following Is the Family Tree of the Susurluk scandal:

Abdullah Catli

Catli was the deputy chairman of the Idealists Hearths prior to 12 September. He organized the murders of the seven TIP [Turkish Labor Party] members in Bahçelievler. He went abroad prior to 1980. He was captured in Paris carrying narcotics. He was returned to Switzerland, where he was wanted for the same crime. He escaped from Zug Prison in Switzerland. He returned to Turkey in 1990. He was involved in the murders of Kurdish businessmen and Omer Lutfi Topal as well as in the abduction of Tarik Umit. Catli who died in the accident in Susurluk was carrying a weapon license that was signed by Mehmet Agar and a green passport [green passports are issued to civil servants]. He used an identity card that was issued to Mehmet Ozbay. He established companies under this name. Kirci was also a partner in some of these companies.

Sedat Edip Bucak

Chief village guard Sedat Edip Bucak who was injured in the accident was also a DYP [True Path Party] deputy. Investigations were conducted against him on grounds of exploitation of office, establishing a gang for committing crimes, and hiding a fugitive. Following the accident, he claimed that he was suffering of "amnesia" and avoided the press. His political immunity was taken away. He gave testimonies in the Istanbul DGM. Being once again elected deputy, Bucak currently hides behind the shield of political immunity.

Mehmet Agar

He is the former Security Director General and Justice Minister. The political immunity of Agar, who was involved in a great number of incidents, was removed six times on grounds of crimes such as bringing the suspects to Ankara and then releasing them, being involved in the abduction of Tarik Umit, and giving the lost Uzi guns to Korkut Eken. The Council of State decided that he should be brought to trial with regard to the suit brought against him in the Kirikkale First Instance Penal Court regarding the lost weapons that were purchased by the Security Directorate in 1994. In the 18 April 1999 elections Agar was elected Elazığ deputy, however. In this regard, he currently enjoys his political immunity.

Huseyin Kocadag

Kocadag who died in the accident constituted the police axis of the police-mafia-politics triangle. The fact that he was together with Catli and Bucak in the Mercedes was interpreted as "he was conducting behind the scenes activities in his role as appointed Security Director of a major province." Later, it was revealed that Kocadag acted as a reference for the license that was granted to Catli by the Istanbul Security Directorate. It was then understood that Kocadag also knew Catli.

Ibrahim Sahin

He is the former acting chairman of the Special Operations Desk. His bodyguard Ayhan Akca, who is from the Special Team, was the last person to meet Tarik Umit, prior to his abduction. He brought his team, which was involved in the

Topal murder, from the Istanbul Security Directorate to Ankara. Following the accident, he was sentenced to a prison term of one year in connection with the lost weapons. Sahin had an additional accident in Bursa last year. Following this accident, Sahin said: "I was involved in many clashes and I did not die. I will not die so easily. Sahin claimed to have "amnesia" and therefore, refused to give a testimony about the trial that continues in the Istanbul DGM. Nor did he give a testimony to the Parliamentary Investigation Commission, which conducted an investigation on Agar.

Korkut Eken

He has retired as lieutenant colonel from the MIT [National Intelligence Organization]. He trained the special operations teams. Eken had also trained Alaaddin Cakici, leader of Idealists and mafia leader. He was held responsible for the abduction of Tarik Umit. In his testimonies, Haluk Kirci noted that Eken gave Catli weapons and explosives. Agar, in turn, stated that he has given Eken the Uzi guns which arrived from Israel and the fates of which are not known.

Yasar Oz

He is the uncle of Catli's wife Meral Catli. He is also Tarik Umit's business partner. Yasar Oz carried a specialist document signed by Agar and a green passport. He was tried at the Istanbul DGM number two on grounds of exporting narcotics and was sentenced to a prison term of 15 years. He claimed that he was involved in narcotics sales in order to provide intelligence information on the PKK [Workers Party of Kurdistan]. He is currently incarcerated in the Eskisehir Prison.

Haluk Kirci

He is the primary suspect of the Bahcelievler massacre. He was sentenced to death in 1988. A year later he was released "by mistake!" He got married in 1992. The term Erzurum deputy Agar was his wife's witness during the wedding ceremony. The MIT report stated that following Catli's death, he became the leader of the gang's armed wing. Despite the fact that he was wanted, his companies participated in tenders. Superintendent Namik Erdogan, who investigated these tenders, was abducted, tortured and then killed. He was captured in Kucukcekmece in January 1996. He was allowed to escape a week later as a result of the pressure imposed by police superintendent Sedat Demir. He was once again captured in January 1999.

Mehmet Eymur

He is the former chairman of the MIT Counterterrorism Desk. He is famous with the reports he has prepared regarding Turkey's relations with the gangs. He claimed that being affected by Hanefi Avci with regard to the Susurluk report, the report was erroneously evaluated. The necessary permission was received from the MIT Undersecretariat and he gave testimony in the Susurluk trial. He answered the questions in a very shallow manner. After resigning from his office, Eymur went to the United States. In his web site, he provides information on what he has learned during the period he was working for the MIT.

Tarik Umit

He worked for the MIT as Eymur's man. His green passport was found at Yasar Oz' home. Together with Agar's driver, he became a partner in a bank in northern Cyprus. It was later understood that they laundered their profits from narcotics trade through this bank. He was abducted by anonymous people. Eymur accused Eken and his team. He said that he has informed Agar on the issue. He reported that Agar said: "The guys will not do anything without informing me."

Ayhan Carkin

He is a member of the special team. He is the main actor of the summary executions. A prison term of eight years is being sought for him on grounds of gang membership. An additional prison term of four years is requested for his mafia activities. The death sentence is requested for Topal's murder. Carkin, who has already been sentenced to a prison term of three years for the Perpa massacre is known to have carried out 38 summary executions. He is being tried without being under detention.

Sami Hostan

He is Topal's childhood friend and partner. He has introduced Catli to Topal and Ali Fevzi Bir. He was wanted for assisting Catli in the Topal murder. He voluntarily surrendered. He was then released. He was included in the Susurluk trial. It was later understood that he is the same "Ostan" who had been wanted for eight years. A suit was brought against him and a prison term of 64 years was requested for him.

Ali Fevzi Bir

He is one of Topal's business partners. Like Hostan, he was wanted for the murder of Topal. He surrendered. He was arrested. He was released.

Hanefi Avci

He is the former deputy chairman of the Intelligence Desk. He assumed the role of the "witness" and provided information on the Susurluk gang. In the detailed testimony he gave to the Susurluk Commission, he talked about the relationship between Agar, Sahin, and Eken. In addition, he stated that General Veli Kucuk constitutes the gang's extension in the army.

Veli Kucuk

He is the Giresun Gendarmerie Command regional commander. Avci and a great number of people who gave testimonies to the Susurluk Commission accused him of cooperating with the Kocaeli gang, which extorts money and deals in affairs of checks and bonds. It was revealed that he had talked on the phone to Catli. The Chief of Staff decided that there is no need for an investigation. He is currently retired.

Mahmut Yildirim

He is known under the code names of "Yesil [Green]," "Sakalli [Bearded]," and Ahmet Demir. He worked with JITEM [alleged intelligence unit within the Gendarmerie]. He was involved in crimes such as usurpation, torture, and murder by anonymous people. It was proven that he took \$ 17 million using an identity card of Ahmet Demir. In his phone conversations with members of the check-bond mafia, he said: "No one will let you eat this alone my son." This was reflected to the public. He is wanted as the key figure of many incidents.

Akman Akyurek

He is the rapporteur of the Parliamentary Susurluk Commission. He died in a traffic accident on 7 December 1997. He did not announce the results of the investigation that he conducted together with prosecutor Tunc Onat. Akyurek who also took place in the Unsolved Murders Commission was a specialist on issues related to state-tribe-mafia, false exports, unsolved murders, and Ugur Mumcu's murder. He revealed that money was deposited in banks in Ankara for Yesil. When he went to Istanbul, he said "I will return with great files." He was not able to return, however.

Hasan Gokce

He is a truck driver. The accident changed his life. He got into a lot of trouble. It was determined that Gokce was guilty of six crimes out of the total eight crimes that were committed in the accident. He was under arrest for a period of two months. His was sentenced to a prison term of three years and a fine of 945,000 lira. His sentence was converted to a fine of six million liras. He was sentenced to pay Kocadag's wife a compensation fee of 100 million liras. The insurance company brought a suit against Gokce on grounds that he damaged the Mercedes and requested that he pay the damages including interest. His truck was sequestered. He suffered the most damages in the accident.

* * * * *

TIME Magazine November 7, 2000

"Mr. President Elect, Meet Mr. Saddam Hussein..."

The Iraqi strongman has survived Presidents Bush and Clinton, and may now be planing a nasty surprise for their successor, says TIME. Com's Tony Karon.

Saddam Hussein is feeling lucky. As well he might, since rising oil prices and Israeli-Palestinian violence have combined to turbo-charge his campaign to smash international sanctions against his country. Iraq Airways on Sunday flew its first domestic flights over the "no-fly zones" maintained by the U.S. and Britain since the Gulf War, and it repeated the gesture on Monday. Official spin from the White House: We have no problem with civilian air traffic; those zones are to protect Kurds and Shiites from Iraqi military planes. Still, nobody doubts the significance of the gesture. Not when airliners carrying government officials and businessmen are landing almost daily from Russia, Europe and all over the Arab world (including countries that had fought alongside the U.S. in the Gulf War). And not when Turkey, the staging ground for most U.S. air attacks against Iraq since the Gulf War, moves to reopen a pipeline to pump Baghdad's oil. This week Baghdad is hosting an international trade fair attended by representatives of some 45 countries — not exactly par-for-the-course for a country subjected to fearsome international sanctions. Even more alarming for Washington is the fact that the biggest delegations came from Russia, China and France, three of the five permanent members of the same U.N. Security Council that maintains the embargo.

Saddam Hussein striding confidently out of his box may be the first foreign policy crisis confronted by the next U.S. president. It's been clear for some time now that the sanctions policy is on its last legs, since almost a decade of restrictions that have crippled the Iraqi economy have done nothing to weaken the dictator's grip on power. The problem for Washington, though, is that it has failed to come up with an alternative strategy despite the fact that most of its Gulf War European and Arab allies have signaled their intention to end sanctions as soon as possible. That's left the initiative with

the Russians, French and Arabs — and most important, with Saddam himself. The Iraqi dictator's refusal to budge on the question of U.N. arms inspectors makes it unlikely that the sanctions will formally be lifted any time soon. But European and moderate Arab regimes have — to Washington's alarm — adopted increasingly liberal interpretations of those sanctions that threaten to make them meaningless. Booming oil prices have improbably strengthened Saddam's hand, to the point that even Washington may be cautious about provoking Baghdad into turning off the taps on the 3 million barrels it pumps daily and driving up world oil prices even further. And the anti-American rage that has swept the Arab world in response to the Israeli-Palestinian violence makes it even harder for Washington to consider any punitive action against Baghdad, giving Saddam plenty of within which to challenge the U.S. and Britain. The Butcher of Baghdad appears to have seen off the Bush and Clinton administrations. Now he may be planning a few nasty surprises for the next occupant of the Oval Office.

* * * * *

Candar Responds: Censored Column Appears on Internet

Dorduncu Kuvvet Medya 05 Nov 00 by Cengiz Candar

Columnists' articles in our country constitute one of the most concrete proofs of freedom of thought and expression. Columnists assume a public role because of their mission. Therefore, their readers are their spiritual bosses. A formal contract between a newspaper and its columnist aims at bringing the columnist's ideas together with his or her readers.

Although newspapers have commercial objectives, they are not purely commercial enterprises. They present news, information and opinions. Therefore, the relation between a columnist and his or her readers is very special.

In this relationship, some readers buy a newspaper only to read the article of a columnist. Some start the day by reading that columnist's article. They anxiously wait to read his or her next article and they are curious to see its topic.

Those who glanced at this column yesterday encountered an example that was probably unprecedented, not only in the history of journalism in Turkey, but also in the whole world. A statement explaining why my article was not published, and which had nothing to do with the facts, was published in this column. It went beyond the limits of a statement and informed the readers, using expressions that could be considered a "denunciation," that I had written an article "including insults to the Turkish Armed Forces." Perhaps it is impossible to find any other person in the history of journalism that has been exposed in his own column to a suggestion that a conspiracy should be designed against him or her. The unpublished article was eventually distributed widely by e-mail, faxes and other means offered by modern technology and reached a large number of readers. It was seen that it included neither an offense nor an insult to the Turkish Armed Forces. In fact, people who regularly read my column and know my ideas quickly grasped that none of the claims in the statement was true. Many calls I received during the day allowed me to learn how the "statement" was actually perceived.

I was told that my article was "problematic" and therefore could not be published. As a journalist who had suffered an illegal assault and whose personal rights were violated, I responded that I would not consent to denial of the right to defend myself and the law in my newspaper and in my column when we had been proven right. Neither would I accept their siding with a retired general whose violation of the law was confirmed by a statement issued by the General Staff. I also informed them that, even if they did not publish the article, they could not prevent it from being published and broadcast by the news and broadcasting media because of the dimensions of the situation. I emphasized that the financial trouble that the group had run into should not be combined with a label of "censorship." I warned them not to take such a step because it could be linked to the financial difficulties. "If that is the way you perceive it, I would not object to its disclosure merely as your perception," I said when they reminded me that my words were tantamount to "blackmail."

All other claims and arguments in the statement are imaginary. I have no doubt that my readers are able to distinguish facts from lies. The claim that "there is an insult to the Turkish Armed Forces" is a totally unfounded and unfortunate accusation. Since I clearly emphasized the importance that I am attaching to the TSK [Turkish Armed Forces], both in the article that was not published and in interviews broadcast by some TV stations only a couple of days ago, this accusation will be recorded as the most unfortunate part of the statement.

I tend to see all these events as a result of the laxity caused by the tension we have experienced recently. Editors can make such mistakes. I do not intend to turn this into a problem, but I intend to continue meeting my readers.

* * * * *

In Turkey's Southeast, Suicide Rates for Women Soar

By Douglas Frantz
New York Times Service

BATMAN, Turkey — A 22-year-old woman threw herself from the roof of a seven-story building across from her family's apartment after being beaten by her parents for wearing a tight skirt.

A 20-year-old woman who felt trapped in an arranged marriage and isolated from her family and village hanged herself, leaving behind a 5-month-old baby and mystified neighbors and relatives.

A mother of five, worn down by the age of 30 from caring for her husband and his first wife and cut off from the outside world, hanged herself in the family barn. Her 65-year-old husband later shrugged and told a psychologist, "It was her time to go to God."

These women were casualties of a cultural conflict in a region in transition and turmoil. Against the backdrop of 15 years of bloody civil war between the Turkish Army and separatist Kurds, they were uprooted from their rural villages and brought to a city where even new buildings look tired and tattered.

Instead of a new start, thousands of women are finding despair, loneliness and, for a startling number, death, medical experts and sociologists said in interviews this week.

The suicide rate among women in southeastern Turkey is twice as high as that in the rest of the country and, in a reversal of what happens elsewhere in the world, women there are twice as likely to kill themselves as men.

In two decades, Turkey has gone from a rural nation to an urban one. Millions of people packed their belongings onto trucks and buses in search of a better life in Istanbul, Izmit and Ankara.

For many, the transition is a smooth one; others, though, lack the skills and education to adapt to city life. To help them, the government has started a program to lure people back to the villages. It has had little success so far.

Nowhere was the flight more pronounced than in southeastern Turkey, the nation's breadbasket and its most conservative region. As villages were burned and towns were evacuated, hundreds of thousands of people sought refuge in cities like Batman, Diyarbakir and Sanliurfa. But jobs were scarce, decent housing was unavailable and the old social rules no longer applied.

"We speak very little about it in my region, but this forced migration created traumatic stresses," said Aytekin Sir, a psychiatrist at Dicle University in Diyarbakir. "The traditional social structure was broken, and there was nothing in its place."

The story of the 22-year-old woman who jumped to her death in July is all too common. She was still living at home, forbidden to find a job or go to school, and trapped within unbending boundaries set by her father. The night before her death, her parents and another relative beat her for wearing a tight skirt,

which her father took from her and burned.

"It was as if I were in a nightmare," she wrote in the last entry in her diary. "Three people were attacking me. I was screaming and crying — my face was swollen and my nose was bleeding. I was so angry I was willing to kill myself."

A few hours later, she climbed to the roof of the building across from her family's apartment, walked to the edge and stepped off.

The young woman's dream of getting an education and choosing her own clothes would have been difficult to obtain in her village. Nearly half the women in southeastern Turkey are illiterate, largely because their families refused to send girls to school.

She also would have been unlikely to challenge her father because men rule with the authority of feudal lords. The women raise the children and live in the shadows. Daughters work at home until they are married.

Confronted by alien cities, uprooted villagers tried to recreate their enclaves. They built cheap houses of mud and concrete along unpaved roads on land nobody wanted at the edges of the cities and had large families.

Batman's population doubled to 250,000 in the last two decades. But the growth has been concentrated in small neighborhoods of *gecekondus*, a Turkish phrase for houses slapped together quickly on vacant land.

Though minutes from the city center, the neighborhoods feel like rural villages. Chickens strut across courtyards enclosed by sticks and cows wander beside the road. Men squat in clusters of four or five, smoking and chatting solemnly at midday. Women and children gather separately outside the modest homes. Few of the kids go to school, and every woman under 30 seems to be either pregnant or carrying an infant or both.

Insular as they are, these neighborhoods cannot keep out the world.

Men who had always provided enough for their families as farmers or herdsmen cannot find work and they bristle with humiliation. Women and children see a different life elsewhere in the city, one in which women work outside the home and young people wear stylish clothes and hang out on street corners.

"They are bombarded with shiny lives," said Rahime Hacioglu, a psychologist. "But there is a huge gap between their lives and those dreams."

The question the experts are struggling to answer is why that gap leads so many women to suicide. A team from Ankara issued a report last month citing some of causes: low education levels for girls, the feudal family structure, widespread polygamy and the need of some girls to conceal their lost virginity.

Isa Parlak, governor of Batman Province, said the overall suicide rate remained below that of Western countries. But he also said the government saw the need to develop programs to assist women. "We want to integrate women into society," he said.

They are casualties of a cultural conflict in a region in turmoil.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE Office of the Spokesman

November 3, 2000

STATEMENT BY SPOKESMAN RICHARD BOUCHER

REGULATIONS GOVERNING FLIGHTS TO IRAQ

Recent humanitarian flights to Baghdad have heightened our continuing concern for the safety of aircraft operating anywhere within Iraqi territory or airspace. We are particularly concerned because of aggressive Iraqi activities south of 33 degrees north latitude and north of 36 degrees north latitude; it is important that any foreign aircraft that do fly to or from Iraq avoid these areas and proceed only through the safest possible air corridors between 33 and 36 degrees north latitude.

In order to help ensure persons and organizations considering humanitarian flights are informed of circumstances and dangers relevant to air operations within Iraq, we draw attention to the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration's Special Federal Aviation Regulation 77 (SFAR 77) regarding Iraq. Effective since 1996, SFAR 77 prohibits U.S. flight operations over or within the territory and airspace of Iraq because of the threat of harm and undue hazard to civil aircraft. While SFAR 77 applies to U.S. air carriers and commercial and private operators, it serves more broadly as a timely and relevant warning of the dangers of flight operations in Iraq. SFAR 77 continues in full effect and states in part:

On September 3, 1996, Iraqi President Saddam Hussein urged his air defense forces to . . . attack "any air target of the aggressors." This threat was not limited specifically to the aircraft of the U.S. military and the coalition forces. The threat could also apply to any civilian aircraft that might attempt to enter the area. [T]he Iraqi military still possesses a wide range of sophisticated weapons that potentially could be used to attack civil aviation aircraft overflying Iraq at cruising altitudes.

Foreign aircraft that do fly to or from Iraq should at all times while in Iraqi airspace remain on air corridors between 33 and 36 degrees north latitude. We caution that the areas of Iraq south of 33 degrees north latitude and north of 36 degrees north latitude are areas of continuous military operations and present significant dangers to aircraft and passengers. Iraqi military ground forces have widely deployed anti-aircraft artillery and surface-to-air missiles throughout these areas and routinely fire on patrolling coalition aircraft. We advise any aircraft operating in Iraq to avoid these areas completely. Foreign aircraft operators proposing to conduct flight operations to or from Iraq should comply fully with United Nations Security Council resolutions and all applicable UN Iraq Sanctions Committee procedures. Persons and organizations seeking further information on SFAR 77, may wish to visit the FAA's website at www.intl.faa.gov.

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Murders and Mutilation in Iraq Revealed

The Guardian 03 Nov 00

by Ewen MacAskill

Barbarous acts perpetrated on Iraqi political prisoners and women persist under Saddam Hussein's regime in spite of a decade of international economic sanctions engineered by the west to topple him, according to restricted Foreign Office documents obtained by the Guardian.

These state that in the last few weeks President Saddam and members of his inner circle have signed orders for executions and other acts of brutality.

The material in the documents is said to have come directly from informants in Baghdad and, indirectly, from exiles. It will help Britain and the US in their efforts to shore up the sanctions - imposed on Iraq for igniting the Gulf war by invading Kuwait in 1990, but now under challenge.

They will argue that the world must go on trying to force such a monstrous regime out. Opponents will argue that the abuses show how ineffective sanctions have been in weakening the dictatorship.

The Foreign Office papers, classified as restricted, provide details of the extensive prison network in Baghdad and on individual cases that confirm the regime's reputation as one of the cruellest in the world.

Among many incidents, the documents say that:

- More than 50 mental health patients were executed in place of prisoners with the means to bribe their way out.

- Eight prisoners were executed in October for defacing murals of Saddam Hussein.

- Thirty prostitutes were beheaded in a "clean-up" during the last month and their heads were left on the doorsteps of their homes.

- A man's tongue was cut off in September under a new decree making slander of President Saddam an amputation crime.

While the international debate has gone on in recent years about the sanctions imposed on Iraq, and the bombing of its capital and missile sites by Britain and US, the regime's abuses have tended to be overlooked, partly because information is so hard to get.

One of the Foreign Office papers says that the Iraqi government is obsessive about cataloguing its abuses. "Each execution or torture order is signed by an immediate member of Saddam Hussein's family or his closest advisers." It adds: "The orders allow the signatory to record how they want the victim to be tortured or to die." The torture and execution orders are said to be held on the eighth floor of the ministry of interior's main building in Baghdad. "None of the normal lifts in the building stop at the eighth floor. This is only accessible by its own special lift."

Among the signatories are President Saddam, his two sons, Uday and Qusay, and various relatives including the president's half-brothers. A former minister of the interior, Watban Ibrahim al-Hassan, is said to have "had every execution videoed. Copies of the videos were kept in a vault in Hassan's office on the second floor of the ministry".

Among the many prisons dotted round Baghdad, the Mahjar (Sanctuary), near Palestine Street, holds about 600-700 political prisoners, according to the documents. To maintain the fear factor, and give an impression to the public of impartiality, the president has imprisoned relatives of his inner circle there to show that no one is immune.

"These high-level prisoners were held in the cells for detainees rather than in the prison itself and were only there for a number of days," one document says. Among those held was Ziyad Aziz, son of the deputy prime minister, Tariq Aziz. The document describes the layout of the prison in detail. "The execution area, the hadiqa (garden) is located near the women's [part of the] prison. The hadiqa is an open area with a sandbank covered by an awning" where prisoners were killed by machine gun. Between 1993 and 1998 about 3,000 prisoners were executed there, it says.

At another Baghdad prison, Abu Gharaib, death-row inmates are said to have been able to buy their freedom from the governor for \$5,000: "To meet the quota of people executed, and to avoid this scam being uncovered, someone would need to be executed. The prison governor devised a scheme whereby he would take a patient from al-Sha ma'el mental hospital to be executed in place of the released prisoner." About 50-60 people died in this way until both the governor and the director of the hospital were transferred in July, it is alleged.

One of the groups carrying out the recent drive against prostitutes - the Fedayeen Saddam militia set up by Uday - is said to have "beheaded about 30 prostitutes in Baghdad, Basra and other major cities. The ... heads were left on the front doorsteps of the prostitutes' homes as a deterrent."

Another paper reveals that last month "the Iraqi authorities executed eight prisoners on charges of forming an opposition organisation and defacing several murals depicting Saddam Hussein.

"Muhammed al-Naji, an engineer from Baghdad province, was the first to be charged with leading the organisation. His body, together with those of three of his companions, were handed on to their families on October 2."

When in September the authorities began cutting off the tongue of anyone slandering the president or his family, an early victim is said to have been driven around his home suburb, New Baghdad, "with a loudspeaker announcing the crime and the punishment".

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KDP replies to statement of rival party leader Talabani

Kurdistan Satellite TV 3 Nov 00

Kurdistan Democratic Party, KDP's, external relations office in London issued a clarification on the statements made by PUK leader Jalal Talabani to ['Al-Hayat'. The Statement contained a number of incorrect issues. The following is the text of the clarification:

The London-based Arabic newspaper 'Al-Hayat' yesterday, 31st October, published comments by Jalal Talabani that contained a number of incorrect issues, among them was his claim that Barzani said that the Kurdish administration is dead and that Barzani was not willing to meet him in London. And hence a clarification on the issue was necessary:

1. On the Kurdish administration issue, it was very clear from what Mr Barzani said in the interview with 'Al-Hayat' on Saturday, 28th October, that he was talking about the failure of the 50-50 experience between the PUK and the KDP, which was the formation reached after the elections in 1992 and the KDP voluntarily gave one seat in the parliament in order to prevent a bloody internal conflict from taking place.

Despite this, the 50-50 experience died after its failure in running the affairs of the region in an objective way and in preventing the internal war, that started by the PUK, in 1994 from taking place. This was also confirmed by 'Al-Hayat' in its article "Barzani in Paris after London". It is very strange that Talabani referred to the headline that was drafted inaccurately by the newspaper without looking at the content. It is very clear that the [KDP-led] Kurdistan regional government taking its legitimacy from the Arbil-based Kurdistan National Assembly, has taken and will take major steps forward in its third and fourth cabinets and works tirelessly to serve the people of Iraqi Kurdistan and remove their suffering under the rule of law and pluralism.

2. On the issue of Saddam Husayn being a president, we say that this is a reality and most of the countries in the world and also the UN deal with Iraq and him [Saddam] on this basis. If Talabani does not want to recognize that, let him go and change this reality - nobody will stop him from doing so.

Yes, we have contacts with the central government. But these contacts do not qualify to be called relations. Contrary to Talabani, we never hid this from anyone. Whenever he makes a statement against Sadam, he sends his envoys secretly to Baghdad and Kirkuk to stay as guests with the Iraqi intelligence services, in order to assure the Iraqi government about his true intentions.

3. As it is known, the British minister of foreign affairs [Peter Hain] invited the two sides [PUK and KDP] to visit Britain in order to find and a solution for some of the points that reached a deadlock in the Washington agreement and give impetus to the peace process. Talabani openly accepted the invitation and his readiness to visit Britain. He even hoped that Barzani would accept the invitation. Undoubtedly, he was hoping for the contrary to happen.

In fact, Talabani never had the intention of visiting London for the meeting date, 24 October 2000, which was set by the British minister. This was also confirmed by Fu'ad Ma'sum, member of the PUK Political Bureau, who said to 'Al-Hayat' that as a result of other commitments, Talabani told Hain that he can only visit London before 20th October or after 28th October. This was published in 'Al-Hayat' on 29th October, in the article entitled "Barzani in Paris after London". Here, we have the right to ask whether there is an issue in Kurdistan today more important than the peace process and normalization?

On his side, leader Barzani informed the British side of his acceptance of the invitation and showed readiness to discuss the issues with the British side first in order to find a way out of the deadlock and a joint meeting with Talabani afterwards if common ideas were formulated [in the meeting with the British side]. Leader Barzani and Peter Hain exchanged views about solving the points that reached a deadlock. If Talabani was present and accepted those views, a meeting would have taken place between the two sides and in presence of the British minister. Unfortunately, Talabani did not come to London and missed a precious opportunity to push the peace process forward.

KDP Office of External Relations - London

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Sabah 04 Nov 00

Candar Censored by Sabah for Insulting Army

p 21 Text of "Announcement" published in place of Cengiz Candar column

The paper's Directorate of Publications has detected actionable passages in Cangiz Candar's article that was due to appear today. The article was then shown to the Legal Affairs Bureau of Sabah, and following the scrutiny of the article it was concluded that it is not only open to criminal action but also includes insult against the Turkish Armed Forces.

Candar was therefore asked to revise his article. He responded by saying, "I am not withdrawing my article, if you want do not publish it." Going further, Candar added: "If my article does not appear in Sabah, then it will appear here and there and in various publications at home and abroad. Moreover, with accusatory passages against Sabah."

The Director of Publications protested by saying, "But is this not a blackmail?" To that Candar replied, "Construe it whichever way you want." Our columnist Mehmet Altan, in his article on page 15 today, also touched on the same subject, that is, on the debate over the General Staff document, but it was published unaltered because it included no actionable offence. We hereby bring this to the attention of our readers.

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Reuters 6 Nov 2000

Pkk Rebels Urge EU to Press Turkey on Kurd Rights

ANKARA, Nov 6 (Reuters) - Separatist Kurdish rebels have called on the European Union to clearly specify Kurdish cultural rights among the reforms it wants to see from Turkey before EU membership talks can begin.

A Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) statement highlights a dilemma facing the EU as it puts the finishing touches to an "Accession Partnership Accord" it will present to Ankara this week setting out the steps Turkey must take to join the bloc.

The Union is almost certain to urge Ankara to expand freedom of expression and language rights in Turkey, but the bloc knows any specific mention of the word "Kurdish" is certain to enrage Turkish officials who refuse to recognise some 12 million Kurds as making up a minority group.

The PKK urged the EU to "accept and openly state Kurdish identity and rights in the Accession Partnership Accord, or this document will not be accepted as legitimate by the Kurdish people."

The PKK call was carried in the Kurdish newspaper Yeni Gundem on Monday and on Kurdish websites over the weekend.

Turkey bans Kurdish language education and broadcasting as divisive moves that could fuel violent Kurdish nationalism.

Following the arrest of leader Abdullah Ocalan more than a year ago, the rebels announced that they were abandoning their armed struggle for Kurdish self-rule in favour of political pressure on Turkey to grant Kurdish cultural rights such as Kurdish language education that it bans.

While isolated fighting still takes place, a conflict that killed more than 30,000 people in more than 16 years has dropped in intensity and hopes of peace and development in the mainly-Kurdish southeast of Turkey are high.

Turkey has rejected the new rebel policy as a ruse to spare Ocalan from his death sentence for treason and murder. It refuses any negotiations with the rebels and its armed forces have promised to "neutralise" any guerrillas who do not surrender unconditionally.

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Birand was followed by Yesil

(from TDN Press Scanner, November 7, 2000)

YENI SAFAK (Nov. 6) said: "The shocking claim – While the controversy involving the military memo [involving alleged smear campaign against journalists Mehmet Ali Birand and Cengiz Candar, in the course of which they were branded as people in the pocket of the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK)] rages on, former National Intelligence Organization [MIT] executive Mehmet Eymur has stepped into the fray, saying that at some time in the past, a mixed team of soldiers and policemen including Yesil [Mahmut Yildirim, the notorious figure implicated in the so-called Susurluk state gang scandal] and the late Tarik Umit had placed Birand under close surveillance. Writing in his Internet site, Eymur, who lives in the United States, said, 'Birand is a close friend of the current MIT chief. He was a close friend of the former MIT chief as well. If he had been in the PKK's pocket, would not the highest state official know about that?'"

Turkey turns charm offensive on Kurds

Guardian 7 November 2000

By Chris Morris in Tunceli

As the European Union prepares to issue a report tomorrow telling Ankara what it must do to pursue its ambition of membership, the Turkish army is setting out its stall for peace after years of brutal suppression of the Kurdish rebellion in the south-east.

With an eye on EU membership, it is claiming victory in its war on the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), and pursuing new challenges.

In the remote highlands of Tunceli, a former PKK stronghold, the situation appears to have changed dramatically. Only a few dozen rebels remain in the mountains - most PKK members have withdrawn hundreds of miles across the border into northern Iraq. "This region needs social and economic help," General Tuncer Kilinc, commander of the 3rd Army, said.

"The people are fed up with terrorism and now we are all fighting together."

Severe restrictions on travel in Tunceli and an embargo on the movement of food supplies have been lifted. A state of emergency remains in place, and there is still a huge military presence, but local people hope the violence has come to a permanent end. "We used to live in the midst of the bullets," a village official said. "But the soldiers have really changed. They used to beat us and curse us, but they don't do it any more. It's been banned."

Instead, the army is making an effort to win hearts and minds by building roads, improving schools and touring villages with mobile health clinics.

But the task ahead is huge: unemployment is sky-high and many villages have been forcibly evacuated by the state.

The EU has already welcomed the new focus on economic development rather than military might - it has been urging Ankara to take steps in this direction since well before the capture and trial of the PKK leader Abdullah Ocalan last year.

But there are some subjects that the army is still unwilling to discuss, including identity, ethnicity, and Kurdishness. These are issues on which the EU is expecting Ankara to make greater progress.

"Ordinary people want peace," said Professor Dogu Ergil, an expert on the southeast, "but they want peace with dignity. That means being acknowledged as Kurds, and respected as Kurds."

And that simply has not yet happened. To many Turkish soldiers, and indeed many politicians, concessions to those who want Kurdish cultural rights smack of concessions to the PKK.

After 15 years of bitter conflict and an estimated 300,000 deaths, senior generals have issued blunt warnings that they will not allow the PKK to gain in the political arena what it failed to win on the battlefield.

The army has been busy erecting dozens of statues of modern Turkey's founding father, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, in Tunceli. The message is not lost on local people.

"We'll have to see how things go," a man said as he watched the opening ceremony of a new children's playground built by the military. "We need jobs, but we need a little bit more as well. Let's see what they have in mind".

There are still reminders of the bad old days in the southeast. In a province adjoining the Iraqi border, 12 PKK fighters were killed in a clash with the army a few days ago.

Elsewhere, three civilians returning to their village for the first time in years were shot dead. Officially the PKK was blamed, but it has denied being involved, and many local politicians are convinced that state forces were responsible. There are growing calls for a full inquiry. Even if the war is officially over, the potential for violence has not gone away.

The military high command says it is determined to hunt down every PKK member until the rebels turn in their weapons and permanently surrender to the state. Few civilians in the south-east have any intention of taking on the army, but many have yet to be won over by the charm offensive. The army may have a job on if its goal is to turn out standardised Turks in every town and village.

Physician Details Changing Methods of Torture

Milliyet 03 Nov 00 p 14 by Aysegul Aydogan

Dr. Sukran Irencin, the Istanbul Representative of the Human Rights Foundation of Turkey, who undertakes the treatment of people who claim to have been subjected to torture, said that the methods used for torture have changed in the past year.

Irencin said that in the process of entering into the EU, thick wooden sticks that have been called "Haydar" have taken the place of the billy club. [He] made the following claims: "The policemen's billy clubs were collected because we will be entering the EU. There are no longer scenes reflecting the public being hit with billy clubs. However, in the police vans they are treating the people so badly that the billy clubs are missed. They beat the people with the sticks called 'Haydar,' which have been hidden under the seats in the van, and the people have to go to the hospital for treatment. Moreover, the bad treatment continues even when they are being taken to the hospital. The most frequently used method is the Mamak Corridor..."

Medical Science Proves the Torture

Irencin stated that the methods of torture have changed according to the conditions and circumstances. The bastinado can be determined with bone scintigraphy and for this reason it has begun to be abandoned. He said, "In the past the bastinado was a very frequently used method. Later the determination of the bastinado marks came onto the agenda and the bastinado was abandoned."

Hernias of the Neck Became More Frequent

Irencin stated that recently in the protest demonstrations about the F type prisons, violence displayed its highest level in the mass arrests. He said, "A period in which violence was so intensive has not been observed for a long time. Broken arms, noses and teeth have started to be seen very frequently. "According to what the applicants tell, they are holding the people on their necks and push them forward very violently and then they sit on them, or they push the people's heads down and squeeze them between their legs. Hernias of the neck have started to appear frequently connected to this trauma applied to the neck."

Those Who End Up Here Are in a Bad Predicament

According to Irencin, the Mamak Corridor method is as follows: Those who are arrested pass through a corridor formed of two rows of policemen facing each other. During this time until the arrested are boarded in vans, they are kicked, slapped, and beaten with sticks and fists. Generally, they try not to leave any marks or traces, but there are seriously broken bones from time to time.

Here Are the Methods

According to the Human Rights Foundation, in 1999 the most frequently used methods that do not leave marks are as follows: beatings; insults; electric shock; hangers; high pressure cold water; sexual harassment; forcing to listen to loud music or marches; stripping nude; twisting the testicles; forcing to obey meaningless requests; pulling out hair, beard, and moustache; keeping awake, forcing excessive physical activity, leaving without air; and lying on top of ice.

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Kurdish Scar Unhealed in Turkey

Washington Post November 8, 2000 ; Page A03

By John Ward Anderson

DIYARBAKIR, Turkey — Early this year, when the government lifted a ban on people living in the remote mountain areas of the southeast, the villagers of Akcapinar finally dared to return and begin rebuilding the community the army torched seven years ago in its long war against Kurdish separatists.

So in May, about 60 villagers crammed into four old trucks and drove to Akcapinar to pitch tents and begin farming their old family plots. It was the type of renewal Turkish officials say this region needs to lure back some of the estimated 3 million residents who fled during 15 years of attacks by Kurdish terrorists, state-funded militia groups and soldiers.

Four weeks ago, after a plentiful harvest brought the villagers enough money to allow them to begin building permanent homes before winter, the army came back. As they had that night in December 1993, the troops herded the villagers together, trampled their gardens and torched their belongings—including the tents and one recently finished house—

-eight villagers said in an interview. "We cried and begged them," said a 50-year-old mother of six, who like the other villagers said she feared reprisals if quoted by name. " 'We've lived here since spring,' we said, 'and we've really worked hard on our vegetable farms,' but nothing we said changed their minds." The governor of this region first denied that the attack took place, then said it was under investigation; the office of the military commander failed to respond to a faxed request for information on the incident.

The troops' attack was a throwback to a brutal era that most people here thought had ended more than a year ago. In February 1999, Turkey arrested the most prominent Kurdish rebel, Abdullah Ocalan, head of the the Kurdish Workers' Party (PKK). And as it has campaigned for admission to the European Union, Turkey appeared to respond to EU pressure to improve its human rights record. Those events have helped bring a measure of peace to southeastern Turkey, where torture by security forces, terrorist attacks and killings have largely subsided.

But few Kurds have tried--as did the people of Akcapinar--to return to the rugged mountain farmlands depopulated by a conflict that destroyed more than 3,600 villages and left more than 30,000 people dead or missing. Kurds and human rights groups say Turkey is making little progress in healing the war's deep wounds. The New York-based group Human Rights Watch said in September that the lull in the conflict is "an unprecedented window of opportunity" for reconciliation that "the Turkish government has been frittering . . . away."

Instead, according to scholars, human rights activists and Turkish officials, the government has continued to attack all things sympathetic to Kurdish culture and has treated the conflict as primarily a military problem. While the Kurds dominate the southeast and make up about 15 percent of Turkey's population of 65 million, hard-line Turkish officials have denied that any legitimate Kurdish ethnic aspirations have driven the conflict.

"My personal view is that the problem is a Kurdish one, and that even if the PKK turned in all of its weapons, it wouldn't solve the problem unless the Kurds are given their ethnic rights," said Osman Baydemir, a Kurd who chairs the Diyarbakir branch of Turkey's Human Rights Association, which has been banned for most of the past four years.

But Gokhan Aydin, the specially appointed governor for the conflict area, said the ethnic dimension of the violence "was created by people who do not want Turkey to be stronger and want the struggle to stay alive. They want to create an ethnic Kurdish nationality."

In matter-of-fact, sometimes exasperated tones, Aydin criticized Kurds' attachment to their language. "It's mud"--a nonscientific mix of other tongues, he asserted. The Kurds should be happy to use Turkish, he said, which he termed a great language with a wonderful literature.

According to political analysts, Kurdish politicians and human rights workers, among the most important steps Turkey could take to restore normalcy to the southeast would be to lift its ban on Kurdish-language broadcasts and schools, relax the state of emergency that keeps the area occupied by as many as 220,000 troops and allows Aydin unrestricted authority to crack down on civil rights, and disarm the Village Guard--a 62,000-member militia group armed by the government. Such analysts and activists blame the group for some of the conflict's worst atrocities.

But the government is pursuing its usual policies, these observers said. In May, it banned 12 Kurdish-language journals, and authorities have jailed Kurdish teachers, union leaders, politicians and others for advocating use of Kurdish in schools. It continues to ban Kurdish political parties and suppress many women's and student organizations, human rights groups, unions and cultural centers.

A "slight softening" of the military's grip and promises by Turkey's president and chief justice for a continued easing of tensions are encouraging, said Ismail Aydin, a top official in the Diyarbakir branch of the pro-Kurdish People's Democracy Party, "but there are no concrete steps following. Most of the [government's] investments in the region are for the military."

One of the government's main initiatives is the Return to the Village program, which is designed to persuade displaced rural people to return to areas depopulated by the war against the rebels. Government officials say they want to consolidate some of the tiny, abandoned hamlets scattered across miles of rugged countryside into larger villages, making it easier to deliver infrastructure and services and attract jobs.

But human rights workers said that move would keep people from returning to their lands and keep them under the gaze of security forces, who they said are meant to block any attempt by the PKK to return and reopen supply lines. Other critics said the program is more a public relations ploy than a true reconciliation effort.

The Akcapinar returnees said the government's announcement of the Return to the Village program signaled to them that their native region was no longer sealed off by the military, and that they could legally return. They said the government gave them no material help, but local authorities cleared their return.

But on Oct. 3, soldiers arrived and said that, according to their commander, Akcapinar did not exist on official maps. They arrested the men and gave the families 48 hours to leave, villagers said. The next day, however, more soldiers came and burned their belongings. The villagers retreated to Diyarbakir, a city that shelters many people displaced by the conflict.

The Return to the Village program is spending \$100,000 on a pilot project to help rebuild Cetinkol, a village outside the provincial capital of Siirt. One day this month, several dozen villagers were toiling to rebuild homes they said were destroyed by the PKK in 1984. Unlike many Kurds who fled during the conflict, these villagers remained and fought in the Village Guard, which gave them guns and pays them about \$110 a month.

"We've suffered a lot," said Semsî Tegin, who spends her days helping her son build their new brick home, complete with running water and several bedrooms. "I'm 60 years old, and this is the first time I've ever known anything like this. I've lived only in dirt houses."

Authorities' disparate treatment of people from Akcapinar and Cetinkol will encourage divisions rather than reconciliation, said Hanefî Isik, a human rights activist. "The state is giving opportunities and livestock to the Village Guard only, and not doing anything for poor villagers," he said.

Gov. Aydiner disagreed. The Village Guards "are people who defended their villages, who are also Kurdish," he said. As for Akcapinar, "It's a lie that the village was burned."

Akcapinar's villagers say they are in a familiar bind. "The state gives us two choices—you're with the PKK or the Village Guard," said a 35-year-old villager with six children. "All we want is to live freely and not carry weapons."

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Envoy Says French Efforts Keep Reference to Kurds Out of EU Document

Anatolia 08 Nov 00

ANKARA, Nov 8 (A.A) - French Ambassador to Turkey Bernard Garcia said on Wednesday that the opposition of only one country to the Accession Partnership document is very difficult, adding that those countries which oppose such documents cause problem within EU.

Speaking to A.A correspondent who reminded him about the unpleasing attitude of Greece about the Accession Partnership document, Garcia said that it is very difficult for one country to oppose this document. "It is one thing to be among the 15 member countries, it is another thing to be outside them. Certainly, the latter is more difficult."

"In the past, certain countries assumed an approach by themselves, but this didn't give a result because the EU means an atmosphere of compromise, I know that this permanent compromise is not found in the Turkish culture. If one country, particularly one that needs the aid of the EU always opposes to the decisions within the EU, it is always remembered negatively by other EU countries."

"I am sure the Accession Partnership document is not an ideal document for the EU as Turkey didn't want it to mention the Aegean and Cyprus issues. Before entering the EU, there was also not a compromise culture in France either. Turkey also has time," he said.

Garcia pointed out that the word "Kurdish minority" is not mentioned in the Accession Partnership Document, adding that "if this is the case, this has come true by the efforts of France. As France does not recognize minorities, it can't expect the same thing from Turkey."

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Iraq and Iran, on the Sidelines, Pose as Champions of Palestinians

By Elaine Sciolino
New York Times Service

WASHINGTON — As Israelis and Palestinians battle for the same small piece of land, Iraq and Iran are using the conflict to portray themselves as the true champions of the Palestinian cause, and thus the leaders of the entire region.

Iraq, in particular, has already benefited so much that it looks as if the Palestinians — believing that they are liberating Palestine — may be liberating President Saddam Hussein instead.

The current crisis has accelerated the erosion of international sanctions against Iraq, allowing Mr. Saddam to argue that doing business with him is, by implication, striking a blow against the United States, which is excoriated regionally as the protector of Israel.

Since Saddam International Airport at Baghdad reopened in August, more than 40 planes have landed from abroad, carrying aid as well as businessmen and government officials. Jordan announced last month that it would no longer let Lloyd's of London agents inspect shipments to Iraq arriving at the Jordanian port of Aqaba.

Syria and Iraq plan to reopen their cross-border oil pipeline this month, in defiance of sanctions, and Turkey has recently become the first NATO country to upgrade relations with Baghdad to ambassadorial level.

Even Iraq's Kurds have established a relationship of coexistence with the regime, denying Iraqi opposition leaders access to Kurdish territory.

The end of Iraq's isolation is especially worrisome, given that even before the outbreak of violence more than a month ago, President Saddam made a series of startlingly belligerent speeches, as he did before the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990.

Last August, for example, he criticized "those rulers and kings who have sold out their souls" by allowing what he called the occupying foreigner to rule over them. He has called on the Arab masses to overthrow their rulers and told his people never to trust outsiders.

At the recent emergency Arab summit in Cairo — the first such meeting that Iraq has been invited to in a decade — Iraqi officials criticized their Arab brothers for not waging holy war against Israel.

**UN sanctions on Iraq
are being weakened
by Middle East strife.**

Iraq also mobilized several divisions on its western border, offering to step in if Syria needed military help. (The United States, aided by a number of Arab states, including Syria, ordered him to pull them back. He did.)

"We're seeing the old Saddam," said Judith Yaphe, a senior research professor at National Defense University.

"He's trying to prove to his own population and to the Arab street that he's the only Arab standing up to the West. He's trying to send a message that, 'I'm in charge. I can do whatever I want. Watch me.'"

No one yet knows what, exactly, to watch for. President Saddam "will use the pressure that he hopes the street could bring to demolish sanctions and to remind his neighbors that they will have to deal with him again as a legitimate Arab leader," Ms. Yaphe said, adding that even the next American president will have to wait for "what his next move will be in testing the resolve of the new administration."

Iran's role in the Palestinian-Israeli crisis is more complicated, because the Islamic Republic is trying to do two things at once.

On the one hand, its reformist president, Mohammed Khatami, has worked for three years to position Iran as a responsible regional power and a reliable economic partner, forging alliances with key Arab and European governments.

Last week, Mr. Khatami was in Japan, the first Iranian leader to go there since the 1979 Islamic Revolution, promoting his campaign for a "dialogue among civilizations" and granting Japanese firms negotiating rights for the development of Azadegan, the world's biggest undeveloped oil field.

On the other hand, one of the pillars of the Islamic Republic's foreign policy, and domestic legitimacy, has always been enmity toward Israel and support for the Palestinians.

Iran continues to provide the Lebanese Shiite militia Hezbollah with weapons and money. It also gives money and possibly weapons to Hamas and the Palestinians' Islamic Jihad.

Half a dozen of Iran's Revolutionary Guards, the remnants of a far larger force deployed years ago, still train "Islamic warriors near Baalbek in Lebanon.

Should the Palestinians and Israel make a comprehensive peace, however,

the Iranian people may begin to question the point of their country's remaining a militant theocracy. For that reason, the current crisis hurts Iran's democratic reform movement and strengthens the hand of Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, Iran's spiritual leader — who wields more power than the elected president — and the conservative clerics behind him.

Ayatollah Khamenei has called Yasser Arafat, the Palestinian leader, "a traitor and an idiot" for making concessions to Israel. And in a sermon to more than 100,000 military volunteers two weeks ago, he said the only solution to the Middle East crisis was to destroy "the Zionist regime."

The crowd responded with chants of "Ready, leader, we are ready!" and some current and former military commanders said the volunteers were ready to fight and die to liberate Palestine.

It is unlikely their government will give them the chance. Iran cannot afford another war. Indeed, it cannot do anything terribly provocative and still continue to repair its international reputation.

But if the violence between Israelis and Palestinians continues, Iran may find it more difficult to maintain its balance between re-entering the community of nations and calling for the destruction of one of its members.

Even Ayatollah Khamenei seems to recognize this. Instead of pledging arms shipments, troops or massive aid in his sermon, he called for Palestinians to stage a referendum to decide what kind of government they want.

Ultimately, the greatest fear of leaders in the region and Washington policymakers is that the two battle-tested powers of the Gulf might forge an alliance against Israel, however temporary.

But Iran and Iraq have never even signed a peace treaty ending their eight-year border war. Each still holds some of the other's prisoners, and Iraq allows an armed Iranian opposition group to operate from its territory, while Iran gives refuge to an Iraqi Shiite group.

Herald INTERNATIONAL Tribune
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NOVEMBER 6, 2000

Prison dorée pour Ocalan, torture pour d'autres détenus turcs, selon le CPT



STRASBOURG, 7 déc (AFP) - 10h25 - Prison presque dorée pour le leader kurde Abdullah Ocalan, torture pour d'autres: le traitement des détenus en Turquie est fortement contrasté, selon un rapport du Comité anti-torture (CPT) du Conseil de l'Europe.

Selon le rapport, publié jeudi à Strasbourg avec l'accord du gouvernement turc, après une visite du CPT en Turquie du 23 février au 3 mars 1999, Abdullah Ocalan, condamné à mort pour séparatisme et détenu dans l'île-prison d'Imrali, dispose d'une cellule de 13 m2, bien éclairée à la lumière naturelle et convenablement équipée avec un lit, un bureau, des toilettes, douche, lavabo et une climatisation, le tout "de très bonne qualité".

Soumis à un rigoureux isolement, il ne court pourtant, selon le rapport, aucun risque de mauvais traitement et quatre médecins prennent soin de lui: un généraliste, un cardiologue, un spécialiste de médecine interne et un psychiatre.

En outre, il peut écouter les émissions de la radio turque TRT-FM et il reçoit régulièrement des livres, périodiques et la presse quotidienne.

Le gouvernement turc, dont la réponse est jointe au rapport, déclare qu'Abdullah Ocalan peut lire tous les livres qu'il veut, ainsi que les publications et journaux que lui apportent ses avocats, son frère Mehmet et ses soeurs Fatma Ocalan et Havva Keser qui lui rendent visite régulièrement.

En outre, afin de pallier les effets négatifs de l'isolement sur la santé mentale du leader kurde, des personnes spécialement formées aux relations humaines "ont des conversations quotidiennes, à des heures spécifiques, avec le détenu", selon Ankara.

Quant aux demandes pressantes du CPT d'agrandir l'espace vital d'Abdullah Ocalan ou de rompre son isolement, en lui permettant d'avoir des compagnons de cellule, la réponse d'Ankara est un non ferme, soit pour des raisons de sécurité, soit parce que la loi anti-terrorisme l'interdit.

D'ailleurs, souligne le gouvernement, le prisonnier dispose aussi d'une aire de promenade de 45 m2, alors que celles réservées aux "criminels dangereux" de certaines prisons occidentales en Allemagne, en Norvège ou en Finlande "sont plus petites".

Dans ce même rapport, le CPT relève plusieurs nouveaux cas de torture et mauvais traitements dans les départements anti-terroristes de la police d'Istanbul et d'Izmir: "pendaison palestinienne" (suspension par les bras), coups sur tout le corps, électro-chocs. Les médecins du CPT ont pu constater la véracité de certaines allégations.

Le cas le plus grave, d'ailleurs reconnu par Ankara, est celui du syndicaliste Suleyman Yeter, torturé à mort en garde à vue du 5 au 7 mars 1999 à Istanbul. Les trois policiers auteurs présumés des tortures font l'objet de poursuites judiciaires, a indiqué le gouvernement.

"Une action décisive doit être faite pour éradiquer, une fois pour toutes, le recours à la torture et aux mauvais traitements par les policiers" du département anti-terroriste d'Istanbul, selon le CPT.

Ankara a laissé entendre que le message était reçu en affirmant avoir placé l'unité "sous une surveillance plus proche et plus stricte" et assurer une formation continue à ses policiers.

40 clandestins kurdes irakiens arrêtés en mer près d'Athènes



ATHENES, 9 nov (AFP) - 10h35 - 40 Kurdes d'Irak ont été arrêtés après l'arraisonnement du voilier à bord duquel ils se trouvaient, jeudi, dans le golfe Saronique, tout près d'Athènes, a annoncé le ministère grec de la Marine marchande.

Le bateau, battant pavillon grec, a été repéré par les garde-côtes au large d'Egine, une île située en face d'Athènes et du Pirée, a précisé le ministère, qui ignorait dans l'immédiat d'où il avait appareillé.

Deux Grecs qui convoyaient les immigrés, Vassilios Papazahariou, 43 ans, et Constantinos Lukas, 52 ans, ont été conduits au Pirée où le bateau a été confisqué.

Les immigrés, parmi lesquels un enfant, ont été pris en charge par la police portuaire du Pirée. Ils devraient être expulsés, comme tous les étrangers qui entrent clandestinement en Grèce.

Selon des témoignages recueillis par la police, chacun des voyageurs avait versé 2.000 dollars pour embarquer.

Adhésion de la Turquie à l'UE : pas encore de négociations mais un "partenariat"



mercredi 8 novembre 2000,

BRUXELLES, 8 nov (AFP) - La Turquie ne répond "pas encore aux conditions d'ouverture de négociations" d'adhésion à l'Union européenne, notamment en matière de droits de l'Homme, selon un projet de rapport de la Commission européenne sur l'élargissement obtenu mercredi par l'AFP.

Néanmoins, la Commission européenne a formellement proposé, pour la première fois, "un partenariat pour l'adhésion de la Turquie" afin de lui permettre de "répondre petit à petit aux critères d'adhésion", souligne le projet.

Concernant les critères politiques nécessaires à l'adhésion, "beaucoup d'aspects de la situation globale des droits de l'Homme restent préoccupants", note ce projet. "Torture et mauvais traitements sont loin d'avoir été éradiqués."

"Les conditions dans les prisons ne se sont pas améliorées", ajoute le texte, constatant en outre que "la liberté d'expression, de même que la liberté d'association et de rassemblement font encore régulièrement l'objet de restrictions".

"Comparé à l'année dernière, la situation économique et sociale, des droits culturels, ne s'est pas améliorée", particulièrement en ce qui concerne la possibilité "pour tous les Turcs, quelle que soit leur origine ethnique, de bénéficier" des "mêmes droits culturels".

"La situation dans le sud-est, où la population est à prédominance kurde, n'a pas substantiellement changé", note le projet de rapport.

En matière économique, "la Turquie a fait des progrès considérables" pour faire face aux déséquilibres les plus flagrants de son économie, ainsi que "des progrès substantiels dans la stabilisation macroéconomique".

"La Turquie doit continuer à améliorer le fonctionnement de ses marchés et accroître sa compétitivité afin de répondre aux critères" économiques nécessaires à l'adhésion à l'Union, souligne le projet.

Le statut de candidat à l'adhésion à l'UE a été reconnu à la Turquie par le sommet européen d'Helsinki en décembre 1999. Toutefois les Quinze avaient alors estimé impossible d'ouvrir des négociations en vue de son adhésion.

Cinq rebelles du PKK tués par l'armée dans l'est



DIYARBAKIR (Turquie), 9 nov (AFP) - 14h26 - Cinq rebelles kurdes du Parti des Travailleurs du Kurdistan (PKK) ont été tués lors d'un affrontement dans la province de Bingol (est), a annoncé jeudi l'autorité chargée de l'état d'urgence à Diyarbakir (sud-est).

Le communiqué ne précise pas quand l'affrontement a eu lieu.

Les affrontements dans l'est et le sud-est ont considérablement diminué depuis que le PKK a annoncé en septembre 1999 qu'il mettait fin à ses quinze ans de lutte armée pour la création d'un Etat kurde indépendant, répondant à l'appel de son chef Abdullah Ocalan, condamné à mort en juin de la même année pour trahison et séparatisme.

Mais l'armée turque a promis de lutter contre les rebelles jusqu'à ce qu'ils se rendent, estimant que leur annoncé d'un arrêt des combats était une manœuvre.

Quelque 36.500 personnes ont été tuées en quinze ans dans les violences entourant la rébellion du PKK, selon un bilan officiel.



Partenariat d'adhésion: le parti pro-kurde critique l'absence du mot "Kurde"

ANKARA, 9 nov (AFP) - 15h56 - Le parti pro-kurde de la démocratie du peuple (HADEP) a critiqué jeudi l'Union européenne pour avoir évité d'employer le mot "Kurde" dans le programme publié par la Commission européenne, qui définit les réformes à mener par la Turquie en vue de rejoindre l'Union européenne.

"L'UE n'a pas utilisé le mot Kurde. Nous voyons cela comme une déficience", annonce un communiqué du HADEP.

"Quand il y a un problème concernant une certaine communauté, ce problème doit être défini par son nom", souligne le texte.

Le partenariat d'adhésion publié mercredi par la Commission définit un calendrier de réformes à "court terme" et à moyen terme" que la Turquie est tenue de réaliser dans les domaines politiques et économiques.

Le document évite les mots de "Kurde" ou "minorité", une distinction parmi ses citoyens que la Turquie réfute. Et il évite de mettre Ankara sous pression en demandant en termes généraux la mise en oeuvre de plusieurs grandes réformes sans échéance précise.

Dans les priorités politiques à moyen terme, sans préciser de date, il demande à la Turquie d'"assurer la diversité culturelle et garantir les droits culturels pour tous les citoyens, quelle que soit leur origine".

Malgré ses critiques, le HADEP a qualifié le document de "satisfaisant" dans l'ensemble.

"La réalisation de ces réformes contribuera à la démocratisation de la Turquie", candidate à l'adhésion à l'UE depuis décembre dernier, estime-t-il.

Le HADEP n'est pas représenté au parlement mais a remporté une série de municipalités dans le sud-est à majorité kurde lors des élections de 1999.

Il fait l'objet d'une procédure d'interdiction en justice pour "liens organiques" avec le Parti des Travailleurs du Kurdistan (PKK) qui a mis fin en septembre 1999 à sa rébellion armée à la demande de son chef, Abdullah Ocalan, condamné à mort en juin de la même année pour séparatisme et trahison.

Les autorités turques s'opposent à des droits culturels pour les Kurdes --enseignement ou télévision en kurde-- de crainte qu'ils favorisent les aspirations autonomistes.

8 November 2000 The Guardian

Peter Hain in attack on French over Iraq sanctions

By Anton La Guardia

BRITAIN made an extraordinary attack on French policy in the Middle East last night, saying its weakening of international sanctions against Iraq was "pretty contemptible".

Amid a flurry of "humanitarian" flights to Baghdad seeking to bring down the 10-year-old air embargo, Peter Hain, the Foreign Office minister responsible for the Middle East, accused Iraq's sympathisers of prolonging the misery of ordinary Iraqis by encouraging Saddam Hussein to be more intransigent and avoid complying with United Nations resolutions.

Two flights have taken off from France, the latest leaving yesterday. Paris argues that the international sanctions imposed against Iraq after it invaded Kuwait in 1990 do not include an air embargo. Mr Hain told a meeting of the Royal Institute of International Affairs: "Frankly, French policy in Iraq has been pretty contemptible. It will put back the resolution of the crisis." Mr Hain went on: "I think that the French have absolutely no illusions that we do not welcome their dabbling in this matter." His public criticism of France exposed the deep tensions in the West over maintaining a tough sanctions policy in the face of growing opposition from Arab states and from some European countries, especially as it has visibly failed to unseat Saddam.

The row makes a mockery of Europe's professed desire to develop a common foreign and security policy. It will ensure that Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, will get a frosty reception when he visits Paris today. Mr Hain has tried to throw back at Iraq criticism that the sanctions had inflicted untold suffering, accusing the Iraqi government of wilfully denying food and medicine to its people and saying Baghdad "plays politics with their suffering".

* * * * *



Le jeudi 9 novembre 2000

Le Sénat reconnaît le génocide arménien

Le gouvernement a minimisé la portée du vote pour ne pas fâcher la Turquie.

Par MARCIA LACOMBE

Les sénateurs n'ont pas l'habitude d'être ovationnés. Hier matin à 5 h 30, à l'annonce dans l'hémicycle du palais du Luxembourg de l'adoption par 160 voix contre 40 d'une proposition de loi visant à reconnaître le génocide arménien perpétré par les Turcs en 1915, le public - principalement d'origine arménienne - s'est levé et a entonné la Marseillaise. Cette explosion de joie intervient dix-huit mois après le vote d'une autre proposition de loi à l'Assemblée nationale en mai 1998 énonçant que «la France reconnaît publiquement le génocide arménien». Soucieux de ménager la Turquie, le gouvernement et l'Elysée s'étaient opposés depuis le début à cette proposition de loi, refusant de la transmettre au Sénat pour des raisons économiques et politiques. Si le texte adopté hier est identique dans ses termes à celui voté au Palais-Bourbon, son origine est sénatoriale et il devra donc retourner à l'Assemblée pour avoir force de loi.

Réticences de l'Elysée. Les sénateurs Jean-Claude Gaudin (RI-DL, Bouches-du-Rhône), Jacques Pelletier (RDSE, Aisne), Bernard Piras (PS, Drôme), Robert Bret (PCF, Bouches-du-Rhône), Michel Mercier (UC, Rhône) et Jacques Oudin (RPR, Vendée) sont à l'origine de la proposition votée hier. Si l'ensemble de la gauche sénatoriale était acquise à la reconnaissance du génocide arménien, il n'en allait pas de même depuis des mois dans les rangs de la droite. Le 22 février dernier, la Conférence des présidents du Sénat avait refusé d'inscrire à son ordre du jour la proposition de loi. Ce refus était dû aux réticences de l'Elysée qui craignait les réactions d'Ankara à la veille d'un voyage de Jacques Chirac en Turquie où devaient être discutés des contrats industriels. La gauche sénatoriale avait aussi tenté de recourir à la procédure de discussion immédiate le 21 mars, mais sans succès. Le groupe RPR avait pesé de tout son poids pour contrer l'initiative.

Hier, il n'y avait pas de consignes de vote, «chacun était laissé devant sa responsabilité», selon un conseiller de l'Elysée. Beaucoup étaient las de voir désigner «le Sénat comme responsable de l'enlèvement», explique Philippe Marini (RPR, Oise), vice-président du groupe d'amitié

France-Arménie au palais du Luxembourg. Mais surtout l'approche de différentes élections, notamment municipales, est pour beaucoup dans le retournement de la majorité sénatoriale.

Abandon. Le 27 octobre, une quinzaine de sénateurs RPR, dont Adrien Gouteyron, secrétaire général du mouvement gaulliste, proposaient ainsi leur propre texte sur la reconnaissance du génocide. Cette proposition de loi n'a finalement pas été retenue et ils n'ont été que 20 sénateurs gaullistes (sur 99), hier, à voter la proposition Gaudin.

Le «devoir de mémoire» mis en avant lors des débats dans l'hémicycle et les considérations électorales l'ont donc emporté sur les enjeux diplomatiques et économiques. Ceux-ci restent pourtant primordiaux, comme en attestent les réactions des autorités françaises hier après le vote. L'Elysée et le gouvernement ont fait une déclaration commune pour affirmer que le vote «ne constitue pas une appréciation de la Turquie aujourd'hui» et que «la France souhaite continuer à entretenir et développer avec la Turquie des relations de coopération étroite dans tous les domaines».

«Optimistes». Hubert Védrine, entendu le mois dernier par la Commission des affaires étrangères du Sénat, avait déjà exprimé ses réticences quant au vote du texte. Le prochain épisode interviendra lors de l'examen du texte à l'Assemblée nationale. «Je suis optimiste, nous allons continuer nos actions pour que l'Assemblée examine ce texte avant la fin du XXI^e siècle», a expliqué, hier, Alexis Govciyan, président du Comité du 24 avril, collectif regroupant l'ensemble des associations arméniennes. Jean-Paul Bret, député PS et président du groupe d'amitié France-Arménie, a assuré, lui, que la proposition de loi «retournera à l'Assemblée nationale, qui confirmera son premier vote». En attendant, demeure la liesse de la communauté arménienne de France. «On a gagné. On est fiers d'être français», disaient hier les Arméniens restés jusqu'à la fin des débats, forts de la victoire de la nuit.

Ankara dénonce un «complot international»

Les massacres d'Arméniens restent un des tabous de la société turque.

Par RAGIP DURAN

Istanbul de notre correspondant

Les responsables politiques turcs, mais également certains représentants de la communauté arménienne de Turquie, ont fermement protesté hier contre le Sénat français qui a adopté une proposition de loi reconnaissant le génocide arménien de 1915. Le groupe multipartite Dialogue de la Grande Assemblée nationale de Turquie, le ministère turc des affaires étrangères ainsi que des députés ont publié des communiqués dénonçant un «complot international contre la Turquie». Bülent Akarcali, du Parti de la mère patrie (partenaire de la coalition gouvernementale), membre de la délégation parlementaire turque en visite à Paris, a affirmé que «la France désire ainsi purifier sa conscience à cause des massacres qu'elle a commis au Viêt-nam et en Algérie».

Relations «détériorées». L'ambassadeur de France en Turquie, Bernard Garcia, a été convoqué au ministère des Affaires étrangères. Ce dernier, dans un communiqué, a condamné «cette initiative absolument erronée et regrettable». Le ministère souligne que «cette décision revient à distordre fâcheusement les réalités historiques et à calomnier une nation entière par des allégations dénuées de tout fondement». Ankara néanmoins ne veut pas couper les ponts. Tout en estimant que les relations franco-turques sont «déjà détériorées», la diplomatie turque espère que l'Assemblée nationale française «réparera la faute commise par le Sénat». Ankara exclut probablement la France des contrats d'achats de matériel sophistiqué de défense. Les milieux d'extrême droite nationaliste exigent

quant à eux la rupture des relations diplomatiques avec Paris.

Les massacres d'Arméniens pendant la Première Guerre mondiale représentent toujours un des tabous de la société turque. Les déportations vers la Syrie - alors province de l'Empire ottoman - et les tueries de 1915 à 1917 ont fait entre 1,2 et 1,3 million de morts, selon les Arméniens, entre 300 000 à 500 000, d'après les Turcs. Selon la politique officielle d'Ankara, cette question doit être étudiée «par les historiens et non par les Parlements des pays étrangers».

Condamnation arménienne. Harant Dink, directeur de publication du seul hebdomadaire arménien paraissant à Istanbul, a aussi «condamné cette initiative» du Sénat français. «Ce problème doit être discuté librement entre Turcs et Arméniens, ici même dans cette région, et pas ailleurs», a-t-il déclaré hier à Libération.

Forte d'environ soixante milles âmes, la communauté arménienne de Turquie, dont la majorité de ses membres vit à Istanbul, affiche depuis toujours une position officielle favorable aux thèses des autorités, mais en privé certains Arméniens reconnaissent la réalité du «génocide de 1915», comme la très grande majorité de la diaspora arménienne vivant en France et aux Etats-Unis.

Le spectre du génocide arménien revient hanter la Turquie



ANKARA, 10 nov (AFP) - L'adoption par le Sénat français d'une proposition de loi reconnaissant le génocide arménien a de nouveau fait ressurgir en Turquie un spectre qui la hante depuis des décennies, et mis en jeu les relations complexes qu'elle entretient avec son passé impérial ottoman.

Le vote français est intervenu cette semaine moins de deux mois après que la Chambre des représentants américains eut retiré in extremis, mais provisoirement, une résolution comparable, sous la pression du président Bill Clinton.

Et la Turquie redoute à présent d'avoir à faire face à d'autres votes, en particulier en Italie où des députés ont soumis un projet de loi comparable.

Les massacres et déportations d'Arméniens entre 1915 et 1917, sous l'Empire ottoman, ont fait jusqu'à 1,5 million de morts, selon les Arméniens.

La Turquie reconnaît des massacres ayant fait entre 250.000 et 500.000 morts mais rejette la thèse d'un génocide et parle d'une répression dans un contexte de guerre civile, alors que les Arméniens s'appuyaient notamment sur l'ennemi russe en temps de guerre pour réaliser leurs aspirations indépendantistes.

L'affaire met en jeu les liens entre la Turquie moderne, créée en 1923 par Mustafa Kemal Atatürk en rupture avec un empire déliquescant, et son passé ottoman. Si elle en est l'héritière, elle n'a pas réglé ses comptes en profondeur avec lui et le considère avec un mélange d'attirance et de rejet.

D'autant qu'elle a été forgée par Atatürk —qui avait lui-même déploré les massacres d'Arméniens— en opposition avec un système jugé arriéré et dont il a essayé d'effacer les traces pour créer une Turquie nouvelle, moderne et éclairée, se fixant l'Europe pour modèle.

"Si la Turquie veut établir de bonnes relations avec ses voisins et instaurer une atmosphère de paix intérieure, elle doit établir les conditions d'un débat sur la période de l'effondrement de l'Empire et de la construction de la République", estime Taner Akcam, un historien turc professeur de sociologie à l'Université de Hambourg (Allemagne) interrogé par l'AFP.

Selon lui, "si la Turquie s'attaquait à la résolution de ce problème directement avec l'Etat arménien, il n'y aurait plus besoin pour les Parlements étrangers de la mettre à leur ordre du jour".

Sur la question arménienne, l'historiographie officielle turque, à commencer par les manuels scolaires, est muette. Si ce n'est pour mentionner les dizaines de milliers de Turcs massacrés par les Arméniens.

Le terrorisme de l'Armée secrète arménienne pour la libération de l'Arménie (ASALA) dans les années 1970 et 1980, qui a tué une trentaine de diplomates turcs en affirmant vouloir venger le génocide, n'a pas contribué à la décrispation.

Et la Turquie n'a pas de relations diplomatiques avec l'Arménie voisine.

"Il y a un 'trou noir' dans l'histoire avant la République qui n'a jamais été comblé", relève Dogu Ergil, professeur à la faculté de sciences politiques d'Ankara.

Pour ce professeur spécialiste du problème kurde, "ce qui prête le flanc au surgissement régulier de cette question est le fait que la Turquie emploie encore les mêmes méthodes aujourd'hui —contrainte, violence et déplacements de population— pour traiter la question kurde dans le sud-est".

Quelques éditorialistes de la presse libérale avaient souligné, dans les semaines où la résolution était en attente au Congrès américain, que la Turquie devait faire face sans crainte à son histoire et en débattre. Mais pour l'heure, ces voix restent encore éparées.

Iraq Resumes Airline Service In Zones Shut To Its Military

Compiled by Our Staff From Dispatches

BAGHDAD — Iraqi Airways, whose aircraft had been grounded since the 1991 Gulf War, successfully resumed regular domestic flights Sunday, passing through Western-imposed no-flight zones.

Baghdad Radio said two planes that took off from Baghdad had landed safely at their destinations in the southern city of Basra and the northern city of Mosul. Both are in zones patrolled by U.S. and British aircraft.

Both the United States and Britain said last Monday that they have no ob-

jection to the civilian flights and that the no-flight zones in the north and south were intended to inhibit military activity.

The Iraqi transport minister, Ahmed Murtada Ahmed Khalil, told reporters that the two flights would be on a daily basis from now on.

The planes took off at 1 p.m. from Baghdad's newly reopened Saddam International Airport. One made the 600-kilometer (375-mile) flight to Basra and the other flew the 450-kilometer route to Mosul.

Iraq used Russian-made military craft in civilian colors for the flights, an Antonov with 42 passengers to Mosul and an Ilyushin with 114 passengers to Basra.

Iraq's 15 Boeing airliners were flown to Jordan, Iran and Tunisia to escape allied bombs during the Gulf War.

Passengers aboard the inaugural flights included officials and journalists who returned with the planes to Baghdad. Thousands of people gathered to welcome the planes on arrival in Basra and Mosul, according to the official Iraqi press agency INA.

The no-flight zones were enforced by the United States and Britain to protect

Shiite Muslims in the south and a Kurdish enclave in the north from possible attacks by Baghdad forces.

Washington says Iraqi military planes have violated the zones often with quick in-and-out forays since late 1998, when Baghdad began challenging the patrols.

The flights Sunday marked the first civilian flights — though in military aircraft — into the zone.

The U.S.-British patrols bar fixed-wing Iraqi aircraft or helicopters from entering the zones, but there was no word on Sunday whether Iraq had given Britain and the United States advance notice of the domestic flights.

"Iraq does not recognize the so-called no-fly zones because they are imposed by the American administration and its ally, Britain," Mr. Khalil said.

Iraq first sought to resume domestic flights in 1992, a year after they were disrupted by the Gulf War, but dropped the effort because of the no-flight zone restrictions.

Baghdad said at the time it was suspending the flights because its planes needed maintenance. (Reuters, AP)

Reformer Says Iran Regime Tortured Him

By Geneive Abdo

Special to the International Herald Tribune

TEHRAN — A prominent journalist who is one of Iran's leading radicals appeared before a Revolutionary Court on Thursday and accused the regime of torturing him.

Akbar Ganji said he had been beaten and forced to wear the prison uniform of a common criminal. He is being tried along with 18 other reformers for acting against the national interest, spreading propaganda against the Islamic system and insulting religion.

He was arrested after he returned from a seminar in Berlin hosted by the Heinrich Boell Foundation last April.

The participants in the April forum, who are now defendants in the trial, held a discussion about Iran's reform movement. Some of the reformers questioned whether Iran should have a religious government and whether women should be forced to wear veils. Many of the participants were arrested as soon as they returned to Iran.

One of the defendants, Hassan Yousefi-Eshkevari, is a prominent progressive cleric who argued for years that religion should be divorced from politics. He was convicted in a separate trial last month before a special clerical court, and could face the death penalty.

Another defendant, Jamileh Kadivar, is Iran's most powerful woman politician and wife of the minister of culture and Islamic guidance, whom the conserva-



Akbar Ganji indicating injuries before his court appearance Thursday.

tives consider their great foe. Mrs. Kadivar is also the sister of Mohsen Kadivar, a theologian who argues that religion should be separated from politics. Mr. Kadivar himself was recently released after serving an 18-month sentence for his writings, which were deemed "un-Islamic."

Many of the defendants represent the most radical faction within President Khatami's fractured reform movement. While the president has consistently tried to maintain a moderate and gradual pace toward political and social development, others such as Mr. Ganji have argued the moves toward change were too slow.

In order to expedite reform, Mr. Ganji last year began writing articles in reformist newspapers that many considered went too far. He accused former President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, a

leading figure among conservatives, of being behind the murders of dissident intellectuals in the 1990s. The essays later became successful books, making Mr. Ganji a rising star among reformists and the major target of the conservative establishment.

As a result of Mr. Ganji's campaign, Mr. Rafsanjani was badly damaged and he surrendered his seat in the national Parliament in February polls amid allegations of electoral fraud on his behalf.

After the defeat of conservatives in the parliamentary polls, the judiciary has now become the battleground for change. Hard-liners in control of the courts have used their power to close about 30 reformist newspapers and to prosecute prominent reformers like Mr. Ganji and his co-defendants.

KURDISTAN

Les Kurdes entre Hamlet et Faust, ou la démagogie d'Öcalan

Un intellectuel kurde dénonce la stratégie du chef du PKK, Abdullah Öcalan, qui oscille entre un discours violent lorsqu'il est en liberté et un opportunisme grotesque depuis qu'il est derrière les barreaux.

AL HAYAT
Londres

Abdullah Öcalan, le chef du Parti des travailleurs du Kurdistan (PKK), actuellement embastillé dans l'île-prison d'Imrali en mer de Marmara, appelle désormais ses militants à déposer les armes et à se consacrer à la lecture de Shakespeare et de Goethe ! On assiste ainsi à un changement de stratégie de la part d'Öcalan, qui, avant son arrestation, appelait à lutter contre le "fascisme turc" et qui demande maintenant à ses combattants d'être plus indulgents à l'égard de la "démocratique Turquie" dont il vient soudainement de découvrir les vertus.

LA LUTTE ARMÉE, UNE ERREUR INVOLONTAIRE

Depuis son arrestation par les Turcs, Öcalan a adopté un discours politique qu'on ne lui connaissait pas jusque-là. Il y a peu, il promettait sur un ton menaçant de répandre la "révolution" au besoin par la violence, enjoignant ses militants à ne reculer devant rien pour réaliser l'"objectif suprême", à savoir l'édification d'un Grand Kurdistan indépendant et socialiste, dont il aurait été bien sûr le dirigeant. Mais une fois conduit en prison, humilié et menotté, Abdullah Öcalan s'est complètement transformé. En un clin d'œil, toute sa logorrhée révolutionnaire et ses aspirations à un Grand Kurdistan ont disparu pour laisser la place à des louanges à l'égard du "régime turc".

Depuis sa prison, où il a été réélu secrétaire général par des camarades qui continuent de voir en lui un guide inspiré et un leader victorieux, Abdullah Öcalan se répand en déclarations contradictoires et grotesques. C'est



▲ Le peuple kurde. Sur les panneaux indicateurs : *Dehors !* Dessin de Gallego & Rey paru dans El Mundo, Madrid.

■ Traître...

Pour prouver sa bonne volonté à l'égard de l'Etat turc, Öcalan n'a pas hésité à demander à plusieurs groupes de militants et de combattants du PKK de se livrer aux autorités. Qu'ils aient été arrêtés et condamnés à quinze ans de prison n'a pas suscité le moindre remord chez le leader kurde. Le premier groupe qui s'est rendu portait le nom évocateur de "Groupe de la fraternité et de la paix" !

ainsi que le chef du PKK qualifie son enlèvement au Kenya par les services spéciaux turcs de "complot international" ourdi par une série d'Etats et de gouvernements. Ce complot ne l'empêche pas de considérer son arrestation comme un événement positif dont la date marque le commencement d'une nouvelle ère pour les Turcs et les Kurdes et qui doit déboucher sur la "fin de la lutte armée" et le début d'un combat pacifique.

Sans complexe, Öcalan juge dès lors que la lutte armée qu'il a menée pendant quinze ans était tout simplement une erreur involontaire. Les 30 000 morts, les 4 000 villages brûlés et les 3 millions de Kurdes qui ont dû fuir le sud-est de la Turquie à la suite de cette guerre de quinze ans sont des détails insignifiants à ses yeux. Il ne s'en est d'ailleurs excusé qu'auprès des mères de soldats turcs morts au combat, exigeant sans honte des mères de combattants kurdes tués qu'elles fassent pression sur le gouvernement turc afin qu'il ne soit pas exécuté.

Lorsqu'il était libre, Öcalan n'avait pas de mots assez durs pour fustiger les Kurdes qui rejetaient son concept de Kurdistan indépendant. Ces dissidents, préférant plutôt l'idée d'une fédération avec la Turquie ou

d'un statut d'autonomie voire simplement l'obtention de droits culturels et économiques, étaient alors invariablement accusés de trahison et faisaient l'objet de pressions physiques et morales. Aujourd'hui, la situation est différente, Öcalan vit sous la tutelle de la démocratie turque qui a décrété une amnistie à l'égard des rebelles kurdes et a décidé de différer son exécution.

Au même moment, sur ordre de leur chef, les combattants du PKK battaient en retraite au Kurdistan irakien où ils poursuivent leur "lutte" par des moyens nettement moins pacifiques contre la population civile. La raison de cette violence se justifie selon Öcalan par "le caractère réactionnaire des Kurdes d'Irak".

Bien qu'Öcalan ait renoncé à la violence révolutionnaire et ait dissous son armée, il a exigé que tout déserteur soit arrêté et exécuté car un tel individu est par définition un traître.

Dans des conditions où le ridicule le dispute au tragique, on se rend compte qu'Öcalan n'a pas précisé à ses partisans ce qu'ils devaient lire dans l'œuvre de Shakespeare et de Goethe : Hamlet qui se tue à cause de ses doutes ou Faust qui vend son âme au diable ?

Nizar Agri

En Turquie, les islamistes s'adaptent à l'Europe

Les islamistes se montrent paradoxalement plus disposés que les militaires à se plier aux exigences des Européens. Ils pourraient profiter de cette ouverture sur le monde pour repartir à la conquête du pouvoir.

D'ISTANBUL

Tous ceux qui connaissent un tant soit peu l'histoire de la Turquie savent que l'islam politique est synonyme dans ce pays d'animosité à l'égard de l'Europe. Cette animosité que la Turquie moderne a réussi à dissiper émanait essentiellement des cheikhs, des imams et de commerçants des régions du sud, qui maîtrisent l'arabe, commercent avec Alep et, au-delà, avec l'Irak.

La maturité politique est arrivée tardivement, vers 1950, année qui a vu la montée fulgurante du leader du Parti démocrate, Adnan Menderes.

C'est dans ce contexte qu'a eu lieu le premier coup d'Etat militaire, conduit par le général Cemal Gürsel, en 1960, qui a coûté la vie à Adnan Menderes. La dualité de la situation en Turquie a ainsi été consacrée. D'une part, l'armée s'est octroyé un droit de réponse exclusif à tous les "défis" visant l'Etat, même s'ils provenaient de l'intérieur. Cet interventionnisme s'est confirmé en 1997 quand les militaires ont fait chuter le gouvernement du Refah, le parti islamiste que dirigeait Necmettin Erbakan. Par ailleurs, ces événements validaient l'assertion selon laquelle c'est l'armée qui était "occidentale" et "européenne" face aux différentes tendances islamistes. Aujourd-

d'hui, cette dualité commence à évoluer. Après une série d'échecs et le sentiment qu'aucune solution non politique ne pourrait voir le jour, les islamistes ont opté pour le modèle européen, qui "préservait leur identité". L'adhésion à l'Union européenne signifie pour eux la défense des droits de l'homme en Turquie. C'est un sentiment d'autant plus fort qu'ils ont eux-mêmes énormément souffert des militaires.

Une grande partie des islamistes pensent que l'Union européenne pourrait les aider à préserver leur identité, contrairement à l'argument selon lequel l'identité et l'euro-péanisme seraient incompatibles. Toutefois, si les islamistes souhaitent que leur choix européen réussisse, ils doivent défaire un certain nombre de nœuds complexes de leur histoire et de leur présent. Ils ne pourront pas faire valoir leurs droits tout en continuant à refuser aux Kurdes cette même revendication et à ignorer leur identité culturelle et linguistique. Ils doivent également reconnaître le massacre des Arméniens, l'expulsion des Grecs, des Juifs et aussi des Arméniens. Ce sont là des questions que les islamistes, ainsi que les nationalistes et les militaires, ont toujours cherché à passer sous silence. Mais, alors que les fondamentalistes commençaient à s'orienter vers l'Europe, les militaires, eux, ont amorcé un changement en sens inverse, en mettant des bâtons dans les roues du projet européen, qui nécessite la reconnaissance des droits culturels des Kurdes, la reconnaissance de la liberté d'expression et d'organisation politiques, et l'abolition de la peine de mort.

Hazem Saghlé, *Al Wasat*, Londres

TURQUIE Commerce avec l'Irak

Dans l'actuel contexte de hausse du prix du pétrole, Ankara doit renforcer ses relations économiques et politiques avec Bagdad.

Après la flambée des prix du pétrole, il n'a pas fallu attendre longtemps pour que l'Irak revienne à l'ordre du jour. Car ce pays, son président et la guerre du Golfe sont intimement liés au pétrole.

Ce qui importe pour nous, c'est de déterminer notre propre attitude dans l'actuelle conjoncture de pétrole cher qui risque d'ébranler notre programme de stabilité économique,

avec les hausses inévitables des prix des carburants et du gaz naturel. Le pays qui a le plus souffert des conséquences de l'embargo, hormis l'Irak, est sans aucun doute la Turquie. Tous ceux qui sont concernés par cet embargo ont normalement le droit de saisir la commission des sanctions des Nations unies pour demander certaines dérogations en matière de commerce avec l'Irak. Ainsi, la Jordanie y a eu recours. La commission n'a pas donné de réponse claire, mais a tout de même "noté" la demande jordanienne concernant un volume d'échanges équivalant à 200 millions de dollars. Amman a ainsi obtenu la possibilité de commercer avec Bagdad. Mais cette même commission ne s'est même pas réunie pour discuter la demande turque.

Peu importe ! La Turquie poursuit un commerce frontalier avec l'Irak. Contre l'achat de carburant à des prix avantageux, elle lui vend des produits divers. Au cours des six derniers mois de l'année dernière, ce

commerce frontalier avait atteint un volume de 150 000 dollars. Pendant la même période de cette année, il doit s'approcher de 200 000 dollars, pour grimper très prochainement à 1 milliard !

Si vous vous demandez comment les Etats-Unis ferment les yeux sur cette réalité qui défie leur rigidité, la réponse est prête : Barzani lui-même profite largement de ce commerce et en laisse aussi quelques miettes à Talabani [il s'agit des deux leaders kurdes rivaux du nord de l'Irak]. Voilà un jeu bien étrange sur les sables mouvants du Moyen-Orient.

A l'heure actuelle, la Turquie cherche à mettre en application une décision concertée avec l'Irak, consistant à élever ses relations diplomatiques avec Bagdad à un niveau d'ambassadeurs. Face à une telle évolution, Washington ne cache pas sa grande irritation, et le fait comprendre à Ankara.

Ali Sirmen, *Cumhuriyet*, Istanbul

Turkey gives EU blueprint cautious welcome

Reuters - 09 Nov 2000

ANKARA, Nov 9 (Reuters) - Turkey seems likely to embrace most points raised in a European Union reform blueprint for membership talks, but is resisting a demand that it push for a swift settlement of the Cyprus dispute with arch-rival Greece.

Turkey's cabinet met on Thursday to discuss the Accession Partnership Accord, which outlined demands for radical reforms in human rights, democracy and the economy. It said child labour must be combated, the death penalty abolished and torture rooted out. Legislation on freedom of speech must be overhauled.

Foreign Minister Ismail Cem said Turkey felt the EU roadmap was "generally positive" apart from references it made to United Nations efforts to resolve the division of Cyprus, Turkey's state-run Anatolian news agency reported. "The government will attach importance to improving individual rights and freedoms in the framework of the constitution," the agency quoted Cem as saying in Strasbourg, where he was attending Council of Europe meetings.

Sabah daily newspaper said the onus was now on Turkey. "The ball is in our court...The document has undeniable diplomatic niceties but if you translate them into everyday Turkish it says: unless you perform these tasks, forget the EU."

Niceties certainly were observed. The document omitted any mention of the words "Kurd" or "minorities" in calling for an end to bans on television broadcasting "by Turkish citizens in their mother tongue." This was a coded demand to drop a ban on broadcasts in Kurdish. Turkey refuses to recognise its 12 million Kurds as a minority, viewing minority status as a possible first step to national disintegration. But Turkish officials have recently hinted concession could be made in broadcasting.

CYPRUS POSSIBLE OBSTACLE

For all the niceties, however, there was something of a flurry in Ankara's corridors of power late on Wednesday when the final version of the document appeared there. A sentence demanding Turkey "support strongly" U.N.-backed efforts for a settlement over the divided Mediterranean island of Cyprus was moved at the last moment from the preamble to the list of short-term goals for 2001.

That change was seen by sceptics as a nod to Greece boding ill for the future. Cem rejected the EU request. "It is not valid for us," Anatolia quoted him as saying. "(It will) not change Turkey's Cyprus policy." EU representative to Ankara, Karen Fogg, played down the issue. "This (Turkey's support) is...something which is already happening," she told reporters.

Sceptics believe the Cyprus reference among short term goals could allow Greece to put pressure on Turkey over Cyprus or to slow aid linked to progress in meeting the document's targets. Leaders of Cyprus and the breakaway Turkish Cypriot north, recognised only by Turkey, have been holding U.N.-sponsored talks in an effort to end the 26-year-old division of the island.

The Cyprus issue could prove a major obstacle to Turkish EU membership, which seems considerably further away than accession by 12 other east European and Mediterranean candidate members. Many of the reforms will represent reversals or shifts in decades-old Turkish official dogma, particularly in the secular state's attitude to Kurdish language rights and political Islam.

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'Give us a roof, not the evening news in Kurdish' Impoverished and war-weary Kurds just want to go home - Turkey's ambition to join the EU could help them get there.

by Leyla Boulton
Financial Times Nov 11, 2000

Nesmi, a 63-year-old Kurdish woman with gold front teeth, looks hopefully at the piles of stones that used to be houses in the Turkish village she fled from eight years ago.

She is both victim and survivor of the Kurdistan Workers' party's struggle, launched in 1984, to carve an independent state out of Turkey's Kurdish-populated south-east. Hundreds of villages were abandoned and 30,000 people killed in a conflict

that hurt all of Turkey. Nesmi is among the first to return home now that the armed forces have declared victory over the guerrilla group and Abdullah Ocalan, the ruthless PKK chief dubbed "the baby-killer" by Turkish media, is held in an island prison outside Istanbul.

But having defeated the PKK militarily, Turkey has yet to win the peace. A state of emergency still grips four out of 12 south-eastern provinces, justified, say security officials, by a continuing "low-level" terrorist threat.

Regional business leaders argue meanwhile that the south-east, already one of the most backward parts of the country, should be declared an economic disaster area. "We know what devastation an earthquake can cause in 45 seconds," says Mucahit Can, who owns the local Opel and Mercedes-Benz dealerships in Diyarbakir, the region's biggest city. "We have experienced an earthquake for 15 years."

Shocking poverty and unemployment fuelled by a flood of refugees are blamed for an increase in theft, suicides and prostitution in Diyarbakir. According to Mesut Deger, a local politician, "people are so poor they go to the supermarket to watch others shop".

Viewed from a broader perspective, Kurds who make up almost a fifth of the Turkish population represent the trickiest domestic challenge to Turkey's effort to join the European Union. As Mesut Yilmaz, minister for EU affairs, stated earlier this year: "Turkey's road to the EU passes through Diyarbakir."

The European Commission has just published a list of the reforms Turkey must adopt before it can start membership negotiations. The EU insists that Turkey abolish the death penalty - without applying it first to Ocalan, who was condemned to hang last year. More controversially, meeting the EU's criterion of a fully functioning democracy that protects minorities will require allowing Kurdish-language broadcasting and education.

That such talk also touches the rawest nerve of the Turkish body politic was made clear when some military leaders suggested that meeting EU requirements on minority rights would break up the country. "Allowing Kurdish-language education and broadcasting could tear apart the mosaic" of Turkey's multi-ethnic society, warned General Cumhur Asparuk, secretary-general of Turkey's powerful National Security Council, shortly after Ankara gained full candidate status last December.

The paradox inherent in such reservations is that the armed forces, like most Turkish political leaders, view EU membership as a top priority.

But as paranoid as it may sound, many Turks suspect that western powers remain intent on dismembering the modern-day republic after the victors of the first world war failed to dis-mantle the rump of the Ottoman Empire. The foreign invaders, who also promised Kurds an independent state, were expelled by Mustafa Kemal Ataturk. The soldier-turned-statesman went on to found the republic as a unitary state with one official language and identity, summarised by the saying: "Happy Is He Who Can Call Himself A Turk."

Of all the ethnic groups inherited from the empire, only Kurdish tribes in the south-east took up arms to resist assimilation policies so aggressive that Kurdish names were banned.

After the last of a series of Kurdish uprisings was crushed in 1938, a virulent new strain of Kurdish nationalism emerged decades later when Ocalan created the Marxist PKK with the help of neighbours hostile to Turkey, including the Soviet Union, Syria and Greece.

Feridun Celik, the mayor of Diyarbakir who belongs to the People's Democracy party (Hadev), a group sometimes seen as the political wing of the PKK, insists that Kurds have no "ill intent against the integrity and unity of Turkey".

"What Kurds want is the right to express themselves, an end to emergency rule, and the return of villagers to their homes," he says, in a change of tone that is common to many Kurdish activists, including Ocalan.

Celik was one of three Hadev mayors arrested and released by security forces in February. But his subsequent and continuing trial on charges of co-operating with the PKK could still be followed by the banning of his whole party on similar grounds. The mistake that Turkey is making, according to one UK official with experience of dealing with the Irish Republican Army, is that "having defeated the terrorists, Ankara is now refusing to address the political issues underlying the terrorism".

Widespread support for Hadeş's views can be in little doubt after the party swept local elections in the south-east last year. But it is a measure of their war weariness that Kurdish villagers desperate for running water and a roof over their heads do not insist on the right to watch the evening news in Kurdish. Most peasants returning to the village of Şaklat are also suitably vague about why they left in the first place.

"The government and the terrorists were fighting and there was fire everywhere so we escaped," says Nesmi.

But an old man who blurts out that "the army called us terrorists and burned our village", is promptly challenged by Mehmet Öz, the young district governor, to reconsider his answer. "The terrorists burned the village," asserts Öz.

For all such anti-terrorist assertions, it is striking that the armed forces have deemed it necessary to launch a campaign to win the "hearts and minds" of local people.

Back in Diyarbakir, General Dogan Temel, the urbane English-speaking commander of half the troops in the south-east, produces blue ring-binder files containing a meticulous inventory of problems, which, crudely summarised, show that more than half the villages lack clean drinking water and access to healthcare.

The results of the army's helping hand range from the reconstruction of 10 health centres and 162 primary schools to the circumcision of 300 boys in an important but usually expensive Muslim rite. "These may seem unusual activities for soldiers but we are trying to regain the time we have lost as a result of terrorist activities," declares the general.

The armed forces, whose own influential role in Turkish politics faces EU scrutiny, have urged the government to implement a comprehensive economic catch-up strategy for the region. But apart from their relative lack of organisation, civilian authorities are constrained by a lack of money - not least because military expenditure remains high.

Öz, who studied in England before being sent to south-east Turkey on a hardship posting, has brought cement, wooden poles, and livestock to help villagers rebuild homes and a livelihood. But with no official budget yet in place, his efforts are necessarily piecemeal.

And while entrepreneurs from western Turkey are slowly beginning to invest in the area, foreign offers of assistance risk tripping up on the pitfalls of history. The US, Turkey's closest ally, recently dropped a plan for a part-time office in Diyarbakir to encourage US investment after it was accused of failing to work through proper bureaucratic channels.

"If countries do not follow our laws, Turkey will become like a colony and go back to the days where the Ottoman Empire was called 'the sick man of Europe'," says Gökhan Aydinler, emergency rule governor for Diyarbakir.

As discouraging as such utterances seem, Kemal Kirisci, a political scientist at Bosphorus University in Istanbul, argues that liberals now have an opportunity to prevail in a debate he compares to France's recent soul-searching over a new status for Corsicans.

The big difference, however, is that all Turkey's citizens - not just Kurds - need more rights. Severe restrictions on freedom of expression and Ankara's habit of closing down political parties, is also a source of EU concern. The Assyrians, for example, are a Christian minority who have been clamouring to no avail for the freedom to teach their language and religion.

As one western diplomat observes: "What is really at issue here is lifting all prohibitions on freedom of expression. Doing this would mean solving the Kurdish problem through the back door."

Much will depend on how sensitively the EU exercises its considerable influence to help Turks achieve the reforms they need for their own sake.

"The EU has a lever which can make things worse or better," explains Kirisci, who says the record so far is encouraging. All other things being equal, he is confident that "Turkey of the 21st century should be able to adjust to a political system where people can express a distinct identity while remaining legal Turkish citizens".

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Kurdish mayors urge Ankara to inaugurate EU reforms immediately

13 Nov 2000 Agence France-Presse

ANKARA, Nov 13 (AFP) - Mayors from Turkey's pro-Kurdish party urged the government Monday to inaugurate immediately a set of reforms recently outlined by the European Union to guide Turkey on its road to EU membership. "We see as positive the accession partnership program and the approach of the Turkish government on it," said a joint statement by 36 mayors from the People's Democracy Party (HADEP). "But the positive reactions of the government are not enough. It should start working on fulfilling the reforms as soon as possible," they added.

The so-called accession partnership program, announced by the EU commission last Wednesday, outlines a calendar of drastic political and economic reforms Turkey should carry out in order to catch up with EU standards. The document urged Ankara to improve its troubled human rights record, ensure cultural rights for all ethnic groups, lift the death penalty and curb the influence Turkey's powerful military wields in political decision-making.

Reiterating a previous statement by their party, the HADEP mayors expressed discontent with the fact that the program did not name the Kurdish minority by its name and placed reforms aimed at improving Kurdish rights among medium-term objectives rather than short-term ones. HADEP, which favors a peaceful resolution to the Kurdish conflict and recognition of cultural rights for the Kurds, won a string of town halls in the mainly Kurdish southeast in the 1999 elections, but failed to enter parliament because it remained under a 10-percent national threshold.

The party faces a possible ban for alleged links to the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) of condemned rebel leader Abdullah Ocalan, considered a terrorist group by Ankara.

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Talk of Kurdish broadcast splits coalition partners

Ankara - Turkish Daily News November 13, 2000

Despite Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit's statement that the Accession Partnership Document did not include measures that Turkey would have difficulty in fulfilling, Deputy Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz's remarks that TRT (Turkish Radio and Television Corporation) could broadcast programs in Kurdish has created a fierce debate among coalition partners.

While Ecevit has refused to comment on Yilmaz's statement on the Kurdish broadcast, Transportation Minister Enis Oksuz of the Nationalist Movement Party (MHP) reacted strongly to the proposal. Answering reporters' questions on Saturday Ecevit said he would not comment on the topic until he had consulted with the coalition partners. Yilmaz had stated in an interview that the state-run TRT could broadcast programs in Kurdish to conform with the Accession Partnership Document's requirements.

Giving Ankara's full support to Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (KKTC) President Rauf Denktas' decision to withdraw from the U.N.-sponsored proximity talks, Ecevit said there was no link between Turkey's candidacy to the European Union and the Cyprus dispute, in a bid to stress that Ankara has not accepted the Cyprus article of the document that was announced last Wednesday. Referring to Finnish Prime Minister Paavo Lipponen's letter to the Turkish government last December - when he was term president of the EU - Ecevit said the letter had cleared up Ankara's doubts on the dispute as it clearly stressed that all the relevant factors would be considered on the problem. Commenting on U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan's latest verbal proposals on Cyprus Ecevit said no one should expect Denktas to take them seriously.

Then responding to questions on the document's reference to the National Security Council (MGK) in Turkey, Ecevit said, "It should not have been included in the document." He stated that the EU had been misinformed about the MGK.

While Ecevit refused to comment on Yilmaz's proposal for a Kurdish broadcast, strong reaction came from the MHP. Oksuz stated that Yilmaz should be asked if the Kurdish language would do any good to the nation-building process in Turkey. He argued that Turkey was obliged to create new nations from ethnic groups unlike European countries or the United States. Indicating that such moves would create potential dangers to the "Turkish ship" and may cause it "to sink," Oksuz said: "Efforts are being made to create a Turkey that would please heathens. Are we stupid? Have we lost our minds? We have to get rich, share equitably and move ahead with the national unity ideal."

While being the target of criticism from the MHP Yilmaz issued a caution to Greece at a meeting in Izmir yesterday orga-

nized by his own Motherland Party (ANAP). He said Greece should stop using the EU as a shield against Turkey. The EU last week laid out steps it wants Turkey to take to improve the economy and human rights, including allowing broadcasts in Kurdish.

Speaking and publishing in Kurdish was made legal in 1991 but broadcasts are still banned. It is also forbidden to teach Kurdish in schools. Yilmaz's center-right ANAP and the MHP are junior partners in Ecevit's three-party coalition government. The nationalist MHP are opposed to granting cultural rights to Kurds fearing the move would break up the country.

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(From TDN Press Scanner, November 13, 2000)

Law obligation for Kurdish TV

Cumhuriyet November 12, 2000 by Bahar Tarrisever

The Supreme Board of Radio and Television (RTUK) has reportedly replied to the Motherland Party (ANAP) leader's, and Minister for EU Affairs Mesut Yilmaz, comments on the Turkish Radio Television Corporation (TRT) that special programs in Kurdish could be made by saying that the law as it stands forbids such a practice and that as long as the law remains unchanged no permission will ever be given for broadcasts in Kurdish.

State Minister Rustu Kazim Yukselen pointed out that a study had to be carried out to confirm whether or not there was a need for Kurdish language broadcasting and said, "The law is not important, we will change it."

The Nationalist Movement Party's (MHP) Minister of Communication and Transport Enis Oksuz reacted to this, saying, "We have to ask is this the right thing to do on the road to becoming a nation?"

The debate over Kurdish language TV broadcasting started up after Abdullah Ocalan was captured, his Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) rendered ineffective and Turkey's EU candidacy was approved at the Helsinki summit last December.

The newly published Accession Partnership Document has thrown the spotlight once again onto the issue. RTUK President Nuri Kayis has pointed out that foreign languages can be broadcast for the purpose of teaching them or to broadcast the news in them, but said that this law did not allow the possibility of broadcasting in Kurdish.

The True Path Party (DYP) view was expressed by deputy leader Mehmet Ali Yavuz: "We want to enter the EU with honor. We cannot accept any impositions that will discredit our honor. Therefore we do not look warmly upon the issue of Kurdish language broadcasting. For the TRT to broadcast in Kurdish would be objectionable."

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Coalition has to decide on 'Kurds'

by Ilnur Cevik

Turkish Daily News November 13, 2000

The European Union has shown all the flexibility it can in wording its Accession Partnership Document that will not push the Turkish government into a tight corner and give new ammunition to the ultranationalists and those who oppose Turkey's links with Europe... The document does not refer to the Kurds and does not mention "minorities," a fact which was much appreciated in Ankara.

However, all this does not mean the EU member states and the commission which runs the union have given up on demanding that Turkey put its house in order and solve the problems in southeastern Turkey -- where our citizens of Kurdish origin comprise a majority of the population. On the contrary, by the absence of references to the Kurds Ankara is now obliged to act on its own on the issue in a responsible manner. So where do we go from here?

Deputy Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz who is in charge of overseeing Turkey's EU membership preparations has told mass circulation daily Hurriyet that he believes Turkish state television could air some programs in the Kurdish language. The Nationalist Movement Party (MHP), a senior partner of the coalition, immediately raised objections saying such a move would jeopardize the unity of the country...

Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit, the leader of the Democratic Left Party (DSP), has taken a middle-of-the-road approach saying the issue should be discussed and resolved at a summit of the coalition leaders...

We feel the time has come for the government and all those concerned in running the country to take up the southeastern issue in a realistic and practical manner and stop beating about the bush. What the EU wants from Turkey on the so-called "Kurdish" issue is beside the point. What is important is what we plan to do and how far we are prepared to go to make our citizens of Kurdish origin, especially those living in southeastern Turkey, into first-class citizens of the republic.

Conquering the separatist Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) terrorist organization was a major achievement. But that was a security issue and now what is needed is to be victorious in the fight to win back the hearts of those who have been alienated by an atmosphere of repression and frustration that has been naturally created by years of struggle against separatist terrorism in southeastern Turkey.

The MHP as well as the other coalition partners have to agree that there is a special situation in southeastern Turkey that has to be addressed. But even if this issue was addressed directly it would not really solve anything because the real issue is reform and democratization throughout the country.

If we really legislate and implement reforms where the individual is granted his or her basic rights and freedoms throughout Turkey then the special measures taken for the Southeast may yield results. But as long as Turkey struggles through a semi-democratic system all the "improvements" in southeastern Turkey will remain on paper and cannot be applied in practice. This is what the coalition partners need to realize.

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Kurdish Interpretation at Supreme Court Proceedings

Kurdish Observer 10 November 2000

A new incident has been added to Turkey's ever-changing attitude towards the Kurdish language.

4 Kurdish women, aged between 63 and 77, who were originally sentenced by Malatya's State Security Court (SSC) on the allegation that they aided PKK, with the assistance of two interpreters, defended themselves in Kurdish before the Supreme Court.

Naciye Sevuk (20), Ali Adir (56), Gullu Chelik (63), Yemis Altintas (63), Emine Kiyanchichek (76) and Fatma Sevuk (77) were sentenced to 3 years and 9 months respectively by Malatya SSC. Their appeal hearing was held at the Supreme Court's Penal Registry No.9. The defendants' solicitor Kazim Gench told the court that other than Ali Adir and Naciye Sevuk, the others did not speak Turkish. Consequently, the Chairman of the Penal Registry No.9 Demirel Tavit, commented that this information should have been provided earlier.

The interpreter was sworn in

Later, Tavit, sworn in two interpreters who are not relatives of the four defendants. Gullu Chelik, Fatma Sevuk, Emine Kiyanchichek and Yemis Altintas who conducted their defence in Kurdish and said that they were taken to the police station after an incident in their field, and as they could not read and write Turkish signed a prepared statement with their fingerprints. The four old women professed their innocence and asked the court to overturn the decision. The 20-year old Naciye Sevuk and Ali Adir, who spoke in Turkish, made similar statements.

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Retired General on Sakik's Statements, Smear Campaign Against Reporters

Radikal 07 Nov 00 p 7 by Omer Tarkan

Ankara--Maj. Gen. (ret.) Erol Ozkasnak, the General Staff's Secretary General during the 28 February process, talked about the "psychological operation" plan mentioned in the General Staff's "memo" and which has caused so much controversy in recent days. Maj. Gen. Ozkasnak's replies to questions put to him are as follows:

[Tarkan] You were the Secretary General of the General Staff during the period 1995-98. It is being alleged that during that time the General Staff planned a "psychological operation" and that at the same time Semdin Sakik's statements

concerning certain journalists were fraudulently distorted. [Ozkasnak] This is an allegation that is totally without basis. Nothing is ever distorted at the General Staff and nobody would even get involved in such a thing. Let me fill you in on the importance of the psychological operation being implemented at that time. These views are not binding on any other individual or institution:

Terrorism reached its peak between 1991 and 1993. It became almost impossible to contain. In those days, the armed strength of the Kurdistan Workers Party [PKK] was greater than its propaganda influence. The funerals of fallen soldiers, the hundreds of wounded people filling the hospitals, and the cries of parents in anguish on TV screens. Public morale was at an all time low. Nobody wanted to send their sons off to do their compulsory military service let alone see them sent to the Southeast. After hearing news of raids, engagements and ambushes, parents would rush be on the phone to their sons well into the next morning.

Historical Mission of Betrayal

Thanks to the measures implemented by the military, especially with effect from 1993, the PKK became marginalized as a fighting force. As they came under more and more pressure and as their activities in the countryside became more and more curbed so the PKK terrorists began to concentrate on Turkish and foreign journalists in order to increase their propaganda power. Ineffective raids on police outposts were replaced with PKK-influenced news and reports written by pro-PKK columnists. Chief among those visiting PKK camps and Abdullah Ocalan were Greek parliamentarians, retired Generals and certain Turkish writers. They used to address Ocalan with titles like "Mr. President" and "Mr. Ocalan". Their TV channels would broadcast reports on the terrorists' camps, training and their mountain survival skills every evening. The murderous PKK terrorists were elevated to the same status as our soldiers and their human rights were frequently talked about. While some journalists were doing this as a requirement of their job, others were doing this in order not to be left out and it was believed that others were doing this out of some historical mission of betrayal. I also firmly believe this to be true.

[Tarkan] Did you consider the members of the press to be a more effective PKK weapon?

[Ozkasnak] Definitely not. The vast majority of the Turkish press and most journalists supported our struggle. Of course, there were some exceptions to this. For instance, the Ozgur Gundem newspaper in Istanbul was acting like the mouthpiece of a country we were at war with. It treated our soldiers like the enemy. PKK ambushes and murders were announced in joyful terms to the readers. No country would ever allow such a practice. Warrant were issued to seize every copy of every edition of Ozgur Gundem. Unfortunately, by the time the warrant was issued, the newspapers would already be in circulation. The commander in Diyarbakir used his initiative and kept the vehicles delivering the papers waiting until the warrant was issued, but the Press Council ruled this was contrary to the freedom of the press. No country would ever allow a publication that praised as a victory every ambush mounted against its own security forces. I do not have to mention the restrictions imposed on the IRA and ETA by Britain and Spain. All these are well known. Furthermore, certain regional correspondents together with TV reporters and their mobile broadcast centers started an intensive news bombardment detailing the dispositions of the Turkish soldiers and their lines of advance prior to operations both within and cross-border. In accordance with this, the PKK would change their positions and would both mine and ambush the limited number of routes to be used by the soldiers. Very expensive operations would fail and our losses would mount. When they were told not to do this, they cited the CNN newscasts broadcast live from Iraq during the Gulf War. Yet, there existed a clear distinction between the two. Even though the news and images could be interpreted by Iraqi intelligence, the Iraqis lacked the means to mount countermeasures. Through the agency of 24-hour broadcasting (such as was used during the Yugoslavia conflict) the United States and its allies were shown to have superior technology and firepower. And this is a prime example of psychological warfare. As for our broadcasts, they only served to assist the PKK in mounting ambushes and laying mines. If CNN's broadcasts in Iraq and Yugoslavia they would have resulted in the death of one soldier even, they would immediately have been censored.

Due to losses suffered towards 1994 and the critical commentaries in the Turkish press we got to the point where the Turkish Armed Forces' lawful fight against the PKK began to resemble the unfortunate situation, as seen by its public, that the U.S. Government and its armed forces found themselves in during the Vietnam War. The fight against the PKK by the Turkish Government and its armed forces was an internal security operation mounted within the borders recognized by the Lausanne Treaty in order to ensure the welfare and security of the public. The United States' war in Vietnam was an ideological one. Unfortunately, this lawful struggle has been turned into a controversial issue by the use of certain circles in this country everybody is aware of especially the media. This controversy became an ace up the PKK's sleeve. The PKK changed the dimensions of its struggle and saw the chance to prolong it. It is a pity the dimension I am talking about rested on a political foundation acceptable to Europe and even the United States (though they did not articulate it). With the EU accession process, the organization is wringing its hands with glee and patiently waiting to reap the rewards.

Ultimately, certain members of the press and NGOs have had an important role to play here.

[Tarkan] What was your plan of action to weaken the PKK's propaganda effort?

[Ozkasnak] The details are far too long and complicated to be included in this interview; it would take up too much space. Press tours were carried out. With one exception and excluding the religious press, all the Turkish media organs were invited to the Southeast. They were shown how the TSK was merging with the local population, how they distinguished between the terrorist and the innocent, how TSK personnel were being trained in human rights and how violations of these rights had fallen to an all time low. They were shown the motivation, patriotism and high level of training of TSK members. Journalists spoke with individual soldiers asking very frank questions and they got to understand the struggle from all angles. Being told and shown the truth had very positive effects.

When the struggle being fought by the commanders and units in the region was understood and appreciated their morale rose considerably as did their determination to fight. The TSK's psychological operation achieved its aim of neutralizing the PKK propaganda effort. Certain journalists realized the gravity of the situation as a result of these tours and voluntarily submitted their footage to the General Staff.

[Tarkan] Was it a part of the operation to accuse certain journalists of making pro-PKK reports?

[Ozkasnak] Such a thing never happened, it could not happen. One of the basic principles of a psychological operation is to tell the truth. We did just this. The psychological operation was not concerned with specific individuals. Any name mentioned is disinformation. As I said at the start, nobody did any such thing. Permission would never be given for anyone in the General Staff to do such a thing.

Pro-PKK reports written in the past and which keep on cropping up are just disinformation activities introduced from abroad and actualized by traitors at home. They are trying to create the impression that what they did was in fact done by us. The reason for this was that the TSK's psychological campaign aimed at neutralizing PKK propaganda had been very successful and that the other side's disinformation activities had been rendered ineffective.

[Tarkan] So was Sakik's statement, reported in the press in April 1998, a fabrication or not?

[Ozkasnak] I do not believe it was a fabrication.

[Tarkan] Proof?

[Ozkasnak] I am not the one to answer this question. Go and speak to Sakik.

[Tarkan] There are claims that during the 28 February process you and retired General Cevik Bir led a gang or a junta.

[Ozkasnak] This is a very serious allegation. I categorically deny it. I would have expected this accusation to have been answered long before I answered it. The Turkish Armed Forces are among the most powerful and respected in the world. Nobody can form juntas or gangs within it. All meetings and studies are attended by the generals and officers concerned. The results of the studies are documented.

The TSK's fight against the PKK and against reactionaries in the period known as the 28 February process have both been conducted within the scope of the TSK Domestic Service Law. This law makes the TSK responsible for protecting and preserving the republic, which was founded by Ataturk and whose characteristics are specified in the Constitution. There is no need for the TSK to form a secret gang or junta in order to combat those seeking to bring down and break up the secular republic and other degenerate elements. This is the basic duty of all members of the TSK. Efforts are being made, in accordance with the disinformation tactics I spoke of earlier, to win over innocent citizens and well-intentioned people in authority who may not be able to grasp the importance and characteristics of this mission and to disintegrate the rival front. The fact is this: [these allegations] are part of a disinformation campaign which will be relegated to history and which could become the topic for books in the future.

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Turkey haunted by the ghost of its past

10 Nov 2000 Agence France-Presse

ANKARA, Nov 10 (AFP) - The spectre of Turkey's past returned to haunt the country this week after the French Senate stirred the history of the Ottoman empire by accepting a bill saying that the deaths of Armenians at the hands of the Ottomans in 1915 constituted an act of genocide. The French announcement came less than a fortnight after the US House of Representatives withdrew a similar resolution after President Bill Clinton warned it would harm Washington's national security interests. Turkey is dreading that more of the same is on its way. Italy has already drafted a similar bill, damning the Turks for their past. Armenia claims that 1.5 million Armenians were killed between 1915 and 1917 under the Ottoman empire in a act of genocide. Turkey, however, maintains that between 250,000 and 500,000 Armenians and thousands of Turks were killed in civil strife during the period coinciding with the dissolution of the

Ottoman Empire. Ankara rejects that there was any genocide, saying that the killings amounted to repression of the Armenians who were suspected of helping invading Russian troops in order to achieve their separatist ambitions. Stoking the issue has once again raised questions of modern Turkey's relationship with its Ottoman past. Today's state was created in 1923 by Mustapha Kemal Ataturk from the rubble of a crumbling empire. Turkey's historical legacy is treated by the country today with a mixture of fascination and rejection.

Ataturk's new Turkey was forged as a new, modern and enlightened country with Europe as its model. The father of modern Turkey deplored the massacres in Armenia and developed the new country trying to wipe away any trace of the country's "backward" predecessor. "If Turkey wants to build good relations with its neighbours and instill a atmosphere of domestic peace, it must discuss the period of its empire's collapse and its republic's birth," says Taner Akcam, Turkish historian and professor of sociology at Hamburg university. "If Turkey sought to resolve this problem with the Armenian state, there would be no need for foreign governments to put it on their parliamentary order of the day," he says.

Official Turkish history is silent on the Armenian massacres. Text books fail to mention the episode, although they do include details of the tens of thousands of Turks killed by the Armenians. Terrorist attacks by Armenia's secret army for the liberation of Armenia which killed around 30 Turkish politicians during the 1970s and 1980s did nothing to help ease the atmosphere. Turkey does not enjoy diplomatic relations with its neighbouring Armenia.

"There's a black hole in Turkey's history before the republic," says Dogu Ergil, professor at Ankara's political science faculty, a specialist on the Kurdish problem. "The fact that Turkey still uses the same tactics today -- violence, repression and displacement of people -- to deal with the Kurdish problem in the south-east, is what lays Turkey open to criticism on the question over and over again," he said. While raising the dark history of the Ottoman empire in the US caused some of the liberal press in Turkey to suggest that the question should be debated in the open, these voices remain for the moment few and far between.

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Turkish Journalists' Association announces October report

Ankara - Turkish Daily News November 14, 2000

The Turkish Journalists' Association (TGC) has announced its October report, a document that consists of important events concerning journalists in October. The report says, "Attacks against press organizations and journalists continued in October." According to the report, two journalists were attacked, one journalist was beaten, one was taken in custody, one was sent to prison, two newspapers were closed down, two magazines were raided by police and two journalists were fined.

Other incidents mentioned are a name-calling attack on some journalists by a party leader, an unfortunate traffic accident which killed four journalists from various newspapers, and the sad death of well known journalist TGC General Coordinator Oguz Ongun. Another interesting development was the accusation against Rauf Tamer, a columnist for daily Sabah, of having received a bribe from Murat Demirel, the former owner of Egebank. Tamer was questioned by the State Security Court (DGM) until he established his innocence.

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November 12, 2000

Tackling Entrenched Corruption in the Turkish Economy

By DOUGLAS FRANTZ

New York Times

ISTANBUL, Nov. 11 — A tough- talking former police chief who has become interior minister and a new banking regulator have opened an ambitious battle against corruption in a country long inured to it, even daring to arrest the nephew of a powerful Turkish politician.

With Turkey trying to get into the European Union, many believe that daunting though the struggle is, the time is right to abandon all forms of financial skulduggery — from routine payoffs to the traffic police to sweetheart deals for business executives.

"Our economy can no longer finance corruption and hope to compete in the world," said Can Paker, a businessman who is chairman of the Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation, which is researching corruption with the authorization of the government.

Sadettin Tantan, a former Istanbul police chief and now interior minister, said that what he calls the corruption economy drives up prices 20 percent and finances everything from dirty politics to Kurdish separatism.

He vowed to weed out bribe- taking bureaucrats and dishonest businesspeople.

At the country's new bank regulatory agency, Zekeriya Temizel, whose surname means "clean hand" in Turkish, has taken over 10 of the country's 36 private banks for mismanagement and abuses and may seize more before he finishes with an industry riddled by cronyism.

The first sign that the campaign was serious came on Sept. 28 when the police arrested Murat Demirel, the nephew of the former president, Suleyman Demirel.

The country was enthralled when television stations broadcast footage from a security camera that showed Mr. Demirel, 33, lugging suitcases allegedly filled with cash out of a bank he owned, just steps ahead of regulators. His uncle, who retired in May, was president at the time, raising questions about whether someone tipped off his nephew — which the older Mr. Demirel has denied. The younger Mr. Demirel has been charged with looting millions of dollars from the bank, but has denied wrongdoing and pleaded innocent.

The Demirel arrest sent shock waves through Turkey, but in a recent speech to business leaders and academics here, Mr. Tantan said the battle had just begun.

"Thieves and exploiters who should be locked up are able to wander among us as respected people and are even greeted with bowing and scraping," he said. "Let no one tell us to stop the operations." Mr. Tantan instructed the country's 81 senior local government officials to develop a plan for attacking corruption, paying particular attention to graft in state contracts.

At the banking agency, Mr. Temizel, a former finance minister with a reputation for integrity, also demonstrated a willingness to step on powerful toes. One bank he took over recently is owned by Dinc Bilgin, a media baron who owns two of the country's most influential newspapers, Sabah and Yeni Binyıl, and a major television network, ATV.

The fall of Mr. Bilgin's bank has created economic problems for his media empire and drawn gleeful headlines from his competitors, who cast the bank takeover as part of the anticorruption campaign.

Supporters of reform said press attention was vital to generate public backing for pursuing corruption, but some questioned what might happen if the inquiry conflicts with other interests of the media owners.

The Turkish media is dominated by two companies, Mr. Bilgin's Medya Holding and Dogan Holding, which is controlled by the family of Aydin Dogan. Together, they control about two-thirds of the nation's newspaper circulation, most of the magazines, the printing and distribution systems and three leading television networks.

Unlike most American media businesses, the companies also have interests in sectors regulated by the government. For example, the Dogan group owns a bank, like Medya, and car-parts factories and tourism businesses. The company owns a share of the power distribution system for Istanbul, and it is partners with the government in the state- owned fuel distribution company.

"Clearly, one of the determinants of what a newspaper or television station does is the agenda of its ownership," said Ilter Turan, a political scientist and president of Istanbul's Bilgi University. "You can look at newspapers and make a judgment about whether the owners were content with the government or not."

Some journalists have felt the brunt of Turkey's most powerful institution, its military, whose actions are usually shrouded behind a curtain of national security.

Early this month, however, the military made an unusual admission that in 1998, it had devised a plan to discredit journalists and politicians who some generals felt were sympathetic to Kurdish separatists. Nazli Ilicak, a member of Parliament from the Islamic-oriented Virtue Party, first disclosed that the army intelligence division drew up a plan in spring 1998 to spread false information that the journalists and others were paid by the outlawed Kurdistan Workers Party, or PKK. One passage identified six journalists and said the goal was to "decrease the reliability and lower the respect for the mentioned names and have a negative public opinion established against them," according to a copy of the plan provided to The New York Times.

The strategy outlined in the memo was to "inform TV stations and some selected columnists that these journalists are paid by the organization" as part of a broad public campaign against them.

Normally, the military would have said the memo involved national security and refused to comment. Instead, without saying why, it admitted drafting the plan.

Some identified in the memo lost their jobs, and Cengiz Candar, a columnist at Sabah, was suspended briefly and then told, he said, not to antagonize the military.

"My bosses told me they knew the information was false, but they kept saying they had to publish," Mr. Candar said in an interview. "They said they could not resist the military." Attempts to obtain comments from editors at Sabah and Mr. Bilgin for this article were unsuccessful. Mr. Candar wrote a column last week asking that the military officers who developed the smear campaign be punished. Sabah refused to publish it, saying in print that the column broke the law by insulting the military.

Another target of the smear campaign, Akin Birdal, then chairman of the Human Rights Association, was gravely wounded by right-wing gunmen who said at their trial that they acted because they believed he was a traitor linked to the PKK.

The army may have calculated that charges that journalists and others took money from the PKK would resonate strongly in a country where, the government estimates, 45 percent of citizens evade taxes. A survey made last year found that 3 of 10 people said they needed friendships and family connections to get services from government, and 2 of 10 said it was appropriate to give gifts to officials to get services. Previous drives to end graft have proven unsuccessful. The biggest scandal occurred after a 1996 auto crash near the town of Susurluk in western Turkey. The crash victims included a top police official, a member of Parliament and a convicted heroin smuggler wanted in connection with the killings of seven leftist students.

Questions about why they were in the same car led to an investigative commission and disclosures of government involvement in death squads and other crimes, but no one has gone to jail in that scandal.

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November 12, 2000

EU Expectations Outlined: "Execution of Ocalan has been rendered impossible"

by Mehmet Ali Birand
Turkish Daily News

The Accession Partnership Document published by the European Union Commission has drawn various comments. But the whole list of EU expectations has not been published. I want to do just that. Then the things that Ankara has to change will be seen more clearly. The following measures will have to be taken in one to three years.

1. Basic liberties Strict implementation of Article 10 of the European Human Rights Convention, that is, amendment of all articles restricting the basic liberties and the freedom of expression (amendment, in this context, of Article 312 of the

Turkish Penal Code [TCK], a great part of the Anti-Terrorism Law including Article 8, and, topping the list of the restrictive provisions, Articles 13-14 and 16 of the Constitution) so that all ideas, speeches or writings which do not encourage terrorism, will be "set free."

Permission for the Heybeliada Clerical School to resume its activities and lifting of certain restrictions involving the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate and the use of other minority languages. Amendment of all laws which hinder the linguistic, religious and cultural development of Alawis as well as those groups which are specified as "minorities" in the Lausanne Treaty. (However, the EU concedes that Turkey can take measures to protect its secular regime, democratic system and territorial integrity.)

2. Human rights Amendment of the Constitution in line with the European Human Rights Convention and implementation of the U.N. Human Rights Convention, which Turkey signed but later ignored. Enactment of laws which would punish human rights violators. Education of the police and all other law enforcers on human rights issues.

3. NGOs Creation of all necessary constitutional and legal guarantees to enable nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) to operate freely, and the lifting of the relevant restrictions.

4. Death penalty Imposition of an immediate "moratorium" on the enforcement of death sentences and, in two or three years, abolition of the death penalty. (In other words, this would render outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party [PKK] leader Abdullah Ocalan's execution impossible.)

5. Torture Enactment of laws which would render the practice of torture almost impossible and elevate the fight against torturers to the highest levels possible. And, for that purpose, implementation of the European Anti-Torture Convention. Implementation with special emphasis of the relevant European conventions to prevent altogether the possibility of torture incidents in custody.

6. Prisons Improvement of the prison conditions and implementation of the U.N. rules involving the minimum conditions inmates must be provided with.

7. Kurds Establishment of Kurdish radio/TV. Permission for the Kurdish language to be taught in private courses. Imposition of no restrictions on activities aimed at developing and spreading Kurdish culture. Introduction of economic and social measures to eliminate poverty in the Southeast so that the latter will attain the socio-economic levels of the other regions in the country. Scrapping of the Emergency Rule (OHAL) in the Southeast in two or three years, and enabling of the all Turkish nationals of the aforementioned rights regardless of their race or origins.

8. The judiciary Diminishment of the work load of all courts and shortening of the judicial process, improvement of judges' training and introduction of measures aimed at elevating the judicial process to international standards. Scrapping of the State Security Courts (DGMs) and creation of specialized courts in their place.

9. MGK Transformation of the National Security Council (MGK) into a consultative body in line with the European practice and an increase in the number of civilian members of the MGK.

10. Cyprus Turkey's supporting the U.N. secretary-general's efforts to bring about a solution to the Cyprus problem. In other words, Turkish Cypriot leader Rauf Denktas's not leaving the negotiating table and not rejecting the Greek Cypriot proposals all the time, opting for a more flexible stance.

11. Economy Compliance with the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) suggestions. Acceleration of the privatization process -- especially in the energy, transportation and communications sectors, and starting with the state economic enterprises (SEEs) and state banks.

Amendment of the law regulating state tenders with a view to shaping these rules according to the European model. A great part of the EU expectations pertain to the implementation of a number of international agreements Turkey has signed onto -- but then dragged its feet when it came to implementing them. The EU document amounts to a call issued to Turkey, a call which boils down to the following: "Fulfil your pledges. You cannot go on like this." Now there is no way Turkey can negotiate or bargain on the aforementioned "list." Turkey has to implement it as it is. And do not think that implementing it would be difficult. Not at all. That is, if our politicians prove to have some measure of farsightedness. Turkey will not be fulfilling these expectations for the sake of the EU. Turkey has to make these arrangements anyway to be part of the international community of the future. If not, going on in the same manner without any change will be impossible from now on.



Media Responds to Allegations of an 'Unfree Press'

- In the aftermath of the disclosure of a controversial General Staff memo, Turkey has begun to debate its powerful military and that institution's affect on the media
- Some veteran journalists argue that the recent developments culminating in the cancellation of Cengiz Candar's column in the daily Sabah reveal that the post-modern military coup continues even today

Though the main question to arise in recent days has been the pressure on Turkey's press and whether true editorial independence can be said to exist, there are other questions which also carry vital importance in the matter of freedom of the press.

In the aftermath of the disclosure of a controversial General Staff memo, Turkey has begun to debate its powerful military and that institution's affect on the media.

Some veteran journalists, including Milliyet's Derya Sazak, argue that the recent developments culminating in the cancellation of Cengiz Candar's column in the daily Sabah reveal that the post-modern military coup continues even today.

The controversy began when Virtue Party (FP) Istanbul Deputy Nazli Ilicak claimed that in April 1988, now-retired Gen. Cevik Bir, who at the time was deputy chief of General Staff, instigated a smear campaign against certain prominent journalists, intellectuals and political parties.

At a press conference in Parliament, Ilicak said that a memorandum called "A Powerful Plan of Action" had been prepared by the General Staff in 1998 after the capture of Semdin Sakik, deputy leader of the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), in an effort to discredit some individuals and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), as well as certain political parties.

Ilicak said she had mentioned this document in her column in daily Yeni Safak on Oct. 21 and that her allegations had not been denied.

Ilicak stated that the former chairman of the Human Rights Association (IHD), Akin Birdal, was among the intellectuals on the smear campaign list. "The plan was timed to begin on April 24-25, when Birdal was accused of aiding the PKK and was then gunned down by two nationalist attackers," Ilicak said. On May, 12, 1998, Birdal was shot and wounded in the chest and leg in his office.

Ilicak claimed that the People's Democracy Party (HADEP) and the FP were the two parties targeted in the smear campaign. Journalists Mehmet Ali Birand, Cengiz Candar, Mahir Kaynak, Yalcin Kucuk and Mahir Sayin were also alleged to be helping the PKK.

Ilicak claimed that the aim of the campaign was to persuade public opinion that these individuals and parties were providing indirect support for the terrorist organization.

After Sakik's capture he reportedly identified these journalists, together with HADEP and the FP, as PKK supporters.

Following Ilicak's press conference, the General Staff admitted that the document was authentic, but added that it was merely a "memo" full of suggestions.

Hurriyet's Ertugrul Ozkok in his column said that the memo could start a new era. "The General Staff could well have denied the authenticity of the document," he wrote. "But it has not done that. The General Staff has done the right thing. And then it described the psychological atmosphere of the fight conducted against the PKK and noted that the interviews the journalists in question had conducted with the terrorist organization's leader adversely affected the struggle."

He said that the military may have such a "reflex" to do such things. "But, as journalists, we too have certain

'reflexes'," he wrote. "Several newspapers published the incriminating story about Candar and Birand which was attributed to the statements of Sakik, a captured PKK leader. The staff of these newspapers, including Hurriyet, had good intentions. They had no intention of doing harm to their implicated colleagues."

Milliyet's Taha Akyol said: "We all knew about the way pressure was exerted on the press in the course of the Feb. 28 process, the anti-fundamentalist drive launched by the National Security Council [MGK] in 1997, reportedly at the instigation of the military commanders. We knew that Bir was playing a central part in all that. We knew that newspapers, courts, various government departments and NGOs were receiving phone calls and 'confidential' letters as part of that process of applying pressure."

"We knew about the columnists whom certain circles were trying to get fired. We sensed that the fabricated headline that claimed that Sakik had said that columnists Birand and Candar were aiding the PKK had resulted from a 'psychological warfare' operation. But since these things were, naturally, carried out in secrecy, we didn't have a clear picture."

While journalists were busy commenting on the revelations, another important development took place: Sabah refused to publish Candar's latest column because it criticized the General Staff memo involving Candar.

In that article, Candar wrote that those military officials responsible for the "news" about him leaked to the press should be punished. The daily Radikal went on to publish the full text of Candar's article.

All these events bring to the foreground questions about the situation of the media, and the free press.

In light of the unfolding controversy, the Turkish Journalists' Association (TGC) issued a press release stating that it was not possible to call the present condition of the press stable.

"It has been observed that the media is involved in a number of conflicts of interest and is furthermore under the influence of certain power centers, and this is reflected in media policies," the TGC statement said. "In light of this, it is not possible to speak of editorial independence."

The TGC statement said that from time to time certain power centers increased their pressure on the media. It commented that there was a history of other journalists' articles being abandoned under similar circumstances.

These events are not the concern of journalists alone, but instead go to the heart of precisely what constitutes a democracy.

La Turquie condamnée pour "violation du droit à la vie"



STRASBOURG, 14 nov (AFP) - 16h18 - La Cour européenne des droits de l'Homme a condamné mardi Ankara, notamment pour "violation du droit à la vie" d'un homme, disparu après son arrestation en 1993 par les forces de l'ordre à Cizre (sud-est de la Turquie, Kurdistan).

Le requérant, Besir Tas, né en 1943, assurait que son fils, Muhsin, disparu pendant sa garde à vue, avait été tué par les forces de l'ordre, qui l'avaient également torturé, selon un communiqué de la Cour.

M. Tas, qui réside à Tatvan (sud-est), regrettait en outre qu'aucune enquête effective n'ait été menée sur la disparition de son fils.

La Cour, qui n'a pas retenu les accusations de torture à l'encontre de Mehsein Tas, a cependant estimé qu'il y avait lieu de "présumer qu'il est décédé après son arrestation par les forces de l'ordre".

Elle a également conclu qu'aucune enquête "n'avait été menée sur la disparition au moment des événements".

Par ailleurs, la Cour a condamné Ankara pour "tortures et traitements inhumains et dégradants", à l'encontre de Besir Tas, estimant que ce dernier avait souffert de la conduite des autorités, indifférentes et insensibles à ses inquiétudes, selon elle.

Les juges européens ont alloué 20.000 livres sterling (33.527 euros) pour préjudice moral aux héritiers de Muhsin Tas, 10.000 livres sterling (16.763 euros) pour le préjudice moral subi par le requérant et 14.795 livres sterling (24.801 euros) au titre des frais et dépens.

13 November, 2000



Talk of Kurdish broadcast splits coalition partners

As Yilmaz states that TRT could broadcast Kurdish programs Transportation Minister Enis Oksuz strongly reacts to the proposal. Oksuz argues that 'it does no good for national unity'

Ankara - Turkish Daily News

Despite Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit's statement that the Accession Partnership Document did not include measures that Turkey would have difficulty in fulfilling, Deputy Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz's remarks that TRT (Turkish Radio and Television Corporation) could broadcast programs in Kurdish has created a fierce debate among coalition partners.

While Ecevit has refused to comment on Yilmaz's statement on the Kurdish broadcast, Transportation Minister Enis Oksuz of the Nationalist Movement Party (MHP) reacted strongly to the proposal. Answering reporters' questions on Saturday Ecevit said he would not comment on the topic until he had consulted with the coalition partners. Yilmaz had stated in an interview that the state-run TRT could broadcast programs in Kurdish to conform with the Accession Partnership Document's requirements.

Giving Ankara's full support to Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (KKTC) President Rauf Denktas' decision to withdraw from the U.N.-sponsored proximity talks, Ecevit said there was no link between Turkey's candidacy to the European Union and the Cyprus dispute, in a bid to stress that Ankara has not accepted the Cyprus article of the document that was announced last Wednesday. Referring to Finnish Prime Minister Paavo Lipponen's

letter to the Turkish government last December -- when he was term president of the EU -- Ecevit said the letter had cleared up Ankara's doubts on the dispute as it clearly stressed that all the relevant factors would be considered on the problem. Commenting on U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan's latest verbal proposals on Cyprus Ecevit said no one should expect Denktas to take them seriously.

Then responding to questions on the document's reference to the National Security Council (MGK) in Turkey, Ecevit said, "It should not have been included in the document." He stated that the EU had been misinformed about the MGK.

While Ecevit refused to comment on Yilmaz's proposal for a Kurdish broadcast, strong reaction came from the MHP. Oksuz stated that Yilmaz should be asked if the Kurdish language would do any good to the nation-building process in Turkey. He argued that Turkey was obliged to create new nations from ethnic groups unlike European countries or the United States. Indicating that such moves would create potential dangers to the "Turkish ship" and may cause it "to sink," Oksuz said: "Efforts are being made to create a Turkey that would please heathens. Are we stupid? Have we lost our minds? We have to get rich, share equitably and move ahead with the national unity ideal."

While being the target of criticism from the MHP Yilmaz issued a caution to Greece at a meeting in Izmir yesterday organized by his own Motherland Party (ANAP). He said Greece should stop using the EU as a shield against Turkey.

The EU last week laid out steps it wants Turkey to take to improve the economy and human rights, including allowing broadcasts in Kurdish.

Speaking and publishing in Kurdish was made legal in 1991 but broadcasts are still banned. It is also forbidden to teach Kurdish in schools.

Yilmaz's center-right ANAP and the MHP are junior partners in Ecevit's three-party coalition government. The nationalist MHP are opposed to granting cultural rights to Kurds fearing the move would break up the country.

Iraq-Syria pipeline opens soon, with

Tripoli Daily Star - 13 Nov 2000

By Mona Ziade

DOHA: Iraq will soon resume pumping oil to the northeastern Syrian terminal of Banias, turning a new leaf in bumpy relations between the two countries and giving a considerable boost to efforts ending the Baghdad regime's decade-old isolation.

While plans for a quick resumption of the flow to Syria have been put firmly on track, contacts for including Lebanon in the deal at a later stage are also in full swing.

Prime Minister Rafik Hariri conferred in Doha on Sunday with Izzat Ibrahim, vice-president of Iraq's ruling Revolutionary Command Council, the highest-level contact between the two countries since relations soured six years ago. Lebanon severed its diplomatic relations with Iraq in 1994 after Baghdad's mission in Beirut was implicated in the murder of an Iraqi dissident.

Ibrahim, accompanied by Iraqi Foreign Minister Mohammed Saeed al-Sahhaf, called on Hariri at his residence in a guest compound to discuss bilateral relations after Lebanese businessmen and industrialists took the initiative with two sanction-busting flights to Baghdad last month.

"The issue of the Syrian-Lebanese leg of the Iraqi pipeline was discussed," a Lebanese source said when asked about the meeting. He would not elaborate. Before the civil war, Iraq pumped oil to Tripoli's oil refinery via Syria.

But the facility, which had a prewar capacity of some 450,000-500,000 barrels per day, is now in tatters and it is not clear how long it would take – or at what cost – to return the refinery to functioning fully.

The Lebanese-Iraqi meeting came a day after Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk al-Sharaa announced, also from Doha, that the "political decision" to reopen the Iraqi pipeline to Syria was "final." He said that some technical hurdles needed to be eliminated for the oil flow to resume after nearly two decades of suspension. Sharaa spoke on the sidelines of the Islamic summit.

He did not explain the technicalities that hinder an immediate resumption of supplies, but other sources said the pipeline, which has been empty for nearly two decades, would need to be cleansed of debris and rust. They could not speculate how long the process would take. Syria abruptly stopped the flow of oil from Iraq in the early 1980s, when Iraqi-inspired dissidents threatened to blow the pipeline up in retaliation for Damascus' tilt toward Tehran during the Iran-Iraq war.

Before its closure, the pipeline carried up to 600,000 barrels of crude oil to the Syrian terminal, but its capacity is believed to be more than double that amount.

The sources, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said that in the initial stage after its impending reopening the pipeline will carry some 200,000 of Basra crude, which Syria will buy at cut-rate prices.

The supplies will be refined at Banias, and reshipped in tankers to consumer countries at market prices. Syria will pocket the difference between the purchase and sale prices. The sources forecast between \$300,000 and \$1 million in daily revenue, depending on the fluctuations in world prices and the stability of supplies through the aged pipeline.

Iraqi oil supplies were suspended under the UN sanctions clamped on Baghdad after Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait in August of 1990. However, limited sales are now allowed to allow Iraq to raise money for food and medicine.

It was not immediately clear if the United Nations would sanction these oil sales to Syria and, perhaps, later to Lebanon. But the United States has often tried, not always successfully, to block any Arab attempts at circumventing the sanctions.

The embargo of Iraq, and Kuwait's insistence on referring to the Iraqi invasion of its territory, have created a source of deep friction at the meeting of the 56-member Organization of the Islamic Conference.

The Iraqi delegates have been pressing for a resolution that calls for an end to the sanctions and for eliminating references to Iraq's belligerent policies toward its neighbor, which the Kuwaitis have adamantly rejected.

Iran, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates have been trying to mediate a compromise, but so far they have only succeeded in changing the wording of a resolution to refer to the "Iraqi-Kuwait" situation, as opposed to the "invasion."

The Iraqi foreign minister has described the mediation effort as "stillborn," because the Iraqis were called upon to accept the blame for the invasion and abide by UN resolutions.

But Iranian delegates have insisted that even if they fail to make a breakthrough at the Islamic summit, they will continue the mediation between Baghdad and Kuwait afterward.

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Iran Closes Consulate in Azerbaijan after Attack

AFP - 10 Nov 2000

TEHRAN, Iran, Nov 10, 2000 -- (Agence France Presse) Iran has closed its consulate in the neighboring autonomous Azerbaijani republic of Nakhichevan following an attack on the building and its staff earlier this week, reliable sources said Friday.

At least three people attacked and insulted the staff and damaged the premises of the consulate in the republic's capital, Nakhichevan, on Monday, the sources said. The consulate was closed Tuesday and would remain shut until further notice, they added.

On October 29, Iran cut the electricity it was supplying to the republic, an enclave separated from the rest of Azerbaijan by Armenia, because it still owes Tehran USD 45 million, state television reported, adding that the power supply would not be reestablished until Baku paid its debt.

The power supply was restored later to allow the inhabitants to take part in legislative elections last weekend, but Iran's energy ministry said it would be cut again when voting was over.

Some 60 percent of Nakhichevan's electricity supply comes from Iran, which had agreed to provide 880 megawatts each day. Tehran has repeatedly said it had no obligations to uphold the agreement if Azerbaijan did not respect its financial commitments. The two neighbors share Islamic and cultural affinities, but relations have been strained in recent years, particularly over the sharing of the resource-rich Caspian Sea. Iran has also singled out Baku for its friendly relations with the United States and Israel.

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Russian delegations head for Baghdad

ArabicNews - 11 Nov 2000

A Russian delegation representing the scientific and cultural international cooperation between Russia and Iraq chaired by the chairman of the committee Yuri Shafranik left Moscow on Friday for Baghdad at the invitation of the Iraqi deputy prime minister Tareq Aziz.

Russian sources said the delegation would take part in the works of the 4th session of the executive and co-ordinate committee of Baghdad's conference, which will be held on November 11, and 12.

Besides Russian citizens, the delegation is composed of representatives for Armenia, Belarus, Kirkezia, Ukraine, and Slovakia as well as members of the Russian Duma council and representatives for the Russian oil and gas companies and Russian businessmen circles. However, It was announced in Moscow on Friday that a delegation including 47 Russian scientists will head for Iraq on November 15 to take part in a campaign of protest against the sanctions imposed by the UN against Iraq.

The spokesman for the delegation Vladimir Anikin said that the campaign of protest is purely humanitarian and has nothing to do with politics.

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Iran Clerics Linked to Raid on Students

By Geneive Abdo

Special to the International Herald Tribune

TEHRAN — The Iranian Parliament issued a report Monday saying that a conspiracy by hard-line clerics and carried out by the country's security forces was responsible for a violent crackdown against pro-democracy students last summer.

Reformist deputies who issued the report said that the elite Revolutionary Guards and the Islamic militia, under the influence of hard-line clerics and the protection of the judiciary, beat university students in the western city of Khorramabad from Aug. 24 to 27.

The young activists had gathered to participate in a national congress organized by the largest student group, the Office to Consolidate Unity.

Four days of protests erupted in the town after the Islamic militia blocked two religious scholars, who had traveled from Tehran to speak at the student congress, from leaving the Khorramabad airport.

One policeman was killed and dozens of people were injured in the violence. The deputy governor of the province, who is confined to a wheelchair, was

also beaten. The report issued Monday appeared to indicate that institutions within the state, not freewheeling vigilantes, are responsible for some of the periodic explosions against activists working for reform and democracy.

In recent years factions within the Islamic militia, the Revolutionary Guards and the intelligence service have been accused of ordering the murders of dissident intellectuals, the beatings of students and threats against those who oppose the conservative establishment.

But little documentation had been issued to substantiate these claims, making it difficult to prosecute the culprits.

"Some people have tried to say that ethical and geographical issues are responsible for the outburst of violence," the report said.

"But the real reason was political violence-mongering and the unlawful use of levers of pressure by one faction in order to attain its own goals and to stop the other faction from continuing its programs."

Student leaders declined comment on the report, fearing repercussions from speaking with Western journalists.

President Mohammed Khatami was elected by a landslide in 1997 on a

promise to bring law and order to Iran. But three years into his presidency, he still lacks control over the armed forces, which in Iran include the police. As a result, he has been forced to stand by as his loyalists are suppressed by various arms of the state.

In July 1999, hundreds of people were severely injured and an unknown number died in Tehran during five days of pro-democracy student demonstrations.

The parliamentary report outlined a detailed conspiracy in which commanders of the Revolutionary Guards turned a blind eye to members of the Islamic militia who blocked the two scholars, Mohsen Kadivar and Abdolkarim Soroush, from leaving the Khorramabad airport.

In the following days, commanders of the Revolutionary Guards witnessed the beatings of students in the neighboring town of Boroujerd. Once the students began leaving the region, members of the Islamic militia stopped their buses and beat them, the report says.

The report also blames the state-owned television network, saying it broadcast sermons by clerics using their pulpits to threaten students and stir up hatred against them.

Iraq Needs Containing

Saddam Hussein sees an opportunity in America's political transition. Already, Arab governments are newly willing to embrace him, thanks to anti-American feeling spread by the Israeli-Palestinian violence. On top of that, Europeans are courting him for business, drawn to the lucrative opportunities created by high oil prices. The incoming U.S. administration, Saddam calculates, is going to inherit a containment policy that seems hopelessly tattered, so much so that there will be strong pressure to give it up. The United Nations sanctions have already been greatly loosened for humanitarian reasons, and they have failed for a decade to topple Saddam.

Iraq's dictator therefore seems to be preparing a new "offer." Give up your failed containment policy, he may suggest, and I will allow some arms inspections in return.

The challenge for the next U.S. administration is not merely to resist that false bargain. Saddam has proved time and again that he has no intention of allowing meaningful inspections, and if he did submit to them, the existing UN resolutions already provide for a

suspension of sanctions. The real challenge is to fight hard for a containment policy — to go out and sell it to voters and allies far more vigorously than has the Clinton administration — because even a tattered version of this strategy is much better than none.

Saddam and his European sympathizers, notably French and Russian, labor mightily to foster the impression that Iraq is already open for business pretty much as usual. A trade fair in Baghdad recently drew hundreds of companies from 45 countries, most of them European. The deputy speaker of Russia's Duma has led a group of 50 parliamentarians to Baghdad; Jordan's prime minister topped him with an entourage of 100 journalists and officials. France's TotalFinaElf heads a rush by the world's oil industry (including prominent U.S. companies that operate under the fig leaf of European partnerships) to profit from Iraq's petroleum.

All of this gives propaganda points to Iraq's dictator, but it does not mean that the next administration might as well discard the UN sanctions as hopeless. Under the UN system, foreign firms can help Iraq export oil, but the oil

revenues go into an offshore account to be used to purchase food, medicines and other UN-approved substances. Trade continues, but the money is supposed to be kept out of Saddam's hands. Inevitably, the system leaks a bit, but it is clearly better than no system.

At a minimum, therefore, the next administration needs to defend the existing sanctions. But it should set its sights on toughening them where possible. The humanitarian objection that this hurts ordinary Iraqis is outweighed by the sad truth that Saddam Hussein is determined to keep portions of his population in poverty. Moreover, the critics of sanctions seem to presume that the Saddam Hussein who rules Iraq is not the same Saddam Hussein who overran Kuwait a decade ago, who advocates holy war against the United States and Israel, who has used weapons of mass destruction and would do so again. Short of removing him from power, the only responsible policy toward this kind of warmongering dictator is containment, and the tougher the better.

— THE WASHINGTON POST.

Mesut Yilmaz soutient l'idée d'émissions de radio ou télévision en kurde



ANKARA, 14 nov (AFP) - 15h23 - Le vice-Premier ministre turc Mesut Yilmaz a soutenu mardi la création d'émissions de radio ou télévision en kurde, demandée par l'Union européenne à la Turquie, y voyant un moyen de contrer la propagande "séparatiste" des rebelles kurdes.

L'UE demande à la Turquie d'"établir un mécanisme pour répondre à une demande de ses citoyens d'avoir des émissions dans leur langue maternelle. Je crois que nous pouvons le faire", a-t-il dit devant le groupe parlementaire de son parti de la Mère-patrie (ANAP, centre-droit), membre de la coalition gouvernementale.

Dans son partenariat d'adhésion pour la Turquie, candidate à l'UE, la Commission demande à Ankara de "garantir le plein exercice par tous les individus sans discrimination, quelle que soit leur langue, race, couleur, sexe (...) de tous les droits de l'homme et libertés fondamentales".

Elle l'appelle à lever les obstacles légaux interdisant aux citoyens turcs d'utiliser leur langue maternelle dans les émissions de télévision ou radio.

M. Yilmaz, chargé des relations avec l'UE, a estimé que l'Etat turc devait introduire des émissions en kurde pour lutter contre les émissions "séparatistes" de la chaîne de télévision pro-kurde par satellite Medya-TV, proche du Parti des Travailleurs du Kurdistan (PKK).

"La vraie menace contre notre unité vient de l'organisation séparatiste qui pénètre dans des millions de foyers grâce à cette chaîne et les soumet à un lavage de cerveau", a-t-il dit.

Les autorités turques s'opposent à des droits culturels pour les Kurdes --enseignement ou télévision en kurde-- de crainte qu'ils favorisent les aspirations autonomistes, bien que le PKK ait mis fin l'année dernière à 15 ans de rébellion armée pour la création d'un Etat kurde indépendant dans le sud-est anatolien à majorité kurde.

Des publications ou des cassettes de musiques en kurde sont cependant tolérées.

Le Premier ministre turc Bulent Ecevit a indiqué que la question des émissions en kurde devait être évoquée "tôt ou tard" au sein de sa coalition tripartite, cité mardi par le quotidien à grand tirage Hurriyet.

"Nous ne devons pas tarder" à évoquer cette affaire, a-t-il dit sans autre précision.

L'armée turque contre l'idée d'émissions de radio ou télévision en kurde



ANKARA, 15 nov (AFP) - 14h53 - L'armée turque a exprimé des craintes que la création d'émissions de radio ou télévision en kurde, demandée par l'Union européenne (UE) à la Turquie, ne porte atteinte à l'intégrité du pays à peine sorti de 15 ans de rébellion kurde, a rapporté mercredi l'agence Anatolie.

"L'armée turque ne peut être contre l'entrée de la Turquie dans l'UE, mais quant à savoir si cela doit se faire de manière inconditionnelle, nous pouvons avoir une opinion différente", a déclaré mardi soir le secrétaire général de l'état-major Aslan Guner, cité par l'agence.

"La seule inquiétude de l'armée réside dans le fait que cette initiative pourrait mettre un terme à la structure unitaire de la Turquie. Nous ne pouvons rester forts si nous sommes divisés", a expliqué M. Guner, interrogé au sujet de la création de radios et de télévisions en langue kurde.

"Mais ce sont des questions politiques, des questions sensibles... Elles seront évaluées en temps voulu", a-t-il ajouté.

Dans son projet de partenariat avec la Turquie, candidate à l'UE, la Commission européenne a demandé la semaine dernière à Ankara de "garantir le plein exercice par tous les individus sans discrimination, quelle que soit leur langue, race, couleur, sexe (...) de tous les droits de l'Homme et libertés fondamentales".

Cette demande de l'UE de la reconnaissance de droits culturels aux Kurdes est au coeur d'un débat animé à Ankara, qui divise les trois partis de la coalition du Premier Ministre Bulent Ecevit.

Alors que M. Ecevit et le chef du Parti de la mère Patrie (ANAP, centre droit), le vice-Premier Ministre Mesut Yilmaz, ont exprimé des opinions favorables à des émissions en langue kurde, le Parti de l'action nationaliste (MHP, extrême droite) s'est violemment

opposé à cette éventualité.

"La Turquie ne peut accepter (la demande de) droits culturels et ethniques qui vont engendrer des conflits ethniques et des divisions", a déclaré le leader du MHP et vice-Premier ministre Devlet Bahçeli, cité mercredi par la presse.

L'armée turque a combattu depuis 1984 le Parti des travailleurs du Kurdistan (PKK) qui luttait pour la création d'un Etat kurde dans le sud-est de la Turquie à majorité kurde. Ce conflit a fait quelque 36.500 victimes avant que le PKK n'eut annoncé l'automne dernier qu'il renonçait à la lutte armée.

Attentat à la bombe dans le Kurdistan irakien: 6 morts, 17 blessés



ANKARA, 16 nov (AFP) - 10h11 - Six personnes ont été tuées et 17 autres blessées dans un attentat à la bombe mardi contre un café d'Erbil (nord), a indiqué jeudi à l'AFP un responsable du Parti démocratique du Kurdistan (PDK), faction kurde qui contrôle cette ville du Kurdistan irakien.

"Quatre personnes ont été tuées sur le coup, deux autres victimes ont succombé à leurs blessures. Il y a aussi 17 blessés", a précisé le représentant du PDK en Turquie, Safeen Dizayee.

Il a indiqué ignorer qui avait organisé cet attentat à la bombe contre un café de la ville qui constitue "un choc et une surprise", soulignant qu'une enquête "sérieuse" est en cours pour en déterminer les responsables.

"Cet attentat vise à déstabiliser la région qui connaissait une accalmie depuis plusieurs années", a-t-il ajouté.

Le Kurdistan irakien échappe au contrôle du régime de Bagdad depuis la fin de la guerre du Golfe en 1991.

L'Union Patriotique du Kurdistan (UPK de Jalal Talabani) contrôle la partie est de ce territoire, frontalier de l'Iran, alors que son rival, le PDK de Massoud Barzani tient le secteur proche de la Turquie. Ils avaient formé un gouvernement non reconnu internationalement après des élections en 1992.

Le PDK est l'allié d'Ankara depuis 1997 dans cette région contre laquelle l'armée turque lançait fréquemment des opérations contre les rebelles du Parti des travailleurs du Kurdistan (PKK).

Le PKK a annoncé l'an dernier qu'il arrêterait sa lutte armée lancée en 1984 contre les forces d'Ankara et se retirait de Turquie, mais l'armée turque a répliqué qu'elle pourchasserait les rebelles jusqu'au bout.

Selon l'armée, il y aurait encore quelque 500 militants dans les montagnes turques et 5.000 dans des pays voisins de la Turquie.

The Weekly Standard October 16, 2000

Saddam Hussein's French Kiss; A desire to stick it to the U.S. has led Paris to embrace the Iraqi dictator.

by Jeffrey Gedmin

When Richard Butler once shared with the United Nations Security Council a series of high-altitude photographs of some 130 heavy Republican Guard trucks gathering at an isolated spot in the desert-- they had just fled an inspection site as Butler and his arms inspection team were approaching--French U.N. ambassador Alain Dejammet mocked the evidence. Dejammet speculated that perhaps it was just "a truckers' picnic."

It's stunning, the degree to which a misguided and deeply cynical policy run by Paris has managed over the last four years to rally much of the world against the United States--and in support of Saddam Hussein's tyrannical regime. Of course, give a weak American president his due. American fecklessness breeds contempt, even among our allies. But the French deserve special credit.

At the end of the Gulf War in 1991, the U.N. Security Council adopted resolution 687. According to the resolution, Iraq gives up its weapons of mass destruction. In exchange, the international community gives up its sanctions against Iraq. Straightforward. Iraq's oil minister, General Amer Rashid, claims today that Iraq has been "in compliance with 687 since the end of 1991." Equally straightforward. The Iraqis practice the Big Lie.

UNSCOM --the U.N. commission charged with removing Saddam Hussein's weapons of mass destruction-- has not been permitted by Baghdad to operate in Iraq since late 1998. Even "son-of-UNSCOM," the softer, more politicized version known as UNMOVIC (the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission), run by former Swedish foreign minister Hans Blix, has not been allowed in. "We are happy without the inspections," says Iraqi deputy prime minister Tariq Aziz. No doubt.

While still operating in Iraq, UNSCOM found a consistent pattern of flagrant cheating and concealment by the Iraqis. In one instance, one of UNSCOM's senior biological inspectors seized a briefcase from two Iraqi officers running out the back door of a laboratory. The briefcase contained materials for testing biological warfare agents such as anthrax and botulinum toxin. In another, Tariq Aziz, brazen and defiant, told UNSCOM's chairman Butler that the regime needed to retain its weapons of mass destruction for the Persians (Iranians) and the Jews (Israelis)!

Saddam's weapons programs continue. According to recent German press reports, Germany's intelligence has located a new secret missile factory some 40 kilometers southwest of Baghdad. The factory reportedly employs 250 engineers and is working on plans for missiles with a range of 3,000 miles, far longer than the missiles Iraq recently tested. How many truckers' picnics would we find today if the international community were able to conduct inspections inside Iraq?

So what's the French posture? Since coming to office in 1995, President Jacques Chirac has pursued doggedly a policy aimed at ending sanctions and returning Saddam's regime to the family of respected nations ("Iraq is not a defeated nation!" French diplomats declare). The French approach to helping Saddam has not been a very creative one, mind you. Paris simply follows Baghdad.

At first, this meant discrediting Richard Butler as an agent of the Americans. Yes, Butler, the center-left Australian diplomat who has spent his career in arms control and disarmament issues—often on the opposite side from the United States. Go figure. Still, when Butler told the New York Times in 1998 that Iraq possessed enough anthrax to "blow away Tel Aviv," Iraq beat the drum about U.S.-Zionist conspiracies—and the French kept pace. Foreign minister Hubert Vedrine suggested that Butler was "over-stepping his prerogatives." France's interior minister, Jean-Pierre Chevenement, called Butler's comments "ridiculous" (Chevenement had resigned as defense minister over the Gulf War).

Paris also followed Saddam's line by discrediting the work of UNSCOM more generally, suggesting that the enterprise itself was a tool of the Americans. After all, it conducted "endless checks," complained *Le Monde*, led by a "preponderance" of Americans. But this, too, flew in the face of all evidence. UNSCOM's work was led by scientific experts.

What's more, the highest percentage of Americans that ever served among UNSCOM's team of technical experts was 17 percent. The head of the missile team was a Russian, as was the deputy head of the chemical weapons unit. A Frenchman served as the photo interpreter for U-2 imagery—until his government recalled him in 1997 because, according to one former UNSCOM official, his work led him to stray from Paris's overtly political line.

Finally, and most successfully, the French have followed Baghdad's propaganda that the U.S.-led sanctions, and not Saddam's regime, have become the primary problem. On this, France has won allies. In August, Venezuelan president Hugo Chavez became the first foreign head of state to visit Iraq since the Gulf War. Chavez belittled those who would demonize Saddam ("We're all sons of God," he crowed). More recently, the Russians, a strong competitor to France in representing Saddam's interest at the Security Council, have joined the French in testing the U.N. embargo by sending planes into Baghdad. India and China have applauded the move. The Swiss and Italians are considering following suit. The purpose? To bring to an end American "genocide," says Jean-Marie Benjamin, a priest who helped organize one of the recent anti-sanctions flights, backed by the French government. "The U.S. approach is to inflict punishment," says Vedrine, "whereas our approach is to look for a solution."

What's the solution? Removing sanctions from Saddam will not change the plight of the Iraqi people. Nor will France's tender embrace civilize the Iraqi dictator. For five years he refused to participate in the U.N.'s "oil-for-food" program, through which Baghdad is able to sell oil for food and medicine. Since 1996, his loyalists have hoarded food and allowed medical supplies to rot in warehouses. He smuggles in Mercedes and Volvos, "absolutely obscene amounts of Scotch," according to Western intelligence sources, and various other luxury goods for personal consumption. He smuggles out what he can't use. Last month, the British pharmaceutical company Glaxo Wellcome discovered its Ventolin—a children's asthma medicine, which had been shipped to Iraq under a U.N. program—circulating on the black market in Lebanon.

Sure, the French, like the Russians, are eager to snap up lucrative oil contracts. Baghdad has openly promised preference to those who help end the embargo. The French also are interested in building coalitions against American power and influence ("the entire policy of France is dedicated to this" goal, says its foreign minister). But "the enemy of my enemy" sort of logic was supposed to have died with the end of the Cold War.

Ali Hassan al-Majid, a cousin of Saddam's, had the assignment in the late 1980s of providing a "final solution" to Iraq's Kurdish problem. Al-Majid boasted in a May 1987 meeting—a transcript of which was in the archive that fell into the hands of Human Rights Watch in 1991—that he would "kill them all [the Kurds] with chemical weapons. Who is going to say anything? The international community? F — them!" Al-Majid gassed civilians and ordered films to be made of his massacres and deportations. He was promoted to governor of Kuwait and subsequently minister of defense. If they get this Iraqi regime out of jail, what reward do the French really expect to receive?

L'armée turque a tenté de discréditer des journalistes qui ne suivaient pas la ligne politique officielle

La découverte de trois mémorandums militaires secrets suscite une polémique

Les forces armées turques n'apprécient guère ceux qui ne respectent pas la ligne politique officielle, notamment en ce qui concerne la ques-

tion kurde. Trois journalistes l'ont ainsi appris à leurs dépens. La découverte de trois mémorandums secrets sur la manière dont l'armée tente

d'intervenir dans le débat en discréditant également des politiciens et des militants des droits de l'homme est jugée préoccupante.

ISTANBUL

de notre correspondante

Nazlı Ilıcak, députée de l'opposition, vient d'intenter une action en justice contre l'ancien numéro deux des forces armées, le général Cevik Bir, après la découverte d'un mémorandum militaire secret portant sa signature, autorisant une campagne visant à discréditer des journalistes, politiciens et activistes des droits de l'homme. M^{me} Ilıcak, membre du Parti de la vertu (islamiste), a également engagé des poursuites judiciaires contre l'état-major des forces armées, demandant une réparation symbolique après la publication d'un communiqué qu'elle juge insultant. En Turquie, où les actions des militaires sont rarement remises en question, la démarche de M^{me} Ilıcak relance le débat sur le rôle de l'armée dans la société.

L'affaire remonte au printemps 1998, peu après la capture de Semdin Sakik, un des hauts responsables militaires du PKK. La presse locale avait alors publié les prétendues confessions du militant kurde, dans lesquelles ce dernier

accusait plusieurs personnalités connues de soutenir le PKK. Parmi les personnes ainsi dénoncées figuraient Mehmet Ali Birand et Cengiz Candar, tous deux éditorialistes de tendance libérale au quotidien *Sabah*, ainsi qu'Akin Birdal, président de l'Association turque des droits de l'homme. A la suite de ces accusations, Ali Birand, journaliste très connu en Turquie, avait été congédié par *Sabah*, alors que son collègue Cengiz Candar parvenait à sauver son emploi de justesse. Le 12 mai 1998, Akin Birdal était grièvement blessé de plusieurs balles au cours d'une tentative d'assassinat.

« OFFENSIVE PSYCHOLOGIQUE »

Le mémorandum secret de l'armée implique que ces allégations faisaient partie d'une « offensive psychologique » visant à « diminuer le respect et la confiance du public » à l'égard de ces journalistes en affirmant que le PKK, usant de ses fonds, les avait utilisés comme pions pour sa propagande. Le document propose également la fermeture de l'association des droits

de l'homme et cible plusieurs hommes d'affaires et parlementaires aux vues non conformes à la doctrine officielle, suggérant l'usage d'« éditorialistes choisis » pour faire passer le message.

L'état-major a confirmé l'authenticité du document tout en condamnant les « personnes mal intentionnées, au noir dessein » qui avaient publié le mémorandum « illégalement ». Les généraux n'ont pas confirmé que le « plan d'action » avait été mis en œuvre, mais ils ont rappelé qu'ils continueraient de lutter de façon déterminée contre « les personnes et institutions qui tentent d'insulter les forces armées ».

L'affaire continue néanmoins de prendre de l'ampleur avec la découverte de deux nouveaux mémorandums. L'un d'entre eux critique le Parti de la vertu ainsi que d'autres groupes politiques qui soulignent la nécessité de réformer la Constitution. Un autre document accuse le Parti républicain du peuple (CHP) de collaborer avec le parti pro-kurde Hadeş. « Je pense qu'il n'est pas acceptable que

des institutions non politiques se mêlent au débat politique. Chaque institution devrait se préoccuper seulement de son propre domaine. Le CHP n'est pas une organisation clandestine », a déclaré Deniz Baykal, le dirigeant du parti.

Akin Birdal a déjà annoncé son intention d'entamer, lui aussi, une action en justice contre le général Bir, aujourd'hui retraité. Les journalistes diffamés estiment pour leur part que cette affaire aura des retombées importantes pour la Turquie. « Le contenu du document révèle qu'au sein de la structure étatique il existe un mécanisme qui se considère au-dessus de la loi et prépare des complots contre ceux qu'il n'aime pas. Ces révélations marquent un tournant », affirme Cengiz Candar. Mehmet Ali Birand, aujourd'hui présentateur vedette de la chaîne CNN-Türk, estime pour sa part que « l'armée a reconnu les faits. D'une certaine façon, c'est une révolution. Nous espérons qu'elle marquera le début d'une ère nouvelle ».

Nicole Pope

Un chef kurde irakien reçu par le colonel Kadhafi



TRIPOLI, 18 nov (AFP) - 15h11 - Le numéro un libyen, le colonel Mouammar Kadhafi a reçu samedi à Tripoli Massoud Barzani, chef du parti démocratique kurde (PDK), une faction kurde du nord de l'Irak, a rapporté l'agence officielle JANA.

M. Barzani a informé le dirigeant libyen des "développements" dans la région du Kurdistan et lui a rendu hommage pour son "soutien au peuple kurde", selon JANA.

Le Kurdistan irakien échappe au contrôle du régime de Bagdad depuis la fin de la guerre du Golfe en 1991. L'Union Patriotique du Kurdistan (UPK de Jalal Talabani) contrôle la partie est de ce territoire, frontalière de l'Iran, alors que son rival, le PDK, tient le secteur proche de la Turquie.

Le PDK est l'allié d'Ankara depuis 1997 contre le Parti des Travailleurs du Kurdistan (PKK, rebelles kurdes de Turquie) et l'armée turque lance fréquemment des opérations contre le PKK dans le nord de l'Irak.

Le PKK a mis fin à sa rébellion armée contre l'Etat turc en 1999 et s'est retranché dans le nord de l'Irak.

Décès à Paris du chanteur turc d'origine kurde, Ahmet Kaya



jeudi 16 novembre 2000,

PARIS, 16 nov (AFP) - Le chanteur turc d'origine kurde Ahmet Kaya, condamné par contumace par la justice turque pour soutien à la rébellion kurde, est mort jeudi matin à Paris, a-t-on appris auprès de l'Institut kurde de Paris.

Ahmet Kaya, 43 ans, est décédé d'une crise cardiaque à son domicile parisien à 7h30, a-t-on précisé de même source.

Le chanteur, très populaire en Turquie avant de reconnaître des origines kurdes et de faire savoir qu'il voulait enregistrer une chanson en langue kurde, avait été condamné en mars à trois ans et neuf mois de prison par contumace pour "propagande séparatiste" en faveur du Parti des travailleurs du Kurdistan (PKK).

Ahmet Kaya s'était vu décerner au début de 1999 le prix de "musicien de l'année" par l'Association de la presse magazine de Turquie. A l'occasion de la remise de cette distinction, l'artiste avait indiqué qu'il souhaitait composer une chanson en kurde pour son prochain disque.

"Je suis kurde, fier de l'être et je ferais connaître la réalité kurde en Turquie; malgré les pressions je sortirais mon album avec une chanson et un clip en kurde", avait-il alors déclaré, selon une citation reproduite jeudi dans un communiqué du Centre d'information du Kurdistan à Paris.

Selon les organisations de défense des droits de l'Homme, il a ensuite été pris dans un "engrenage judiciaire" et a fait l'objet d'une campagne médiatique. En tournée dans plusieurs pays européens, en 1999, Ahmet Kaya avait décidé de ne pas rentrer dans son pays.

Après des poursuites judiciaires, il avait été acquitté pour les déclarations faites lors de cette cérémonie. Mais la Cour de sûreté de l'Etat d'Istanbul l'avait en revanche condamné en mars à trois ans et neuf mois de prison pour des propos tenus en 1993 lors d'un concert à Berlin.

De nouvelles poursuites avaient été lancées contre le chanteur au mois de juin, pour des motifs similaires.

Ahmet Kaya sera inhumé au cimetière parisien du Père-Lachaise à une date qui n'a pas encore été fixée. Il y "rejoindra son ami, le cinéaste kurde Yilmaz Guney (auteur du film Yol) qu'il admirait et qui, également persécuté en Turquie, mourut en exil à Paris en 1984", a indiqué l'Institut kurde.

Saddam Hussein offre 1,5 million de livres scolaires aux Kurdes irakiens



BAGDAD, 10 nov (AFP) - 14h00 - Le président irakien Saddam Hussein a envoyé au Kurdistan 1,5 million de livres scolaires, don aux écoliers de cette région qui échappe à son contrôle depuis 1991, a rapporté vendredi la presse irakienne.

Citant un sous-secrétaire au ministère irakien de l'Education, le quotidien Al-Iraq a indiqué que "sur instruction du président irakien un don de 1,5 million de livres scolaires, en langues arabe et kurde, a été acheminé vers le Kurdistan à bord de sept camions".

Le gouvernement irakien fait des dons aux Kurdes, depuis 1994, sous la forme de livres et d'autres fournitures scolaires acheminés vers les provinces d'Erbil, de Souleimanieh et de Dohouk.

Quelque trois millions de Kurdes vivent dans le nord de l'Irak, où un conflit armé oppose depuis quatre ans le Parti démocratique du Kurdistan (PDK) de Massoud Barzani et l'Union patriotique du Kurdistan (UPK) de Jalal Talabani.

Le Kurdistan irakien s'était soulevé contre le régime au pouvoir à Bagdad dans la foulée de sa défaite dans la guerre du Golfe en 1991.

TURQUIE Sermonné par le Parlement européen

Ankara se crispe

Istanbul :
Éric Biégala

Nouveau coup de massue pour Ankara : le Parlement européen vient d'inviter la Turquie à reconnaître publiquement le génocide arménien et à retirer ses troupes du nord de Chypre. Depuis une semaine, la Turquie voit s'accumuler les mises en demeure, même si certaines sont formulées sur un ton diplomatique.

Les deux premiers coups sont tombés le 8 novembre. Ce jour-là, le Sénat français reconnaissait le génocide arménien de 1915 et la Commission européenne rendait public le « plan de route » qu'elle entend voir adopter par la Turquie si celle-ci entend entamer des négociations d'adhésion.

S'ils reconnaissent du bout des lèvres que les Arméniens ont bien été déportés en masse par l'empire ottoman en 1915 et que des massacres se sont produits, les Turcs récusent le terme de « génocide ». Le mi-

nistère des Affaires étrangères estime que « la Turquie n'a jamais commis de crime contre l'humanité dans son histoire », la résolution française relève donc d'« allégations sans fondement ».

La résolution du Sénat français doit encore être ratifiée par l'Assemblée nationale,

Strasbourg demande à la Turquie de reconnaître le génocide arménien et de retirer ses troupes du nord de Chypre

mais le gouvernement ne l'a pas mise à l'ordre du jour. Parallèlement, le Pape a reconnu la semaine dernière le génocide arménien.

Le Parlement italien prépare de son côté un texte similaire. Il y a un mois, une semblable résolution devait également être votée par la Chambre des représentants américaine. Mais Ankara ayant brandi des menaces de rétorsion contre les États-

Unis, la Chambre avait renoncé à voter le texte.

Le « document de partenariat d'adhésion » de la Commission européenne a été qualifié de « globalement positif » par le gouvernement turc, même si celui-ci est sommé par Bruxelles de mettre les bou-

chées doubles pour résoudre les problèmes liés au respect des droits fondamentaux. Un seul point a été déclaré « invalide » par les Turcs : la référence à Chypre. Parmi les priorités de

la Commission figure en effet un alinéa demandant à la Turquie de soutenir les efforts de l'ONU en faveur d'une solution négociée entre Chypriotes grecs et turcs séparés par une ligne de front depuis plus d'un quart de siècle.

Le chef du gouvernement turc a demandé à ses homologues européens de revoir leur copie sur la question chypriote. Même si, comme le rappelle l'éditorialiste Sami

Kohen dans le quotidien *Mil-liyet*, « le document européen n'est pas un menu à la carte » dont on pourrait choisir certains éléments et en laisser d'autres. Dans le même temps, Ankara a critiqué les dernières propositions de l'ONU pour un règlement dans l'île, où elle maintient une force de 30 000 hommes.

Qu'il s'agisse de Chypre ou des Arméniens, Ankara s'arc-boute sur des positions intransigeantes. Le seul chapitre sur lequel le régime accepte de discuter est celui de la mise à niveau des droits fondamentaux. Une discussion animée vient d'ailleurs de s'engager dans le pays sur l'opportunité d'autoriser une télévision en kurde, ce que réclame instamment l'Europe.

Le gouvernement a également promis de procéder à quelques réformes d'envergure concernant les droits de l'homme. Mais le récent limogeage de la présidente de la commission parlementaire en charge des droits fondamentaux et son remplacement par un député d'extrême droite n'est pas de bon augure.

Ankara condamné par la Cour européenne dans une nouvelle affaire kurde



STRASBOURG, 16 nov (AFP) - 16h05 - La Turquie a été une nouvelle fois condamnée jeudi à Strasbourg par la Cour européenne des droits de l'Homme à la suite de la plainte d'un Kurde dont la maison et les biens avaient été totalement détruits par les forces de sécurité turques, dans la province de Diyarbakir.

Ihsan Bilgin, 40 ans, habitant actuellement à Batman, recevra 22.000 livres sterling pour dommage matériel et moral et 21.500 livres pour frais et dépens, soit au total 70.659 euros.

Dans son arrêt rendu à l'unanimité, la Cour européenne a constaté une violation de l'article 3 de la Convention européenne des droits de l'Homme (interdiction des peines ou traitements dégradants) et jugé que la destruction du domicile et des biens du requérant, sous prétexte d'empêcher qu'ils soient utilisés par des "terroristes", constituait "des actes inhumains".

Les juges européens ont également conclu à la violation des articles 8 (respect de la vie privée et familiale, et du domicile), du Protocole 1 (droit au respect de ses biens) et 13 (absence d'un recours effectif).

Ils ont en outre reproché à la Turquie d'avoir exercé "une forme de pression illicite et inacceptable" sur le requérant pour l'empêcher de porter plainte à la Cour européenne, en violation de l'article 25.

U.S. Ally Turkey Doubting Iraq Embargo

Tribune - 12 Nov 2000

By Tom HundleyTribune Foreign Correspondent

ANKARA, Turkey -- International resolve to maintain stiff sanctions against Iraq has slipped significantly in recent months, as the Baghdad regime learned last week when it successfully resumed commercial air service through no-fly zones in the northern and southern parts of the country.

Russia and France were the first major powers to break the ice on international flights when they sent aid flights to Baghdad earlier this fall. Now Turkey, normally a close U.S. ally, has joined the growing list of nations to challenge the flight ban. The only member of NATO that shares a border with Iraq, Turkey has been one of the main bulwarks of the 10-year-old sanctions program--at an estimated cost to the Turkish economy of \$35 billion in lost trade.

But Turkish Foreign Minister Ismail Cem, in an interview last week, said the time had come for the U.S. and its allies "to explore if there can be some adjustment of the sanctions."

"There is growing reaction against the sanctions," Cem said. "The U.S. really should consult with others to see what is wrong with the policy and to see if together we can develop a new one."

The foreign minister argued that the sanctions had been in place for a decade, but had brought the U.S. and its allies no closer to their goal of undermining the regime of Saddam Hussein. If anything, Hussein is more entrenched now than he was when the Persian Gulf war ended. "We now have in Iraq a whole generation, which is underfed, which doesn't have enough vitamins, and which is growing up with a hatred toward everyone--their environment, their parents, their leaders, their neighbors," he said. "This generation is going to govern Iraq in five years time, and this will create an enormous danger for the whole region."

Although the declared goal of U.S. policy is to topple Hussein--and Congress has set aside \$80 million for this purpose--the sanctions imposed by the United Nations Security Council have a more limited scope: to force Hussein to give up his existing weapons of mass destruction and prevent him from adding to his arsenal.

Critics say the Clinton administration's bellicose policy, which includes flying daily combat missions over the no-fly zones in Iraqi territory, undermines the supposed purpose of the sanctions.

"If your official policy is to remove the regime, you can't expect the regime to comply with the UN resolutions," said one diplomat in the region.

The collapse of the Mideast peace process has been another factor contributing to the rapid erosion of international support for the sanctions. Escalating violence between Israelis and Palestinians has put pressure on moderate Arab governments and strengthened the hand of more zealous ones across the region.

"Saddam Hussein is seen as a figure who resisted the West. With the hostility all across the Arab world toward Israel and the United States, the political climate is very conducive to being exploited by Saddam," said Feridun Sinirlioglu, director of the Middle East desk at the Turkish Foreign Ministry.

The French and Russian aid flights to Iraq were followed in quick succession by flights from Jordan, Morocco, Tunisia, Yemen, the United Arab Emirates, Algeria, Syria and Egypt.

France and Russia obtained UN permission for their humanitarian flights, but Egypt and Syria did not. Although the two Turkish flights were cleared by the UN, some officials have indicated that in the future Turkey might not feel the need to ask for UN approval. Sinirlioglu pointed out that Turkey had stood with the U.S. in enforcing the sanctions even though it had cost the Turkish economy dearly in lost trade and contributed significantly to the impoverishment of the country's troubled southeast region. He also noted that Turkey allows the U.S. to use a Turkish air base and Turkish airspace for the fighters that enforce the no-fly zone over northern Iraq.

Echoing Cem's concerns about Iraq's "angry generation," Sinirlioglu said: "We are not getting Iraq's people to our side by these harsh sanctions. The reality for us is that Iraq is our neighbor and Iraq will remain our neighbor. By sending aid, we are trying to gain the hearts of Iraq's people."

In addition to the aid flights, Turkish officials recently held discussions with Baghdad about upgrading rail links between the two countries and increasing the flow of Iraqi oil through a pipeline that crosses Turkish territory to the Mediterranean port of Ceyhan. Although Iraq is allowed to sell all of its oil under the UN's oil-for-food program, this and other signs of warming toward Iraq became points of contention with the U.S. when Ankara linked them to its unhappiness over a House of Representatives resolution condemning the Turks for the World War I genocide of up to 1.5 million Armenians. The U.S. bowed to Turkish pressure and the resolution was withdrawn at the last moment.

All of this has emboldened Hussein, who last week began using converted military aircraft to fly civilians to the northern city of Mosul and the southern city of Basra.

A State Department official said the U.S. "will continue to monitor closely any Iraqi aviation to determine whether it poses a threat to our forces, Iraq's neighbors or the Iraqi people." So far, U.S. military planes have not challenged the Iraqi flights.

The U.S. and Britain established the no-fly zones after the gulf war to protect Iraqi Kurds in the north and the Muslim Shiite minority in the south. Iraqi Foreign Minister Mohammed Saeed al-Sahaf told Arab news agencies that Baghdad intended to increase the passenger flights until the no-fly zones were broken.

To encourage other nations to resume flights to the country, Iraq is offering a free tank of fuel to any incoming aircraft.

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FP Deputy Ilicak's Legal Action Against General Staff: Threshold of new period

by Gul Demir

Turkish Daily News November 17, 2000

A memo by the Chief of Staff published in Nazli Ilicak's column on Oct. 21 has revealed certain important truths about Turkey. It has shed light on the condition of the Turkish press, the acquiescence in slander and spurred the debate on the application of the Constitution and the laws. It indicated the need to reassess the situation of the press and to be less lenient on ourselves.

While the press is customarily silent on these issues, veteran journalist Ilicak has abided by the demands of journalism and suggested a remedy for Turkey. It is noteworthy that other experienced journalist who were sent the same document did not publish it "for fear that it was fabricated." Yet no one should doubt that people such as Ertugrul Ozkok, Serdar Turgut and Ismet Berkan know enough about journalism to distinguish between fake and genuine documents.

A statement by the Chief of Staff has revealed that the document is genuine and noted that the memo was never put into effect. Yet the events of that period point to some unmistakable truths. The press cocktail by the Chief of Staff on Nov. 15, the list of guests and the statement by General Secretary suggest that a certain period may have been left behind, but while some of the journalists mentioned in the memo were invited, Ilicak's name was conspicuously absent.

As a deputy from the Virtue Party and a critic of Turkish democracy, Ilicak has attracted considerable fire. She comes from an old family that has seen the establishment of the Turkish republic and bears witness to the development Turkish politics. We interviewed her to find the missing links of the "memo event" which has recently rocked Turkey.

TDN: The memo which you made public in your newspaper and the Parliament received attention both in Turkey and abroad. It has been stated that the same memo was sent to a number of other journalists. What did you feel when you received the document?

NAZLI ILICAK: It was sent through mail. This is not the first memo to have been sent in this way. The intelligence section of the General Chief of Staff objected to some of the constitutional amendment proposals of the Virtue Party (FP) citing the unitary and secular nature of the republic. These were seen as an effort to decrease the leverage of the Armed Forces. It was stated that the Motherland Party (ANAP) acted in favor of greater liberties recently and questioned why 'two deputies from the Southeast who had resigned from the FP joined ANAP.' It was said that constitutional amendments which would harm the unitary and secular nature of the republic are unacceptable and the Nationalist Movement Party (MHP) was praised. It was underlined that while the Democratic Left Party (DSP) defended more liberties in the past, it started to show greater sensitivity to the unitary and secular structure of the state. The assessments were prepared by the General Chief of Staff Intelligence Office and presented to the High Command.

I asked if there was really such a document and why issues which would normally be under the jurisdiction of the

legislative were being treated in this way. There was no answer. Then I received another memo which described how the FP, HADEP, certain journalists, businessmen, civic associations and the IHD (Human Rights Association) would be discredited by adding fictitious sections to Semdin Sakik's confession. As the General Chief of Staff did not make a statement, I called for a parliamentary session and distributed the memo to the press. I also gave them copies of the four issues that I wanted to raise vis-a-vis the government and Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit.

TDN: You certainly verified the authenticity of the document before making it public. Whom did you contact?

ILICAK: My intuition was that the document was authentic. The style and the emblems led me to think that this was not fabricated. Who would think of sending me a fake document on such an issue? No, I did not contact anyone.

TDN: During this period, did you ever ask why you had been chosen?

ILICAK: First of all, this document was not sent only to me. It was sent to all democratic journalists who are opposed to the Feb. 28 process. This should have been published with no reservations whatsoever. For me, journalism is about providing information to the people and some centers of power and facts had to be exposed in this process. There are different allegations, some say that the goal is to expose Cevik Bir. If we want a 'talking country', we should know that we can get nowhere by playing the three monkeys who reiterate 'I did not see, did not hear, did not speak'. I believe that I did what was necessary on a number of counts, including pointing out the errors of the Turkish Armed Forces. It is a positive step that the General Chief of Staff should have confirmed the verity of this document. This may have been brushed aside as a security factor.

TDN: You have touched on an issue which many are afraid to broach. Do you feel anxious or afraid?

ILICAK: No, I have no fear. Should I be afraid of the Turkish Armed Forces? Are they going to punish me? As you know, my family went through very difficult times in Turkey and our past is unblemished. It is not as though we are entangled in Susurluk and the sunken banks. We have nothing to be ashamed of on account of arresting politicians, closing down parties and resorting to torture and tyranny. We are glad to have opposed such things and to have fought for democracy. We have always felt love and respect for the Turkish Armed Forces and expect their representatives to reciprocate in kind. Let no one exploit his office to slander the innocent children of this country. Patriotism is not the preserve of anyone.

TDN: Did you meet Cengiz Candar or the other journalists mentioned in the memo during this period?

ILICAK: Yes, I saw Candar. Democratic journalists customarily come together and chat. I informed and sent fax messages not only to Candar but to other individuals mentioned in the memo. I met Mehmet Altan and he was interested. I said that I would write about it. As you may know, it is not only journalists who are mentioned. There are deputies like Sebgetullah Seydaagaoglu from ANAP, Selim Ensarioglu from the DYP, Fethullah Erbas from the FP and some businessmen. The IHD and its chairman Akin Birdal were also implicated. Not only Candar but the others were also pleased since they would be cleared from public doubt. Everyone was happy to see the truth come out.

TDN: Ms. Ilıcak, as you know, this is not the first time that information about press members has leaked to the media. Most recently, Rauf Tamer has been the hot spot on the agenda. How do you view that case?

ILICAK: We have to separate the incident of Rauf Tamer from the memo. Some people are exerting pressure on Tamer and journalists are also at fault. They turned it into a sensational event. I believe that the bodyguard of Mete Has wanted to make some money. Has offered some money to Ugur Dundar, who turned it down but passed the news to Emin Colasan. As customary, Colasan did not doubt anything and wrote that Tamer received \$1 million. As a journalist-researcher, he should have clarified the sides of the land dispute. He insists on his argument although the facts have borne otherwise.

This sensational event led to Tamer's dismissal from Sabah. Rauf Tamer decided to suspend writing until he is cleared and informed the newspaper management. But they did not allow him to leave with dignity and announced that he had been fired. Even though he was dismissed, Tamer said that he had only stopped writing.

TDN: You are known as a courageous journalist. How do you assess the situation of the press in Turkey?

ILICAK: It is not good at all. Despite the Radio Television Higher Board (RTUK) Act, newspaper owners enter state tenders and electricity and telecommunication bids. In fact, they should not be allowed to trade on the stock market. In a nutshell, I want to say that the people who collaborated during the Feb. 28 process condoned illegalities.

TDN: As a journalist, what do you think of the trend where journalists act as deputies, ministers or bank managers?

ILICAK: I don't see any problem with columnists becoming deputies. In this way, they obtain more detailed information about issues under discussion in parliament, and I write in order to inform the people about these developments. But it is not possible to approve of journalists who follow up the affairs of their bosses and represent them in state tenders. It is one thing to be a deputy and another to follow up the private affairs of the boss. Some ministers have to put more time into their work, but if others can spare time to write, there is no problem.

We have another pack of cards when we speak about journalists becoming bank or company managers, positions which imply a relationship with the state. It is also wrong for journalists to take credit from state banks in the name of their bosses.

TDN: Do you think the method of enacting laws subsequent to negotiations between the ruling and opposition parties is healthy? Do such laws reflect social needs?

ILICAK: If the negotiations are based on principles, it is possible. We could not call this a negotiation if the opinion of the opposition was taken in order to reach a compromise. But an 'agreement' to the effect that some will vote for "five plus five" [law for the constitutional amendment which would have enabled Demirel to be reelected president] if others declare amnesty for [chairman of the outlawed Welfare Party] Erbakan is not correct. In any case, the establishment of political parties is part and parcel of the democratic rights in developed countries and does not require negotiations. Our party had even opposed a referendum on this issue in the belief that it was not in line with democratic norms.

Yet it is necessary to exchange opinions and to act in concert on an issues such as amnesty which are of concern to a large number of people. There is always a process of consensus formation which is not exactly a negotiation. As I said, negotiations cannot put in question democratic rights and liberties.

TDN: To return to the memo, how will this process continue in the future and will the media be affected?

ILICAK: I believe that there will be a purification process. We will see some change. After the Susurluk accident where a police officer, a deputy and a mafia boss were discovered in the same car, the public and the media grew suspicious. The system of banditry had developed as part of a triangle formed by the media, the military and the politicians. How otherwise could Cavit Caglar purchase Etibank while Interbank had grown insolvent under Article 64? How come the shares of NTV were handed over to Ayhan Sahenk and the other half of the shares of Etibank to Dinc Bilgin just two days before Interbank's bailout?

TDN: Do you see a significance in the distribution of such a memo prior to the announcement of the Accession Partnership Document by the European Union (EU)?

ILICAK: I don't see a design to prevent Turkey's accession to the EU; to the contrary, the memo may have been circulated by people who look favorably on Europe. As you know, KOB asks that the military step over from their political positions and that their functions be reduced. In this sense, I think that the memo may have been useful.

TDN: How do individual rights and liberties, including the freedom of thought, stand in Turkey? Do you plan to discuss this issue in Parliament?

ILICAK: KOB stipulates that Turkey improve its human rights condition. The Counter-terrorism Law and Article 312 of the Constitution should be reviewed. There may be similar laws in other countries but they are designed vis-a-vis clear and present danger. People are not punished for expressing their thoughts, as it happens in Turkey. For instance any statement about a Kurdish identity can lead to penalties. These problems arise because of the formation of media cartels. In the past, there were collective labor agreements and journalists' unions in Turkey. At this point, there is huge unemployment in the press and fierce competition among journalists, the latter of whom have grown increasingly dependent on their bosses. How may this be corrected through legislation?

Major newspapers do not respect the right to make corrections. If a correction is not printed, it should be published in newspapers with the widest circulation and the cost should be deducted from the vagrant newspaper. In addition, labor unions should decide on the minimum staff required by a newspaper. Cartels have to be dissolved as well. There is only one cartel left now. The same person should not own a newspaper and a television channel at the same time.

TDN: Another issue on the agenda is a Kurdish television channel. What is your opinion?

İLİCAK: I have no problems. In a globalizing world, people can watch whatever they want through satellite TV or they hook on the internet. Reservations on this issue are and will remain as sticking points. In addition, I believe that citizens who define themselves as Kurds should receive their education in Kurdish if they so choose.

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Kadhafi meets with Jordanian premier, Iraqi Kurdish leader

AFP - 18 Nov 2000

TRIPOLI, Nov 18 (AFP) - 14h59 - Libyan leader Moamar Kadhafi met here Saturday with Jordanian Prime Minister Ali Abu Ragheb to discuss cooperation between their two countries, the official JANA news agency reported.

In a separate meeting, Kadhafi had talks with Massud Barzani, leader of one of northern Iraq's Kurdish parties, JANA said. Abu Ragheb, who brought with him a message from Jordanian King Abdullah II, reviewed with Kadhafi the financial and technical assistance Libya is providing Jordan to increase its now meagre water supplies.

Jordan hopes Libya will use its know-how in pumping water from its own harsh desert and help in setting up a similar project.

The scheme aims at pumping water from the ancient Disi aquifer in southern Jordan to Amman, more than 300 kilometers (185 miles) to the north, providing it with 100 million cubic meters (3.5 billion cubic feet) annually.

The project includes digging 82 wells, as well as two main water pumping stations, for a total estimated cost of 650 million dollars. For his part, Barzani, head of the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP), briefed Kadhafi on developments in the Kurdish territories and congratulated the Libyan leader on his "support for the Kurdish people," JANA said.

Control over Northern Iraq, which has been outside Baghdad's control since the end of the 1991 Gulf War, is shared by the KDP and by its arch-rival, the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan of Jalal Talabani.

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Pro-Kurdish party members arrested for suspected links with rebels

AFP - 18 Nov 2000

ANKARA, Nov 18 (AFP) - 13h41 - Nine members of Turkey's pro-Kurdish People's Democracy Party (HADEP) have been arrested and five others taken into custody for alleged links with armed Kurdish rebels, a party official told AFP Saturday. Three leaders of HADEP's branch in Cizre town in Turkey's predominantly Kurdish southeast, were arrested Friday after a ten-day detention on suspicion of links with the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), HADEP deputy chairman Hamit Geylani said. Six other HADEP members were arrested in Varto town on the same charges after spending four days in custody.

In addition, security forces in Semdinli town detained five party members, among them the chairman of the local party branch and a municipal official, Geylani said.

He stressed that the accusations had no legal merit. "These are slanders, a conspiracy ahead of our party convention on November 26," he said. "It is obvious that such an injustice and illegal oppression cannot be of benefit for anybody, and primarily our country," Geylani added. In October, a dozen HADEP members, among them the chairmen of two provincial branches, were arrested for suspected links to the PKK, which has waged a 15-year war for Kurdish self-rule in Turkey's southeast.

HADEP says the arrests are a part of a "conspiracy" to bully the party from carrying out political activities in the country's mainly Kurdish southeastern provinces, where it has recently stepped up its activities.

In the 1999 elections, HADEP, which favors a peaceful resolution to the Kurdish conflict and recognition of Kurdish cultural rights, won a string of town halls in the region, but failed to enter parliament because it remained under a 10-percent national threshold.

The party itself faces a possible ban for alleged links to the PKK, considered a terrorist group by Ankara.

Greek police arrest two smugglers, 62 illegal Kurd immigrants

AFP - 18 Nov 2000

ATHENS, Nov 18 (AFP) - 18h33 - Port authorities in Laurion near Athens on Saturday arrested two smugglers and their cargo of 62 Kurdish illegal immigrants, the Greek shipping ministry said.

The two smugglers, a Greek and Syrian, were arrested near a small fishing port. They had picked up the Kurds, including four women and four children, from the Turkish coast. Both smugglers and the immigrants were to appear before a magistrate later in the day.

Greek port authorities have arrested 3,777 illegal immigrants and 147 smugglers since the start of the year, with 45 ships being seized, the ministry said.

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Politics-Russia: Kurds Seek Backing from

Moscow IPS - 15 Nov 2000

MOSCOW, (Nov. 15) IPS - Despite some recent setbacks, the Kurds still hope to get a measure of support from Russia, even though many analysts believe that the Kremlin will not involve itself in Kurdish struggles anytime soon.

"We urge Russia to recognize Kurdish autonomy within the frame(work) of (an) Iraqi state," says Khoshawi Babakr, representative of the Kurdish Democratic Party in Russian and CIS. Babakr says Moscow should have a say in settling the Kurdish issue, adding that the

Iraq-based Kurdish Democratic Party has maintained contacts with the Russian officials. According to Babakr, when Middle East expert Yevgeny Primakov was Russian Prime Minister two years ago, he agreed to receive two politburo members of the Kurdish Democratic Party.

However, Babakr concedes that these days his party has no official ties with the Russian officials, except occasional contacts with the opposition members of the Russian parliament.

The Russian diplomacy underestimates Kurdish factor in the Middle East politics, argues Babakr, adding that more than 3.5 million people now live in the Kurdish autonomy in Northern Iraq.

Moreover, Moscow has been lobbying for lifting the U.N. sanctions against Iraq, which prohibit oil exports except for a limited amount of crude oil that can be sold to fund humanitarian supplies.

The U.N. oil-for-food accord allows sanctions-hit Iraq to export billions' dollars' worth of oil to finance imports of food and medical supplies. According to Babakr, the Kurdish autonomy in Northern Iraq receives nearly one-fifth of oil-for-food revenues, and Kurdish share could amount to \$2 billion in 2000.

Furthermore, Russia has long been critical of the U.S. and British occasional missile strikes against Iraq designed to enforce no-fly zones. American and British pilots have been patrolling the skies over northern and Iraq since shortly after the 1991 Persian Gulf War. The flight bans were imposed in an effort to stop Iraqi forces from attacking the Kurds in the north. Babakr argues that the Iraqi Kurds will need "security guarantees" in the future.

The Kurdish factions in Northern Iraq have managed to settle their differences, notably in the wake of a peace deal between Massoud Barzani, leader of the Kurdish Democratic Party, and Jalal Talabani, leader of the Patriotic Union of Kurds.

They forged a peace accord on Sept. 17, 1998 designed to resolve long-standing differences and bring about reconciliation in Iraqi Kurdistan.

The Kurdistan Workers Party, or PKK, has viewed the deal as a yet another attempt by the U.S. and Turkey to undermine Kurdish unity and divide northern and southern Kurds. There are some 800,000 Kurdish refugees in the former Soviet states, many of them in Armenia, which borders eastern Turkey. Roughly 150,000 Kurds are living in Russia now, including those 5,000 in Moscow.

The Russian angle of the Kurdish issue was highlighted two years ago, when fugitive Kurdish guerrilla leader Abdullah Ocalan briefly found refuge in Moscow. But bowing to Ankara's pressure, Moscow finally refused asylum to Ocalan, who was eventually apprehended and sentenced in Turkey.

Ocalan, known as "Apo" founded the guerrillas group in the 1970s and led it through a separatist campaign in southeastern Turkey for over 14 years that has cost tens of thousands of lives. Some 30,000 people reportedly have been killed since the PKK began its armed campaign for Kurdish self-rule in 1984. The PKK has declared a unilateral cease-fire, while Turkey insisted it had defeated the militants. Ocalan's cause is not universally supported, even among Kurds themselves.

Analysts argue that the Kurdish issue poses a delicate dilemma for the Kremlin, which is keen to maintain Russia's territorial integrity and maintain normal ties with its important trade partner, Turkey.

On the other hand, Ankara was believed to give mute support to Chechen separatist, thus tempting Russian nationalists to retaliate by supporting the PKK. Turkey's aggressive policy in Central Asia and the Caucasus demonstrated that Russians and Kurds could have common interests, but the Kremlin was always late to realize it, according to Makhir Walat, representative of National Liberation Front of Kurdistan in CIS and Central Europe.

Nonetheless, some nationalist Russian politicians express a measure of support to PKK's cause. The violent campaign against the Kurdish liberation movement amounts to genocide, as tens of thousand of Kurds have died since 1984, and between 1919 and 1940 some 2 million Kurds were killed, according to Alexei Mitrofanov, deputy of the State Duma, the lower chamber of Russian parliament.

The U.N. has to set up a special commission to investigate Turkish genocide against the Kurds, argued Mitrofanov, a prominent member of Russian ultra-nationalist Liberal-Democratic party, headed by maverick politician Vladimir Zhirinovsky.

Kurdish activists also argue that Russia, as a permanent member of the U.N. Security Council, could initiate a discussion of peaceful settlement of the Kurdish issue at the U.N. General Assembly. However, Moscow's failure to save Ocalan seemed to have caused disillusionment, notably among Turkey's 12 million Kurds.

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KDP Denies Handing Over PKK Militia to Turkey

RFE - 17 November 2000, Volume 3, Number 38

Radio Free Europe Iraq Report

On 8 November, Irbil's "Brayati" carried a statement by a Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) Political Bureau spokesman denying the 2 November allegations by "Medya-TV," which often serves as a PKK outlet, that the KDP had handed over PKK militiamen to Turkey. The PKK militia were named in the broadcast. The "MEDYA-TV" item was then picked up by the PUK (Patriotic Union of Kurdistan) newspaper "Kurdistani Nuwe" on 5 November. The KDP spokesman said that the KDP did not hand over any PKK militia. They returned to Turkey at their own request. He also gave the names of the men, and added that "the International Red Cross is aware of their return. They have signed papers and videotapes of them expressing their will to return to Turkey." (David Nissman)

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Belgian jurists question Ocalan in money-laundering probe

AFP - 16 Nov 2000

ANKARA, Nov 16 (AFP) - A group of Belgian jurists have questioned Kurdish rebel leader Abdullah Ocalan in his Turkish prison cell as part of an investigation into money-laundering in Belgium, the Turkish justice ministry said Thursday. "An eight-member delegation, headed by Belgian judge Jeroen Burm, visited convict Abdullah Ocalan Tuesday" on the prison island of Imrali in northwestern Turkey, the ministry said in a statement.

It added that the visit was allowed after a Belgian court demanded that Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) leader Ocalan testify as a witness in an investigation against the ROJ broadcasting company.

The company was running the Brussels-based Kurdish channel MED-TV, which had its British licence revoked in April last year for provoking violence in broadcasts after Turkey captured Ocalan in Kenya in an undercover operation in February 1999.

The investigation against ROJ, called "Operation Sputnik", was launched after Belgian authorities found "significant proof" that it was involved in money-laundering, the statement said.

One of Ocalan's lawyers, Dogan Erbas, said the PKK leader was interviewed as a "person who may help in the probe" and not a witness.

"Ocalan downplayed the importance of the issue and declined to give details," Erbas told AFP of the meeting with the Belgian delegation. Tuesday's visit was the second one by people other than Ocalan's lawyers and relatives allowed to see the rebel leader since he was put under solitary confinement on Imrali.

The first visit was by members of the Council of Europe's committee for the prevention of torture in March 1999 -- only two weeks after Ocalan's capture -- to supervise the conditions of his detention.

"The Belgians appear to have done a great job because the procedures to get permission to visit Ocalan are really very hard," Erbas said. In June, Ocalan was sentenced to death for treason and separatism as the leader of the PKK, which took up arms against Turkey in 1984 for Kurdish self-rule in southeastern Turkey.

Ankara has suspended the sentence to grant the European Court of Human Rights time to hear Ocalan's complaints against Turkey.

The Strasbourg-based court is set to review the receivability of Ocalan's case on November 21.

* * * * *

Saudi Arabia Says Iraq Should Comply with UN

Reuters - 19 November 2000

By Tabassum Zakaria

RIYADH (Reuters) - Saudi Arabia would be the first to call for an end to U.N. sanctions against Iraq and bring it back into the Arab fold if it complied with U.N. resolutions, Saudi Defense Minister Prince Sultan bin Abdullah Al-Aziz said on Sunday. If Iraq complied with U.N. Security Council resolutions, "then you can be sure that we would be the first people to call for lifting sanctions on Iraq," Sultan said at a joint press conference with Defense Secretary William Cohen.

Cohen, on a nine-stop tour of the Gulf and Middle East, has been reiterating U.S. policy that U.N. sanctions on Iraq should continue unless Iraq allows weapons inspectors to return.

"And when we are certain that Iraq is doing so, and does not have incorrect weapons, then Iraq will be a friendly brother country," Sultan said, according to a U.S. embassy translator.

In his last visit to the region as defense secretary, Cohen also met King Fahd and Crown Prince Abdullah with whom he discussed the Middle East peace process, U.S. elections, and terrorism. Asked whether he was comfortable with the amount of U.S. military presence in Saudi Arabia, Sultan replied: "We don't have any American troops in the Kingdom."

"What we have now is only the embargo planes which were put in place by the coalition countries," for patrolling the Western imposed no-fly zone in southern Iraq, he said. "The aim of these planes is not aggression against Iraq, but to serve peace and stability in Iraq and the neighboring countries," Sultan said.

Saudi Arabia is currently not considering any new weapons deals, Sultan said.

Not Thinking Of New Weapons

"We are not thinking of any new weapons deals. We are now thinking to build Saudi society scientifically and industrially and agriculturally and commercially. Saudi Arabia has enough to defend itself."

Asked whether he believed U.S. foreign policy favored Israel over the Palestinians, Sultan replied: "I think the U.S. under the leadership of President Clinton is seeking world peace, especially in the Middle East. The question of who is biased or not biased is not a useful question. It has no use to anybody."

Cohen's trip to the region comes at a time of rising discontent among Arab states which perceive the United States as showing a bias toward Israel in the confrontation with the Palestinians.

"There was a clear sense of concern on both sides that we have to find a solution to this crisis in order to prevent it from getting worse," Pentagon spokesman Ken Bacon said after Cohen's meeting with Abdullah.

"The Secretary represented that he thought this was serious and that everybody in the region should work hard to bring the Palestinians and Israelis to the peace table," Bacon said.

"I would say that based on the countries I've been to to date, and those that I will visit the next several days, that our standing in the Gulf region is still very high," Cohen said.

"We enjoy support for the contribution we make to peace and stability and prosperity throughout the Gulf region," he said. The leaders also discussed the U.S. election, which is so close that no winner has been declared nearly two weeks after ballots were cast.

Cohen has been assuring leaders on this trip that no matter who wins, the United States would remain committed to its ties in the region. Since the Oct. 12 attack on the U.S. destroyer Cole at the Yemeni port of Aden in which 17 American sailors died, U.S. troops have been on heightened alert, with the nearly 11,000 U.S. service personnel in Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Qatar on the highest level of alert.

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Hundred Ocalan supporters detained on eve of court ruling

AFP - 20 Nov 2000

ISTANBUL, Nov 20 (AFP) - 16h15 - Police detained about 100 supporters of Abdullah Ocalan at a demonstration on Monday on the eve of a European court hearing on an appeal by the Kurdish rebel chief against his death sentence.

The protesters, who included members of the pro-Kurdish People's Democracy Party (HADEP), were arrested in the city of Van in the south east of the country as they denounced the sentence, according to a party spokesman.

"About 100 people, including 15 members of HADEP and three of its local leaders were detained after the police moved in," Ahmet Ertas, a regional party leader, told AFP.

Ertas said women were among those rounded up by police. Turkey is currently keeping Ocalan, the former leader of the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), in solitary confinement in Imrali jail, on an island in the Sea of Marmara.

In a statement HADEP has called on judges at the European Court of Human Rights to "choose social peace, concord and the democratization of Turkey rather than encouraging an atmosphere of violence and conflict."

Supporters and opponents of Ocalan are gearing up to stage demonstrations in the French city of Strasbourg at the opening of the European Court hearing on Tuesday.

The hearing is expected to last several months.

The Turkish government is aware that carrying out the death sentence on Ocalan would ruin the country's chances of being admitted into the European Union, for which it became a candidate in 1999. In elections held in 1999, HADEP, which favors a peaceful resolution to the Kurdish conflict and recognition of Kurdish cultural rights, won a string of town halls in the region, but failed to enter parliament because it remained under a 10-percent national threshold.

The party itself faces a possible ban for alleged links to the PKK, considered a terrorist group by Ankara.

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Iraqi Kurdish group hails thaw in ties with foes in northern Iraq

AFP - 20 Nov 2000

ARBIL, Iraq, Nov 20 (AFP) - 16h03 - Iraqi Kurdistan has enjoyed several months of relative calm due to a thaw in relations between the two feuding factions which control the region, a senior Kurdish official said.

"There is a considerable improvement in our relations with the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK)," Sami Abdurahman of the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) said in a weekend interview in the main Kurdish city of Arbil.

Abdurahman, the strongman of Arbil who carries the title of KDP deputy prime minister, told AFP that "peace prevails" in northern Iraq, which has been in Kurdish hands since Iraq's defeat in the 1991 Gulf War over Kuwait.

A 1998 US-brokered peace accord sealed in Washington to halt several years of conflict between the KDP and PUK that cost more than 3,000 lives is being respected by both sides, he said.

But despite the thaw on the military front in divided Iraqi Kurdistan, a political settlement has proved elusive over the past two years. "Important problems remain," acknowledged Abdurahman, whose faction gained control of most of the region in the fighting. "There is still a long way to go to set up a joint administration."

Unprecedented Kurdish elections were held in May 1992, resulting in a 50-50 split between the KDP of Massud Barzani and Jalal Talabani's PUK. But the Kurdish parliament has not been able to function because of the clashes. Backed by Iraqi troops, the KDP seized control of Arbil from the PUK in August 1996, while Talabani's faction has since been headquartered in Sulaymaniyeh near the Iranian border. New elections to set up a Kurdish regional administration could be held in six months, according to Abdurahman.

A key factor in the dispute remains the tax revenues which the KDP monopolises through its control of the Habur post on the Turkish border, a major thoroughfare of trade. On the ground, the KDP official pointed out, residents of northern Iraq can cross the demarcation lines unhindered.

He said the situation in Arbil, which has 900,000 inhabitants and served as a Kurdish capital during the short-lived parliament, was "stable" despite a November 14 explosion in a coffee shop that killed around 10 dead. A "thorough investigation" is being carried out, he said, without pointing a finger of blame.

"We are in favour of an open society and we don't want to impose stringent security measures. But this also gives rise to terrorist infiltrations," the KDP official explained. Northern Iraq has also been used by the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) as a springboard for attacks on Turkey that have prompted the Turkish army to launch frequent incursions into the area with the support of KDP fighters. The PUK, which had close ties with the PKK in the past, has also started to clamp down on the Turkish separatists, resulting in several deadly clashes between the Iraqi Kurds and the Turkish Kurds.

Turkey's military says 5,000 PKK militants have crossed into northern Iraq since September 1999 when the group announced it was laying down arms and withdrawing to seek a peaceful settlement, an offer dismissed as a ploy by Ankara.

Abdurahman stressed the need to maintain the western security umbrella for the Kurds, referring to the exclusion zone over northern Iraq enforced by US and British planes from a base in Turkey to protect the Kurds from Iraqi forces. But he said the Kurds would one day have to reach a political settlement with Baghdad. The Kurds are already "in regular contact with the Baghdad administration on everyday matters" but not on "political matters," he said.

Kurdish dreams of independence from Baghdad have been dashed by a lack of international support amid opposition from Iraq's neighbours Turkey, Iran and Syria, which also have sizeable Kurdish communities of their own.

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Kurdish cultural center sealed off after staging play in Kurdish

AFP - 19 Nov 2000

ANKARA, Nov 19 (AFP) - 18h36 - Turkish police sealed off the theater hall of a Kurdish cultural center in Istanbul Sunday after a play in Kurdish was staged there, Turkey's leading human rights group said. "The official reason for the closure was announced as the center's lack of a licence to run a theater hall," a statement by the Istanbul branch of the Human Rights

Association (IHD) said. "But it is meaningful that the closure followed a newspaper report that a play was staged there in Kurdish," it added.

Turkey's biggest daily, *Hurriyet*, reported Sunday that the Mezopotamya cultural center began a run of a play in Kurdish on Saturday.

IHD said the closure of the theater "shows how insincere the recent pledges of democratization are" by Turkish authorities. Last week, the European Union urged Turkey to grant its Kurds cultural rights in a program of reforms that Turkey should carry out on its road to membership in the EU.

Even though a joint statement by the three-way government of Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit welcomed the demands, the coalition's far-right Nationalist Action Party (MHP) later voiced harsh objections to legalizing broadcasts and education in the Kurdish language.

Turkey fears that recognition of Kurdish cultural rights could encourage separatist-minded Kurds and damage Turkey's unity. The outlawed Kurdistan Workers' party (PKK) has waged a 15-year armed campaign for self-rule in southeast Turkey. The conflict has claimed more than 36,000 lives.

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Security high at European Court ahead of Ocalan hearing

AFP - 20 Nov 2000

STRASBOURG, France, Nov 20 (AFP) - 16h36 - Police here will be on high alert Tuesday for a hearing into the arrest of the Kurdish rebel leader Abdullah Ocalan at the European Court of Human Rights.

More than 15,000 people are expected to take part in about six demonstrations in the city streets throughout the day.

Police will have to deal with two opposing groups – those supporting the families and friends of victims of terrorism, and those supporting the former leader of the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK). Ocalan, who is being held in an island prison in northwest Turkey, was sentenced to death in June last year for treason and trying to create self-rule in the country's mainly Kurdish southeast.

He is taking legal action against Ankara for violating his rights during a secret arrest operation in Nairobi, for the conditions of his detention and over his trial, which was heard partially under a military judge.

Security will be particularly high at the Strasbourg court, where about 70 places have been reserved for relatives of PKK victims, 70 for Ocalan's supporters and 60 for the media. Families of the victims will not be allowed to take part in the proceedings, but the court said they have been allowed to submit documents. According to Turkey, about 36,500 people, most of them Kurds, have been killed in violence linked to the PKK since 1984.

Nine judges will hold one sitting Tuesday to decide whether the case can be heard and whether it is well founded. A decision on whether the court is properly suited to hear the case should be made within a week, while a ruling on the case's grounding could take several months.

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November 21, 2000

European Court Hears Kurd's Appeal Against Turkey

Reuters

STRASBOURG, France (Reuters) - The European Court of Human Rights heard Kurdish rebel leader Abdullah Ocalan's appeal against the death penalty Tuesday as some 15,000 Kurds demonstrated and 4,000 Turks counter-demonstrated outside. Ocalan's appeal against the sentence imposed by a Turkish court could add to anger already simmering in Turkey at conditions laid down for European Union membership.

Police said that some 15,000 Kurds had demonstrated in the eastern French city in support of Ocalan, while 4,000 Turks staged a counter demonstration.

Ocalan, leader of the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), was abducted by Turkish agents in Kenya two years ago and flown to Turkey for a trial at which he was condemned to hang for killings during the PKK's 16-year fight for Kurdish self rule.

His lawyers allege that Turkey violated 21 clauses of the European Convention on Human Rights, starting with Ocalan's abduction, but said the main issue to be addressed by the panel of seven judges was the death sentence.

"The sole question posed today is whether there is a place for the death penalty in a civilized and democratic Europe," Sydney Kentridge told the court on Ocalan's behalf. Turkey has never ratified the part of European Human Rights Convention that outlaws the death penalty. Lawyers for Ankara told the court that there was no doubt about Ocalan's guilt. "We have an accused man who recognizes and accepts responsibility for the crimes he was found guilty of," said lawyer Francis Szpiner.

Ocalan's sister and Kurdish activists followed the session from the public gallery as did relatives of Turkish soldiers allegedly killed by PKK guerrillas.

TURKEY PROMISES DELAY

Turkey has not carried out a death sentence since 1984 and has agreed not to execute Ocalan while the case is in progress.

The European Court is expected to rule in days on the case's admissibility. If it is allowed to proceed, a decision is likely to take several months, and either side can appeal. From his cell in an island jail, Ocalan has ordered the PKK to abandon armed struggle and use democratic means to seek cultural rights.

Violence has dropped sharply, but tensions over the Strasbourg hearing have run high. Police arrested around 100 members of the Kurdish Peoples' Democratic Party, Turkey's only legal Kurdish party, during an anti-death penalty demonstration in eastern Turkey Monday.

Kurdish groups sympathetic to the PKK have declared Tuesday a day of "national mobilization" and thousands of protesters from around Europe gathered in Strasbourg to show support. Police kept them well apart from the demonstration by Turkish nationals and no violence was reported.

The rights court is not part of the European Union, but the hearing could add to Turkey's anger at European institutions. Last week, the European Union laid out economic and political changes Ankara must make before it can start EU membership talks. Turkey was incensed that the document said Ankara's short-term aims should include "strong support" for U.N. efforts to resolve the dispute with Greece over Cyprus.

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Ocalan begins appeal against death sentence

Independent 22 November 2000

By Justin Huggler

One of the most controversial cases in the history of the European Court of Human Rights opened in Strasbourg yesterday: the appeal of Abdullah Ocalan, the Kurdish rebel leader, against the death sentence he was handed down in Turkey.

Kurdish supporters of Ocalan have vowed to make Strasbourg in France, where the court sits, "a Kurdish city" for the event. Yesterday, 15,000 of them marched peacefully while French police kept them apart from 3,000 rival Turkish protesters - and both groups away from the court.

Ocalan's sister sat beside relatives of Turkish soldiers "martyred" in the 15-year Kurdish war inside the courtroom.

Sir Sydney Kentridge QC, the British lawyer who defended Nelson Mandela in the Sixties and appeared at the inquest into the death of Steve Biko, headed a team of British and Turkish lawyers representing the rebel leader.

Ocalan himself is still in solitary confinement on the Turkish prison island where he has been the sole inmate since he was snatched from the streets of Nairobi by Turkish security forces in February last year. The Turkish government has pledged not to hang him until the European Court decides his appeal. Ocalan was sentenced to death in June last year for leading the 15-year Kurdish separatist rebellion and trying to break up the Turkish state. Turkey holds him responsible for killing 30,000 in the fighting, but the majority of those 30,000 were Kurdish rebels and supporters who died at the hands of Turkish

security forces. Yesterday's hearing was just the start of a long process that could take years. Initially the court must determine whether Ocalan's appeal is admissible but the repercussions of this case will be far reaching. There is no shortage of experts predicting that a decision against Turkey will further strain relations between Ankara and the European Union.

Yesterday Ismail Cem, the Turkish Foreign Minister, accused the EU, which it is trying to join, of acting like a "colonial power" in the conditions it is imposing for Turkish membership.

But the case could have much more serious effects than ruffling Turkish sensibilities.

It will be closely followed in the wretched slums of south-east Turkey where the Kurds have lived in the shadow of the guns for 15 years, and where a fragile peace holds only because they expect Europe to deliver them the rights they have so long been denied by the Turkish authorities. The rebel leader's lawyers say the Ocalan case will establish as a principle whether capital punishment is acceptable in Europe.

"In the year 2000 the infliction of the death penalty is an inhuman and degrading treatment," Sir Sydney Kentridge told the court yesterday. "Save for Turkey, and even it is not certain, there is now a complete consensus (against the death penalty) in Europe."

Though the death penalty remains on the books in Turkey it has not been carried out since 1984. But Turkish politicians have spoken of breaking that tradition in Ocalan's case and hanging him, a move that his lawyers say would amount to discrimination. Ocalan's lawyers accuse Turkey of violating 12 articles of the European Convention on Human Rights.

As well as arguing that capital punishment violates the right to life they accuse Turkey of violating Ocalan's right to liberty by covertly abducting him from the streets of Nairobi, of mistreating him in custody - when Ocalan was captured Turkish authorities paraded him blindfold before a Turkish flag - and of denying him a fair trial. Among many other claims, they also charge Turkish authorities with trying to obstruct his right of appeal to the European Court.

The judges retired yesterday to consider whether the case is admissible. They are expected to rule that the court will hear at least some of Ocalan's application but a ruling is not expected for at least a week.

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November 21 2000

Iraq compensates Israelis for Gulf War

Associated Press

JERUSALEM - Iraq has transferred over \$30 million into a United Nations claims fund earmarked to compensate Israeli companies and citizens for their losses during the Gulf War, the Justice Ministry said yesterday.

Some \$300,000 of the money will go to five individual Israelis whose claims were approved by the fund, Justice Ministry spokesman Ido Baum said. The rest is for business-damage compensation.

These are the largest payments Israel has received indirectly from Iraq, Baum said.

Baum said the Justice Ministry is in contact with the UN to obtain additional funds. He said the payments depend on Iraq's revenue from oil sales, which are regulated by the UN. During the 1991 Gulf War, Iraq fired 39 Scud missiles at Israel, causing considerable damage to apartment houses and businesses, mostly in the Tel Aviv area. Responding to US pressure not to interfere in its war effort, Israel did not retaliate.

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Nuclear Arms for Iran or Iraq Could Cripple U.S. in Mideast

By Reuel Marc Gerecht

WASHINGTON — During America's war against Iraq, Iranian clerical circles were abuzz with a nuclear debate. If Saddam Hussein had had the bomb, the mullahs wondered, would the United States have challenged his conquest of Kuwait?

With the Islamic Republic's recent test of the Shahab 3 intermediate-range missile — whose mission is unquestionably as a delivery vehicle for a nuclear warhead — the clerical regime has again clearly told us its answer. Tehran understands, as does Baghdad, that nuclear-tipped missiles will go a long way toward neutralizing the naval power of the United States.

Backed by such weapons, Iran or Iraq could cajole, intimidate or even invade its neighbors, reasonably betting that Washington would not eagerly play nuclear poker over oil wells. America's alliances with Saudi Arabia and the other Arab gulf states, in particular Bahrain with its critical port facilities for the U.S. Navy, could start to weaken.

The Clinton administration, though always quick to underscore its intention to militarily stop the rebuilding of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction, has been far less quick and clear

on what is to be done about Iran's nuclear aspirations. The administration has tried to influence Iran's weapons-related high-tech suppliers — Russia, China and North Korea — but the regular repetition of its entreaties and protests, and the obvious advance of Iran's medium- and long-range missile programs, do not lead one to believe that these countries fear American retaliation.

It will most likely be Iran, not Iraq, that first challenges the United States with nuclear realpolitik in the Middle East. Contrary to what the Clinton administration has hoped, the "moderate" Iranian president, Mohammed Khatami and his "leftist" clerical allies are no less, perhaps more, of a strategic challenge to the United States than are the "conservative" forces behind Iran's more powerful but weary revolutionary leader, Ali Khamenei.

Mr. Khatami and his clerical allies passionately want to reanimate Iran's Islamic revolution by reconnecting it to the people through limited democracy. "Moderation" at home may well mean more action abroad.

The serious divisions within the clergy on domestic affairs have repeatedly inclined the

ruling mullahs to unite on foreign policy. There is probably no issue among them that has more unifying appeal than an Iranian nuclear bomb. It is the ultimate guarantor of the Islamic Republic's survival against foreign threat.

Though Saddam Hussein probably has made progress in "reconstituting" his weapons of mass destruction programs, the Iranians may well have leapfrogged their Iraqi enemy.

It would not be at all surprising to learn that while the United States focused on Saddam Hussein, the developed world's businessmen have supplied Iran with a growing variety of dual-use technologies.

Though the Islamic Republic has not been kind to its intellectual elites, regularly purging

its best and brightest for ideological deficiencies, this zealotry has definitely cooled against the scientific and technocrat types. Internet-savvy, commercially inclined and larcenous, clerical Iran has, in nuclear-related fields, probably surfed, bought and stolen as much as possible from the West — not to mention from the Russians, Chinese and North Koreans.

Although an Iranian nuclear missile is preferable to an Iraqi one — the clerics, unlike Sad-

dam Hussein, are not Hitlerian predators — its strategic impact on the projection of U.S. military force does not differ from Iraq's. A review of congressional debates and testimony before the Gulf War quickly reveals the extreme shakiness of our resolution to fight in the Middle East.

Always attentive to the American scene, Tehran, armed with nuclear missiles, would likely become immensely fond of intimidating the oil-rich, pro-American and religiously distasteful Arab Gulf states. The possible ramifications of this on the Middle East's always explosive politics would be electric. We should anticipate nuclear cooperation between Israel and Turkey.

If the United States has not deployed a ship-born anti-ballistic-missile system by the time Iraq and Iran go nuclear — the only credible way we can both spook our enemies and gird our own loins — then the Middle East will certainly give us a new, provocative "dialogue of civilizations." We won't care for the conversation.

The writer, a former Mideast specialist in the CIA, contributed this comment to the Washington Post.

Le seul espoir d'Ocalan: l'isolement à vie dans une île-prison



ANKARA, 19 nov (AFP) - 9h07 - La Turquie s'est pour l'heure résolue, au nom de ses aspirations européennes, à épargner la vie du chef rebelle kurde Abdullah Ocalan, dont la condamnation à mort est examinée mardi par la Cour européenne des droits de l'Homme, et lui réserve au mieux la prison à vie en isolement.

Ankara attend la décision de la Cour pour fixer le sort de son ennemi public numéro un, condamné à la corde pour trahison et séparatisme en juin 1999, tout en sachant que l'exécuter ruinerait ses espoirs d'adhésion à l'Union européenne, opposée à la peine capitale et très critique du traitement que la Turquie réserve à sa population kurde.

Ocalan vit depuis sa capture par un commando turc, en février 1999 à Nairobi, dans l'île-prison d'Imrali (ouest), en mer de Marmara, dont il est l'unique détenu.

Hormis ses avocats et des membres de sa famille, aucun visiteur n'a été depuis autorisé à le rencontrer, excepté une délégation du Comité pour la prévention de la torture du Conseil de l'Europe, en mars 1999, et un groupe de juristes belges enquêtant sur une affaire de blanchiment d'argent en Belgique, la semaine dernière.

Il dispose d'une petite radio, reçoit trois quotidiens turcs et des livres apportés par ses avocats, dont certains sont parfois interdits "selon des critères que nous ne comprenons pas", a expliqué à l'AFP Dogan Erbas.

Son client est "en bonne santé", a-t-il précisé.

Les autorités l'ont réduit au silence en interdisant les communiqués qu'il diffusait par l'intermédiaire de ses avocats, dans les mois ayant suivi sa condamnation.

Il y répétait inlassablement sa demande d'un règlement pacifique de la question kurde en s'offrant comme médiateur, après avoir renié devant ses juges turcs la violence et la lutte armée menée pendant 15 ans par son parti des Travailleurs du Kurdistan (PKK), avec pour objectif initial la création d'un Etat kurde dans le Sud-Est anatolien à majorité kurde.

A son appel, le PKK avait annoncé l'arrêt des combats et son retrait de Turquie en septembre 1999, mettant pratiquement fin à un conflit dont les violences ont fait plus de 30.000 morts, en majorité des Kurdes.

Mais l'Etat turc a rejeté ses offres de service et l'armée pourchasse toujours les quelque 500 rebelles encore présents en Turquie, et les quelque 5.000 réfugiés dans le nord de l'Irak, selon elle.

Ocalan a d'autant plus de chances d'avoir la vie sauve que l'abolition de la peine capitale fait partie des demandes de l'UE pour une adhésion de la Turquie, déclarée candidate en décembre 1999.

Elle est contenue dans la liste de réformes dressées par la Commission européenne dans son récent "partenariat d'adhésion", qui prévoit dans un premier temps le maintien du moratoire en vigueur en Turquie depuis 1984, puis l'abolition.

Cela fait grincer des dents l'un des partenaires de la coalition du Premier ministre Bulent Ecevit, le parti de l'Action nationaliste (MHP, droite nationale), qui avait mené campagne pour la pendaison d'Ocalan avant les législatives de 1999 dont il est sorti deuxième force au parlement.

Le MHP a déjà fait une concession en acceptant d'attendre la décision de la Cour européenne, mais résiste toujours à une suppression de la peine de mort qui ferait échapper Ocalan à la corde.

Il s'oppose également à l'octroi de droits culturels aux Kurdes --autre demande de l'UE-- y voyant un danger pour l'intégrité territoriale, à l'instar de la puissante armée turque.

Une fois connue la décision de la Cour, le gouvernement devrait clarifier sa position. Mais l'hypothèse d'une pendaison semble exclue.

Erbil, chef-lieu du Kurdistan irakien, prospère grâce au commerce frontalier



ERBIL (Irak), 20 nov (AFP) - 3h33 - Le commerce frontalier lucratif avec la Turquie a fait d'Erbil, la "capitale" du Kurdistan irakien, une ville qui ne cesse de grandir et de se développer en dépit de récents problèmes de sécurité.

"Nous gagnons maintenant beaucoup plus comparé aux années d'avant", explique à l'AFP en souriant Abdourrahmane, devant son épicerie où les étagères sont remplies de produits arrivant pour la majorité de Turquie.

Erbil, qui compte environ 900.000 habitants, selon des sources concordantes, est contrôlée depuis août 1996 par le Parti démocratique du Kurdistan (PDK), de Massoud Barzani.

Cette faction kurde partage la souveraineté sur le nord de l'Irak, autonome de fait depuis la fin de la guerre du Golfe en 1991, avec son rival l'Union patriotique du Kurdistan (UPK), de Jalal Talabani, qui contrôle la partie est.

"Je me fournis chez des gens qui vendent des produits turcs, car c'est fiable", précise l'épicier qui range en même temps derrière le comptoir des paquets qui contiennent de la sauce tomate de la compagnie turque "Tat".

La marchandise leur est vendue surtout par des camionneurs turcs qui franchissent le poste-frontière de Habur, le seul entre la Turquie et le nord de l'Irak, et rentrent avec du mazout, dix fois moins cher.

Ce commerce frontalier est toléré par l'ONU, qui a imposé un embargo multiforme contre l'Irak après la fin de la guerre du Golfe dont souffre aussi le nord.

Le PDK recueillerait en outre plus de 300 millions de dollars par an de taxes frontalières, selon une estimation des autorités turques. Le partage de ces taxes constitue l'une des principales pommes de discorde avec l'UPK.

De somptueuses villas ont été récemment construites, ou le sont actuellement, à Zakho et Dohouk, deux autres villes sous le contrôle des peshmergas de M. Barzani.

De nombreux ouvriers s'affairent en outre dans des chantiers à Erbil, qui possède de nouveaux hôtels quatre étoiles capables d'héberger "comme dans d'autres villes irakiennes" des dizaines d'hôtes, relève un de leurs employés.

Une quinzaine d'organisations non-gouvernementales sont aussi actives dans la région.

"Il est vrai que nous vivons plus aisément qu'autrefois. Mais cela continuera-t-il ?" s'interroge Fouad, le voisin de l'épicier, l'un des nombreux Turkmènes présents dans la ville où ils sont entre 150 et 200.000.

Il estime qu'une reprise des combats entre les deux factions kurdes anéantirait tout effort pour mener une "vie normale" dans la cité où tout est importé, et où l'industrie se réduit à des ateliers rudimentaires fabriquant des kilims (petits tapis tissés à la main) ou autres menus objets.

"Les explosions déstabilisent la situation. C'est dommage", rétorque Farouk, devant son échoppe plus loin dans la rue. Il fait référence à une série d'attentats à l'explosif dans la ville, aux auteurs inconnus, dont l'un, meurtrier, le 14 novembre contre un café, qui a fait une dizaine de morts et 13 blessés.

Le dernier en date, une explosion de TNT, s'est produit tôt dimanche, sans faire de blessés, mais a soufflé les vitres des maisons environnantes proches d'un bureau du Front turkmène, qui regroupe plusieurs partis turkmènes.

La ville connaissait une accalmie depuis plusieurs années sans qu'il y ait eu d'affrontements entre factions rivales.

Dans le bazar, les antennes satellitaires sont très demandées. Elles permettent de capter la chaîne du PDK, Kurd Sat, et toute une série de chaînes étrangères.

Les dignitaires de la ville possèdent en outre tous des téléphones satellitaires. Le Kurdistan irakien serait autrement coupé du reste du monde.

"Si on avait le téléphone, on pourrait au moins faire du commerce avec d'autres pays", estime Abdourrahmane l'épicier.

Une faction kurde d'Irak se félicite de ses nouveaux liens avec son rival



ERBIL (Irak), 21 nov (AFP) - 9h59 - Le Parti démocratique du Kurdistan (PDK de Massoud Barzani), faction kurde qui contrôle la majeure partie du nord de l'Irak, s'est félicité de l'amélioration de ses relations avec son principal rival, autrefois très perturbées.

"Il y a une amélioration considérable de nos relations avec l'Union patriotique du Kurdistan (UPK de Jalal Talabani)", explique à l'AFP le "vice-Premier ministre" du PDK, Sami Abdurrahman, homme fort d'Erbil, la "capitale" du Kurdistan irakien.

Selon lui, la "paix prévaut" dans le nord de l'Irak, qui échappe au contrôle de Bagdad depuis la fin de la guerre du Golfe en 1991.

L'accord de Washington est respecté par les deux parties, affirme-t-il, en référence à l'accord conclu en 1998, sous l'égide des Etats-Unis, entre MM. Barzani et Talabani après plusieurs années d'affrontements sanglants pour le contrôle de la région, qui ont fait plus de 3.000 tués.

Cependant des "problèmes importants" persistent, admet M. Abdurrahman, estimant qu'"il y a encore un important chemin à faire pour parvenir à une administration unifiée" dans le nord de l'Irak.

De premières élections libres avaient été organisées en mai 1992 dans la région, pour résoudre la vieille rivalité entre MM. Barzani et Talabani. Mais le "parlement kurde" qui en a été issu, non-reconnu internationalement, n'a jamais pu fonctionner. Le PDK et l'UPK se partageaient à égalité ses 100 sièges.

Erbil, contrôlée jusqu'en août 1996 par l'UPK, est tombée aux mains de l'armée irakienne et des combattants du PDK. Le siège de l'UPK se trouve actuellement à Souleymanieh, à environ 200 km au sud-est d'Erbil.

M. Abdurrahman estime que de nouvelles élections pourraient être organisées en l'espace de six mois pour parvenir à une administration régionale. "S'il y a de la volonté, il y aura un moyen de réunir le parlement", dit-il.

Le responsable du PDK souligne que les habitants peuvent traverser sans problème la ligne de démarcation qui sépare les zones des deux factions et qu'il n'y a eu aucun combat "depuis longtemps".

Une bonne part du contentieux entre les deux partis repose sur le partage des taxes frontalières, l'UPK accusant le PDK --qui contrôle le poste-frontière turco-irakien de Habur-- de les monopoliser.

M. Abdurrahman souligne la nécessité de maintenir la protection internationale dans la région, en référence à la zone d'exclusion aérienne établie au nord du 36ème parallèle par les Alliés en 1991.

Mais il ne se fait pas d'illusion sur l'avenir du nord de l'Irak, soulignant l'importance d'un règlement dans le cadre de l'intégrité territoriale de l'Irak. "Ce qui est bien pour l'Irak l'est pour nous aussi", dit-il.

Les Etats turc, iranien et syrien ont averti qu'ils étaient opposés à la création d'un Etat dans le Kurdistan irakien, craignant qu'elle

ne fasse des émules au sein de leurs propres populations kurdes.

M. Abdurrahman fait état de "contacts réguliers" avec l'administration de Bagdad, mais dit-il, sur des "questions quotidiennes", et non sur des "sujets politiques".

Il qualifie la situation à Erbil, qui compte quelque 900.000 habitants, de "stable" en dépit de deux récentes explosions qui ont secoué la ville, dont l'une a fait le 14 novembre une dizaine de morts dans un café.

Il assure qu'une "enquête complète" sera menée, tout en refusant de vouloir spéculer sur les responsables.

"Nous sommes en faveur d'une société ouverte et nous ne voulons pas imposer de fortes mesures de sécurité, mais cela favorise aussi l'infiltration de terroristes", se contente-t-il de dire.

Les mines: cauchemar des populations kurdes du nord de l'Irak



ERBIL (Irak), 22 nov (AFP) - 9h56 - "Les mines sont un cauchemar. Elles ne font pas de distinction entre enfants ou adultes et les marquent à vie", affirme à l'AFP Haval Hoshyar, responsable d'une organisation non-gouvernementale (ONG) italienne à Erbil, "capitale" du Kurdistan irakien.

M. Hoshyar travaille à l'hôpital de cette ONG, "Soutien aux victimes civiles des guerres", construit en 1998 dans cette ville tenue par le Parti démocratique du Kurdistan (PDK de Massoud Barzani), faction kurde qui contrôle la majeure partie du nord de l'Irak.

"Les mines sont un vrai fléau. Nous ne savons pas combien ont été mises dans le Kurdistan" irakien, où vivent quelque 3,5 millions de Kurdes, précise-t-il.

Au moins 70% des victimes sont des enfants et des adolescents, qui sont "les plus touchés", souligne-t-il.

Le nord de l'Irak, qui échappe au contrôle de Bagdad depuis la fin de la guerre du Golfe en 1991, est un véritable champ de mines. Des milliers ont été installées par les troupes irakiennes lors de la guerre Iran-Irak (1980-1988) dans des zones proches de la frontière iranienne, selon des responsables à Erbil.

Les unités du président irakien Saddam Hussein en ont placé des milliers d'autres après le soulèvement, violemment réprimé, des Kurdes dans le nord du pays dans la foulée de la défaite en février 1991 de l'Irak face à la coalition internationale.

L'hôpital de 120 lits reçoit chaque mois trois ou quatre personnes qui ont sauté sur une mine et qui doivent être amputées d'une jambe, sinon deux. Ces patients sont ensuite transférés à Souleimaniya, à quelque 200 km au sud-est d'Erbil, contrôlée par une faction rivale, l'Union patriotique du Kurdistan (UPK de Jalal Talabani).

Un centre de réhabilitation, administré par la même ONG, leur fournit séances de rééducation et prothèses. Comme il n'existe aucune carte indiquant l'emplacement des mines, la tâche des démineurs est titanesque.

"Nous avons déminé plusieurs milliers de km² et neutralisé des milliers de mines", explique Mike, un technicien de l'ONG britannique de déminage MAG (Mine Advising Group).

MAG est appuyée dans ce domaine par une organisation humanitaire norvégienne.

Mike ignore le nombre de mines cachées dans la région, mais les 650 hommes de son organisation travaillent sans cesse afin de fournir à la population une "meilleure vie".

Un total de 15 ONG sont actuellement présentes dans le Kurdistan irakien. Selon une responsable de l'une d'elles, l'organisation britannique SCF (Save the Children Found), ces ONG constituent un facteur de dialogue entre les deux factions kurdes qui se partagent la souveraineté de la région.

"Nous travaillons ensemble et cela renforce la paix et le dialogue", estime Najat Omer, ancienne professeur d'anglais reconvertie dans l'humanitaire.

"Notre objectif est le bien-être de tous les enfants du Kurdistan", explique-t-elle.

L'ONU est également présente dans la région et veille à la bonne marche du programme "pétrole contre nourriture", qui autorise l'Irak, soumis à un embargo international depuis 1990, à vendre du brut pour acheter des produits de première nécessité.

13% des revenus de ce programme sont utilisés dans le nord du pays.

"Mais ce n'est pas assez. Nous voulons que le programme couvre aussi d'autres domaines comme les infrastructures", souligne un responsable du PDK au siège du parti à Salaheddine, à une trentaine de km au nord d'Erbil.

Selon lui, les experts de l'ONU "sur le terrain" sont convaincus d'une telle nécessité. "Mais il faut encore qu'ils puissent convaincre leurs dirigeants à New York", ajoute-t-il, sous couvert d'anonymat.

Öcalan défend sa tête à la Cour européenne

Le leader du PKK accuse la Turquie de manquements aux droits fondamentaux.

Strasbourg

de notre correspondante

Plaidoyer contre la peine de mort d'un côté; défense d'une législation d'exception au nom de la raison d'Etat de l'autre. La Cour européenne des droits de l'homme (CEDH) a examiné hier la requête du leader indépendantiste kurde Abdullah Öcalan, condamné à mort le 29 juin 1999 par la Cour de sûreté de l'Etat d'Ankara. Le chef du PKK (Parti des travailleurs du Kurdistan), arrêté au Kenya en février 1999 dans des circonstances non élucidées, emprisonné depuis sur une île turque, réclame la condamnation de la Turquie pour manquement à plusieurs droits fondamentaux. Entre autres: le droit à la vie, l'interdiction de mauvais traitements, le droit à la liberté et à la sûreté, le droit à un procès équitable, la liberté de pensée et de conscience, l'interdiction de discrimination. Strasbourg a été placé sous haute protection policière. Alors que commencent les trois heures d'audience consacrées à l'affaire, deux manifestations traversent la ville sans incident. L'une rassemble environ 18500 Kurdes (selon la police), venus de France, mais surtout d'Allemagne et des Pays-Bas. L'autre réunit 3000 Turcs non kurdes, qui veulent dénoncer le «terrorisme du PKK».

Les défenseurs d'Öcalan tentent de faire le procès de la peine capitale, abolie par 39 des 41 pays membres du Conseil de l'Europe (la Russie a signé la Convention sans la ratifier, seule la Turquie n'a fait ni l'un, ni l'autre). Ils savent que la Cour européenne est l'ultime recours de leur client: seul, en Turquie, le Parlement pourrait désormais s'opposer à son exécution et il est peu probable qu'il y soit enclin. «Exécuter un



Quelque 18 500 Kurdes ont manifesté hier à Strasbourg contre la condamnation à mort du leader du PKK, Abdullah Öcalan.

homme en l'an 2000 dans un Etat du Conseil est, en soi, une violation de la Convention européenne des droits de l'homme», plaide sir Sydney Kentridge. Les avocats du leader kurde dénoncent aussi les zones d'ombre qui planent toujours sur l'arrestation de leur client. Son «enlèvement» à Nairobi par un commando des forces spéciales turques alors qu'il se trouvait sous la protection de l'ambassade de Grèce au Kenya «est un complot international», affirme Hasip Kaplan. La défense relève enfin les atteintes réitérées à ses «droits»: avocats traités «en suspects» avec relevé de leurs empreintes digitales, refus de transmission des 17000 documents du dossier, absence de contact avec l'accusé pendant

dix jours, entretiens en présence de tiers parfois «cagoulés», etc.

Au nom du gouvernement turc, Sükrü Alpaslan réplique que des circonstances particulières méritent un traitement d'exception: «Une législation normale peut être insuffisante pour combattre le terrorisme.» Francis Szpiner fait valoir qu'aucune des 31 peines capitales prononcées en Turquie depuis 1984 n'a été exécutée, preuve que «l'idée d'abolition n'est pas un sujet tabou»: «Mais ce débat ne peut avoir lieu librement qu'en Turquie et nulle part ailleurs.» Quant aux conditions d'arrestation d'Abdullah Öcalan au Kenya, elles relèvent, selon lui, de la simple «coopération entre deux Etats souverains». Et ne diffèrent guère

des méthodes employées en son temps par la France pour «récupérer» au Soudan Illich Ramirez Sanchez, alias Carlos. La CEDH doit se prononcer dans quelques jours sur la recevabilité de la requête d'Öcalan et dans plusieurs mois sur le fond. A la demande de la Cour, le gouvernement turc a accepté, le 13 janvier 2000, de «surseoir provisoirement» à l'exécution du leader du PKK. La juridiction strasbourgeoise n'a pas le pouvoir d'annuler la sanction. Mais si elle devait condamner la Turquie, il serait plus difficile à Ankara d'exécuter son opposant numéro un. Bien que ce pays soit, avec la France, le plus rebelle aux injonctions de la Cour européenne des droits de l'homme ■

NICOLE GAUTHIER

LIBÉRATION
22 NOVEMBRE 2000

TURQUIE Sermonné par Bruxelles sur la question chypriote et sur les droits de l'homme

Ankara en colère contre l'Union européenne

LE FIGARO MERCREDI 22 NOVEMBRE 2000



A Nicosie le 15 novembre, Rauf Denktaş défile à l'occasion du dix-septième anniversaire de la « République turque de Chypre Nord ». Le chef des Chypriotes turcs a mis en doute sa participation aux pourparlers de Genève en janvier prochain. (Photo Reuter.)

Les responsables turcs ont accusé, hier, l'Union européenne d'avoir créé incompréhension et méfiance dans leurs relations en ajoutant des conditions supplémentaires à l'adhésion de la Turquie à l'UE. Ce coup de colère a relégué au second plan l'audience le même jour à Strasbourg de la Cour européenne des droits de l'homme, devant laquelle le chef rebelle kurde Abdullah Öcalan, condamné à mort en Turquie, a porté plainte.

Istanbul :
Éric Biegala

« L'Union européenne devient une institution à laquelle on ne peut se fier et amenuise le capital de confiance dans ses liens avec la Turquie », a lancé, hier, le ministre des Affaires étrangères, İsmail Cem, à l'occasion d'une réunion de députés turcs et européens. İsmail Cem n'hésite pas à accuser les membres de l'Union européenne d'agir comme des « gouverneurs coloniaux ».

Ce week-end, le chef du gouvernement, Bülent Ecevit, n'hésitait pas à envisager de « revoir la nature des relations avec l'Union européenne », particulièrement si celle-ci persistait à lier l'intégration de la Turquie à la résolution de la question chypriote. Quant au vice-premier ministre, Mesut Yılmaz, réputé être plus souple, il déclarait par ailleurs que l'intégration ne devait pas être un objectif poursuivi « à n'importe quel prix ».

Du point de vue d'Ankara, Chypre est en effet le principal nœud du problème. Les autorités turques ont toujours dit

qu'elles n'accepteraient jamais que leur adhésion à l'Europe soit liée d'une façon ou d'une autre à la résolution de la question chypriote. Et pour cause : elles prônent le statu quo dans l'île.

En 1974, l'armée turque envahissait le nord de Chypre à la suite d'un coup d'État fomenté par la junte militaire alors au pouvoir à Athènes. Depuis, l'île est divisée entre Chypriotes grecs au sud et Chypriotes turcs au nord. Elle est également candidate à l'intégration dans l'UE, du moins sa partie sud internationalement reconnue comme « République de Chypre ». Cette dernière fait d'ailleurs partie des candidats en tête du processus d'adhésion. Au nord, en revanche, la Turquie maintient une force armée de 30 000 hommes, dans une « République turque de

Chypre Nord » autoproclamée en 1983.

Le 8 novembre, dans son « document de partenariat d'adhésion », la commission européenne a donc demandé à la Turquie de « soutenir les efforts » des Nations unies qui tentent depuis plus d'un quart de siècle d'obtenir un règlement du conflit. Une demande décrochée in extremis par la Grèce et inacceptable pour les Turcs qui y voient une condition supplémentaire pour leur adhésion à l'UE. Le « document de partenariat d'adhésion » est en effet le plan de route que doit suivre la Turquie si elle veut entamer des négociations.

Quelques jours plus tard, le Parlement européen enfonçait le clou en demandant à la Turquie d'évacuer ses troupes de Chypre. Si le chef de la diploma-

tie turque déclarait, hier, ne pas vouloir « *esquiver un règlement du problème de Chypre* », le chef du gouvernement a, lui, pris l'habitude de dire que « *le problème de Chypre est résolu depuis 1974* ». Son argument :

les affrontements entre les deux communautés ont cessé depuis qu'elles vivent séparément.

Quant à soutenir les efforts de l'ONU, il n'en est plus question puisque les Turcs viennent de dénoncer les dernières propositions du secrétaire général, Kofi

Annan. Le chef du gouvernement estime en effet inaccep-

table que les Chypriotes grecs puissent venir se réinstaller dans le nord.

Le chef des Chypriotes turcs a d'ailleurs mis en doute sa participation aux pourparlers qui doivent reprendre à Genève en janvier.

Le point de rupture a pratiquement été atteint, lundi, lorsque la Grèce a encore voulu durcir les conditions politiques pour une adhésion à l'UE en incluant dans le « plan de route » turc un alinéa pressant la résolution du différend en mer Egée. Les ministres des Affaires étrangères européens, qui doivent ra-

tifier le texte in fine, ont fini par botter en touche, décidant de reporter la rédaction finale au 4 décembre prochain.

Officiellement acceptée comme treizième candidate à l'intégration en décembre 1999, la Turquie bénéficiait à l'époque de l'élan de sympathie consécutif au séisme qui avait durement touché le pays quelques mois plus tôt. Un élan particulièrement perceptible en Grèce où le gouvernement avait levé son veto à l'acceptation des Turcs dans le giron européen. Dans la foulée, les deux pays avaient entamé une série de pourparlers

aboutissants à une dizaine d'accords bilatéraux.

Mais fin octobre, les relations entre la Grèce et la Turquie se sont de nouveau dégradées. Lors de manœuvres communes sous l'égide de l'Otan dont les deux pays sont membres, l'état-major turc a fait décoller ses chasseurs pour barrer la route aux avions d'Athènes, accusés d'avoir indûment survolé des îles grecques censées être démilitarisées. C'est peut-être la brutalité de cette diplomatie que les Grecs sont aujourd'hui en train de faire payer à Ankara.

Öcalan tente de sauver sa tête à Strasbourg

Istanbul :
de notre correspondant

La Cour européenne des droits de l'homme a commencé hier l'examen du recours présenté par les défenseurs d'Abdullah Öcalan. Condamné à mort par la Turquie, le chef du Parti des travailleurs du Kurdistan (PKK) est actuellement détenu dans l'île-prison d'Imrali, à quelques encablures au sud d'Istanbul.

La suppression de la peine de mort est l'une des priorités inscrites dans le « Partenariat d'adhésion » présenté à la Turquie le 8 novembre dernier. La sentence qui pèse sur le chef kurde n'a toutefois pas été exécutée en Turquie depuis 1984. Une quarantaine de condamnés à mort sont dans le même

cas qu'Öcalan.

Les défenseurs du chef kurde estiment que la Turquie a violé une vingtaine de clauses de la Convention européenne des droits de l'homme. La plus importante a trait à « l'enlève-

ment » du chef du PKK au Kenya, en février 1999. La cour, qui est une émanation du Conseil de l'Europe, dont la Turquie est l'un des membres fondateurs, comprend sept juges qui devront d'abord statuer sur la recevabilité du recours. Le cas échéant, les débats pourront ensuite se poursuivre pendant plusieurs semaines avant d'arriver à une

décision, les avocats d'Öcalan et ceux de la partie turque pouvant faire appel auprès d'une chambre supérieure. La procédure pourrait durer plusieurs

mois.

L'audience de la Cour européenne des droits de l'homme intervient au moment où l'Union européenne vient de faire connaître ses vœux quant à la résolution du problème kurde. Conformément aux demandes de la Turquie, qui se crispe facilement pour des questions sémantiques, ni le mot « kurde » ni même le mot « minorité » n'ont été mentionnés dans le « document de partenariat d'adhésion ». En revanche, la Commission a demandé à la Turquie d'« extraire (de ses lois) toutes les dispositions interdisant aux citoyens turcs d'utiliser leur langue maternelle à la télévision et à la radio ». En clair, d'autoriser les émissions en langue kurde.

Pour la première fois, un véritable débat est en train de se dérouler en Turquie quant à l'opportunité d'une telle me-



Abdullah Öcalan est détenu dans l'île-prison d'Imrali, au sud d'Istanbul. (Photo AP.)

sure. L'extrême droite, l'une des deux principales forces de la coalition gouvernementale, s'y oppose catégoriquement. Les libéraux pour leur part font valoir qu'avec les antennes satellites, les Kurdes peuvent déjà regarder les émissions de Medya-TV qui reflète les vues du

PKK ou les chaînes kurdes d'Irak du Nord. Selon l'ancien ministre Salih Yildirim, 80 % de la population kurde ne parle pas le turc.

Le « partenariat d'adhésion » européen a mis également l'accent sur les efforts que la Turquie doit consentir pour réduire

les disparités régionales, « et en particulier pour améliorer la situation du Sud-Est en vue de rehausser les perspectives économiques sociales et culturelles de tous les citoyens ». La commission demande ainsi à Ankara de fournir un véritable effort pour le sud-est anatolien,

Cortèges antagonistes

Plus de 21 000 Kurdes et Turcs ont manifesté hier à Strasbourg, dans des cortèges séparés, pour leur « héros » Apo, ou contre le « terroriste assassin ». Les sympathisants d'Öcalan ont réuni, selon la police, 18 500 manifestants venus avec femmes et enfants des quatre coins d'Allemagne pour réclamer « Liberté pour Öcalan et paix pour le Kurdistan » dans un cortège coloré et résonnant de musique traditionnelle. Le cortège adverse, moins dense, plus masculin, a mobilisé « contre le terrorisme » environ 2 800 marcheurs selon la police, 7 000 selon les organisateurs, originaires de l'est de la France ou des régions allemandes voisines. Pour éviter les heurts entre les deux camps antagonistes, le palais des Droits de l'homme, où les audiences sont d'habitude largement ou-

vertes au public, avait été transformé en camp retranché, la police et le service d'ordre filtrant les entrées de manière draconienne.

Soixante-dix places avaient été réservées aux proches et sympathisants d'Öcalan, parmi lesquels plusieurs ex-députés du parti indépendantiste kurde DEP (dissous), dont le président du Parlement kurde en exil Yasar Kaya, et l'ancien maire de Diyarbakir, Medhi Zana. Un frère et une sœur du leader indépendantiste kurde devaient également assister à l'audience, selon des représentants de la partie kurde.

Autant de places étaient occupées par les familles des victimes de la rébellion kurde, représentées surtout par des femmes en deuil, des adolescents et des hommes mutilés et invalides.

(AFP.)

à majorité kurde, ravagé par quinze ans de guerre entre l'armée turque et le PKK.

Du fond de sa cellule, Abdullah Öcalan avait lancé, à l'automne 1999, un ordre de cessez-le-feu puis de repli largement suivi par ses com-

battants. Selon les autorités, les affrontements ont baissé de 80 % dans la région. L'armée turque continue toutefois de faire la chasse aux rebelles, notamment dans les montagnes d'Irak où ils se sont réfugiés.

La libéralisation du régime en matière de droits des mino-

rités risque toutefois de prendre du temps. Lundi, une manifestation de 250 personnes en faveur de la suppression de la peine de mort a été dispersée sans ménagement à Van, dans le sud-est anatolien. La police a interpellé une centaine de manifestants. La plupart sont

membres du Haçep, le principal parti pro-kurde toléré par le régime. Le mouvement reste toutefois sous le coup d'une mesure d'interdiction sur laquelle la justice turque devrait statuer ces prochaines semaines.

LA CROIX MERCREDI 22 NOVEMBRE 2000



Deux millions d'Irakiens défilent devant le président Saddam Hussein

Quelque deux millions d'Irakiens ont défilé lundi pendant pas moins de 13 heures devant le président Saddam Hussein (photo Karim Sahib/AFP). Ils ont marché sur des tapis sur lesquels étaient dessinés des dollars américains pour la «Grande journée d'Al-Qods» (Jérusalem) à Bagdad. Le coup d'envoi du défilé a été donné par le dictateur irakien, en tenue militaire, qui a tiré des coups de feu en l'air, «signal de la libération de la Palestine», selon l'agence irakienne INA. Bagdad affirme avoir mobilisé quelque 6,6 millions de volontaires pour combattre contre Israël, en réponse à un appel lancé le 8 octobre par Saddam Hussein.

Ankara tente de justifier le transfert d'Ocalan du Kenya vers la Turquie



STRASBOURG, 21 nov (AFP) - 15h30 - Le gouvernement turc a justifié mardi à Strasbourg, les conditions de la capture du leader kurde Abdullah Ocalan au Kenya, puis de son transfert vers la Turquie, comme "une opération de coopération entre deux Etats souverains", devant la Cour européenne des droits de l'Homme.

Face aux accusations d'avoir procédé, avec l'aide d'un commando, à un "enlèvement" contraire au droit international et à la Convention des droits de l'Homme, le représentant du gouvernement Francis Szpiner s'est référé au cas d'Illich Ramirez Sanchez, alias Carlos.

Ramirez, qui est "un petit artisan du terrorisme à côté d'Ocalan", a été livré à la France par le Soudan dans les mêmes conditions que le Kenya a livré Ocalan à la Turquie, a-t-il déclaré.

Le Kenya a décidé, en tant qu'Etat souverain, de ne pas donner l'hospitalité à M. Ocalan qui est venu sur son territoire, "non pas en demandeur d'asile, mais muni de faux papiers", a dit M. Szpiner.

Selon l'un des avocats du chef du PKK, qui a porté plainte à Strasbourg contre la Turquie pour de nombreuses violations de la Convention des droits de l'Homme, "l'opération menée au Kenya est un complot international où la Turquie et la Grèce ont joué un rôle important".

Me Hasip Kaplan a en outre reproché à la Turquie de n'avoir jamais dévoilé les circonstances de cet "enlèvement" par un commando secret, même au procès d'Ocalan en Turquie.

Despite Sanctions, Iraq Is Back in the Arab Fold

By Howard Schneider
Washington Post Service

CAIRO — As if stepping off an aircraft at Baghdad's airport was not unusual enough after years of blockade, Prime Minister Ali Abu Ragheb of Jordan said that what he saw showed the extent to which U.S.-backed international sanctions were slipping in the face of efforts by Arabs and others to end Iraq's isolation.

Seven other aircraft that had carried visiting dignitaries stood on the tarmac of the suddenly bustling Saddam International Airport.

Hotels were full of officials and businessmen hoping to build ties and secure contracts, including Jordanians led by Mr. Ragheb, the highest ranking Arab leader to visit Iraq since its invasion of Kuwait.

Iraq was mobilizing dozens of truckloads of food and medical supplies to help Palestinians.

And, in another at least symbolic example of improving conditions in a country that has often complained about shortages of basic medical and other goods, the Jordanian said he was able to replace quickly a blood-pressure medicine he forgot to take with him.

After weathering years of scarcity, Iraq is riding a resurgence in the price of oil and in its own political fortunes in the Arab world and beyond, with its government intact and with new opportunities to battle for a lifting of the international sanctions imposed at the start of the Gulf War a decade ago.

Arab leaders, most of whom joined the military alliance that evicted Iraq from Kuwait, are showing an increasing willingness to rehabilitate the country even with President Saddam Hussein still in control.

Their people are demanding it, particularly when the Iraqi president's anti-Israel rhetoric has struck a chord during weeks of Palestinian-Israeli violence. The image of American and British planes patrolling northern and southern Iraq, ostensibly to protect rebel Kurdish and Shiite populations, is contrasted with U.S. opposition to international intervention on behalf of the Palestinians.

In addition, there is diminishing faith among Arab officials that U.S. policy makes sense toward a country they regard as militarily weakened, and which for their

own economic, political and cultural reasons they would like to reinvigorate.

Iraq "has suffered enough," the Jordanian prime minister said in a recent interview, adding that the Arab countries felt Iraq should be "re-engaged." "Are the sanctions eroding?" he added. "Yes. We feel they are becoming ridiculous."

Jordan has a particular interest at stake. It needs trade with Iraq to support an economy that has yet to realize the benefits of business with Israel or the West that were promised when King Hussein made peace with Israel.

It also relies on Iraq for cut-price oil, a fact the Iraqis have used to pressure their economically weaker neighbor.

But it is not just Jordan making the case. Iran and Syria, military and political nemeses of the Iraqi government, have stepped up talks with Baghdad, and

Syrian officials said Wednesday that Iraqi oil resumed flowing in a pipeline to Syria, reaching 150,000 barrels a day.

Although wary of Iraq's military designs, Saudi Arabia has reopened its border with Iraq to facilitate truck traffic.

Egypt, a key U.S. ally in the region, recently hoisted its flag again in Baghdad, a signal that the country's downgraded consular section there will be restored to full diplomatic status.

Iraq "will soon be integrated into the Arab fold," President Hosni Mubarak said. "It's only a matter of time now."

Although there is nothing about the United Nations-imposed sanctions that prevents diplomatic and even economic ties from expanding, such sentiments strike at the political credibility of the U.S. containment policy put into place after the Gulf War.

Sanctions are a critical part of the strategy, aimed at preventing President Saddam from using the country's oil wealth to rebuild his military or invest in biological, chemical or nuclear weapons.

Under UN resolutions, international weapons inspectors are supposed to certify that the country is complying with restrictions on its weapons programs before sanctions are lifted.

In fact, the sanctions have been progressively loosened over the last 10 years in response to international concern about Iraq's skyrocketing disease rates, malnutrition and other humanitarian problems.

Over the same period, the government of Saddam Hussein tried to conceal its weapons programs from UN inspectors and was forced to cooperate when the concealment was revealed by a defector.

Then, in 1998, Iraq effectively kicked out the inspectors — a move that triggered four days of intense U.S. air strikes on suspected weapons sites.

U.S. officials still argue that Iraq maintains weapons programs that must be monitored if they are not to threaten the region. And they note that the basics of the sanctions program remain intact and largely respected. The country's purchases of equipment, chemicals, industrial goods and a host of other items are still monitored by international officials and subject to embargo if it is determined they have a potential military use.

The controls are outlandishly picayune, according to Iraq and its supporters, vital to international security according to the United States.

However, Western and U.S. diplomats throughout the region consider the events of recent months a possible pre-

cursor to more blatant sanctions-busting, and a boost to diplomatic and political moves to lift the sanctions.

Already the effectiveness of the sanctions is questioned, as is the ability of the United Nations to resolve a nearly three-year deadlock over whether weapons inspectors will be allowed to return. Iraq is earning more money from oil than ever. It has the benefit of cash from smuggled exports to pursue the military programs the sanctions are supposed to prohibit. In such a situation, there is little incentive for compromise.

Arab leaders, out of deference to Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, have for years maintained an ambiguous stand toward Iraq. But sympathetic to the hardships that sanctions have imposed on the Iraqi people, they also largely blame President Saddam for the country's plight.

That has not fully changed. Jordan, Egypt and others, along with Iraq's main backers on the UN Security Council, France and Russia, are pushing Iraq to accept the weapons inspectors again, even as they build new diplomatic and economic bridges with Baghdad.

But there is little doubt that regional trends favor Iraq. When the Arab summit convened here last month, it was for the first time in a decade joined by both Kuwait and Iraq, a sign Arab observers said showed that anger over Palestinian-Israeli violence could supersede other regional tensions.

When the broader Organization of the Islamic Conference convened in Qatar last week, diplomatic efforts on behalf of Iraq continued, with the host nation joining other small Gulf countries to press for a reconciliation. Some progress may have been made. The final statement dropped its traditional reference to "Iraqi aggression" and called for efforts to "prepare the ground for resolving the differences."

The Iraqis may have begun to show some movement as well. Though they have said repeatedly that UN weapons teams would never return, at a meeting last week with Secretary-General Kofi Annan, the Iraqis agreed to a review of the situation "without preconditions."

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Un chef kurde irakien reçu par le président syrien



DAMAS, 22 nov (AFP) - 15h47 - Le président syrien Bachar al-Assad a reçu mercredi à Damas Massoud Barzani, chef du Parti démocratique kurde (PDK), une faction kurde du nord de l'Irak, a indiqué le porte-parole de la présidence.

Selon M. Gébrane Kourîé, le numéro deux du parti Baas au pouvoir en Syrie, Abdallah al-Ahmar a participé à l'entretien qui a porté sur "la situation régionale".

M. Barzani s'était rendu la semaine dernière en Libye où il s'était entretenu de la situation en Irak avec le numéro un libyen, le colonel Mouammar Kadhafi.

Le Kurdistan irakien échappe au contrôle du régime de Bagdad depuis la fin de la guerre du Golfe en 1991.

L'Union Patriotique du Kurdistan (UPK de Jalal Talabani) contrôle la partie est de ce territoire, frontalière de l'Iran, alors que son rival, le PDK, tient le secteur proche de la Turquie.

Le PDK est l'allié d'Ankara depuis 1997 contre le Parti des Travailleurs du Kurdistan (PKK, rebelles kurdes de Turquie) et l'armée turque lance fréquemment des opérations contre le PKK dans le nord de l'Irak.

Le PKK a mis fin à sa rébellion armée contre l'Etat turc en 1999 et s'est retranché dans le nord de l'Irak.

Les salles de cinéma d'Erbil aspirent à leur splendeur d'antan



ERBIL (Irak), 24 nov (AFP) - 9h07 - Tombées en désuétude et s'avouant vaincues par la télévision et des conditions de vie difficiles, les salles de cinéma d'Erbil, dans le nord de l'Irak sous embargo, rêvent aux jours de gloire d'un temps révolu.

"Il vient de nos jours dix fois moins de spectateurs qu'il y a dix ans", indique à l'AFP Mohamed, le propriétaire de la salle de cinéma "Hamra", situé dans le souk du chef-lieu du Kurdistan irakien, construit au pied de la citadelle surplombant l'ancienne cité.

Les gens préfèrent rester chez eux pour regarder, s'ils en ont les moyens, les chaînes turques ou arabes captées par satellite, explique-t-il, résigné.

L'entrée coûte 5 dinars irakiens (environ 25 cents US). Mais "peu de gens peuvent déboursier cette somme" pour venir voir un film, souvent enregistré sur cassette-vidéo sur les chaînes turques et montré ensuite dans une salle pouvant accueillir jusqu'à 300 personnes, construite en 1946.

"Je ne reçois plus que moins d'une centaine de personnes" pendant les quatre séances quotidiennes, soupire-t-il, indiquant que le Ramadan (NDLR: mois de jeûne des musulmans), qui commence fin novembre, va davantage l'affecter.

"Ce n'était pas comme cela il y 10, 15 ans, les gens venaient en famille", dit-il.

Kristal, Selaheddine et Sirvan, les trois autres salles de cinéma de la ville de quelque 900.000 habitants, font également les frais des conditions économiques difficiles qui y règnent depuis la fin de la guerre du Golfe en 1991.

Le nord de l'Irak est contrôlé depuis par deux factions kurdes rivales: le Parti démocratique du Kurdistan (PDK, de Massoud Barzani) et l'Union patriotique du Kurdistan (UPK), de Jalal Talabani

"La télévision est pour beaucoup dans notre manque à gagner mais c'est aussi surtout à cause de conditions de vie", estime Mohamed.

A Erbil, tenue par le PDK, un fonctionnaire touche un salaire mensuel moyen de 60 dollars (480 dinars) tout juste suffisant pour lui procurer les denrées de première nécessité.

Et il est encore parmi les chanceux.

Dans une famille où ses membres, ou du moins l'un d'eux, ne travaillent pas pour l'administration locale ou ne font pas du commerce –florissant dans la ville grâce au trafic par le poste-frontière turc de Habur–, chacun de ses membres doit se trouver une besogne qui puisse rapporter quelques dinars.

"Je gagne 20-25 dinars par jour (1,5-2 dollars) ce qui ne nourrit pas ma famille de cinq", lance, énervé, un vendeur ambulant de rondelles de betterave bouillie, amuse-gueule propre à la région consommé sur place avec du sel pour un dinar.

Le souk est chaque jour envahi par une foule de gens qui vendent menus objets ou vieux vêtements pour gagner quelques dinars.

Seuls les dignitaires du PDK ou les étrangers peuvent se payer le luxe d'un repas dans l'un des trois hôtels de la ville.

Quand la nuit tombe, les habitants désertent les rues et se retirent dans leur foyers. Seuls restent dehors les peshmergas (les combattants

kurdes) armés de Kalashnikovs pour assurer la sécurité des bâtiments publics et d'autres bâtisses sensibles, comme hôtels ou locaux de l'ONU.

"Il n'y a rien à faire ici le soir. Le seul passe-temps est de rester chez soi et regarder la télévision", précise Cemal, le gérant de la cuisine du seul "bar-américain" de la ville, "The Edge", située dans les locaux du siège de l'ONU.

Mais seuls y ont accès le personnel onusien et des ONG ainsi que les rares visiteurs étrangers.

"Violente dispute" entre députés allemands et police turque à Diyarbakir



ISTANBUL, 24 nov (AFP) - 11h55 - Une "dispute plutôt violente" a mis aux prises la police turque et un groupe de députés allemands en visite à Diyarbakir (sud-est), capitale du sud-est à majorité kurde, a indiqué vendredi à l'AFP le chef de la délégation, le député Vert Claudia Roth

Une équipe de policiers a suivi pas à pas la délégation de la commission des droits de l'Homme du parlement allemand, filmant en permanence et prenant des notes lors de ses entretiens jeudi, a précisé Mme Roth.

Les 5 parlementaires se sont indignés devant ce qu'ils ont perçu comme "un contrôle sur nous et nos interlocuteurs", a ajouté Mme Roth.

Tout en disant comprendre la nécessité de mesures de sécurité lors des visites de parlementaires étrangers dans la région kurde, Mme Roth a estimé que la police avait dépassé les bornes.

Des représentants de l'ambassade allemande en Turquie sont intervenus pour aplanir le terrain et les policiers turcs se sont alors tenus à distance, a-t-elle ajouté.

Les députés allemands ont rencontré jeudi à Diyarbakir des représentants des autorités locales, du parti pro-kurde de la Démocratie du peuple (HADEP) et des défenseurs des droits de l'Homme.

La délégation est venue enquêter sur la situation des droits de l'Homme en Turquie, pays candidat à l'Union européenne, après la publication le 8 novembre du "partenariat d'adhésion" de la Commission européenne qui l'engage à mener une série de réformes politiques et économiques. Les députés doivent quitter la Turquie dimanche après une visite d'une semaine.

Le parti pro-kurde tient son congrès dans l'incertitude et sous pression



ANKARA, 26 nov (AFP) - 15h11 - Le Parti de la démocratie du peuple (Hadep, pro-kurde) est réuni depuis dimanche matin en congrès, dans une ambiance de pression policière et judiciaire, et d'incertitude quant à l'octroi par les autorités turques de certains droits réclamée par l'Union européenne (UE).

Samedi, le secrétaire général adjoint du Hadep, Ali Riza Yurtsever, avait dénoncé une vague d'arrestations de cadres provinciaux du parti dans le but de "réduire la participation" à ce congrès.

Plus de 30.000 personnes se sont retrouvées à Ankara pour ce congrès, le quatrième depuis la création du parti en 1994, sous la surveillance de quelque 2.000 policiers.

La formation pro-kurde avait remporté en avril 1999 lors d'élections locales la plupart des mairies du sud-est du pays à majorité kurde, mais n'a pu franchir le seuil requis de 10% des suffrages aux législatives.

Le Hadep est toujours sous le coup d'une procédure d'interdiction pour "liens organiques" avec le Parti des travailleurs du Kurdistan (PKK, rébellion séparatiste kurde).

C'est sous cette même accusation que sont régulièrement poursuivis les responsables du Hadep, comme le secrétaire provincial d'Adana, inculpé samedi pour "propagande et aide à organisation terroriste".

"L'Etat doit se départir de sa phobie de la division", a déclaré le président du parti, Ali Turan Demir, à l'ouverture du congrès, selon la chaîne d'information en continu NTV.

Le programme de partenariat pour l'accession de la Turquie à l'UE, publié le 8 novembre, mentionne la nécessité pour Ankara d'octroyer certains droits culturels à la population kurde, un tabou qui reste encore bien difficile à lever.

Ces exigences européennes, parmi d'autres, ont suscité une vive réaction de la classe politique turque, réduisant les espoirs des Kurdes d'une rapide reconnaissance de leurs revendications.

La littérature iranienne sort de l'ombre où l'avaient plongée la censure et l'exil

Un recueil de nouvelles vient de paraître en France et le Théâtre national de l'Odéon reçoit huit auteurs pour des lectures, des débats et un concert

GRÂCE à la vitalité du cinéma iranien, le public international a pu découvrir une partie du renouveau artistique de ce pays de 80 millions d'habitants. En invitant des écrivains et des auteurs de théâtre les 24 et 25 novembre, l'Odéon-Théâtre de l'Europe offre à présent un aperçu de sa vie littéraire contemporaine. « *Il existe une effervescence nouvelle dans le domaine de l'édition et des tendances littéraires, aussi bien en Iran que dans la diaspora* », explique Sorour Kasmaï, organisatrice de ces journées, par ailleurs traductrice de russe spécialisée dans le théâtre, dont le père dirigeait un quotidien en langue française de Téhéran. « *Le nombre de parutions et de publications – nouvelles, romans, revues – et la diversité des styles marquent un tournant dans l'histoire des vingt dernières années* », ajoute-t-elle.

Invitée à l'Odéon, Farkhondeh Hadjizadeh, née en 1956 à Téhéran, est l'une des premières femmes éditeurs en Iran. Elle publie la revue littéraire *Baya*, « *plus ou moins interdite* » : « *Nous avons tremblé pour chaque article, nous avons supporté des pertes financières, mais nous ne nous sommes pas pliés aux exigences, à la médiocrité* », affirme-t-elle, tout en se réjouissant de constater « *l'activité grandissante des associations culturelles, la vague déferlante d'écrivains, de poètes, de traducteurs, de chercheurs, le tirage élevé des œuvres littéraires* ».

En France, les exilés multiplient depuis trois ans les rencontres dans des caves, des garages de la banlieue parisienne ou, jusqu'à sa fermeture récente, au Café de Cluny. Concerts, expositions, projections de films réunissent régulièrement cent à deux cents personnes. Khara-van, une maison d'édition et librairie installée à Vincennes, organise chaque mois des rencontres autour d'écrivains de langue persane vivant en Iran ou en exil. « *On se retrouve, on discute, on se dispute. Pourquoi ne pas faire partager ces débats au public français, qui connaît un engouement pour le cinéma iranien ?* », s'est demandé Sorour Kasmaï. Pour permettre à ce public de découvrir les écritures contemporaines, elle a rassemblé des nouvelles dans un recueil, *Les Jardins de solitude*, qui vient de paraître aux éditions Mille et une nuits (196 p., 59 F [8,99 €]), dont les auteurs d'Iran et de la diaspora, inédits jus-

qu'alors en France, sont invités à l'Odéon. De styles différents, ces nouvelles frappent par leur liberté littéraire et leur gravité.

TOUT EST SUGGÉRÉ

Si la réalité du pays est présente en arrière-plan, les écrits sont à l'opposé d'une littérature naturaliste. Ici, rien n'est dit, tout est suggéré. Dans la nouvelle intitulée « *Toutes nos condoléances !* », d'Akbar Sardouzami, installé au Danemark depuis 1986, un homme balbutie, tâtonne pour raconter la mort de ses deux enfants, victimes d'un régime qui n'est pas nommé. Est-ce l'auteur qui ne peut dire le nom du régime ou est-ce le père qui, devant tant d'absurdité, ne peut plus articuler ses émotions et ne comprend plus qu'on lui adresse des condoléances ?

Le Huitième jour de la Terre dépeint, dans un style à la limite du fantastique, un bourbier fait d'inondations et d'enlissements. Son auteur, né en 1957 à Chiraz, y dirige la revue littéraire *Jeudi soir*. Nassim Khaksar dresse, avec *Le Qandâ*, le tableau cruel de la misère paysanne. Les deux seules richesses d'un paysan sont brisées : son fils est revenu aveugle d'un front qui évoque la guerre entre l'Irak et l'Iran ; son âne, outil de travail et seul véhicule, a les pattes rompues. Mahmood Massoodi, traducteur en persan de Michel Tournier et de Jacques Derrida, signe une nouvelle en forme de conte initiatique.

« *Le thème de ma nouvelle est né de l'exil* », explique Réza Daneshvar, installé à Paris depuis 1982, où il gagne sa vie comme chauffeur de taxi. *Mahboubeh* et *Al* est un superbe portrait de femme vaincue par la bêtise, dont la narration, serrée, poétique, réserve une fin inattendue. « *En Iran, je considérais la situation des femmes comme*

normale. Simone de Beauvoir a été traduite très tard. Ici, j'ai lu Hélène Cixous, j'ai développé une forme d'attention à ces questions que je n'avais pas en Iran. » Réza Daneshvar a connu ses premiers déboires avec la censure au temps du shah. Ses pièces de théâtre étaient jouées, mais ses romans étaient parfois interdits. « *Comme tous les soixante-huitards iraniens, j'espérais la révolution. Quand elle est arrivée, je me suis tout de suite senti désespéré.* »

En France, il a écrit un roman, un recueil de nouvelles et une pièce de théâtre. Les deux premiers ont été publiés par une maison d'édition iranienne exilée en Suède. Ils circulent sous le manteau en Iran, mais sont condamnés à une diffusion confidentielle. Pour échapper à ce silence, Goli Taraghi, exilée en France depuis 1979, publie en Iran malgré les difficultés de la censure. Un livre, tout comme un film, ne peut paraître sans l'autorisation du ministère de l'orientation islamique. De nombreux éditeurs se trouvent au bord de la faillite dans l'attente de la précieuse autorisation. « *J'ai ainsi publié un conte pour enfants, traitant d'une petite sirène entreprenant un voyage sur la terre ferme et rencontrant un petit garçon. Le livre s'est vendu à 3 000 exemplaires, jusqu'à ce qu'un journaliste le dénonce comme sale et immoral en 1999. Le comité de censure est venu chez l'éditeur et a confisqué les exemplaires restants* », raconte Goli Taraghi.

En Iran, l'écrivain est confronté à une triple censure, explique-t-elle : l'autocensure – « *il faut éviter les thèmes sensuels, érotiques ou politiques* » –, celle de la maison d'édition – « *inquisiteur gentil, rendu méfiant par les attaques et les incendies subis par bien des éditeurs* » –, et celle de l'Etat.

Catherine Bédarida

Le chant de Mohammad Reza Shadjarian

Grand maître du chant classique iranien, Mohammad Reza Shadjarian s'est rarement produit en France. Il vient à l'Odéon, le 25 novembre, accompagné de son fils, Homayoun Sjadjarjan, chanteur et percussionniste, et de deux instrumentistes, Kayhan Kalhor et Hossein Alizadeh. S'ils maîtrisent le répertoire classique, ces musiciens sont aussi compositeurs et chercheurs. Hossein Alizadeh a été l'un des premiers à introduire des voix féminines dans ses concerts. Kayhan Kalhor a enregistré un disque avec des musiciens indiens. Pour leur concert parisien, ils ont choisi de chanter la poésie iranienne classique et contemporaine.

IRAK

Un paysage médiatique sous contrôle

En sus de l'embargo économique imposé par l'ONU, les Irakiens souffrent d'un embargo médiatique orchestré par le régime de Saddam Hussein.

Membre de l'importante délégation qui a récemment atterri à Bagdad à bord d'un avion de la compagnie royale jordanienne, le ministre jordanien de l'Information, Taleb Rifai, a demandé à ses hôtes de pouvoir suivre l'actualité régionale et internationale. Or les seules sources officielles sont les deux chaînes de télévision irakiennes, qui tardent généralement à diffuser et à couvrir les événements. C'est pourquoi la population irakienne suit l'actualité internationale, voire nationale, par l'intermédiaire de sources étrangères, notamment Radio Monte Carlo, la BBC et La Voix de l'Amérique. Le régime irakien n'a pas encore trouvé le moyen de parasiter la réception de ces radios "impérialistes". Le ministre jordanien aurait donc été informé par les Irakiens que, s'il voulait vraiment être informé, il lui faudrait se rendre chez le vice-président irakien, Taha Yassine Ramadan, qui possède une parabole échappant aux lois et aux peines que l'Etat applique aux citoyens, ou bien à l'imposant siège du ministère de la Culture et de l'Information.

Bien que cette anecdote ne soit peut-être qu'une simple rumeur, elle traduit bien la situation des médias irakiens. Depuis plusieurs années, les Irakiens ne cessent d'entendre des promesses et des déclarations rassurantes venant des plus hautes autorités sur la suppression imminente des interdictions. De façon paradoxale, la scène irakienne est décrite tous les jours de manière émouvante, dans tous ses détails politiques, culturels et sociaux, non par

les pauvres médias irakiens, mais par les satellites arabes et internationaux. Pourtant, ces moyens de communication continuent d'être considérés par les bureaucrates irakiens comme des outils du complot impérialiste, visant à pervertir des esprits jusqu'alors préservés par une production locale aseptisée.

Il y a un an, le président irakien, Saddam Hussein, dirigeait un Conseil des ministres au cours duquel il a été envisagé que les Irakiens puissent recevoir les chaînes étrangères par parabole. Une commission d'étude sur cette question épineuse a été constituée. Quelques jours plus tard, la commission a annoncé la nouvelle tant attendue par la population : certaines chaînes de télévision allaient pouvoir, de façon imminente, être reçues gratuitement – mais pas toutes. Depuis, il semblerait que le contenu des programmes des chaînes disposées à émettre en Irak ait poussé les responsables irakiens à ajourner l'application de leur décision.

Autre interdit qui a accentué les souffrances dues au blocus intellectuel des Irakiens : Internet, que Bagdad a découvert depuis quelques mois seulement avec l'ouverture de trois centres dans la capitale, sous contrôle des services de sécurité.

Le seul média d'information dont dispose l'ensemble de la population irakienne est la chaîne de télévision nationale, qui ouvre le journal télévisé avec les lettres de félicitations et de soutien destinées au Président, et le termine avec la météo. Pourtant, en Irak, les variations climatiques sont infimes, le ciel toujours dégagé, la sécheresse continue, et rares les jours où la température dépasse sa moyenne annuelle.

Ab al-Kadhim, Al Quds al-Arabi, Londres

DU 23 AU 29 NOVEMBRE 2000

COURRIER INTERNATIONAL N° 525

Chypre: Ankara défie l'Union européenne

La Turquie a défié l'Union européenne vendredi en soutenant la décision du dirigeant chypriote-turc, Rauf Denktaş, de se retirer des discussions sur l'île divisée de Chypre, organisées sous l'égide de l'ONU. Le Premier ministre turc, Bülent Ecevit, a accusé l'UE d'être à l'origine de la stagnation du dialogue en cours depuis décembre 1999. Les Quinze avaient provoqué la colère d'Ankara en liant son adhésion à la question de Chypre, dans un catalogue de mesures politiques et économiques à mener pour concrétiser sa candidature, entérinée en décembre 1999. « Nous ne voyons aucune utilité à la poursuite de ces discussions sans acceptation de nos paramètres », a déclaré Rauf Denktaş. En l'état, elles ne sont qu'une perte de temps. Chypre est divisée en deux secteurs, turc au Nord et grec au Sud, depuis que la Turquie a envahi son tiers nord en 1974, en riposte à un coup d'Etat de Chypriotes-grecs qui visait à rattacher l'île à la Grèce. La Turquie prône une solution basée sur une confédération de deux Etats séparés. Chypre, Athènes et la communauté internationale préconisent une fédération bizonale et bicommunale. (D'après AFP)

LIBÉRA 1000
26 NOVEMBRE 2000

Turkey Seeks Defense Role

ANKARA — Turkey, a member of NATO but not of the European Union, said Wednesday its commitment to a planned EU rapid-reaction force depended on how closely Ankara was allowed to participate in future EU defense policy.

Turkey is pressing hard for a role in "policy shaping" in a European Security and Defense Initiative, citing its role as a North Atlantic Treaty Organization member in a pivotal position on the edge of the Middle East and Caucasus. So far, however, the EU has stopped short of

meeting Turkish demands.

Defense Minister Sabahattin Cakmakoglu said in a statement that Turkey, seeking EU membership, had offered a substantial contribution to a European rapid-reaction force Tuesday at a meeting of 15 European countries not belonging to the EU.

"We expect EU member friends to take into consideration Turkey's just desire to take an active role in the European Security and Defense Initiative as a trusted country, as an EU candidate which has powerful forces and has served European security under the NATO umbrella for 50 years," he said.

(Reuters)

INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE, MONDAY, NOVEMBER 27, 2000

Le parti pro-kurde réuni en congrès élit un nouveau président

ANKARA, 26 nov (AFP) - 21h28 - Le Parti de la démocratie du peuple (Hadep, pro-kurde) a élu dimanche son nouveau président, Murat Bozlak, lors d'un congrès tenu sous forte pression policière et judiciaire, ont rapporté les media turcs.

Murat Bozlak avait déjà présidé le parti avant Ali Turan Demir, qui faisait partie des 6 candidats qui ont retiré leur candidature pour permettre son élection.

M. Bozlak avait dû quitter ses fonctions après une condamnation à de la prison pour propagande séparatiste, en février dernier.

"Nous suivrons une politique de dialogue et de concorde qui rassemble l'ensemble de la Turquie", a déclaré M. Bozlak à une assistance surexcitée, dont seule une petite partie avait pu trouver place dans la salle de sports de 3.000 places.

Plus de 30.000 personnes avaient fait le déplacement d'Ankara pour ce congrès, le quatrième depuis la création du parti en 1994, sous la surveillance de quelque 2.000 policiers.

Les responsables du Hadep avaient dénoncé une vague d'arrestations dans ses rangs, les jours précédant cette réunion.

La chaîne de télévision en continu NTV a indiqué que parmi les invités du Hadep, beaucoup de diplomates et de représentants de partis européens, une députée allemande d'origine turque, Felekna Uca, a tenté d'intervenir à la tribune en langue kurde, mais en a été empêchée par les responsables du parti.

NTV a également noté que le congrès s'était ouvert sans l'hymne national turc, et que des slogans à la gloire du chef de la rébellion kurde du PPK, Abdullah Ocalan, avaient été entendus.

Le Hadep est sous le coup d'une procédure d'interdiction pour "liens organiques" avec le Parti des travailleurs du Kurdistan (PKK, rébellion séparatiste kurde), après que le drapeau turc ait été décroché et remplacé par des portraits d'Ocalan lors du congrès fondateur du parti, en 1996.

La formation pro-kurde avait appelé le 13 novembre la Turquie à accélérer les réformes réclamées par le programme de partenariat pour son accession à l'UE, notamment certains droits culturels pour les Kurdes.

Ces exigences européennes, parmi d'autres, ont suscité une vive réaction de la classe politique turque, réduisant les espoirs des Kurdes d'une rapide reconnaissance de leurs revendications.

Diyarbakir NGOs hail broadcasts in Kurdish

Ankara - Turkish Daily News

Chairmen of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) based in the Southeastern city of Diyarbakir made various comments yesterday hailing the possible advent of Kurdish broadcasting, which has been near the top of the national debate of late.

Diyarbakir Bar Association Chairman Mustafa Ozer lamented Tuesday that there were a number of laws in Turkey that prevented broadcasting in Kurdish.

Citing the Constitution's article saying that Turkish is the official national language and which also bans broadcasts in other languages, Ozer stated that the first step towards broadcasting in Kurdish must be establishing new legal regulations.

"The issue is on the agenda just because Turkey wants to become a member of the European Union. By giving permission for Kurdish broadcasting, Turkey wants to make a positive impression and send a positive message to the EU," Ozer said.

Diyarbakir Chamber of Commerce Chairman Kutbettin Arzu said that the state would be better able to communicate with people speaking Kurdish if it approved Kurdish broadcasting.

Diyarbakir Chamber of Doctors Chairman Emin Ulug commented that the government was tardy in discussing the issue.

"We support the idea of broadcasting in Kurdish," he said. "The state should give information to these people in Kurdish."

Young People in Iran Begin to Loosen Up

Rules on Dating and Dress Are Often Ignored

By Molly Moore
Washington Post Service

TEHRAN — The rap of Puff Daddy pulses from the speakers. Young men and women bathed in the hazy glow of black lights hunch over small tables, occasionally touching hands.

"Two years ago in Iran you couldn't even imagine boys and girls sitting together in a place like this," said the 36-year-old manager of one of the popular new coffeehouses that have become the hottest commercial boom in Tehran.

In one of the most visible signs of social change in this largely isolated, Islamic nation, Iran's youth is going public.

Influenced by what growing numbers find on satellite television and on an Internet unfettered by economic sanctions or religious codes, young men and women are meeting openly for dates, strolling the streets arm in arm and pushing the limits of mandatory Islamic dress codes.

For many Iranians, those acts are nothing short of revolutionary in this strict Islamic theocracy, where just a few years ago women were arrested for wearing lipstick in public and teenagers were hauled to jail for holding hands with the opposite sex.

While political reforms sought by President Mohammed Khatami are stalled under pressure from conservative Islamic institutions that control much of the government, social reform is blossoming with the tacit acceptance of some of those same conservative forces.

The relaxation of social standards after two decades of stringent Islamic rule has unleashed a boom in coffeehouses, upscale hamburger restaurants and trendy cafés in one of the last industrialized nations on the globe that does not have a single American-franchised fast-food restaurant. U.S. sanctions on trade with Iran make it virtually impossible for American companies to

do legitimate business here.

"Now that they have more freedom, young people need places to go," said Asghar Shadmanpur, 34, who closed his traditional rice-and-kebab restaurant 18 months ago to open Star Burger, modeled after the Burger King and McDonald's chains he patronized during visits to London.

In recent months, scores of coffeehouses have opened in the malls of wealthy north Tehran and along the sidewalks of the city's major commercial districts. Decorated more like 1970s discos than like current-day Starbucks shops, many of the coffee bars push the limits of official tolerance. They play music from the West, which formally is prohibited, and cultivate a romantic intimacy with black-mirrored storefronts, dark interiors and tiny café tables designed for two.

Although the government tolerates the coffee shops, the managers at six such cafés asked that their names and those of their restaurants not be published for fear of harassment by authorities.

Despite the liberalization, Iranians adhere to some of the strictest codes of social behavior in the Islamic world. Most coffee shops and burger joints display signs warning that they are not allowed to receive women without veils.

While the coffeehouses are tame by Western standards and the stiffest drink on the menu is an ice cream banana cocktail (alcohol is taboo), their very existence is a seismic change in a culture where, until the last few years, young people socialized only at private parties or in rendezvous at their parents' homes.

"In terms of freedom for male and female relationships, it's almost a democracy now," said Samira Hadjali, 18, a university student sitting on a bench in one of Tehran's largest parks, where hand-holding couples strolled freely.

The liberalization of social codes has also changed the way young Iranians,

particularly in urban centers, are dressing. Hoda Khaledi, 19, a college student wrestling with one of Star Burger's over-size sandwiches, confided: "Last summer I saw a few girls wearing trousers above their ankles. And we could paint our toenails and there was no problem."

But talk of toenail polish and dating annoys other young people.

"Freedom is more than boys and girls going out," said Banafshe, 20, a college student eating pizza with her boyfriend at a popular fast-food restaurant called Boof, or Owl.

Her friend, Hootan, a 23-year-old civil engineering student, agreed: "The freedoms they have given us are just the tail of the shirt. They are willing to give more social freedom at the expense of political freedom."

And while many youths credit Mr. Khatami and his reformist policies for opening the doors of social reform, others contend that external forces, uncontrollable by Iran's conservative Islamic institutions, have been more influential.

Elaheh Koulai, a reformist parliamentarian who created a furor this year as the first female legislator to attend sessions without the traditional black chador, attributed the social relaxation to "a gradual change in our country" caused by "the expanding wave of globalization" that has come with such borderless influences as satellite television and the Internet.

As for her controversial decision to wear the preferred garb of a growing number of urban Iranian women, an outer coat and a head scarf, she said, it was "a kind of declaration of rights of women."

Although Iran's morality enforcers first began cutting youth a little slack shortly before Mr. Khatami was elected three and a half years ago, they have significantly reduced harassment of young people since he took office.

These days, the only time the police show up at the popular Star Burger is to assist with crowd control when the lines get too long, said the owner, Mr. Shadmanpur. Now selling 3,200 burgers a day (cheeseburgers are the biggest hit), Mr. Shadmanpur says he plans to triple the size of his 70-seat restaurant and open two more branches in Tehran within the next four months.

Iranian Leader Admits Limits of Power

The Associated Press

TEHRAN — President Mohammed Khatami on Sunday accused his hard-line opponents of constitutional violations and said he was powerless to stop them — his first such statement since his 1997 election and the clearest sign yet of the ongoing power struggle in Iran.

"I declare that after three and a half years as president, I don't have sufficient powers to implement the constitution, which is my biggest responsibility," Mr. Khatami said.

"In practice, the president is unable to

stop the trend of violations or force implementation of the constitution."

Mr. Khatami, addressing a conference on the constitution, said he deliberately had refrained from elaborating on the anti-constitutional activities of his opponents to "avoid tension." But he warned that he would report to the country at the end of his four-year term.

Mr. Khatami, whose pro-democracy changes have been opposed by hard-liners, said that the closed-door, no-jury courts that were being used to try jour-

nalists and political activists were an example of how the constitution was being trampled. He said ambiguous charges of "disturbing the public opinion" and "undermining the establishment" were used by the hard-liners to convict moderates.

The judiciary, which is controlled by hard-liners, has closed down 30 publications since it began a press crackdown in April in a bid to undercut Mr. Khatami's public support and roll back social and political reforms.

Meanwhile, about 2,000 students gathered Sunday in central Tehran to denounce hard-line actions, with several leading moderates calling the reform movement unstoppable. They urged hard-line leaders to heed the people's demands for greater political freedoms

and liberalization of Islamic social laws.

Ali Afshari, a leader of the Office for Fostering Unity, Iran's largest reformist student group, specifically targeted Ayatollah Mahmoud Hashemi Shahroudi, head of the judiciary.

"Either you can't protect freedoms,

or you don't want to do so," Mr. Afshari said. "If you can't do so and still want to cling to power, you are committing treason. And if you don't want to do so, then you should get out of the way and let a competent person take over."

Un député dénonce fermement la répression de la minorité kurde en Iran



TEHERAN, 28 nov (AFP) - 8h51 - Un député kurde iranien a dénoncé mardi devant le Parlement (Majlis) la "campagne de répression, d'assassinats en série et l'interdiction de culte" dont est victime, selon lui, la minorité kurde sunnite en Iran qui compte environ 6 millions de personnes.

Dans un discours d'une tonalité sans précédent en Iran sur un sujet très sensible, tant politiquement que religieusement, M. Jalal Jalalizadeh, député de Sanandaj, chef-lieu du Kurdistan iranien, a fait état de "meurtres en série d'intellectuels" ainsi que "de destructions de mosquées sunnites".

Le député a notamment dénoncé "l'accusation de Wahhabisme", mouvement sunnite au pouvoir en Arabie saoudite, portée contre les kurdes sunnites qui, a-t-il dit, visent "à les priver de leurs droits sociaux".

Il a dénoncé en outre "les attaques, les offenses et les discriminations". Elles visent, selon lui, les religieux sunnites du Kurdistan et de toutes les régions sunnites en particulier le Sistan-Balouchistan (sud-est) et le Khorassan (nord-est) où ils sont très minoritaires.

M. Jalalizadeh a demandé l'intervention du Guide de la République islamique, l'ayatollah Ali Khamenei et du président Mohammad Khatami pour que soit mis fin aux discriminations dont sont victimes les Kurdes en Iran.

"Notre province souffre de sous-développement et de chômage des jeunes", a dit M. Jalalizadeh.

Pays à très forte majorité chiite, le chiisme est la religion officielle de l'Iran depuis 1600, l'Iran compte une importante communauté sunnite.

Les Kurdes ne disposent plus de parti politique en Iran, le parti démocratique du Kurdistan iranien (PDKI) ayant été interdit après la révolution, et son principal dirigeant Abdolrahman Ghassemlou, ayant été assassiné à Vienne en 1989.

L'Iran a connu, en 1946, sous la présidence de Ghazi Mohammad, la première et unique République kurde de l'histoire, dans la ville de Mahabad. Cette République a été écrasée quelques mois plus tard par l'armée impériale.

En 1967, un très violent soulèvement kurde a duré 18 mois et les hommes du chef kurde irakien Mustapha Barzani ont participé à la répression des kurdes d'Iran.

En 1975, le Chah d'Iran et M. Saddam Hussein, alors vice-président irakien, ont signé les accords d'Alger, conjuguant les efforts des deux pays pour mettre fin à toute rébellion.

En Iran, au lendemain de la révolution de 1979, les Kurdes des différents courants politiques se sont soulevés contre le pouvoir central islamique. L'imam Khomeiny a ordonné la création d'une force conjointe de l'armée et des Pasdaran (Gardiens de la révolution) qui ont écrasé la rébellion et interdit tous les partis politiques, en particulier le PDKI et le Komeleh communiste.

En Syrie, triste continuité

QUI EST Bachar El Assad ? Depuis son arrivée au pouvoir, en juillet, le nouveau président syrien tarde à se révéler. Ses interventions au sommet arabe du Caire comme à celui de l'Organisation de la conférence islamique, à Doha, se sont inscrites dans la droite ligne de la politique régionale de son père, Hafez El Assad. La libération, le 16 novembre, de six cents prisonniers politiques constitue-t-elle en revanche un infléchissement significatif pour les affaires intérieures syriennes ?

La mesure était espérée et attendue de la part d'un responsable jeune et susceptible de solder certains des comptes laissés par son père, sur le modèle du roi Mohammed VI au Maroc. Les prisonniers libérés appartiennent d'ailleurs en majorité aux mouvements les plus sévèrement réprimés au cours des années 70 et 80 : les Frères musulmans, qui avaient juré la perte du régime, les baasistes pro-irakiens et les communistes (PC-Bureau politique et Action communiste). Cer-

tains membres du Parti islamique de la libération incarcérés il y a un an et des militants des droits de l'homme retenus depuis environ une dizaine d'années ont également été relâchés.

S'il y a tout lieu de se féliciter de ces libérations, il convient cependant de rappeler que des centaines d'autres prisonniers politiques sont toujours sous les verrous. Selon les décomptes dressés notamment par Amnesty International, six cents Syriens restent encore détenus, auxquels s'ajoutent environ six cents prisonniers palestiniens et jordaniens, ainsi que plusieurs dizaines de Libanais. Et encore, ces estimations ne prennent-elles pas en compte les nombreux « disparus » libanais et syriens pendant les années de plomb en Syrie, entre 1978 et 1985, et pendant la guerre civile libanaise.

Le poète Faraj Bayrakdar, gravement malade, a enfin pu regagner le 17 novembre son domicile de Homs, après treize ans de détention

dépeints dans un recueil bouleversant, *Ni vivant, ni mort* (Le Monde du 11 septembre 1998). Mais le journaliste Nizar Nayyuf, récipiendaire cette année du Prix de la liberté de la presse attribué par l'Unesco, devrait rester encore cloîtré. En mai, le journaliste avait fait parvenir un message dénonçant les conditions de vie dans la prison de Mezzé, qualifiée de « cimetière des êtres vivants ».

CONSIDÉRATIONS MATÉRIELLES

Selon un responsable syrien, cette prison construite par les Français du temps du mandat qui leur avait été confiée par la Société des Nations, devrait bientôt fermer ses portes. Mais cette décision répondrait plus à des considérations matérielles qu'humanitaires. En effet, les bâtiments, qui ont retenu les plus hauts responsables politiques syriens déposés par Hafez El Assad, sont particulièrement vétustes. De fait, Bachar El Assad n'a guère pris de risques en entrouvrant les portes de ses

géôles. Souvent brisés par une longue détention, dans des conditions affreuses, les prisonniers libérés sont loin de constituer une menace.

Cette vague de libérations ne semble donc pas marquer une rupture. Elle s'ajoute au contraire aux vagues précédentes décrétées en son temps par Hafez El Assad. Il en va de même avec la loi d'amnistie votée le 21 novembre par les députés et qui devrait permettre d'alléger certaines des peines prononcées contre des responsables du régime accusés de corruption. Il s'agissait, à l'époque, de faire place nette pour un futur président qui a, aujourd'hui, grand besoin d'alliés.

L'orchestration de ces libérations dans la presse officielle a d'ailleurs visé à faire passer un message clair. Le journal *As-Saoura* a évoqué « un prélude à une reconsidération sérieuse, tranquille, responsable et active de la vie politique en Syrie », mais les limites de l'exercice sont également limpides : « Les acteurs du système politique syrien, qu'ils soient au pouvoir, dans l'opposition, (...) ne pourront contribuer à cette révision que s'ils commencent à faire leur propre autocritique en toute transparence. Il va de soi de dire que celui qui ne peut pas faire une révision subjective ne sera pas capable de juger les autres. » Pas question pour le pouvoir de laisser penser que ces libérations, qui surviennent près de deux mois après l'appel spectaculaire pour l'instauration de la démocratie lancé par des intellectuels et artistes syriens, aient été dictées par une quelconque pression.

Bachar El Assad, pour convaincre, devra donc aller plus loin. La majorité des prisonniers libérés depuis le 16 novembre ne viennent pas de Mezzé, mais d'un autre centre de détention, autrement plus symbolique. Il s'agit en effet de la prison située à proximité du haut lieu archéologique de Palmyre, *Tadmor* en arabe, au beau milieu du désert, et que visitent chaque année des milliers de touristes. Les témoignages que l'on peut recueillir en Syrie concernant cette prison disent un véritable enfer. Au Maroc, un lieu similaire, Tazmamart, avait fermé ses portes au début des années 90. Un pèlerinage a été organisé dans l'ancien bagne au début du mois d'octobre par une organisation marocaine de défense des droits de l'homme. En Syrie, quand fermera-t-on enfin Palmyre ?

Gilles Paris

Le président Khatami se plaint de son manque de pouvoir

TÉHÉRAN. Le président iranien, Mohamad Khatami, a déploré dimanche 26 novembre « l'insuffisance de ses prérogatives » et a demandé leur renforcement dans le cadre d'une révision constitutionnelle. « Je dois avouer qu'après trois ans et demi de présidence je me rends compte que le chef de l'Etat ne dispose pas de prérogatives suffisantes pour assurer ses fonctions », a souligné M. Khatami dans un discours à Téhéran, à l'occasion d'un séminaire sur « la Constitution et les délits politiques et de presse ». « Le président n'est pas capable, dans la pratique, d'empêcher la violation de la Constitution ou d'intervenir pour la faire appliquer », a-t-il ajouté. « Parmi les choses importantes et structurelles que nous devons faire figure la dissipation des ambiguïtés afin que le président puisse assurer sa fonction en toute autorité et sur la base de la légalité. » Par ailleurs, lors d'un rassemblement à l'intérieur du campus, les étudiants de l'université technique Amir-Kabir, à Téhéran, ont manifesté dimanche leur soutien aux réformes entreprises depuis plus de trois ans par le président Khatami et ont conspué la justice conservatrice. — (AFP)

Le chef des services secrets turcs pour une télévision en kurde



ANKARA, 28 nov (AFP) - 10h29 - Le chef des services secrets turcs (MIT) s'est prononcé pour des émissions de télévision en kurde --l'une des conditions posée par l'Union européenne à une adhésion de la Turquie-- comme moyen de contrer la propagande des indépendantistes kurdes.

"Medya-TV, qui suit la ligne du Parti des Travailleurs du Kurdistan (PKK) est largement regardée dans le sud-est" à majorité kurde, a souligné Senkal Atasagun dans un rare entretien avec la presse turque, cité par le quotidien Sabah. "Ils déforment la réalité. Ne serait-ce pas mieux de les mettre en compétition ?", a-t-il demandé.

La télévision satellitaire Medya-TV, proche du PKK, peut être reçue dans toute la Turquie.

M. Atasagun a affirmé que la position de la puissante armée turque sur cette question était "100% conforme à la nôtre" et que l'opposition à des émissions en kurde venait "principalement des hommes politiques", selon Sabah.

L'autorisation d'émissions en kurde est l'objet d'un vif débat en Turquie depuis la publication le 8 novembre d'un document de la Commission européenne énumérant les réformes politiques et économiques que la Turquie doit mener si elle veut adhérer à l'UE.

Plusieurs articles concernent les Kurdes sans les nommer directement et l'un d'entre eux appelle à la levée des interdictions pesant sur l'utilisation de la langue maternelle.

Mais le Parti de l'action nationaliste (MHP, droite nationale) est opposé à des émissions en kurde, y voyant un stimulant pour les aspirations indépendantistes. Le Premier ministre Bulent Ecevit a récemment souligné que le gouvernement devait s'occuper rapidement de cette question, et son adjoint chargé des Affaires européennes Mesut Yilmaz, du parti de la Mère patrie (ANAP, centre droit), a plaidé pour des émissions en kurde.

L'usage du kurde est interdit dans l'enseignement, la radio et télé-diffusion et les réunions politiques. Il est toléré dans la presse et les cassettes de musique.

Le PKK, qui a lutté pendant quinze ans pour la création d'un Etat kurde dans le sud-est, a annoncé en septembre 1999 l'arrêt des combats et son retrait de Turquie.

Mais selon le chef du MIT, il "continue d'être une menace aussi longtemps qu'il disposera de 4.500 membres armés à l'étranger et 500 en Turquie".

Antibiotics laboratory established in Kurdish region

Kurdistan Satellite TV 28 Oct 00

For the first time in Iraqi Kurdistan, and in a new attempt for Kurdish scientists, an antibiotics centre was established. This centre, established by the scientists at the animal health laboratory of Kurdistan regional government's Agriculture and Irrigation Ministry, has a significant role in identifying animal and poultry diseases and curing them. It provides an important service to the animal wealth of Kurdistan.

[Reporter - recording] The special circumstances of Kurdistan region after the great spring uprising of 1991 put the Kurdish individual before a new reality that made him rely on his own skills and experience in dealing with problems in an up-to-date manner. Despite the harsh economic conditions, he demonstrated skill and experience in many areas and invented new ways. In the latest scientific attempts to identify those deadly diseases that affects animals, scientists at the animal health laboratory of the Ministry of Irrigation and Agriculture managed to establish an antibiotics centre in order to carry out research on bacteria's immunity to various antibiotics. This is regarded as the first scientific attempt

in the poultry field in Kurdistan region. From an economic point of view, and in addition to identifying the disease, the laboratory provides a good service to the animal wealth of Kurdistan.

The process goes has different stages. At first, the bacteria is cultivated in a circular glass in a temperature of 37 C for 24 hours. the second stage starts by putting the bacteria in another circular glass and apply 10 micro-litres of another medicine on it for 24 hours. Then the [appropriate] antibiotic will be identified.

The laboratory consists of seven parts. It has some modern equipment, the most important one is the analyzer which is considered as one of the most advanced tools that can carry out many searches in a short time and identify diseases in a very good way.

* * * * *

MIT out of its shell: liberal approach to Islam and Kurds

- **Atasagun:** MIT is opposed to hanging Ocalan, Kurdish TV is essential, and one must distinguish between fundamentalists and the genuinely devoted

Ankara - Turkish Daily News

Speaking to several prominent journalists, Senkal Atasagun, the National Intelligence Organization (MIT) undersecretary and Mikdat Alpay, the organization's second-in-command, in a virtual pact, both stress the same needs:

"Turkey should make the most of this period of Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) inaction following the capture of its leader Abdullah Ocalan..."

When asked, "But can it be taken advantage of?" the MIT undersecretary avoids giving a positive answer:

"The Turkish Armed Forces (TSK) are making a specially concerted effort. But time is running out. That man [Ocalan] has been here for two years now, but most of what should have been done still has not been." At this point, Atasagun says: "We should get over this custom of ours of looking abroad and at external factors when apportioning blame for our mistakes. We should be more introspective when asking why," and voices a criticism directed at the system in Turkey.

Better than Medya TV

After Ocalan was captured, MIT submitted a report to the National Security Council (MGK) meeting of Feb. 25, 1999 detailing what needed to be done in this new era. The report, which also covered cultural measures to be taken, created a stir within the MGK. MIT representatives were met with reactions such, "How can you say this!?"

The announcements made by both Atasagun and Alpay the other day show, just like the report did, that MIT has a rather flexible and all-encompassing approach to the Southeast issue. Likewise, the signs of a flexible and liberal approach to the debate over allowing TV broadcasting in Kurdish are plain to see.

In reply to a question on this topic, Atasagun said:

"This is primarily a decision to be made by the government. Medya TV, which follows a PKK line, is watched in the Southeast with no problems. They add their own spin to events and tell loads of lies. Everybody has got a satellite dish and is watching it..."

At this point Alpay adds his voice and puts the following question: "Do you want to win over the people there or not?" Recalling that when he was doing his internship as a judge in the region in Urfa in 1965, they had to employ Kurdish and Arabic translators, he goes on: "It is just the same today. If you want to win over the people, you have to be able to get through to them. But how? With sign language? If you want to win them over, you have to reach them. Their native language is Kurdish. How are you going to explain the facts in Turkey to them? We should be able to use Kurdish in the best interests of the Turkish Republic in the same way we are using Ocalan. When we do this we should not look as if we are being forced to, but that we want to. Look. A theatre troupe puts on a play in Kurdish and engage in Kurdish nationalism. That is one matter. The use of Kurdish by the state to get through to its citizens is another matter entirely."

Alpay goes on: "Words can be used for good as well as evil purposes. Turkey should be able to use its brains and form the infrastructure so that words can be used to good effect. But this is not MIT business, it is government business."

We could not win over their mothers

The number two in at MIT then makes probably the most heart rending comment of the discussion: "The Turkish Republic was unable to win over their mothers. According to some studies, 60 percent of the mothers in the region do not know Turkish. We never set up a system to win them over. This state did not know how to address the mothers. Had we been able to win them over, the issue would not have lasted until today. We noted this for many years but we could not get anything achieved."

So, has MIT put its more flexible view of Kurdish TV across to the other elements of the state? Has the government asked MIT its opinion on this matter? Atasagun's reply was: "We were asked and we gave them our opinion, the same one we have told you. In much the same way, we opposed hanging Ocalan and told the government accordingly. We opposed it in Turkey's best interests." These opinions voiced by Atasagun and Alpay all show that MIT has long adopted a flexible approach towards Kurdish TV and has even relayed this view to the government and the other organs of the state.

So, what is preventing MIT's views from coming to life?

The MIT undersecretary replies: "Naturally, being bureaucrats we do not have to worry about votes and can talk more freely. Politicians have clearly defined voting bases. Furthermore, there are some issues they drag their feet over. It is not that easy for them to change their tune. The stance of the organization is what is important here. If they say it is their condition, it can be opposed. Then we too will oppose it. It is best not to blackmail." He rounds off the topic saying, "The matter is one of not giving the playing field to the separatists..."

Do not underestimate the PKK

The MIT undersecretary also notes that the PKK should not be taken lightly and expresses this view in powerful terms:

"We do not underestimate the PKK. They still have 4-5,000 men under arms abroad. Until this force is removed, the PKK will remain a threat."

Warning of intifada

Atasagun further recalled the efforts of children to try to prevent census officials entering the slum areas of Adana where Kurdish migrants had settled and brought the threat of an "intifada" to the fore: "They tried on Medya TV to portray the incidents in Adana on census day as a kind of intifada. They now have intentions such as applying a Palestinian model [to the region]. The PKK want to use this as a means of blackmail." While evaluating the mood in the region, Atasagun said, "If we were to say that Ocalan had not been influential in the region for the past 20 years, we would be lying." Alpay for his part said the PKK had broken feudalism and had tried to impose a sense of nationalism: "Ocalan has this idea of forming a Kurdish Language Board, like the Turkish Language Board (TDK)."

Let us distinguish the pious

One of the most interesting subject headings of the discussion at MIT headquarters concerned the threat of reactionaries. The statements by both Atasagun and Alpay showed that MIT did not have a rigid approach to combating reactionaries and that the organization were adopting a very line when distinguishing between genuinely pious people and reactionaries. This part of the conversation went:

[Hurriyet] How does MIT view the reactionary problem?

[Atasagun] One should not confuse the genuinely pious masses with the proponents of shariah [fundamentalists].

Shariah only 8 percent

[Hurriyet] Is it not confusing?

[Atasagun] It should not be. Look, this is a real problem. There are fundamentalists in Turkey. According to various estimates, between 5 and 8 percent of the population are fundamentalists. Their most explicit supporters are those countries where they live under this system. They cannot accept the existence of a secular, Muslim and democratic Turkey. They see it as the greatest threat to their existence. But they have zero chance of success.

Leaderless community

[Alpay] We are always expounding the need to distinguish between the genuinely devout and the fundamentalists. The moment you stop making a distinction you will be playing into their hands. Look, a well-intentioned mosque-going community is everybody's citizen. The other day saw the funeral of a friend of ours. It was a Friday. We went to the mosque. It was packed full and very tranquil. But there are those among those there that want to use the others. This is where the Religious Affairs Directorate comes into

being. In fact, Mehmet Nuri Yilmaz works wonders. However, the Turkish Republic has been unable to win over the mosque-going community. The fundamentalists are winning. We will never get anywhere by estranging the mosque-going community.

Snot-nosed man

Atasagun has an interesting approach towards religious sects and especially towards the supporters of Fethullah Gulen. In Atasagan's view, Gulen is: "A man they used to mention to me for a while. Here, they would say: 'Watch these videos. What he says is important.' I watched; he is snot-nosed man who cries a lot."

Let us be EU members but not Yugoslavian

Atasagun voiced his personal opinion regarding Turkey's full European Union membership and supported it. However, "This does not mean we are going to accept everything," he said. In reply to a question on this matter, Atasagun said: "The path Ataturk showed to us is the West. The East as you can see is full of dangers. We are going to seek out ways of getting to the West. But, while we search this does not mean that we will accept everything they tell us or that we will ask them to turn us into Yugoslavia. I look at the situation from a more democratic and economic viewpoint. Look at Greece and Portugal. Just see how far they have come thanks to the EU. We have to install democracy with all its principles. What is acceptable for a European will be acceptable for us."

We could hand over domestic intelligence

During our conversation, Atasagun told journalists for the first time a view he has been defending for some time regarding MIT withdrawing completely from the sphere of domestic intelligence and concentrating solely on foreign intelligence... Atasagun's view was: "We focus the majority of our effort abroad. If the police say, 'We handle domestic intelligence,' we will go along with that. However, the state has to tell us officially not to look at the internal threat any more. If this happens, we will hand it over to the police. It is not a problem for us. We will look abroad." Pointing out in reply to a question whether the intelligence activities of the police and the military did not step on their toes, Atasagun said, "We would be happy to see the military and police intelligence efforts intensified."

Roth says no visible development in Turkey on human rights

- Authorities in Turkey have mentioned several law drafts aiming at improving human rights but there is no visible development in practice

Ankara - Turkish Daily News

There is still no visible progress on the issue of human rights in Turkey, Claudia Roth, German Parliament Human Rights and Humanitarian Assistance Committee Chairman said.

Speaking at a press conference on Monday in Berlin, Roth said, after evaluating her recent visit to Turkey, "there is no development in Turkey regarding the issue of human rights. But we still support Turkey's European Union membership, after it has fulfilled all the reforms necessary for membership."

Roth visited southeastern Anatolia last week. Echoing a previous statement by Deputy Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz that "the road to the EU passes through Diyarbakir," Roth said "for this reason I see the mayor of Diyarbakir as being as important as an ambassador."

Turkish authorities, including Foreign Minister Ismail Cem, angrily reacted to Roth's statements describing Roth's comments as "disturbing and nonsense."

Roth also said that authorities in Turkey have mentioned several law drafts aiming at improving the human rights but, she claimed, there was no visible development in practice.

According to Roth, there are still big deficiencies in Turkey regarding the freedom of expression. As for the Turkish reactions against her words, Roth claimed that she, as a friend of Turkey, had wanted to tell the truth.

She also pointed out that she was against the sale of weapons to Turkey and believed Europe should provide financial assistance to Turkey, instead of selling weapons. She stated: "The Kurds should be granted minority rights and their cultural identity should be preserved."

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Ecevit approves of MIT comments; MHP angered

- Ecevit: Atasagun's comments should not come as a surprise and his observations should be benefited from; I gave him permission before he spoke with journalists
- MHP's Sabahattin Cakmakoglu: I don't know whether he was given the authority to say these things but he should have informed the relevant ministry beforehand what he was going to say. You already know our views. He voiced his own and they're not binding on the government

Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit has spoken out in favor of comments made by National Intelligence Organization (MIT) Undersecretary Senkal Atasagun and MIT second-in-command Mikdat Alpaz, the Anatolia news agency reported yesterday. "It is difficult to keep a secret in modern and democratic countries with the state of communications technology being what it is today," he told the press. "Those in charge of MIT today are acting in this knowledge. Therefore Atasagun's comments should not come as a surprise and his observations should be benefited from." Ecevit said that MIT was working with great openness and transparency, which was an important stage for Turkey. He agreed that the genuinely devout should not be confused with fundamentalists, as Atasagun had said, and echoed what he had said about Kurdish women not knowing Turkish. He called for a solution to the Kurdish issue that would not harm the territorial integrity of the country, adding the government was doing all it could on the economic and social fronts to address the problems in Turkey's East and Southeast and said the death penalty ought to be abolished. Stating that separatism was still a threat but that only its direction had changed, Ecevit said the latest congress by the People's Democracy Party (HADEP) served as ample warning of this.

MHP response

Nationalist Movement Party (MHP) ministers criticized Atasagun but limited their criticisms to saying that he didn't have the authority or the right to say such things. Defense Minister Sabahattin Cakmakoglu reacted harshly to Atasagun's comments, saying: "Atasagun is a high-ranking bureaucrat in the service of the state and should speak according to the bureaucracy's rules and regulations. I don't know whether he was given the authority to say these things but I do think he should have informed the relevant ministry beforehand what he was going to say. You already know our views. He voiced his own and I do not believe they are binding on the government."

Transport Minister Enis Oksuz said: "Everybody seems to be able to say whatever comes into their heads. Is the MIT undersecretary governing Turkey?" State Minister Ramazan Mirzaoglu told journalists: "This topic

will be defined by the government and by Parliament. Everybody should stick to their own duties."

However, the prime minister voiced his belief that Atasagun hadn't gone out of bounds. "In fact, I gave him permission before he spoke to journalists," he said. When asked about MHP sensitivities about Kurdish television and the abolition of the death penalty, Ecevit replied, "We definitely have to keep these sensitivities in mind; I've already told you my personal opinion on these matters." Another Democratic Left Party (DSP) minister, Culture Minister Istemihan Talay, replying to journalists' questions regarding Kurdish TV, said that according to the Constitution, the official language was Turkish and that one of the biggest problems was that it was not being taught over a wide enough area. He added it was one of the primary responsibilities of the state to ensure the official language was understood by all its citizens. "We have to evaluate very carefully an approach that doesn't take into account the priority and instead puts forward other priorities before the first one is achieved," he added.

Leader of the main opposition pro-Islamist Virtue Party (FP) Recai Kutan said that Atasagun's view that the genuinely devout should be distinguished from fundamentalists was right on the mark. "This is something we have been saying for ages," he said. However, he refused to give a definite response to journalists asking his views regarding Atasagun's comments on not hanging Ocalan. "As I have not studied his comments in depth, I cannot make any comment of my own," he replied.

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"Un avion pour l'Irak" : Responsabilité des organisateurs dans l'échec de l'opération

par Gilles Munier (*)

**Avion fantôme - Absence des documents nécessaires à la navigation
aérienne - Inorganisation - Manipulation - Irresponsabilité**

La campagne de soutien à l'opération "Un avion pour l'Irak" a été un succès, mais sa mise en œuvre a tourné à l'échec. Les organisateurs de la phase finale - Enfants du Monde- Droits de l'homme (Père Yves Buannic), et Coordination internationale contre l'embargo (Subhi Toma) - en sont les premiers responsables. Ces deux associations n'ont pas respecté l'engagement pris en commun en juin dernier - avec les Amitiés franco-irakiennes et Co-développement avec le Tiers Monde - de ne donner le signal du départ que munies de tous les avais et de tous les documents nécessaires. Je me suis retiré du Comité d'organisation lundi 25 septembre après que le Père Buannic et Subhi Toma eurent annoncé, à la stupeur de la plupart des membres présents à la réunion, qu'ils "avaient bien travaillé pendant le week-end, qu'ils avaient contracté un emprunt bancaire et qu'ils avaient loué un avion français à une compagnie partenaire du groupe Air France." Selon Subhi Toma, le plan de vol et les papiers nécessaires devaient être prêts en deux jours, et il me demandait si je pouvais "faire la soudure" au plan financier, le montant des inscriptions recueilli ne permettant pas de couvrir l'ensemble des frais de location. Subhi Toma ajouta qu'en cas d'interdiction de décollage, il avait averti le Quai d'Orsay qu'il le rendrait responsable de l'échec de l'opération.

Poker menteur

Quelques jours plus tôt, j'avais reçu un message des mêmes personnes m'enjoignant de poursuivre et de finaliser les négociations engagées avec une compagnie aérienne islandaise... Ce lundi là je venais de faxer le dernier document qui manquait, fourni par la Section des intérêts irakiens en France, concernant le gardiennage de l'avion sur l'aéroport Saddam Hussein à Bagdad, la renonciation des Irakiens aux taxes et l'accueil de l'équipage. Le contrat aurait été signé au plus tard mercredi 27 septembre. Aujourd'hui, du fait de la rupture brutale des négocia-

tions en cours pour l'affrètement d'un appareil, dont le départ était prévu le 6 octobre, la société d'aviation islandaise est en droit de réclamer un dédit de 25 000\$(environ 150 000 F). Apprenant au cours de la réunion du 25 septembre que deux membres du Comité d'organisation avaient mené - en parallèle et sans m'en avertir - des négociations avec une autre société d'aviation, je décidai de quitter sur le champ la direction collégiale de l'opération. Depuis juillet dernier, j'ai contacté plusieurs compagnies aériennes françaises et étrangères, et je m'étonnai que le Père Buannic et Subhi Toma aient pu réunir "en un week-end" les moyens financiers pour louer un appareil, et qu'ils puissent effectuer en quelques jours toutes les démarches nécessaires. Je mettais ce "miracle" au compte des relations particulières qu'ils tiennent - disaient-ils - avec le Cabinet de Jean-Claude Gayssot, ministre des Transports. Malheureusement, il n'y a pas eu de "miracle". Les "organisateurs" n'avaient ni avion, ni tous les documents nécessaires au décollage, et se lançaient à bras ouverts dans une partie de poker des plus risquées.

Soupçons

C'est un raccourci intellectuel que de rejeter sur les Américains l'entière responsabilité de l'échec de l'opération. Certes, les Etats-Unis ont fait pression depuis juillet sur le Gouvernement français et sur les compagnies d'aviation pour empêcher le départ de l'appareil vers Bagdad, mais les menaces diverses ont été "battues en brèche" par la fermeté manifestée par le ministère des Affaires Étrangères. Il n'y a pas eu "d'interdiction de décollage", comme l'a prétendu le Père Buannic, car il n'y avait pas d'avion sur le tarmac. Comme les organisateurs du premier vol- passagers français vers l'Irak l'ont prouvé le 22 septembre : il suffit d'avoir de la patience, un avion et les documents réclamés par les autorités, pour se rendre en Irak. Je soupçonne donc le Père Buannic et Subhi Toma d'avoir programmé l'échec théâtral de l'opéra-

tion "Un avion pour l'Irak" : ils s'opposaient à ce que le voyage s'effectuât à une autre date que le 29 septembre - fixée en juin - et ils voulaient profiter de l'audience internationale que leur donnaient la présence des personnalités et des journalistes, français et étrangers, ayant retenu une place dans leur "avion fantôme". L'opération "Un avion pour l'Irak" était devenue une opération de marketing politique servant les intérêts spécifiques de l'organisation humanitaire Enfants du Monde- Droits de l'homme. Ils ont abusé des personnalités et des journalistes, faisant croire que tout était prêt pour le départ. Ils sont donc maintenant dans l'obligation de rembourser les billets pour Bagdad, et les aller-retour des passagers venant de l'Étranger. A moins que ne se sentant pas responsables, ils s'en dispensent...

Conséquences désastreuses

L'échec lamentable de la phase finale de l'opération "Un avion pour l'Irak" a, d'abord, un effet désastreux en Irak, où les dirigeants et la population plaçaient beaucoup d'espoir dans la réussite de l'initiative. Il risque d'avoir en France des conséquences néfastes - à court terme - sur l'organisation d'autres vols- passagers politiques vers l'Irak. Nombre de personnalités et de journalistes qui ont attendu un avion hypothétique à l'aéroport de Roissy- Charles de Gaulle de 9 à 16 heures, y regarderont à deux fois avant de s'engager à nouveau dans une opération du même genre. Cet échec, prévisible pour les "organisateurs", et sans doute programmé, donne - de plus - une piètre image de la France et des organisations françaises qui militent contre l'embargo. En me retirant de la direction de l'opération, je m'étais engagé par communiqué de presse à ne rien faire qui puisse nuire à son succès. C'est ce que j'ai fait. Aujourd'hui, il est nécessaire de dire comment on en est arrivé là, pour que de telles mascarades ne se reproduisent pas. Il revient à tous ceux qui sont favorables à la levée des sanctions imposées à l'Irak, et en ont la possibilité, de réagir rapidement pour organiser ou favoriser d'autres vols français vers l'Irak. L'association des Amitiés franco- irakiennes apportera son concours à toutes les initiatives qui se développeront, pourvu qu'elles soient sérieuses et honnêtes.

G.M
(30 septembre 2000)

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La Turquie fulmine mais doute

par Christophe Diremszian

Des hurlements, des menaces de mort contre Youri Djorkaeff avant le match de football Turquie-France du 15 novembre, mais pas encore de mesures concrètes de rétorsion économique ou diplomatique depuis le vote du 8 novembre : la Turquie perd la main. D'ordinaire, dès qu'un pays se prononce en faveur des Arméniens, il peut dire adieu à ses chances de remporter un appel d'offres international lancé par Ankara et se voit automatiquement transformé en suspect du terrorisme. Cette fois, les dirigeants turcs se sont livrés aux habituelles outrances verbales mais ont résisté à la tentation de sanctionner la France plus sévèrement. Pire, certains intellectuels ont timidement remis en question la ligne officielle et ont appelé à rouvrir le dossier sur la période de 1915.

Au sommet du pouvoir, personne n'est encore prêt à reconnaître le bien-fondé des résolutions sur le génocide. "Initiative erronée et regrettable", a déploré le ministère des Affaires Étrangères après le vote du 8 novembre. "Honte pour le Sénat" a même lancé Bulent Akarcali, le vice-président du Parti de la Mère-Patrie (ANAP), irrité par le refus des sénateurs français de le rencontrer avec sa délégation juste avant les débats, et qui a cru bon de dénoncer "la lâcheté du président de la République Jacques Chirac et du Premier ministre Lionel Jospin". Ceux-ci ont pourtant pris immédiatement leurs distances en affirmant conjointement dans un communiqué - chose rare - que "la France continuera à

œuvrer pour le rapprochement de la Turquie avec l'UE", affirmation de circonstance au moment où la Commission européenne venait de dénoncer le maigre bilan d'Ankara en matière de droits de l'homme, mais qui démontre la solidarité sans faille des dirigeants français à l'égard de leurs homologues de l'autre bout de la Méditerranée. Les voilà en principe rassurés.

Il n'empêche que le vote du 8 novembre a bien eu lieu. Un doute est en train de s'installer dans les esprits turcs et certains éditorialistes s'en sont fait récemment l'écho. Doute d'abord sur l'efficacité du lobbying pratiqué sur les Occidentaux. Riches, puissants car aidés directement par le pouvoir et confortés par leur victoires passées, les groupes d'influence ont toutefois tendance à devenir trop confiants et à se reposer invariablement sur la même stratégie depuis des décennies : sensibiliser les dirigeants de l'Etat susceptible de se ranger aux côtés des Arméniens en espérant qu'ils ramèneront les élus à la raison. Cela a encore bien fonctionné aux Etats-Unis le 19 octobre dernier : quatre coups de fil du président Sezer à Bill Clinton et la résolution Radanovich disparaissait de la Chambre des représentants. La méthode se révèle pourtant de moins en moins sûre car elle se heurte aux enjeux intérieurs d'un pays, à la susceptibilité de parlementaires soucieux de marquer leur indépendance vis-à-vis de l'exécutif et, depuis peu, à l'émergence d'un véritable contre-lobby arménien qui intègre les pratiques de ses

adversaires et bénéficie d'une médiatisation positive grâce à ses succès en France et plus récemment au Parlement européen (voir page 12).

Conséquence : la Turquie, qui n'a jamais préparé de parade à une éventuelle remise en échec de sa politique négationniste, a vu réapparaître contre son gré une amorce de débat sur le génocide. Pour mieux l'étouffer, Ankara finance des lieux d'étude et de grands commis de l'Etat, comme l'ambassadeur à Washington Sukru Elekdağ, proposent de créer des commissions d'experts sur les événements de 1915, avec comme objectif avoué de démonter les explications arméniennes. Mais dans le même temps, certains intellectuels comme le sociologue Taner Akcam, appellent à se pencher honnêtement sur le passé, même s'il est peu glorieux. "Les centres de recherche établis récemment en Turquie fonctionnent comme des réflexes de défense ; ils sont incapables de faire un vrai travail scientifique car ils sont motivés par des repères idéologiques. Le travail des historiens est d'établir qui a fait quoi. L'idéologie officielle n'a pas à s'en mêler". L'impact de ce discours, comme celui de l'éditeur Ragip Zarakoglu, qui appelle depuis longtemps à la reconnaissance du génocide, reste marginal mais ne demande qu'à augmenter. Les Arméniens de la diaspora, en continuant à œuvrer auprès des instances nationales et internationales, peuvent y contribuer. ● C. D.

Journaliste à Radio France Internationale

Si l'Etat doit apposer un jour son tampon
au bas d'un texte de loi,
ce ne sera pas de gaieté de cœur.
Depuis 1984, les responsables politiques
français ont toujours privilégié les intérêts de
la Turquie sur la question arménienne.

La raison du plus fort

par Christophe Diremszian

Le 5 avril 1995, la rédaction de France-Arménie recevait un courrier encourageant pour l'avenir de la cause arménienne en France. Le signataire, Lionel Jospin, engagé dans la course à la présidentielle contre Jacques Chirac, promettait en cas d'élection, de faire adopter "dans les meilleurs délais" une proposition de loi étendant de facto la loi Gayssot de 1990 sur la répression de la négation des génocides à celui des Arméniens. "Je veillerai personnellement à ce qu'elle soit mise en dis-

cussion", ajoutait le Premier secrétaire du PS. Cinq ans plus tard, nous sommes depuis longtemps "hors délais". Lionel Jospin, locataire de l'hôtel Matignon faute d'avoir pu entrer au palais de l'Élysée, porte-drapeau d'une gauche "moderne" convertie à la *realpolitik*, a sacrifié la communauté sur l'autel des intérêts économiques et géostratégiques partagés avec la Turquie. En cela, il n'a fait que poursuivre avec une remarquable constance la politique des

gouvernements qui se sont succédés depuis plus de quinze ans.

L'héritage Mitterrand, sur lequel le Premier ministre actuel estimait avoir un droit d'inventaire, n'a pas été fructifié. Lorsque les socialistes accèdent aux affaires en 1981, ils mettent en avant des hommes dont la solidarité envers les Arméniens va au-delà de la simple compassion d'élus locaux soucieux de mettre de leur côté les voix qu'ils représentent. Les militants "hay" de la première heure n'ont sans

doute pas oublié Jean Poperen, n°2 du PS de 1981 à 1987, lançant en avril 1975 "Vive l'Arménie et Vive la nation arménienne" lors des cérémonies de commémoration à Décines. Ils apprécient lorsque le ministre de la Défense Charles Hernu déclare que la Turquie appartient plus à l'OTAN qu'à l'Europe. Ils jubilent en entendant Gaston Defferre, ministre de

de l'Etat à Ankara pour normaliser les relations avec Paris, déclare que "la France va changer d'attitude face à la question arménienne". C'est aussi l'époque des premières tentatives de rappro-

terre, indépendance de l'Arménie - les Arméniens laissent beaucoup de répit à la France redevenue socialiste et à la Turquie sûre de sa puissance diplomatique. Avec l'affaire Lewis qui éclate en janvier 1993, la vérité sur le génocide est à nouveau l'objet d'un combat mais la bataille est plus inégale que jamais. Deux ans plus tôt, la guerre du Golfe avait confirmé le rôle géostratégique d'Ankara aux yeux des Alliés face à l'Irak. Cette arme essentielle de l'OTAN, réactivée lors du récent conflit au Kosovo, ne doit pas se gripper et la France, dont la politique atlantiste s'est accentuée à partir de 1995 avec l'arrivée de Jacques Chirac au pouvoir, s'y emploie. Autre atout non négligeable des Turcs : ce sont de bons partenaires commerciaux. Les exportations françaises sont passées de 9,1 milliards de francs en 1995 à 18,6 milliards l'an dernier (hors ventes militaires), et la marge de progression est encore grande, la Turquie n'étant que le 15ème client des entreprises hexagonales. Dernier écueil pour les Arméniens : le président Chirac n'a jamais caché sa sympathie personnelle envers la Turquie, à tel point qu'il est l'un des avocats les plus zélés de son entrée dans l'Union européenne. L'acceptation du principe de la candidature turque lors du sommet européen d'Helsinki de décembre 1999 doit beaucoup à son appui.

Du coup, depuis le réveil de la lutte pour la reconnaissance du génocide arménien, les ministres des Affaires Etrangères, de droite comme de gauche, cohabitants ou pas, font un grand usage des termes édulcorants pour éviter le mot qui fâche lors des nombreuses questions au gouvernement : "martyr" (Alain Juppé, avril 1993), "massacres" ou "tragédie" (Hervé de Charrette, juin 1995 et juillet 1996), "événements tragiques" (Hubert Védrine, octobre 1997). Après le vote de l'Assemblée nationale en mai 1998, la tension franco-turque n'a guère duré, signe que la France n'avait pas l'intention de reconsidérer son jugement et de faire du dossier un élément d'appréciation de ses relations bilatérales. Le même scénario s'est produit au lendemain du vote du Sénat du 8 novembre : quelques cris poussés, quelques injonctions à la France, mais aucune marque concrète de représailles. Comme si la Turquie savait parfaitement qu'elle pouvait maintenir sa confiance dans la volonté politique française de faire passer un texte de mémoire par pertes et profits. Sur ce point, on attend encore un démenti. ● C.D.



Le ministre des Affaires étrangères turc Ismail Cem en compagnie du président Jacques Chirac

l'Intérieur, répéter en avril 1982 à l'Assemblée nationale ce que son collègue des Relations Extérieures Claude Cheysson avait déjà affirmé l'été précédent à la même tribune : "Les Arméniens vivant dans l'Empire ottoman ont été victimes d'un génocide". Le maire de Vienne et président de l'Assemblée, Louis Mermaz, poussera même un peu plus loin en affirmant que le génocide de 1915 est l'oeuvre du "pouvoir central turc". Poperen, Defferre, Hernu, Mermaz et même Joseph Franceschi, secrétaire d'Etat et maire d'Alfortville, deviennent alors les bêtes noires du régime militaire d'Ankara. Même l'Elysée opte pour la franchise en considérant "le drame de 1915 pour ce qu'il est, c'est-à-dire un génocide". C'est un conseiller technique du Président qui l'écrit dans un courrier de septembre 1983 adressé au Collectif des femmes arméniennes de Marseille. Il s'appelle Hubert Védrine.

La France est aux côtés des Arméniens ? Plus pour longtemps. En 1984, la Turquie retrouve un semblant de démocratie et ouvre ses marchés. Le gouvernement, en pleine rigueur économique et aux prises avec un énorme trou dans son commerce extérieur, ne veut pas rater l'occasion. François Mitterrand a beau déclarer le 7 janvier devant la communauté de Vienne qu'"il n'est pas possible d'effacer la trace du génocide qui vous a frappés", l'ancien ambassadeur Etienne Manac'h, envoyé six mois plus tard par le chef

cielles. Dès avril 1987, sous la première cohabitation, le chef de la diplomatie, Jean-Bernard Raimond, ne parle plus que de "tragédie" pour qualifier 1915. Investis alors dans d'autres

combats - Tribunal permanent des Peuples (1984), sous-commission de l'ONU chargée de la protection des minorités (1985), Parlement européen (1987) - les représentants communautaires baissent un peu la garde en France. Seules quelques prises de position individuelles, comme celles de Patrick Devedjian ou de Michel Noir au printemps 1987 permettent aux Arméniens d'avoir encore parfois droit de cité dans les médias. Avant une longue traversée du désert.

Un combat inégal

La période 1988-1993 est en effet très noire. Démobilisation après les victoires dans les instances internationales, orientation vers d'autres priorités - Karabagh, tremblement de



LA TURQUIE AUX PORTES DE L'EUROPE

Contribuons à imposer les droits de l'homme

23 septembre 2000, vers 18 h 30 : onze hommes sont arrêtés par la gendarmerie, alors qu'ils rentraient chez eux, dans le sud-est de la Turquie. Ils venaient d'assister à une réunion de leur parti, le HADEP. Ils sont actuellement détenus au quartier général de la gendarmerie de Sirnak, et il est à craindre qu'ils ne soient victimes de torture ou d'autres formes de mauvais traitements...

En Turquie, les partis politiques kurdes légaux sont harcelés quotidiennement par les autorités, leurs sympathisants et leurs membres ont été victimes de torture, de « disparitions », voire d'homicides. Le HADEP, en particulier, est considéré dans certains milieux comme « l'aile politique » du PKK, bien qu'il soit opposé à l'usage de la violence à des fins politiques. Ce parti est menacé d'interdiction. Rappelons que, en février 2000, trois maires du HADEP à la tête de municipalités situées



Intervention de la police lors d'une manifestation des proches de prisonniers à la suite d'une grève de la faim dans les prisons turques

Par cette campagne, nous demandons :

- Aux députés français d'appuyer la création d'un groupe parlementaire sur les Kurdes, point majeur pour l'amélioration des droits de l'homme en Turquie ;
- Au gouvernement français d'exiger le respect du volet « Droits de l'homme » des critères de Copenhague dans le processus d'adhésion de la Turquie ;

dans le sud-est de la Turquie, dont le maire de Diyarbakir, ont été détenus durant neuf jours. Selon nos informations, ils ont été soumis à la torture et sont jugés actuellement pour complicité avec le PKK.

Pour une Union européenne exigeante

La question du respect des droits de l'homme se pose aussi à des degrés divers dans de nombreux autres pays, notamment ceux de la zone euro-méditerranéenne (Algérie, Israël, Maroc, Tunisie...). De la fermeté de l'Union européenne sur la question des droits de l'homme

Torture, atteintes à la liberté de la presse et d'expression, maintien de la peine de mort, non respect des décisions de la Cour européenne de justice, voilà la Turquie que l'Union européenne envisage de faire entrer dans son sein

dépendront les conditions d'adhésion ou d'association d'autres pays du sud de la Méditerranée. C'est pourquoi, à l'occasion de la présidence française de l'Union européenne et du sommet Barcelone IV qui se tiendra en novembre 2000 à Marseille, AGIR ICI et les partenaires suivants : ACAT, Amnesty international, CIMADE, CRADHOM (Centre de recherche et d'action pour les droits de l'homme en Méditerranée), France libertés et Mouvement de la paix, ont décidé de lancer une campagne dont l'objectif est de contribuer à améliorer le respect des droits de l'homme dans la zone euro-méditerranéenne et en particulier en Turquie.

Cette campagne, menée de mi-novembre 2000 à fin février 2001, s'adresse au Premier ministre, aux députés français et au commissaire européen chargé de l'élargissement de l'Union européenne. ●

MARCELLE ADDÈS

SOURCES : AI, COLLECTIF EUROMED-TURQUIE.



- Au gouvernement français de respecter le Code de conduite de l'Union européenne sur les exportations d'armements, en renonçant à exporter du matériel militaire vers la Turquie tant que la situation des droits de l'homme dans ce pays n'aura pas été améliorée ;
- À l'Union européenne de mettre en place un mécanisme d'évaluation et de contrôle du respect des droits de l'homme dans les pays engagés dans un processus d'adhésion à l'Union européenne.

TURQUIE

BONNES NOUVELLES DE TURQUIE. Le président turc, M. Ahmet Nejdettin Sezer, s'oppose aux purges idéologiques dans l'administration (fin août 2000).

Fin septembre, M. Sezer a de nouveau opposé son veto contre un décret gouvernemental prévoyant la privatisation des banques d'État. Motif de sa décision : le Parlement a droit de regard.

Par ailleurs, le président de la cour de Cassation turque a inauguré l'année judiciaire en parlant longuement des problèmes des droits de l'homme, de la démocratie, de l'État de droit, des droits des citoyens face à l'État, de l'indépendance de la justice...

Il considère que la Constitution turque actuelle, imposée en 1982 par les militaires, est plus « un règlement de police » qu'un texte de droits fondamentaux. Il considère que la pratique de la torture, répandue et routinière, est une « honte nationale »... La loi sur le jugement des fonctionnaires qui, dans les faits, organise leur impunité, doit être abolie.

« Dans un monde où tout est remédiable, réparable, la peine de mort [...] est une ignominie, il faut l'abolir [...] ».

Nous devons réformer nos institutions pour nous conformer aux critères de Copenhague. [...] C'est la Turquie qui doit changer de A à Z en se restructurant. »

SOURCES : « POINT SUR LA SITUATION EN TURQUIE », DU COMITÉ INTERNATIONAL POUR LA LIBÉRATION DES DÉPUTÉS KURDES.

West's overtures to Saddam alarm Kurds

Daily Telegraph 30 Nov 2000

By Amberin Zaman in Sina Village, northern Iraq

The precarious peace that has brought the good life to many Kurdish refugees is coming under threat due to recent violations of United Nations sanctions against Iraq.

With the growing number of non-authorised flights to the Iraqi capital, the perception among the Kurds is that it will not be long before sanctions against Baghdad are lifted. That would leave the Kurds in a precarious position. Kurdish independence remains as elusive as ever.

British and American fighter jets which have been patrolling the no-fly zone over northern Iraq since its 2.5 million Kurds were defeated by Baghdad when they rebelled at the end of the Gulf war.

As three consecutive booms shake the earth, sending scores of shrieking children into the school courtyard, three horseshoe-shaped puffs of smoke scar the deep blue Kurdish sky.

However, the anti-aircraft missiles being fired by Saddam Hussein's forces plummet to the ground without hitting their targets. Murat Jindi is a teacher in the village 10 miles outside Dohuk, in Kurdish-controlled northern Iraq. He said: "Saddam is firing again and no one seems to be ready to stop him."

With sanctions being broken on a near-daily basis in recent months, the Kurds are feeling at their most vulnerable since their mass exodus in April 1991 to the Iranian and Turkish borders to flee the wrath of Saddam's Republican Guards. Nechirvan Barzani, prime minister of the Kurdish regional government, said: "We are deeply concerned about the way things are going." The regional government is led by the Kurdistan Democratic Party and controls the northern two thirds of the Kurdish enclave.

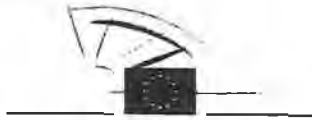
The last time the Iraqi Kurds received security guarantees from the Americans was during a meeting last June in Washington with Sandy Berger, the National Security Adviser in the Clinton administration. Just a 15-minute drive away, a battalion of Iraqi tanks deployed in the village of Qustapa is poised to strike at any moment. Mr Barzani said: "What can we do against tanks and helicopters? We only have guns."

Encouraged by neighbouring Turkey and Iran, the two main Iraqi Kurdish factions, Massoud Barzani's KDP and Jalal Talabani's Patriotic Union of Kurdistan have been locked in a bloody power struggle since 1994.

International sympathy for the Kurds waned further after Mr Barzani invited Iraqi troops in August 1996 to help him to seize control of Erbil, the main Kurdish city. The brief invasion led to the collapse of a CIA-backed Iraqi opposition movement and led to the permanent removal of US and British officers from the enclave and to its partitioning into the KDP-controlled north and PUK-controlled south. International support for a deal with Baghdad which would allow the Kurds to set up a federal government is facing stiff resistance, not only from Saddam but from Turkey, which fears that it would encourage its own 12 million Kurds to make similar demands.

In an effort to dilute Kurd claims to the region, the Ankara government has stepped up support for Iraq's estimated 1.5 million Turcomen minority and is arming and training a 500-man Turcomen force based in Erbil. It is also putting the final touches to a new border post with Iraq, which would bypass the Kurdish-controlled region, depriving the Kurds of income and boosting trade with Baghdad.

Yet life has never been so good for the Kurds, thanks to billions of dollars earned from taxes levied on a thriving illicit fuel and luxury goods trade with Iran, Iraq and Turkey. With an additional 850 million Pounds earmarked for the Kurds under the UN's oil-for-food programme for Iraq, the standard of living in the north is visibly higher.



AFFAIRES ETRANGERES

Turquie : des progrès sur la voie de la démocratisation restent à accomplir

Philippe MORILLON (PPE-DE, F)

Sur le rapport régulier 1999 de la Commission sur les progrès réalisés par la Turquie sur la voie de l'adhésion

Procédure : rapport d'initiative

Doc.: A5-0297/2000

Débat : 14.11.2000

Le rapport de M. Philippe MORILLON sur la demande d'adhésion de la Turquie, adopté à une très large majorité par la commission des affaires étrangères estime que la Turquie ne remplit pas actuellement tous les critères politiques de Copenhague et réitère sa proposition de mise en place de forums de discussions réunissant des personnalités politiques de l'Union européenne et de la Turquie mais aussi des représentants de la société civile. Il se réjouit toutefois de la reprise du dialogue politique au sein du conseil d'association et salue la création de huit sous-comités chargés de définir les priorités dans l'intégration de l'acquis communautaire.

Le rapport encourage le gouvernement turc à intensifier ses efforts de démocratisation, notamment en matière de séparation de pouvoirs (surtout en ce qui concerne l'impact de l'armée dans la vie politique) et à mettre en oeuvre les conventions des Nations-Unies relatives aux droits politiques, sociaux et culturels signés récemment. Si l'adoption par le Conseil des Ministres turc du rapport élaboré par le haut-conseil de coordination turque des droits de l'homme comme

« document de référence de travail » est salué, la commission des affaires étrangères demande que des mesures concrètes en faveur de la protection des droits des minorités y soient ajoutées. De même, le rapport salue l'adoption de la loi portant ajournement des

poursuites et des peines pour des délits de presse et de radiodiffusion. Dans l'attente d'une réforme rendant le code pénal compatible avec le principe de la liberté d'expression, il demande une amnistie pour les délits de presse. De même, le moratoire sur la peine de mort doit être maintenu dans l'attente d'une abolition rapide.

La commission des affaires étrangères rappelle son attachement à la reconnaissance des droits élémentaires des identités qui compose la mosaïque turque et, rappelant le passé tragique de la minorité arménienne, demande un soutien du gouvernement et de l'Assemblée nationale à cette dernière. Une solution pacifique, respectant l'intégrité territoriale de la Turquie et s'assortissant des indispensables réformes politique, économique et sociale, doit être apportée au conflit kurde.

Le gouvernement turc doit participer, sans condition préalable, aux pourparlers entre les communautés chypriotes, grecques et turques afin de parvenir à un règlement négocié, global, juste et durable qui soit conforme aux résolutions du Conseil de Sécurité et aux recommandations de l'Assemblée générale des Nations-Unies. Il lui est demandé de retirer ses troupes d'occupation de la partie nord de Chypre.

Enfin, le rapport demande de poursuivre les efforts visant à intensifier la mise en oeuvre de la stratégie de préadhésion et invite le Conseil et la Commission à réexaminer le volume de l'aide financière apportée par la Communauté à la Turquie. La volonté de la Turquie de contribuer à l'amélioration des capacités européennes dans le cadre de la politique européenne de défense et de sécurité est saluée.

