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# ISOLATION

International Platform Against Isolation

Special Issue 1

April 2003

4 euro

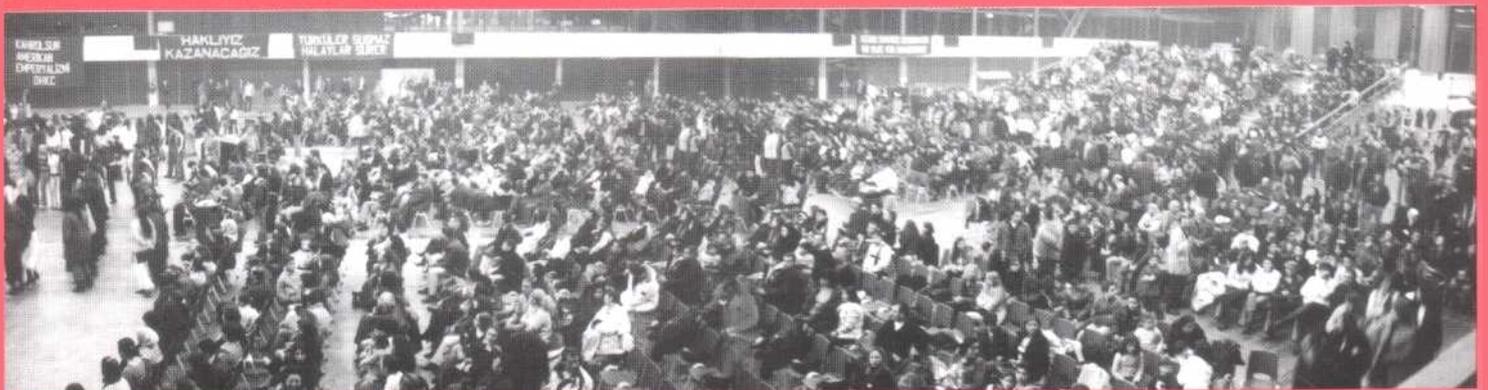
**Isolation: From Nazi Camps to F-Types, From F-Types to Guantanamo  
a onacceptable form of torture and destruction against human**

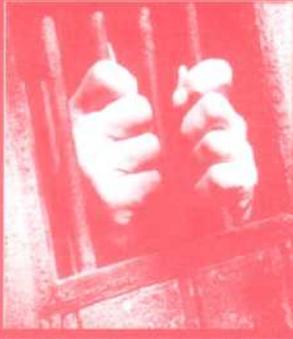


Isolation Practices  
cannot  
be accepted on  
humane,  
medical,  
legal  
and political  
grounds

Isolation is torture  
we are against torture

isolation prisons  
Turkey: F-Type  
USA: Control Units  
Spain: FIES  
France: QHS





This brochure was published by the  
**INTERNATIONAL PLATFORM  
AGAINST ISOLATION**

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Against Isolation**

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# FOREWORD

## ISOLATION

Wherever in the world a struggle is waged, whether against difficulties created by human beings or against problems caused by nature, there also has to be a struggle against the violence and exploitation of the rulers. Today the world is dominated by forces which defend and practise tyranny and exploitation.

For those who engage in struggle for justice against tyranny and exploitation, the price is a heavy one from this point of view. One side of this price consists of torture, repression, massacres, the other aspect is imprisonment. Obtaining justice and freedom means facing up to such a cost. In the world and in neo-colonial countries nowadays, human beings who are part of the struggle for justice face torture, in the streets or in their homes they can be executed extra-judicially, they may disappear while in detention, and all their rights to organise or have beliefs are taken away from them. All this repression and terror has one aim: to destroy thoughts which are oppositional and dangerous. And thus to continue the system of repression and exploitation indefinitely.

The operations of the ruling class to choke the struggles for rights and freedoms and to destroy revolutionary beliefs are not limited to the destruction of beliefs. Because in these countries, as long as rights and freedoms are violated and the peoples are left without bread and justice, the struggle and thoughts of rebellion will continue to live on.

And on precisely this point, destroying revolutionary beliefs is simply and solely to deprive the people's forces in the struggle for bread and justice of their rights and freedoms, and this is connected to a far-reaching terror aimed at silencing them, leaving them disorganised and making them give up resistance.

State terrorism is practised in order to bar the way to resistance and to make people give up resistance and so terrorism against the people is made more widespread.

Today, there are billions of people in the world who have had their rights and freedoms taken from them. Intimidating these billions is connected to the ruling class desire to create conditions for a world without opposition or resistance.

At the point where torture, massacres, disappearances in detention, disinformation, repression and bans do not constitute a solution, the prisons and imprisonment are deployed by the state as a part of its terrorism.

And to make the threat of this more intimidating, since time immemorial prisons have been the scene of repression and arbitrariness. These policies are supported with every kind of illegality together with inhumane conditions. Prison conditions are made continually more difficult on the subject of rights to visits, using the exercise area, social relations

and activities, and prison conditions are used as a means of bringing the masses to a state in which they give up being rebellious. Methods of repression have been developed in the prisons with the aim, on a continuous basis, of strengthening the effect of imprisonment as a means of getting people to renounce their beliefs.

This has been the case in every period of history, for the dungeons of the Middle Ages had the same purpose, and so did the Nazi concentration camps.

The Nazi concentration camps have an important place in shedding light on practices in our own day. The most important role of these camps was to destroy any beliefs that might be capable of resisting. Destroying beliefs that might encourage resistance in these camps was designed to bring about an atmosphere of total surrender, and the masses were

also to be brought to the same condition through making them feel fear in very fibre of their being. The ruling classes try to bring about their own objectives by making this fear as dominant as possible. They have admitted that from the point of view of this feeling's significance, „General Fear” is one of the most biggest aids.

The methods developed in the Nazi concentration camps were designed to make the people in them surrender. The habit of surrender made greater destruction and

savagery possible behind barbed wire. Inside the perimeters of the Nazi camps, millions of people were destroyed, together with the beliefs they held. But in one of these camps, Buchenwald, resistance was conducted, hope was not destroyed and this shows the road of hope for our own day. Buchenwald camp was an exception because there was organised resistance. The only antidote to repression and terror is resistance.

## ISOLATION IS AN AGGRAVATION OF IMPRISONMENT

After the Second World War, more skilful use was made of imprisonment as a punishment. Vietnam's Tiger Cages, the H-Blocks in British-occupied Ireland, the prisons of France and Spain, the white cells in Italy, Stammheim in Germany the Control Units in America, the special type E and F prisons in Turkey are all examples of more planned attempts to destroy opposition thoughts.

Everyone has seen and experienced the white torture practised in Korilados in Greece, in Germany and Italy, and the repression designed to cause the struggle outside the prisons to give in. Despite the resistance of individual prisoners connected to individual solidarity and the dynamic of resistance, the isolation torture in these prisons can play an



Turkey, 2000: Protest to support the death fast against the F-type prisons

obvious role in dissuading people from organising against the system. Today, especially in Germany and Italy, isolation torture has achieved some quite concrete results. These are the results that the ruling classes want to create.

### THE STRUGGLE AGAINST ISOLATION

Today, to struggle against isolation means to struggle for democratic rights and freedoms and for justice. It is a struggle against the ruling class's arbitrary and tyrannical confiscation of democratic rights.

The struggle against isolation is a natural expression of the human feeling for freedom and passion for resistance. Human beings are opposed to evil, tyranny and injustice.

Isolation is a form of aggravated punishment, stretched out over years. It does not just do moral damage to human beings, but does them physical damage.

The first aim of isolation; to destroy an opposition political identity.

The second aim is to wear down the social feelings natural to human beings, and through the torture of depersonalisation to make the target into a subservient slave.

And if they succeed in doing that, the final aim is to erase all feelings and drive the target insane.

The struggle against torture has a psychological and physical meaning, the defence of the human body against torture and destruction.

As social beings, humans need communication, relations and social production. Isolation is a practice aimed at aggravating punishment by curtailing the most basic needs that make human beings what they are. The struggle against isolation is a struggle against these arbitrary practices.

### THE STRUGGLE AGAINST ISOLATION IS A DUTY NOT ONLY OF PRISONERS BUT OF EVERYONE WHO CLAIMS TO BE HUMAN

Because the practice of isolation is not simply a means of intimidating prisoners, but is a means of making the people surrender; the struggle against this policy of depersonalisation and destroying identity is a duty that is essential for those „outside" who have not yet been imprisoned.

Those aspects of ourselves which have not been imprisoned; these are the political identity and social values in our personalities, the struggle against tyranny and evil. These are what conducts the struggle for rights and freedoms and against tyranny and oppression. The way to protect these aspects is to struggle against isolation practices without waiting to become a „prisoner" oneself. The resistance in Buchenwald, in the EU and American prisons and in Turkey's F-Type prisons have developed resistance and created a tradition of resistance that is connected. And this tradition of resistance can develop the



London, 1981: Protest to support the hungerstrike against the H-Blocks

existence of beliefs and organisation and parallel support „outside" prison.

Today, on a world scale, the struggle against isolation is continued at the most intense level in the isolation prisons of Turkey, which are called F-Type prisons. Up to the present, 104 people have lost their lives in the resistance begun by revolutionary prisoners in Turkey's prisons on October 20, 2000 to oppose isolation. Of these, 28 were shot or burned to death when on December 19, 2000, the state launched a simultaneous attack on 20 prisons and carried out a massacre. At present, the number of lives lost is divided almost half and half between those on the Death Fast resistance inside the prisons and those of people outside prison who lost their lives in solidarity actions and the Death Fast. It would not have been possible for this resistance, now in its third year, to continue without the support and solidarity shown outside prison.

Because our people had a conception of resistance to F-Type prisons while outside prison, that is, which started when they have not yet been arrested, today they can resist and we can resist even when held in isolation conditions.

The resistance to F-Type prisons is not merely in Turkey, the struggle to resist isolation all over the world is continuing.

### ISOLATION IS PARTICULARLY DIRECTED AGAINST POLITICAL PRISONERS

Since isolation practices essentially target opposition beliefs, it would not be wrong to say that they target political prisoners in particular. The aim is quite clear, the targets of isolation are people who have been imprisoned because of political beliefs and actions. In Spain, Britain, Italy, the examples are obvious. And in Turkey the F-Type prisons have only been used against people charged under the law against terrorism, that is, political prisoners.

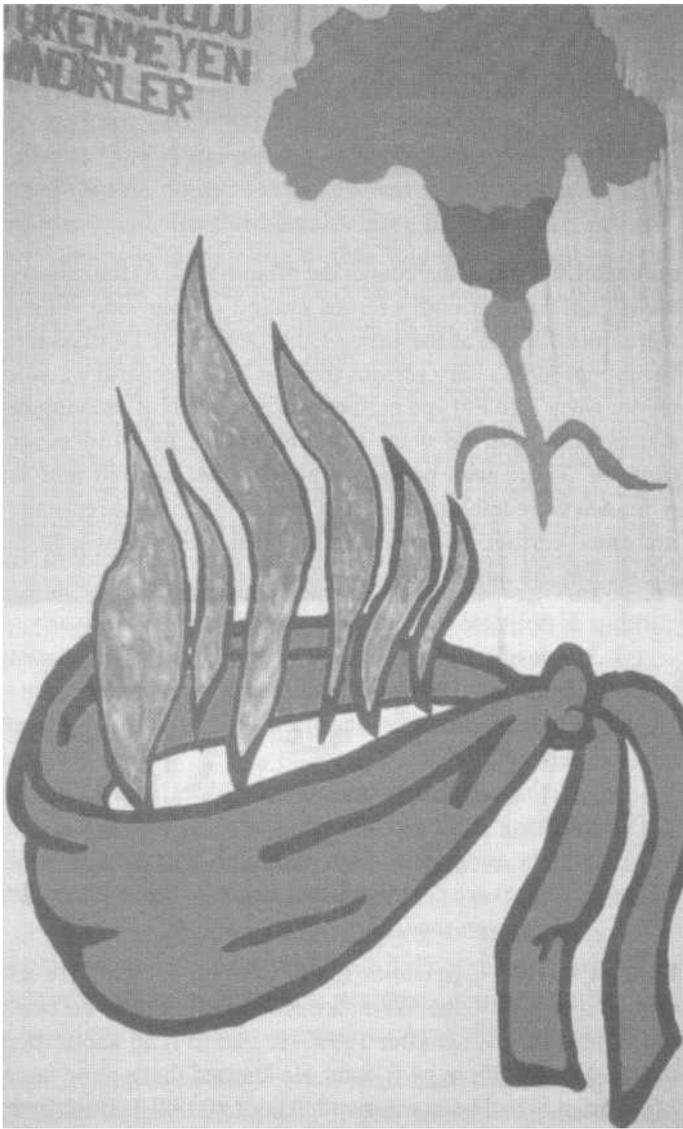
In places where there are no political prisoners or very few, for example America, isolation conditions are also inflicted on ordinary prisoners. But isolation practices are political even when they are directed against non-political prisoners. Because prisoners jailed for non-political reasons can also oppose the system, they are targets of these prison practices.

### THE „SUCCESS' OF THE PRISONS

We said that prisons as a whole are one of the methods used to break resistance. Those who struggle for rights and freedoms and for a human way of life pass **through these** prisons. For the system prisons are places aimed at rehabilitation<sup>g</sup> resistance. For those who struggle against the system they are also places that are not beyond the bounds of possibility. There is a price for continuin<sup>g</sup> resistance and it is necessary to look places like these in the eye.

In the prison resistance, resisters come face to **face**

with the enemy and the place of the confrontation **with the**



enemy must be taken into account, from the point of view of resistance there is a disadvantage. The ruling classes try to create a fear of prison in the minds of the masses, with the aim of creating an obstacle to resistance. To achieve this aim and bring about surrender, they try to establish a prison cell in the mind of every prisoner. So when we know this and are able to dismantle the prison cells they try to establish in our minds, the effects of prisons and isolation will also be broken. In this way too, more will resist who have not been imprisoned and those who have been imprisoned can continue to resist. The destruction they seek to create in peoples' minds by means of prison and isolation can be broken in this way. The proof of this is the examples that have been experienced up to now. We say that To Resist Is To Live, and we must resist in order to live with honour.

We need to learn to be able to resist before being imprisoned and before being thrown into isolation cells.

For this, we say that the prison resistance is not simply for prisoners but is a duty for everyone struggling for rights and freedoms.

However, if we look at it in this way we can understand better the need to struggle against isolation and the need to pay the price that has been paid in the struggle.

The prisoners who are struggling against isolation are at the same time struggling for us. At the same time, to support their struggle is to struggle also for the future of those who are „on the outside”. Those of us who are imprisoned were

caught in the struggle for justice. The prisoners resist because they know why they were put in prison. That is, they are resisting because they know they are a part of the same struggle. They can resist but they can feel the scale of it. The only way to be able to give the feeling is to be in solidarity with and support them.

A cause has no chance of success if it does not support its own prisoners.

**LET US SUPPORT THE PRISONERS, LET US GLOBALISE THE STRUGGLE AGAINST ISOLATION**  
Up to the present, we have been through a great many acts of resistance to isolation. A great price has been paid and is continuing to be paid. If the isolation practices created and developed in the USA and Europe have also achieved a certain success, from our point of view the example we will set is the example of resistance we are creating.

Efforts are being made to spread the isolation conditions of the USA and Europe throughout the world. Russia, like Turkey, is following the example of isolation practices.

Billions of people in the world are part of the fight for bread and justice. Instead of meeting these demands from billions of people, attempts are being made to destroy the resistance that expresses these demands, to prevent the fight for bread and justice by exporting isolation imprisonment throughout the world.

We want to oppose the internationalisation of isolation practices, by internationalising the struggle against isolation. So we held an International Platform of Struggle Against Isolation symposium on December 19-21, 2002.

On December 21 we announced the holding of the Symposium at a concert attended by about three thousand people in Rotterdam, Holland.

We announced that the Platform's first decision was that December 19-22 would be International Days of Struggle Against Isolation.

With this brochure we seek to announce the subjects dealt with at our Symposium to the world, involving the human, legal, medical and political aspects of isolation.

We call on all political organisations and bodies, all institutions and foundations on the side of human rights to mark every December 19-21 as International Days of Struggle Against Isolation and to carry out solidarity actions within the framework of their possibilities.

We do not expect only the days December 19-22 but all the days of the year to be days of solidarity and support. Concrete signs of this range from participating in local actions to writing letters to individual prisoners to show we are on their side.

Let us not forget that the aim of isolation is to cut off prisoners from the outside world and all relations. Our support for them and writing to them at the same time also serves to break up their isolation to a small extent.

**ISOLATION IS TORTURE, LET US STRUGGLE AGAINST TORTURE**

**LONG LIVE DECEMBER 19-21, THE DAYS OF STRUGGLE AGAINST ISOLATION TORTURE**

**LONG LIVE THE INTERNATIONAL STRUGGLE AGAINST ISOLATION**

# International Symposium against Isolation

## December 19-20, 2002

### Notes of proceedings at the Noordwijk Symposium

#### *The dimensions of human isolation*

**Ahmet Kulaksiz** from TAYAD, the association of prisoners' families in Turkey, spoke. Both of his daughters, Canan and Zehra, died in 2001, taking part in the Death Fast opposing the F-Type isolation prisons in Turkey.

We are resisting, he noted, we are sure our children will resist. What they gain will also be a gain for the world - their example and the lessons to be drawn from their struggle have an international dimension. The process whereby traditions of resistance are maintained is a very important one and will be discussed later;

**Ex-Prisoner - Serdar, (DHKP-C)** and Death Fast gazi (term used for wounded war veterans) spoke. He said there was not enough sensitivity. This was the source of deficiencies in the anti-imperialist, anti-capitalist struggles. The struggle against prison isolation is a struggle against imperialism. Isolation is about destroying human beings so it is primarily a human question. Imperialism and capitalism are responsible for isolation. The war against Iraq is a serious problem. The Front must be large. The basis of current events was laid down in 1991. Via NATO, the USA got the TMY (Law on Fighting Terror) introduced, based on getting terror suspects to either change their beliefs or die. It has been engaged in this project for years because for imperialism to achieve its aims in the Middle and Far East, it has to first destroy the revolutionaries. The aim of the 1980 junta in Turkey was to destroy the revolutionary struggle. But this was not achieved in 1991, on the contrary, the struggle in Turkey and the Middle East increased in those years. But imperialism drew strength from the destruction of the Soviet Union and was able to alleviate its own crisis by moving into virgin territory. So since the 1980 junta, the policy has been one of trying to make opponents surrender. But we also know our own strength. For this reason we responded in a serious manner. In the period up to 1990 we experienced many bitter things and encountered both tyranny and cunning manoeuvres. The Republic of Turkey's authorities were not very skillful. So, since 1991, imperialism has intervened in the prisons and told Turkey's authorities that „you will do as I say”.

Inside the prisons we resisted stubbornly and outside we also stepped up our war during the 1990s. This resistance led to us being put on the USA's terrorism list and a new period evolved in the prisons. Our presence on the USA's terrorism list is not new but dates back to the start of the 1990s. The resistance in the prisons during the period 1991-2000 is a process whose dimensions the world should examine more closely.

On December 19, 2000 I was a prisoner in Umraniye where I had been for seven years. I confronted a policy that was highly tyrannical. This is why I want to explain a reality, which is that we could not make others completely understand the

universal and moral aspects of the prison cells. At the moment we do not have friendly forces ranged on our side. Things were no different at the time of the December 19 massacre. We prepared in a very serious manner but in general we were on our own. The F-Type prisons were opened by carrying out a massacre and we were thrown into them amid severe tortures. There was nobody who was not injured and the wounded were left untreated, but despite all that the resistance increased further. Isolation started. It has three aims. In the short term the aim is;

- 1- A political target has to be destroyed politically. A type of person has to be created who is completely deprived of political beliefs, is unable to question, is unconditionally obedient, is defeated and has surrendered.
- 2- In the medium term, human values like solidarity, sharing and other feelings are to be destroyed.
- 3- In the long term, once political beliefs and human feelings are destroyed, they are to be made like robots and driven mad.

**Former DHKP-C prisoner Erdal** gave his account. He said that as a result of the Wernicke-Korsakoff illness he could not remember events after 1999. He had to read about them or be told about them by friends. He learned that a good many of his friends had been martyred. About 10,000 Turkish army soldiers and police attacked 20 prisons in December 2000 in an attempt to end the Death Fast protests against prison isolation. Twenty-eight prisoners were martyred. Some of them carried out sacrifice actions when the state attacked the prisons. Six women prisoners in Bayrampasa Prison were burned to death in an attack by the state which used chemical substances. The prisoners were thrown into the F-Type prisons and the state said it was „finished”. But it was not over. The F-Type prisons were created based on experience elsewhere, notably with prisons in Germany and the experiments carried out on RAF prisoners. People were put in cells for one to three persons. Prisoners were isolated from each other and often had no news of the outside world for months. Sometimes strange noises would be created and these would go on for a long time, as a form of harassment. In fact everything about the F-Type prisons was turned into a form of torture, and any excuse would be sought to attack prisoners. But prisoners knew how to give a correct response to these attacks and the protests against the F-Type prisons were not ended as the authorities had hoped.

**Jon, a former ETA prisoner**, described his experiences of 21 years' imprisonment. He said that isolation was a special method of repression directed at prisoners. He described the political context of his own experiences. These arose from the political conflict between the government of the Spanish State and the Basque people. About 100.000 people have been put in prison or punished at some time there. Isolation starts at the police station with the aim of instilling fear. There is

absolute isolation, a lawyer is not permitted to be present, and this is regarded as legal.

Three different levels of imprisonment occur. The first level is an isolation cell or at most a two-person cell. This is quite similar to the F-Type prisons in Turkey. The second level is typical for non-political prisoners and involves three or four people in a cell. The third level is more flexible and is mainly for prisoners who are close to finishing their sentences. The first level is the one Basque prisoners are typically kept under. He described the general situation in the Basque Country. Three million people live there and there are about 650 political prisoners. A prisoners' support organisation was set up. The government of the Spanish State does its best to break up the community of Basque prisoners. At the end of the 1970s the government sent Basque prisoners as far from the Basque Country as possible. Herrera de la Mancha was a prison they were sent to which was similar to an F-Type prison. A similar situation to the one experienced by prisoners in Turkey. It copied the system from Germany. The system was totally militarised. They wanted to isolate the prisoners and make this known but solidarity with the prisoners grew in response. The prisoners' collective organised the people to fight against the military regime. The Guardia Civil (gendarmery) was present in the jails all the time, an abnormal situation. Thousands of people demonstrated far from the prisons to show solidarity with the prisoners. The government's plans did not succeed. So it sought other methods, basically seeking to destroy the prisoners. There were talks between the government and prisoners but these did not yield any results. There were more than 100 car accidents among families on the way to visit relatives in prisons a long distance away.

A representative of Denmark's **International Forum** said that his institution worked with the left from all over the world.

A representative of the **PFLP** spoke about the situation of the Palestinian people, who were in effect 500,000 or so prisoners in their own country. Since April, Nablus in the West Bank has been under military occupation by the Israelis, people cannot enter or leave. According to human rights associations, there are about 10,000 Palestinian political prisoners, of whom about 520 are affiliated to the PFLP. Of these, five are in the PFLP's leadership. The Israeli government is the only one in the world whose laws legalise torture by its forces, although of course many other governments practise torture. Someone held by Israel's forces can be detained without trial for six months, and it can be renewed at the end of six months. Some PFLP comrades have been held for 10 years in this way.

In April the Israeli government passed a law allowing a prisoner to go for 18 days without seeing anyone (a lawyer, family members). Families only have a right to see a prisoner once every six months. They can even lose this right if curfews or security alerts prevent them from travelling. Palestinians are in jail whether they are in a prison or not. Political prisoners have engaged in hunger strikes and there are six groups set up to organise solidarity with the prisoners. One of these, Addameer, is close to the PFLP.

Wolfgang from **Angehörigen-Info** commented on the use of isolation imprisonment in Germany and its influence over events in Turkey. He noted that in 1975, NATO had abolished joint dormitory-type cells, while in 1990 an official delegation from Turkey visited Stuttgart's Stammheim Prison, where in

1977 three RAF (Red Army Faction) prisoners were killed. In the mid-1970s there were attempts to portray revolutionaries as being „insane”, for example Ulrike Meinhoff. He described the role of the Eppendorf clinic in such torture, and the way nine prisoners were killed there. RAF and Second of June Movement members were targeted in that way. Prisoners were kept in isolation cells for six to eight years. Then they were isolated in small groups. „Special treatment” and censorship were also torture methods used. Sensory deprivation was used in the *Toter Trakt* in Ossendorf. After the RAF kidnapped Schleyer in 1977, RAF prisoners were completely cut off from the outside world. No newspapers, contact with lawyers or information about the outside world were permitted. The aim of this was first to get the prisoners to incriminate themselves through statements, then to get them to give up the struggle and finally to destroy them completely. Prisoners fought back with 10 collective hunger strikes and conditions were partly improved. Torture itself has not ended and there are still five prisoners being held.

Representatives from **Morocco** said that they greeted the friends from Turkey who were resisting their government. We have a similar situation in Morocco, they said. Opponents of the monarchical regime are put in isolation prisons. This has happened to sections of the military who oppose the monarchy. In the 1970s, the Marxist-Leninist Al-Amam („Forward”) movement developed. Moroccans were not free and political murders and other forms of repression increased. Repression of Al-Amam was physical and psychological. People were deported to distant prisons and as usual the prison system was designed to break peoples' personalities. Many people were martyred and some died in hunger strikes. There was a major trial in 1977, and many people were sentenced to 24 years' imprisonment for membership in Al-Amam. People were also subjected to repression outside of prison. Youth and human rights organisations were attacked. Members of Al-Amam could not work in the public or private sector and leave the country. Many disappeared in custody or were the target of political murders. There was a secret prison in Morocco where many prisoners were killed extra-judicially.

Currently human rights organisations exist \*hick seek to Have those government staff who killed people in the 1970s punished.

At the symposium, representatives from Morocco said that they supported the right of the Sahara people (the Polisario movement) to self-determination. The Sahara area was invaded by Morocco in the 1970s.

Other speakers described human rights violations elsewhere. In Iran, prison torture was practised in accordance with Islam, so it was not seen as torture by those who practised it. Because in Islam, all women who are virgins go to heaven, it is the practice to rape virgins before they are executed.

A speaker from the **Organisation of Progressive Arab Youth (UJPA)** described the situation in Syria, where there are about 250 political prisoners and torture in prisons, including rape, is widespread.

A speaker from **Laboratorio Marxista** noted that while there were frequently protests and demonstrations in support of political prisoners in other countries, often their participants

ignored the fact that there are political prisoners in Italy too. The rightist government has introduced new laws designed to instill fear, especially in the post-September 11 climate.

**Ramon Bada** said he saw himself as one of those following the legacy of the **PCPE**, the Communist Party of the Peoples of Spain. What the **DHKP-C**, the Palestinians and the Basques have told us should serve as a warning. We must be more united. We have a great legacy to draw upon as lessons. We must be united against the attacks made on us. I hope that this meeting will allow us to get to know one another better. Certainly we are here to work and all our discussions must serve actions. Our Party hopes that this work will contribute to international unity.... We wish to thank those who extended the invitation.

**Antonio Dores:** Portugal does not currently have political prisoners. An association has been formed for non-political prisoners. Portugal has some of Europe's worst prison conditions. There are very great contradictions. Portugal has



the lowest crime rate. I am a teacher, I write articles about prisoners. The state puts pressure on us, and it has tried to blacken my reputation with my work colleagues. The situation of prisoners is very bad. At the end of 2001 they killed another male prisoner. Nor was this the only case, another prisoner I didn't know was killed. They intimidate families and prevent information from being passed on. There are a lot of occurrences like that. We can do nothing about them. Moreover, the state puts pressure on us. We are quite a new organisation. We are working to formulate policies on the basis of a civil society. They tell us to watch our step... Perhaps there will be no prisons in a future society. We want a just society.

**Yorgos:** I want to express the class solidarity of thousands of construction workers. We greet you today in the name of the Militant Workers' Front. This day the peoples are in the grip of imperialist barbarism. Everything has been turned into a market by greed of the wealthy for a profit. Moreover, in spite of the people, they condemn the peoples to poverty and unemployment. With every passing day, racism, xenophobia and the swamp of drug addiction grow ever worse. The rights and freedoms of the peoples are restricted and infringed. Centre left and right governments jointly continue to practice terror. The appeal in the Communist Manifesto to „unite”

remains valid today. We experienced the 1967-74 junta. Now our country is a US base. We showed our reaction to Clinton visiting our country. We are on your side. The isolation used against our neighbours angers us. We direct our reaction against the state in Greece, because it also supports the policy of isolation. We will transmit to all institutions in our country our discussions here and the decisions we reach opposing isolation.

**MRTA (Peru):** We bring greetings from a revolutionary organisation. The situation of revolutionary prisoners in Peru and Chile is almost the same. The period of detention without being charged, which was 15 days in the fascist period, is now 30 days. No kind of torture is left out. In the last years of the dictatorship non-political prisoners also carried out prison occupations. They started to be influenced politically through this resistance. The Toledo government introduced changes. Hundreds of prisoners were put in the Challapalca prison, 5,200 metres up in the Andes mountains, or in Yanamayo-puno prison which is at a height of 3,800 metres. Even Fujimori did not use these prisons. There the air is very thin and not even plants can grow. In recent weeks some political prisoners have been transported there in an illegal and inhuman fashion. Prisoners from the Amazon or from low-lying deserts being transported there is guaranteed to do harm to their health, and within a very short time. The way is open to them suffering headaches, stomach problems and even brain haemorrhages. All of this constitutes various forms of torture. However, there is resistance and various messages of hope. We will win. We see the resistance in Turkey's dungeons as a part of our victory. We will create and establish things together. We must also carry out actions. Argentina is also important. Prisoners are resisting there. A bridge must be created to them. The situation of 15 prisoners there is terrible. It is no different from the situation in Chile.

**Belgian Committee:** We have contacts with prisoners in an number of countries. We have relations with prisoners in the USA. Also in Spain. We also have links to **GRAPO** prisoners there. All prisoners have problems. Everywhere the problems are different but essentially the same. The policy of isolation and solitary confinement are being transmitted to all parts of the world. It is the same everywhere. There are many examples of control units. There are two million prisoners in the USA. There is no difference in the treatment of political and non-political prisoners. The proportion of blacks in prison is far higher than their proportion in the general population.

**Colombia:** There are also political prisoners there. However the Colombian government does not accept that they are political prisoners. **FARC-ELN** and other organisations have held talks concerning the status of prisoners. There have been exchanges. Right-wing paramilitaries tend not to take prisoners.

**Mexico:** There were major actions in 1994. This uprising was of a historic nature. In the 1960s and 1970s there were similar uprisings but not of this size... Now there are about 1,500 political prisoners. About 500 are Zapatistas and 1,000 or so are from other revolutionary groups. Isolation imprisonment and solitary confinement are being used along with a programme of high-security prisons.

**Iran:** There are many political prisoners. Previously released political prisoners but were re-arrested by the authorities of

the Islamic Republic. Torture is used systematically. Torture starts shortly after initial detention. Isolation is a normal practice there...

**Italy:** There are political prisoners who have been there since the 1970s. There are no organisations run by families of political prisoners, on the pattern of TAYAD. The situation in Italy is an interesting one. Campaigns are organised for prisoners in other countries but not for prisoners in their own country. Anti-terror laws are quite comprehensive and laws supposedly for use against the mafia are extensively employed against political people. The condition of political prisoners has also worsened. The period of detention was lengthened after September 11. These fascist practices are supported by the social democrats. At the moment we know that some prisoners are on hunger strike. But we have not been able to obtain details. Hundreds of prisoners are held under laws left over from fascism. There are 24 political prisoners. Prisoners from the past have been joined by new prisoners.

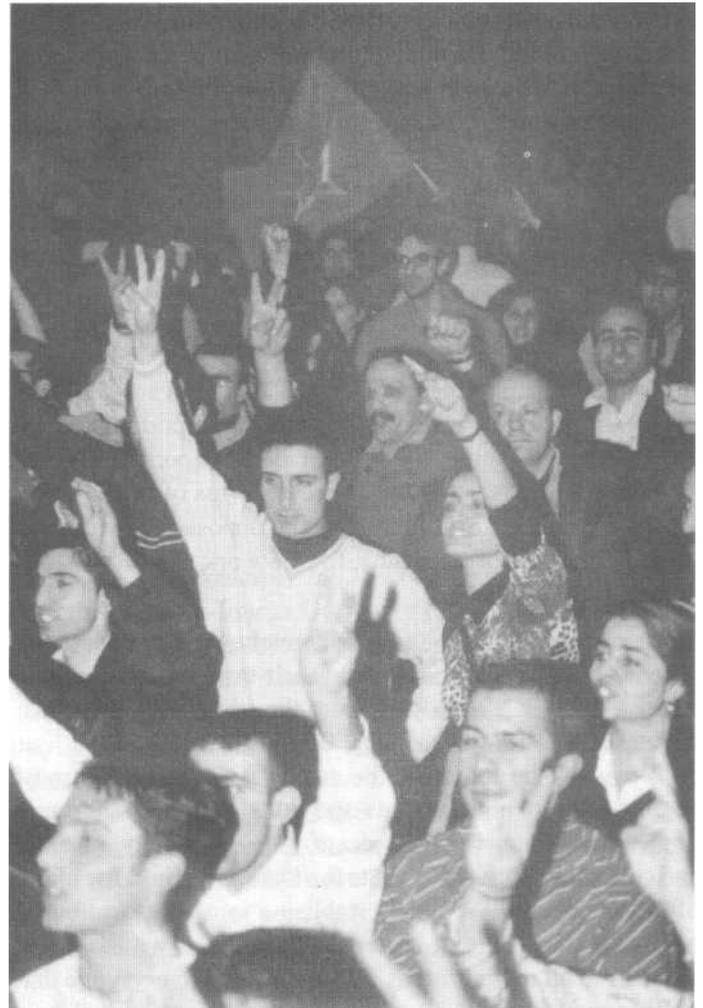
**Lebanon:** Greetings. A great many different methods of torture and solitary confinement have been experienced. For example, a friend named Samir was arrested while struggling against Israeli colonialism. In 1978 he was given life imprisonment by a court. This punishment was only inflicted because he struggled against Israeli colonialism. Another friend named Anwar was sentenced to 30 years for the same reason. There are a number of examples of this. Similar practices have been seen in other Arab countries. For example, in Syria there are 250 prisoners who have been held since the 1970s. There is also torture and ill-treatment. For example, there is a torture called the „German chair”, which is a chair which has an electric current passing through it. Sometimes people are even tortured on the pretext that they are breathing - it is a punishment for being alive. There are bans on prisoners receiving visits. There is an organisation for relatives of prisoners. They are trying to work together with France's Red Aid organisation.

**Antonopoulos Pavlos:** We want to thank the friends for organising this activity. Until last year there were no political prisoners in Greece. There were some individual bomb attacks and so forth. From 1967 to 1974 Greece was under a military dictatorship. Thousands were tortured and imprisoned. Some were put in isolation conditions on islands. The Communist Party was banned until 1974. Eighteen people have been imprisoned in connection with the November 17 group. These people have been thrown into isolation cells and subjected to white torture. There are also cell-type prisons in Greece. Some friends are continuing a hunger strike. Our trade union has been doing some things. We are keeping an eye on their situation and any developments. We are trying to raise peoples' consciousness on this issue. We are trying to do things for the friends from Turkey.

**Belgian journalist:** We went to Turkey with the TAYAD committee. There we went to Armutlu to see the resisters and we got to know them. We have made a film about it...

**Lawyer Murat Demir:** The dungeon tradition inherited from Ottoman times is continuing in Turkey. Political justice cannot be separated from the political struggle. Our country has had many political prisoners, especially since the 1960s. But it has been a more important feature of life since the 1980 military junta. Fascism became institutionalised during this

period. People were silenced. The state constantly tried to make itself appear legitimate. Events in this period had a considerable effect on the left. Some organisations surrendered. But during this period there were also revolutionaries who resisted. In the difficult conditions of the junta, there were revolutionaries who refused to conform to sanctions and who defended their honour. The prisoners from Devrimci Sol (Revolutionary Left) were prominent in this resistance. In 1984 there was a Death Fast. After this, though some rights were gained, the policy of repression continued. In various periods, if some policies changed, the essence remained the same. The aim was always to get the



prisoners to accept their will. To bring this about various forms of punishment, prison regulations, methods of torture and new laws were applied. If these were not enough, they resorted to physical destruction. So the F-Type prisons in Turkey today are based on practices experienced earlier in our history. Many times they would try to introduce practices but the resistance would force them to take a step back. This was why in the year 2000 they wanted to introduce the F-Type prisons and on December 19-22 they carried out a massacre. But the prisoners replied with resistance, even though the price was high. And the resistance is still continuing, so the state has still not succeeded.

**TAYAD's Ahmet Kulaksyzy:** Greetings. We are the families of DHKP-C prisoners. We don't want our friends to see us just as organisation of families. Because we have been in the foremost ranks of the struggle. Everybody has told you that it is not possible to resist the F-Type prison attack and win without paying a price. Right at the start we had said that this

would be a prolonged resistance. The scale of the attack meant that the resistance would have to be on as great a scale. We have developed a resistance of a kind not seen before in the world. We started the Death Fast outside the prisons as the families of the prisoners. We cannot win without paying a price. Everybody knows this. Yes, our families too have faced up to and paid a heavy price. And we are continuing to pay it. We know that these attacks were not limited to prisoners. Imperialism is the original source of these attacks. For this reason we want to explain that we will not allow imperialism's global attacks to succeed on our front. In the Death Fast I gave my two children, my daughters, as martyrs. The best I can do, the most honourable behaviour is to support their resistance. I am conscious of this and am trying to be worthy of my daughters. There is nothing in the demands of this resistance that cannot be accepted. Besides, it is false to expect that the resistance will end without these demands being accepted. I knew my daughters well. I do not recognise as a supporter of the Front anyone whose behaviour is other than keeping their promises, doing what they said they would do and not hesitating to pay any price that is necessary. That is why I say that this resistance may go on much longer but victory is certain. The resistance is not going to end without isolation policies in the prisons being abolished and without the demands being accepted. We, the TAYAD Families, also see the struggle elsewhere in the world as important and we see international solidarity as particularly important. But we also think that it is necessary to create forms of organisation so that the policies of isolation can be opposed. In particular we believe that it is necessary for the work and discussions here to yield results.

**Serdar:** I would like to speak concretely. We have heard the bitterness suffered by people and their experiences, we have heard what people have said about the situation in their own countries. We have heard their demands. It means that our problems are the same and the enemy is the same. We must be able to unite our demands and our struggles at the same time. Imperialism wants to destroy us, politically, morally and culturally. Imperialism eats the flesh and drinks the blood of human beings. We must establish a joint platform based on a minimum of joint issues. With this aim we have sent requests to all organisations. We announced to everyone that we wanted the days December 19-22 to be international days of struggle against isolation. At the moment we are proposing that again here, as the DHKC. There are dozens of organisations who could not come here or participate for various reasons but are taking a part in our proposal. Let us announce to all organisations that December 19-22 are to be the days of international struggle against isolation. Our second proposal is that we organise an institutional framework involving the bodies given below. This can be done in the form of a commission or a committee. This can be done jointly. It can be discussed jointly. For communication a joint Internet site can be set up. Instituting it should be characterised as a way of organising all practical activities. It should be a uniting of our brains, our hearts and our forces. We want to hear what all organisations who have taken part in this symposium think on this subject and we want to hear their proposals. We respectfully greet all participants.



## Participants of Symposium

ADDAMEER, organisation of prisoner's families, Palestine  
 Ahmet Kulaksiz, TAYAD, Istanbul  
 Antonio Pedro Dores, representing a group concerned with prison reform, Portugal  
 IKM (Committee for Struggle against Isolation Torture),  
 Hambourg

DHKC (Revolutionary People's Liberation Front) Information  
 Bureaus  
 Participant from PFLP (Popular Front for the Liberation of  
 Palestine  
 Gernot Bodner, Anti-Imperialist Camp, Austria  
 Ramon Bada, member of the Central Committee of the  
 Communist Party of the Peoples of Spain (PCPE)  
 Antonopoulos Pavlos and Delali Pareskevi, Greek Federation  
 of Secondary School Teachers  
 Yorgos Pontikos, PAME (Militant Workers' Front) trade union  
 movement, Greece  
 Abdallah Abdallah, UJPA (Union des Jeunes Progressistes  
 Arabes), Morocco  
 Mouloud Hourrane, Way of Democracy (Voie de Democratie),  
 Morocco  
 Mhassim Abdel, Way of Democracy (Voie de Democratie),  
 Morocco  
 Roberto de Geeter, Anarchist Black Cross, Gent/Belgium  
 Bart Dalle, Anarchist Black Cross, Gent/Belgium  
 Gianfranco Castellotti, Laboratorio Marxista, Italy  
 Mirca Celi, Laboratorio Marxista, Italy  
 Cristina, Casa Cultural Colombiana (Colombian Cultural  
 House), Vienna  
 Marcellino, Senza Censura, Italy  
 Tiziana Fresu, Anti-Imperialist Camp, Italy  
 Cornelius, Bremen, Anti-Imperialist Caravane, Germany  
 Louis, Basisgruppe, Germany

Serdar, prisoner released from Kandira F-Type (Isolation) Prison  
 in Turkey after being subjected to forcible medical treatment  
 in order to break his resistance in the Death Fast  
 Erdal, formerly inmate of Bursa Prison, Turkey, then confined  
 in Edirne F-Type Prison, joined Second Death Fast Team,  
 subjected to forcible medical treatment, later released  
 Jon Anza, former ETA prisoner, released after 21 years in prison,  
 Euskadi

Norma, former woman prisoner in Peru, member  
 of the Association for rights of Indians

Julen Arzuaga, lawyer, Euskadi  
 RafJespers, lawyer, from PTB (Party of Labour),  
 Belgium  
 A. Dtizgün Yüksel, lawyer, Turkey  
 Murat Demir, lawyer, Turkey  
 Vesile Yücel, lawyer, Germany

Andrea, journalist, Austria  
 Wolfgang, Angehörigen-Info, Germany  
 Lauretta Richter

ClemensTosian  
 Patricia

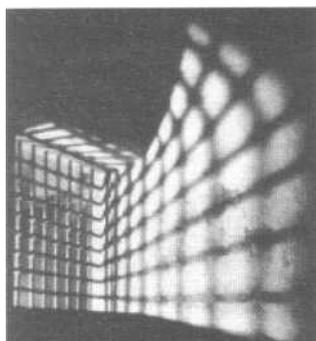
# ISOLATION PRISONS

## in Turkey

### F-TYPE PRISONS:

#### *Cells, isolation, torture and the taking away of rights*

*On 19 December 2000, an operation given the ironic nickname „Return To Life ” was carried out at 20 prisons in Turkey, as a result of 28 prisoners on remand and convicted prisoners and two soldiers lost their lives and hundreds of prisoners were wounded. After the operation they were transported to the F-Type prisons of Edirne, Tekirdag, Kandira and Sincan, despite the continuing controversy about these prison and the fact that these prisons had not been finished and the furnishings and not yet been installed.*



It is the end of two years in which hundreds of political and non-political prisoners and convicts in Edirne, Tekirdag No. 1, Kocaeli/Kandira No. 1, Sincan No. 1, Bolu and Izmir/Kiriklar F-Type prisons have been living and struggling under conditions of severe isolation.

In the Death Fasts which started on October 20, 2000 to oppose

the opening of the F-Type prisons and which after December 19 raised the demand of closing these prisons, so far 101 prisoners and convicts have lost their lives and over 400 have developed illnesses like Wernicke-Korsakoff syndrome as a result of long-term starvation and the medical intervention in their fasts - complications include loss of memory and loss of balance. A non-political prisoner in Sincan F-Type and a political prisoner in Kandira F-Type committed suicide by hanging themselves (official statements on this matter and lawsuits about it are continuing.) The name of the F-Types is bitterness, death and tyranny. Describing the F-Types means describing isolation, lawlessness and torture.

#### A. A **BRIEF LOOK AT THE PRISONS AT THE END OF THE 1980s**

##### A.1. ISOLATION CELLS AND SOLITARY CONFINEMENT ARE NOT NEW **POLICIES**

After the 1980 military coup, about two million people were detained, thousands imprisoned, thousands were sentenced to a total of many thousands of years of imprisonment by martial law courts and death sentences were passed. Fifty people were executed by hanging. Between 1980 and 2000, about 500 prisoners and convicts lost their lives in the prisons for reasons such as poor living and health conditions, death fasts, sacrifice actions and military operations. The legal basis for the „cell” systems in the prisons was laid by paragraph 16 of the 1991 law No. 3713, and no time was lost in carrying out active and bloody operations aimed at putting prisoners in these cells, which were called „coffins”. Two hundred and six prisoners and convicts were transported to them, but a 22-day hunger strike and pressure from public opinion caused them to be closed again. Law No. 3713, paragraph 16 furnishes a legal pretext for attacks aimed at putting people into these cells. Despite the state's aim of putting not just

convicts but prisoners on remand in isolation from each other and from life, the people and democratic mass organisations were not persuaded with regard to the cells for 10 years. Because of continually increased opposition to the cells and isolation, there was a retreat from every attempt to bring them in. Again, whenever there was a tunnel, an escape attempt or a fight in areas occupied by political or non-political prisoners, attempts were made to plant in peoples' minds that the cells and isolation are the only logical alternatives to the dormitories. The media worked with the state in doing this, and non-existent events were described and news distorted in an attempt to achieve the desired result. Since its unrestrained attacks in 1995 the state has been in an increasing hurry. Among prisoners and convicts, on September 21, 1995 three at Buca Prison, on January 4, 1996 four at Umraniye Prison, 11 in the same year at Diyarbakir Prison, on September 26, 1999 10 at Ankara Ulucanlar Prison and on December 19, 2000 in all of the country's prisons, 28 were beaten, burned or gassed to death. In the summer of 1996, when prisoners were forcibly transferred to Eskisehir Special Type Prison, political prisoners started death fasts and in the course of 69 days, 12 prisoners and convicts lost their lives. On the 69th day the Justice Minister Sevket KAZAN announced that the shipping of prisoners to Eskisehir Special-Type Prison would be stopped and the cells would be closed.

##### A.2 **F-TYPE CELL PRISONS**

The Justice Ministry and other state bodies in 1999-2000 stated that a project had been established to set up prisons with cells, to be called F-Type prisons, contracts were tendered and building work started. Discussion began, and it was announced that resistance would start. In the spring and summer of 2000, prisoners on remand as well as those convicted, their families who never abandoned them, the defenders of human rights as well as sensitive and democratic people maintained that it would not be possible to keep prisoners in the F-Type prisons for the aim of that was to isolate them and expose them to torture; All concerned sections of society, such as the prisoners and convicts, their families, associations like medical chambers, chambers of architecture and engineering, legal bar associations opposed the cells and called on state officials to discuss the matter with them. Their calls for discussion met with a very stern response. The families were clubbed by police, detained, imprisoned. Intellectuals, artists, doctors and lawyers were

threatened if they sought to express their views on this subject, and they were prevented from speaking.

### A.3 DEATH FASTS

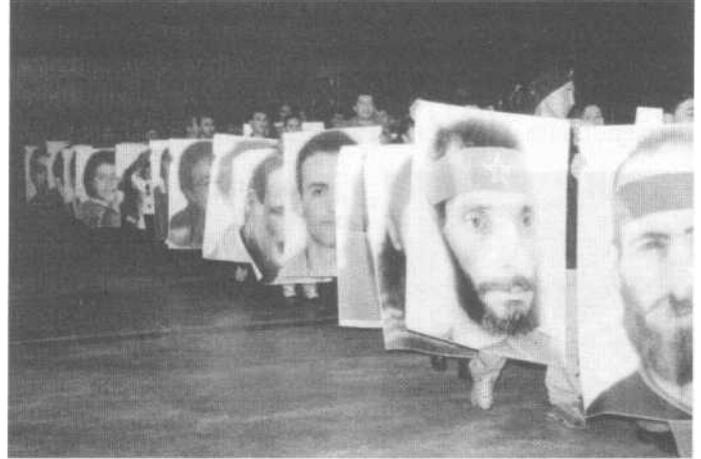
Political prisoners and convicts started a death fast action on October 20, 2000 in opposition to the indifference shown by the relevant officials of the Ministry and the state. In December the Fazilet (Virtue) Party member of parliament Prof. Dr. Mehmet BEKAROGLU, the chairman of the chamber of Turkish Architects and Engineers Kaya GUVENC, the chair of the Istanbul Bar Yucel SAYMAN, and the chairman of the Turkish Doctors' Union, Metin BAKKALCI, started talks with the prisoners, with authorisation from the Justice Ministry. On December 9, 2000 the Justice Minister Hikmet Sami TURK announced that the F-Type prisons would not be opened until a representative meeting involving all sections of society had been held. After this statement, the representatives in the talks were recalled, with no reason or explanation being given. And DECEMBER 19: At 20 separate prisons, thousands of state personnel embarked on an operation as though they were going to war. Twenty-eight prisoners on remand and convicted prisoners and two soldiers lost their lives. In Bayrampasa C-1 dormitory, six women prisoners were BURNED ALIVE, the charred bodies could only be identified through DNA tests. On December 19, deportations of prisoners to Edirne, Sincan and Kandira F-Type Prisons were carried out though these were still being built, thus on this date a shameful act was added to their bloody ones.

## B. F-TYPE PRISONS

### BA. ARCHITECTURAL CONSTRUCTION

At present six F-Type prisons have been completed and three further ones are under construction. All of them have been built far away from cities and population centres. This is a product of the isolation policy aimed at making access difficult because of the distances. Edirne F-Type is 10 km from the city centre by the Sarayakpinar village road, Tekirdag F-Type is 10 km from Tekirdag via the Muratli route, Kocaeli/Kandira F-Type is 15 km from Kandira, Sincan F-Type is about 25 km from Ankara's Kesimhane district and there is no population centre nearer to it than that, Izmir F-Type was built 20 km from Izmir via the Kiriklar/Kaynaklar village route. There is no public transport, or else it is limited. Kandira/Kocaeli No. 1 F-Type was built covering 70 donums (a donum is about a quarter of an acre) and the accommodation space is only 17,000 square metres. While it is possible to expand the space, the accommodation area was kept very limited with the aim of creating isolation conditions. Kocaeli F-Type Prison has a capacity of 373 people. There are 103 three-person cells and 64 one-person cells. Three-person cells are two-storey, with the lower floor 25 square metres and containing a toilet and washing facilities, while the upper part contains beds for three people as well as steel cupboards for personal items. Two windows on the upper floor look out onto the exercise area and there is a radiator inadequate for the space. The entrance to the cell is a steel door which has a small viewing aperture at head height and an opening about a third of the way up through which food is served. Physically it is impossible to take the food without „bending”. From the lower floor out to the ventilation area there is a door, the ventilation area is thirty square metres and is closed off by an

8-metre-high concrete wall. On each corridor with three-person cells, there are three such cells. The corridors open onto a main corridor. In the one-person cells, there is only one floor and they are only eight metres square, with the toilet and washing facilities together occupying one and a half square metres. The smallness of the available area and the installation of it means that you have to shower in the area you use as a toilet. There is a window that looks out onto the ventilation area, and the door to the ventilation area is opened from the outside by a lock system. The ventilation area is 25



square metres and again there is a wall around it 8 metres high. In the upper floors above the one-person cells, there are workshops and when they are operating, the noise coming from them is a kind of torture for those in the one-person cells. Some of the one-person cells open out onto the one-person cell ventilation area, but a few open out onto the same ventilation area as the three-person area cells. For joint living, apart from the workshops, a reading room and a sports hall, there are no areas which are units available to all. Again, in all F-Types, to the outside and there is only one entrance, all the walls and the floor are coated with a soft material, and each has two special cells which contain nothing whatsoever. The prison has four blocks, A, B1, B2 and C, and each block has two visiting rooms for lawyers, so that a prison with 373 inmates has eight rooms for lawyers to visit their clients. The rooms for meeting lawyers are separated, two each, by concrete blocks and cover an area of 4 by 10 square metres. A duty official is always available to monitor the meeting from behind a glass partition. In the rooms where lawyers meet prisoners there is no sound insulation from the outside and conversations can easily be overheard. In two separate places, there six rooms each for prisoners to meet family members, 12 places where there is a double-sided iron railing and thick glass through which sound does not penetrate, people are only visible from the chest upwards to each other and communication is only possible by means of a telephone apparatus. Duty personnel can listen to everything and for arbitrary and unjustified reasons they may close down use of the telephone connection.

### B.2. THE LEGAL SITUATION OF THOSE HELD IN THE F-TYPE CELLS

On the basis of paragraph 16, law No. 3713, the cell prisons are conceived by the DGM (State Security Court) as places where prisoners on remand or convicted prisoners who are political as well as those being tried for narcotics or mafia offences or organised crime are to be held. So the F-Type

prisons are not simply for political prisoners. The fact that the DGMs are special and extraordinary courts is beyond dispute. A great many amendments to the Law on the Practice of Penal Trials which could be classified as democratic are not put into practice, proof obtained through illegal methods is submitted to these courts and sentences which could never be described as just ones are passed. While the people who typically come before the DGMs are socialists and revolutionaries, depending on the economic situation, other sections of society may be addressed with a DGM „invitation” to be judged. The DGMs, the Political/Organisation/Public Safety Branch Administrations, the Forensic Medicine Institution and the Supreme Court Penal Departments which determine who will be harmed by violence on a basis, that is not legal but is political.

### **B.3. THERE ARE NO LAWS OR STATUTES CONCERNING THE MANAGEMENT OF THE F-TYPE PRISONS**

With regard to the F-Type prisons our knowledge in the legal sphere is limited to paragraph 16 of law No. 3713. With regard to their management or practices, no laws or statutes have been published or presented to public opinion. As far as we have learned, a „master plan” exists for the Discipline, Letter-Reading and Library Commissions and the Executive Judgeship’s decisions and all practices take place in accordance with this „master plan”. Although we have sought to obtain this „master plan” from the prison administration, the Prosecutor’s Office, the Judgeship and the Ministry, this has continually been rejected. Up to the present, apart from state officials - and even some prosecutors have not seen it and have only been told about it by word of mouth - nobody has seen the „master plan”. The administration of the F-Type prisons was set up in a completely arbitrary way.

### **B.4. REMOVAL OF THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN PRISONERS ON REMAND AND CONVICTED PRISONERS**

Of the universal principles of law, one of the main ones is that nobody’s guilt should be accepted unless it has been properly determined in a court of law. But the F-Types and law No. 3713, paragraph 16 remove this distinction. Prisoners who have been indicted as well as prisoners who have not been indicted are put into the cells. Under our Penal Law, a proportion of those who are convicted are punished with imprisonment in a cell and this has begun to be extended to unconvicted prisoners who are still on remand. Executive punishment through imprisonment in a cell (by decision of a court or else a disciplinary measure) is something that does not distinguish those held in the F-Type prisons, because prisoners are already held in cells in these prisons.

## **C. TORTURE AND THE VIOLATION OF RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS OF THOSE HELD IN F-TYPE PRISON CELLS**

**C.1. ISOLATION - „human beings need human beings”**  
Isolation is practised to alienate human beings from other beings and thus also from themselves. It is an attempt to leave a person defenceless, to break their will by leaving them alone with their physical and psychological problems and get them to abandon their beliefs. Isolation aims to kill thoughts. It aims to separate people from their dreams, aims, ideas and

love of life. It aims to destroy by causing physical and psychological problems to arise. Isolation is a policy aimed at causing destruction.

### **C.1.1. ISOLATION STARTS WITH THE SELECTION OF SITES FOR PRISONS**

As we have noted in detail above, the F-Type prisons were built a long way away from population centres. The F-Types are closed off from all the voices and sounds of cities and nature. They were built in this way with the aim of cutting people off from life. On the pretext of „high security” and suchlike reasons, this was done behind a curtain of secrecy. To this extent, we can understand the logic of isolation when we ask ourselves whether security precautions are made easier by having prisons closer to cities and transport or by putting them in places that could be termed out of the way. The aim is to cut off prisoners on remand and convicts from voices, smells, noises, everything connected to life; to prevent efforts by their families to support them and mitigate isolation somewhat, to make lawyers’ defence efforts and the search for rights difficult; and to put prisoners, families and lawyers in a difficult position economically.

### **C.1.2. THE AIM OF ISOLATION IS TO DESTROY THE PERSONALITY OF PRISONERS**

A human being is all alone in a space of 8 square metres. He or she is able to see his or her family for an hour a week - if they are able to come - if the lawyer is able to come he or she can see a lawyer for half an hour once a month. Humans need other humans. Those who are held all alone in a cell for months and years will undergo physical and psychological destruction. By preventing people from striving for their personalities, aims, ideals and reasons for existence, the aim is to create personalities who are „unconditionally obedient”, who do not search for rights, raise objections, criticise, question or reflect, whose personalities are destroyed in this way. The intention is to kill the mind. After two years the psychological damage created by isolation is clearly visible. Halil Kocyigit, a non-political prisoner who was put in Sincan F-Type accused of forming an organisation with an intent to commit a crime, committed suicide in his one-person cell by hanging himself. Again, in Kocaeli F-Type Prison Volkan AGIRMAN, a non-political prisoner preferred suicide to the dilemma of going, into a place from which he could not emerge, and so he lost his life. In Tekirdag F-Type Prison Aziz DOGAN, a non-political prisoner, hung himself with a sheet but his cellmates managed to save him before he killed himself. He was saved because there were another two prisoners there. But the policy of isolation caused others to die. They lost their lives because there was nobody beside them with whom to converse, share troubles and joys, information or consultation, and because when their bodies dangled by the neck in the emptiness there were no hands there that could untie the sheet or the rope. Nobody can escape from the weight of guilt for the psychological problems that prisoners experience. The only one responsible is „ISOLATION”, the only people responsible are those who practise the policy of isolation.

### **C.1.3. ISOLATION IS PRACTISED BY LIMITING FAMILY VISITS**

Even before the F-Types were opened, quite a lot of relatives were prevented from coming to visit. The family members

able to visit were restricted to fathers, mothers, spouses, children, paternal uncles, maternal aunts, paternal aunts and maternal uncles. Other close relatives do not receive permission for visits, so the prisoner's connections with life are cut off. In the case of those who have a right to visit, attempts are made to stop them visiting by demanding documents such as the family's official registration and an official order from their mayor. At every visit the prison administration wants the same documents again and again, even though they retain copies of them, and in this way they try to intimidate people who come to visit and make them give up. Despite family visits being programmed to last one hour, in reality they do not even last half an hour. The visit's length is significantly reduced by searches, documentation, obtaining permission and other processes. Visits conducted by telephone are listened to and are continually exposed to interference. Some words not being understood can be a sufficient reason for the visit to be brought to an end. There can be nothing more normal than for political prisoners to express the thoughts they have produced or developed and make reference to political subjects. But saying them in the course of a visit is enough excuse for the visit to be terminated. The prisoners and his visitors are prevented from using their native language because if, apart from Turkish, any language is used, the visit is terminated. To expect something like that from people who have spoken their own language and no other since the day they were born does not conform to the essence or crime and punishment or to human honour.

#### C.1.4. THE POLICY OF ISOLATION AND THE DEFENCE

The economic and social situation of prisoners is also reflected in their defence. Attempts are also made to impede the efforts of the limited number of lawyers who pursue the cases of political prisoners as part of the struggle for rights and freedoms. While the prisons are located very far from places of adjudication like Istanbul, Izmir or Ankara, the purpose of the visiting hours and periods, searches, detailed document checks and similar practices is to interfere with the right to a defence. Prisoners in isolation cannot have their defence files supplemented, nor can their rights be defended appropriately.

#### C.2. TORTURE, BEATING

We had said that the aim of isolation is destruction, isolation is the necessary foundation for such destruction and once it is established, attempts are made to destroy prisoners with torture and beating.

##### C.2.1. RAPE IN THE CELLS

In the days of the first transports to F-Type prisons prisoners were subject to object rape with truncheons. Isolation creates the material conditions for such a shameful attack on humanity. Where prisoners are held together in the same place, this type of torture is not possible.

##### C.2.2. TORTURE AND BEATING

Ali Ihsan KILIC was a prisoner on remand in Kocaeli F-Type Prison when he was attacked by prison staff on the pretext that he had not stood up during a roll call. After he was given a severe beating, his head was struck on the ground several times while his feet were held in the air. The result: a skull fracture and permanent memory loss. The torturers are practising these things in the cells, far from observation, while the state and the courts keep quiet about it. The victims are only taken to the forensic medical faculty or hospital after

the evidence has disappeared, and in this way the torturers are protected and go unpunished.

#### C.3. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

The aim of isolation is to create favourable conditions for depriving people of their rights and freedoms.

##### C.3.1. PRISONERS KEEPING EACH OTHER INFORMED

Prisoners are absolutely prevented from passing on news to one another and severe penalties are instituted. At family visits the three people in the same cell go out together, so for years you are required to live all the time with the same two people. There can be no explanation for there being such a degree of hatred and hostility towards people that they are prevented from seeing different faces and different human beings. While prisoners are going out into the corridors for family or lawyers' visits, the prison staff prevent them from looking at the embrasure in cell doors where they might catch a glimpse of other prisoners. Those who look or attempt to call out to other prisoners will not only not be allowed to see their families or lawyer but will also be severely beaten. Prisoners who call out to others from the exercise area are the target of intervention by guards who lock them back in their cells and remove their right to go out into the exercise area. The only way prisoners can communicate is by letter. If the Reading Commission sees fit, the Post Office is the medium for bringing letters even to neighbouring cells, and these letters arrive 10 to 15 days later, a process designed to inhibit communication.

##### C.4.1. COMMUNICATION BY LETTER

The only way for relatives and friends outside the prisons to communicate with prisoners is by letter and very extensive mechanisms for bans have been established for that. Banned words could be equal in number to those that were not banned and according to its own arbitrary interpretations the prison administration censors and destroys letters. Reasons for destroying letters might be because they talk about prisoners, about life, or about political and social developments. And even photos of spouses or of friends might not be given to prisoners on the pretext that they are a means of propaganda. The CMUK rule 144 states that „writings to do with a suspect's defence may not be subjected to inspection” but it is abundantly clear how much this rule is breached in an arbitrary way by prison administrations. Letters do not arrive at the addresses they are sent to, letters do not come even if they are registered or sent recorded delivery, or they go missing. It is such that letters from an F-Type Prison are subjected to considerable censorship but letters to another F-Type Prison are seen as troublesome and dangerous and are not delivered but simply destroyed. An additional economic burden arises for those who send letters to prisoners or to relatives outside prison by registered or recorded delivery with the aim of guaranteeing or checking that the letters have been delivered.

#### C.S. VIOLATIONS OF PRESS FREEDOM AND FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

##### C.5.1. THE HIGHEST DIMENSIONS OF PRESS CENSORSHIP

Pretexts are found not to publish the letters written by prisoners in the press or in magazines and Executive Judgeships also legitimise this illegality. Never mind a prisoner sending an article to a newspaper or magazine to be

published, stories and poems will come under the scissors of the letter-reading commission and be sent on in an incomprehensible form or will not be sent on at all.

#### **C.5.2. NEWSPAPERS ARE CENSORED BY CUTTING OUT PARTS OR BLACKING THEM OUT**

Despite there being no decision to confiscate them and stop them publishing in relation to the F-Type Prisons, some magazines and newspapers are not received, are considered objectionable in advance and prisoners seeing them is not allowed. The prison administration usurps the duties and competence of the prosecutor's office and uses the excuse that magazines and newspapers are elements of a crime in order not to give them to prisoners. Despite a good many requests for newspapers and magazines, they are not supplied on the grounds that „there are no vendors!” and similar equally incredible excuses are used. In Sincan F-Type Prison, the newspapers Evrensel, Bakis and Yeni Safak were not supplied for seven months, despite being sold all over the country during the same period. Some items of news in the newspapers are censored by blacking them over or cutting them out. An attempt is made to condemn prisoners to assimilating items from the newspapers that encourage a game-show culture and moral degeneration.

#### **C.5.3. BANS ON BOOKS!**

A great many books are considered objectionable by the prison administration and judicial bodies who check them and so they are not sent on to prisoners. Books which the controllers have not understood or cannot understand are particularly likely to fall into this category. Books on philosophy, politics or theory have not been allowed into the F-Type prisons up to the present, even though they can be found in the library of Turkey's parliament and in school libraries. The aim is to kill thoughts and kill people as thinkers. We are facing measures in the F-Type prisons which are unprecedented in our history. There is a three-book limit. Prisoners are not allowed to have more than three books or magazines at a time. This also includes legal books or textbooks. Those who want to research or go into a subject, seek to comprehend the world or want to learn are prevented from doing so in the F-Type prisons.

#### **C.6. HELPING PEOPLE OR SHOWING SOLIDARITY IS FORBIDDEN IN THE F-TYPE PRISONS**

The administration uses all the ways it can do to destroy the culture of aid and solidarity, as part of its aim of isolation. It is totally forbidden for prisoners to give each other books, money, clothes and other forms of aid. Never mind aid or solidarity, it is forbidden to barter or exchange books even for economic reasons. A prisoner is to remain without money even if he has acquaintances and even relatives in the same prison. It is forbidden to give him or her money or a loan. In the cells the most important aspects of people's culture and social aid are forbidden. A prisoner in the next cell may not have medication because he has no money, he may have no water but you cannot give him a glass of water. If you throw somebody something from the ventilation area, you are reckoning with a ban on visits of at least a month.

#### **C.7. A SEARCH IS THE EXCUSE, TORTURE IS THE AIM**

At any time, the aim is not to search but to practise torture. At advanced hours of the night the administration deliberately subjects people to sudden searches with the aim of

intimidating them or increasing fear. Under the pretext of a search, all belongings are plundered, scattered around, and letters and notes from books are confiscated. The slightest resistance is punished with a beating and disciplinary action.

#### **C.8. THE CANTEEN AND PURCHASING PROBLEMS**

In the F-Type prisons, prisoners are not given cash and are forced to spend from an account. In this situation prisoners are continually forced to keep accounts and their money can be cut by the administration at any time. Money is needed for electricity, medication and so on. The canteen is not there to meet needs but to turn a profit. Products are sold in the canteen at rates much higher than the market prices, a kind of usury is being practised. Shopping can only be done once a week, refrigerators are forbidden in the cells and food becomes spoilt. The products in the canteen are limited, and there is very little variety. In particular, stationery products like glue, carbon paper and onion skin paper are not available for sale. If it is not in the canteen, it is impossible to obtain food, drink or materials. Prisoners who need a special diet for health reasons are not able to obtain suitable food and drink and experience serious health problems as a result. Ufuk KESKIN, held in Edirne F-Type Prison suffered from Type II diabetes and was not given the diet suitable for this, so he was removed to hospital and was transferred to Bayrampasa Special-Type Prison one and a half years later after repeated efforts by his family. The TVs and radios sold in prison by the administration are low quality and unusable, prisoners on release are prevented from re-selling them or leaving them behind, and in this way the aim is to do harm to prisoners in an economic sense.

#### **C.9. ELECTRIC BILL FOR THE CELLS**

There is an electricity counter in each cell and the fact that we have to pay for using electricity of the sockets and lamps was something introduced into our lives with the F-Type prisons. The prisoners are not respected at all, and the aim is to exhaust them economically and psychologically by pressuring them to pay electricity bills whatever their individual preference.

#### **C.10. SEARCHES OF SHOES AND OUTER CLOTHING**

When prisoners go out of their cells for whatever reason, they are subjected to a search of their outer clothing and shoes. The aim of these searches is harassment rather than security or control. The aim of searching prisoners going to the infirmary or to see a lawyer is to enfeeble them psychologically and physically, to make them surrender and abandon their beliefs. There is no humane reason or pretext whatsoever to search people's shoes, mouth and even anus.

#### **C.11. THE PRACTICE OF LEADING PEOPLE BY THE ARM OUTSIDE THE CELLS**

In high-security prisons where all prisoners are in isolation and under lock and key, prisoners going to the infirmary, visits or court are brought by two guards, each holding an arm, in a way for which there is no security justification. This practice is done to make many prisoners unable to use their rights, attempting to force on them the psychology of guilt and to break their honour.

#### **C.12. RESTRICTIONS ON DRESS AND COLOUR**

Jumpers, trousers, T-shirts, shoes and tracksuits are limited to two or three of each. It is forbidden to give prisoners clothes such as scarves, gloves or berets. If families bring clothes

such as these they have to hand them over. If they are sent by post or brought by a lawyer or other person, they are not accepted. Not all clothes brought in are acceptable. Black, dark blue and red clothing is never given to prisoners. The only aim of this is to restrict your pleasure with regard to clothing and purge them of your beliefs and personality. Socks, underwear and towels cannot be brought in from outside. They absolutely have to be obtained from the canteen. But those sold in the canteen are low-quality and expensive. It is clearly visible that the administration aims to do economic harm and damage the morale of prisoners by making them wear worn-out clothes which are difficult to change.

### C.13. PRESSURE IN MAKING REQUESTS

Before receiving a packet of cigarettes, sending a letter or going to the doctor for an appointment in the infirmary, a request has to be made in writing. It is also not enough to write the request, it is also necessary to put „I present this” at the end of the letter, and this is nothing to do with politeness, it is a means of obtaining obedience and surrender. Getting an answer to written requests is another problem. While the prison administration makes such bureaucracy obligatory, it does not actually keep a record of requests, so it is impossible to prove that a prisoner's request or demand has been made. Written petitions and charges directed to the administration, the prosecutor's office or the ministry are checked and if seen as objectionable they are destroyed. In this way a search for rights on the part of prisoners is prevented, and by continuing these arbitrary practices they try to forestall, confront and prevent resistance.

### C.14. WATER AND HYGIENE PROBLEMS

The F-Type prisons are built outside the cities and so are not connected to water network of the cities. They use water that comes from wells. Well water is insufficient and from the point of view of health is very objectionable, and in Tekirdag and Sincan F-Types mouth ulcers and irritations on the body surface have appeared among many prisoners. Well water is not clean and cannot be taken internally, so the prisoners continually have to buy water from the canteen. Water is necessary for cleanliness but its supply also cannot be guaranteed. In Tekirdag F-Type Prison one day a week, water is made available for half an hour, prisoners can wash and clean themselves during this time. Otherwise they are compelled to deal with this need by purchasing drinking water from the canteen at inflated prices.

## D. VIOLATION OF THE RIGHTS OF FAMILIES

### D.1. LIMITATIONS ON FAMILY VISITS

In the F-Type prisons every prisoner has a right to a family visit for an hour a week. This cannot be used outside the slice of time determined. A small delay can mean a waste of money and effort in coming. Families are forced to organise their entire lives around this one-hour segment of time, if there is something to do that cannot be postponed to another date, the visit cannot take place. The practice in other prisons

of having specified days where there is a right to visit all day must be restored. It is completely impossible to hold a visit lasting one hour. Registering, signing, having a digital card read, the search, the prisoner being brought are all included in the hour. During these periods the active part of the visit amounts to about 20 to 30 minutes.

### D.2. THE TORTURE OF SEARCHES

Families who come to see their sons and daughters, spouses, mothers or fathers for a one-hour visit travel many kilometres and then if they manage to get to the prison they are forced to struggle against the torture of a search by gendarmes and guards. The harassment used when passing through the sensitised door and the X-ray machine is no different from the torture that the search by hand constitutes. A visit is not about contact, it can be called nothing other than the pulling apart of human beings from every side by searching them. This search is done in a way designed to attack people's honour, and even women's sanitary pads are checked. The sensitised metal doors are set at the highest level of sensitivity and even the fibre hooks of underwear can trigger them off. So male guards and soldiers use this as an excuse to get families to remove metal objects in a way designed to humiliate them.

### D.3. BANS ON FAMILIES BRINGING BELONGINGS

Families may bring belongings, books and magazines to prisoners, and these are not given to prisoners but the family may only learn of that on a subsequent visit; in contrast to other prisons, families cannot bring in belongings. The aim of this is to wear down their personalities by injuring the moral ties and feelings of prisoners.

## E. THE RIGHT TO A DEFENCE PREVENTED

### E.1. LEGAL DEFENCE ALSO SUBJECTED TO ISOLATION

The distance of the prisons from courts (for example, Istanbul DGM is used to try prisoners in Tekirdag, Kandira or Edirne F-Types) is aimed at preventing the right to a defence being exercised. Because of work, time or the economic burden, lawyers are brought to the point where they avoid defending prisoners held in the F-Type prisons.

### E.2. THE PERIODS AVAILABLE FOR VISITS ARE INADEQUATE

There are 370 prisoners in prisons where there are only eight places available for them to meet their lawyers. In this way there is always the risk that they might make the long trek



to prison and not be able to hold a meeting. From Monday to Thursday, lawyers' visits are from 15.30 to 17.00 (in Izmir/ Kiriklar and Sincan F-Types they are limited to one hour, 16.00-17.00). This one and a half hours includes registration, searches, having a digital card read and similar processes, so the active part of the visit is one hour (in Izmir and Sincan this is half an hour) if the visit is possible at all. This amount of time for lawyers' visits is inadequate for cases going before the DGM where the penalties for convicted clients are serious.

Again, lawyers' visits may not take place on days when there are searches going on. Without exception, searches are done on purpose during the lawyers' visiting hours. The probability is high that someone who may have travelled 250 km will have to turn back because a search is going on. The administrations of Tekirdag and Edirne F-Type Prisons carry out a search every two weeks at the time of the Wednesday lawyers' visit. The intention of these periodic searches is to remove a prisoner's right to a defence. On this subject, the Ministry and the Prosecutor's Office treat accusations as being of no importance.

### **E.3. SEARCHES ARE CONDUCTED CONTRARY TO THE LAW WITH REGARD TO LAWYERS**

Despite the Law With Regard To Lawyers 58/1 saying lawyers cannot be searched and prescribing severe penalties for those who do, in the F-Type prisons, searches of outer clothing are carried out by regular army gendarmes when leaving the F-Type prisons and by prison staff on entering. After entering and undergoing the manual search of one's outer clothing, the aim of the sensitised door and the X-ray machine is to harass and inhibit the defence. Lawyers are identified with their clients and are exposed to being treated as suspicious persons. As with the searches of families, underwear and sanitary pads are searched with the aim of infringing people's honour and preventing them from carrying out a defence. Again, lawyers undergo extensive document checks in the F-Type prisons. These checks are done to undermine the independence of the defence and put legal defence institutions under state control. These illegal practices are carried out to prevent lawyers from defending prisoners who are in the F-Type prisons on remand, and as an attempt to punish such prisoners in advance by treating them as guilty.

### **E.4. CONTROLS OVER FILES AND DOCUMENTS**

While lawyers' offices and residences can be searched under supervision from the prosecutor's office and a bar association representative, they cannot be searched if it is not a case of someone being caught red-handed committing something worthy of severe punishment, but guards carry out searches of files and defence documents at the prison entrance. These controls are carried out by staff who are ignorant of legal knowledge and culture and they get involved in meaningless quarrels with the lawyers. So a file lodged with the Prosecutor's Office containing a photocopy of an ID card as proof was not allowed into the prison, and it was necessary to talk to the Tekirdag Republican Prosecutor to have the ban lifted. The lawyer is banned from passing any kind of document to a client and in such a situation investigations are started in addition to active interference. There can be nothing more natural than for documents to be given and received by suspects and their defence lawyers, but this is not deemed valid in the F-Type prisons. Searches of lawyers' outer clothing and check-ups on their documents are the product of a mentality that sees lawyers as criminals. The independence of the defence is destroyed and efforts are made to place it under the control of the state.

### **E.5. TWO OR MORE PRISONERS CANNOT MEET A LAWYER TOGETHER**

Suspects accused in the same trial may be put in different prisons. This makes it impossible to mount a joint defence and evaluation. Again, it is impossible for suspects held in the same prison to meet together. Two or more prisoners tried

under the same case cannot meet at the same time, the result of this is that a proper defence cannot be prepared, something that openly infringes the right to a fair trial. The prisoners cannot be given documents or pens during their meeting with their lawyer. They cannot take notes while meeting a lawyer, which makes a defence impossible. These practices reflect the general mentality of the F-Type prisons, which is one not found in any legal system. It is forbidden for lawyers to go into a meeting with a packet of cigarettes and a lighter. This type of ban is part of the zeal to ensure that the meeting takes place in a restless and troubled atmosphere noticeable elsewhere in the prison at different times. It is not possible to have a meeting with a competent official in the prison. All bans and restrictions are said to be in line with regulations, and all requests to meet an official are refused. By cutting off all efforts to enter into a dialogue with the administration, an atmosphere of tension and conflict has been encouraged right from the start.

### **F. THE DAMAGE DONE BY TWO YEARS IN THE F-TYPE PRISONS**

#### **F.1. TWO PRISONERS LOST THEIR LIVES AS A RESULT OF SUICIDE**

On April 11, 2002 in Sincan F-Type Prison, the prisoner on remand Halil KOCYIGIT, who was accused of membership in an organised crime network whose aim was profit, committed suicide by hanging himself with a bedsheet. Kocyigit's trial was still in progress at Ankara DGM No. 1. Until several days previously, he had shared a cell with a friend but after he was sent elsewhere, Halil KOCYIGIT committed suicide because of the isolation. The second suicide was in Kandira/Kocaeli F-Type Prison on July 12, 2002. Volkan AGIRMAN who was on remand accused of membership of an organisation, had been in a three-person cell but in his first week in an isolation cell he committed suicide. It is an irrefutable fact that the isolation conditions in the F-Type cells and the policy of leaving people all on their own destroys them psychologically and prepares the way for suicide.

#### **F.2. HEALTH PROBLEMS ARISING FROM ISOLATION CONDITIONS ARE CLEARLY WIDESPREAD AMONG PRISONERS**

We want to report what a cellmate of the remand prisoner Aziz DOGAN said, in exactly his words: „Twice he tried to hang himself from a staircase, dangling down into an empty space, and we prevented him with difficulty. Once he attacked me. I fought him off with difficulty, helped by Metin Abi. Once he gulped down all at once a large number of pills supplied by the infirmary, leaving few behind. When that happened he was taken to the infirmary, given a sedative and brought straight back... He spends a large part of the day in bed. He only comes down for meals. He eats a little bit, then he wanders up and down, is very troubled, we don't say anything. If we do he gets irritated with us...” Aziz DOGAN was fortunate that he was not in a cell all by himself, unlike Volkan and Halil who committed suicide while in isolation cells.

**ENVER YANIK**; A prisoner in Sincan F-Type Prison. Hydrocephaly (water on the brain) and epilepsy were diagnosed. Despite his health situation being deemed serious and the numerous fits he has had while in the F-Type prisons, he has not been treated and the illness has become advanced.

Applications have been made for him to be released but they have been rejected.

**HACI DEMYR;** A prisoner in Sincan F-Type Prison who suffers from Hepatitis B. His skull caved in as a result of blows to his skull. His abdominal and neck hernias have become more advanced. As a result of isolation his sense of hearing has suffered.

**ERCAN KARTAL;** A prisoner in Edirne F-Type Prison. As a result of the unhealthy conditions in the cells, he has developed a lung infection. He has a continual ringing in his ears and also has a kidney infection. The cause of his illnesses is that he is in an isolation cell where the noise of a constantly running toilet siphon penetrates.

**ALI OSMAN KOSE;** A prisoner in Edirne F-Type Prison. He is in an isolation cell and is unable to hear or see any person. His cell is on an upper floor and suffers from hearing problems as a result of constant noise from the machinery in neighbouring workshops. The illness in his ears is a constant buzzing and ringing in his ears and it makes him feel like banging his head on the walls. His cell has not been changed despite persistent requests and the availability of a suitable place in the prison.

**HATUN POLAT;** Prisoner in Kutahya E-Type Prison. Schizophrenia has been diagnosed. Her illness has become more advanced under prison conditions. Besides this she has a number of other serious illnesses. There is a tumour in the womb and cancer is suspected. An operation was carried out. After the operation cancer was suspected by the doctors to be present, and another operation is needed but her transportation to hospital has been prevented by the prison administration and the gendarmes. She has asthma. She has a stone in her gall bladder. A blockage is present in one of her kidney canals. Because of all these illnesses she needs properly organised treatment in a hospital, an operation and to be kept under supervision. Although her illnesses prevent her from continuing life in prison, a request to release her under CMUK 399 has been rejected.

**BEKIR SIMSEK;** A prisoner in Edirne F-Type Prison. He lost his memory as a result of forcible and incorrect medical intervention and he is also severely burned. He cannot remember anything after 1996. It is impossible for him to continue life in prison because of the burns on his body, memory loss and loss of balance.

**SEVINC SAHINGOZ;** A prisoner in Ankara Ulucanlar Prison. Illnesses are advanced bone decay and bone inflammation. The inflammation can also cause complications of the blood and even be dangerous, resulting in death if not treated. Sevinc Sahingoz's treatment needs to be performed by experts. But because of interference by the prison administration and soldiers she has not been removed to hospital for treatment.

**HUSEYIN SOLAK;** A prisoner in Sincan F-Type Prison. Shortage of breath, blockage of the left lung, chronic hepatitis B, a tear in the membrane of the left ear.

**SERDAL GELIR;** A prisoner in Sincan F-Type. Illness is degeneration of the nervous system. Took part in the 1996 Death Fast and has had

serious memory loss and balance problems since. Also suffers from chronic anaemia.

**SELMANI OZCAN;** A prisoner in Sincan F-Type Prison. After the 1996 Death Fast, he has suffered balance problems and visual problems and memory loss. His right leg is 4 cm shorter than the left.

**ABBAS BEKTAS;** A prisoner in Sincan F-Type Prison. Suffers from rachitic deficiency. Needs to be exposed to a sunlit environment and make constant use of vitamin D. Suffers from illness caused by exhaustion of body's store of vitamin B1. But in the unhealthy conditions of the cells, this illness is growing worse.

**CUMHUR BIRCAN;** A prisoner in Sincan F-Type Prison. Problems with heart rhythm, hypertension and blockages in the veins of the legs, venous deficiency present.

**TUNCER KARAKAYA;** Prisoner in Sincan F-Type Prison. Suffers from vertigo. This illness means he should not be left in isolation. Legbones inflamed and rotting.

**GULDEDE CEVEN;** Prisoner in Tekirdag F-Type Prison. Epilepsy. Psychological harm done by conditions in cells. Suffers from depression. Documents giving details of illness are present in Gunay Eren's letter.

**ZEKI DOGAN;** Prisoner in Tekirdag F-Type Prison. Suffering from deep depression as a result of the conditions in the cells. Details in Gunay Eren's letter.

**GENCALI KARABULUT;** Prisoner in Tekirdag F-Type Prison. Suffering from deep depression. Details of illness found in Gunay Eren's letter.

**TURAN BULUT;** Prisoner in Tekirdag F-Type Prison. He developed epilepsy in prison conditions. The illness grew worse in the cells under isolation conditions. Details given in Gunay Eren's letter.

**YASEMIN KARADAG;** Prisoner in Manisa E-Type Prison. Advanced kidney deficiency. Only one kidney. This kidney is being worn down and is in danger of being lost. It is impossible for her to remain in prison. In prison, her illness is life-threatening and is becoming more advanced.

**TULIN SOYHAN;** Prisoner in Kartal Special Type Prison. Suffers from fragmentation of the personality and in cell conditions this psychological condition is becoming more advanced. Suffers from continual nervous crises, from time to time she hurts herself and also does damage to her surroundings. A potential suicide. Cell conditions are damaging to her health and she must be released.

**NECLA CAN;** Prisoner in Kartal Special Type Prison. Blockages in blood vessels of neck and brain. Needs serious and constant treatment.

**SENGUL MERT;** Held in Bayrampasa State Hospital. Suffers from advanced lung deficiency and problems in the broncheal tubes. Lungs are three-quarters non-functioning. Needs regular treatment in a properly run hospital and to live in an open-air environment with clean air and plenty of oxygen.

December 7, 2002

**The TAYAD Families**



# THE ISOLATION CELLS CAUSE PEOPLE TO ROT

**The effects that isolation cells have on the health of human beings, as practiced in various countries, are something that has come on the agenda fairly often. Since December 19 deaths have been frequent among prisoners in the isolation cells, and so there have not been many possibilities to describe the effects that the isolation cells have.**

Guney Eren, one of the prisoners in Tekirdag F-Type Prison, summarised the health situation of prisoners in a letter to the TAYAD Families. The letter gives concrete information about two suicide attempts, F-Type cells that have all the characteristics of coffins and are centres for the physical and mental ruin of human beings, and it also describes events up to now.

## **Two suicide attempts in eight months**

One of these prisoners mentioned in the letter is Aziz Dogan. Those who shared his cell reported that he became ill eight months after being imprisoned (August 2001). „Twice he tried to hang himself with a sheet from the stairs leading up to the sleeping area in the `room'. We prevented him with difficulty. Once he attacked me. With Metin Abi's help I fought him off. with difficulty. Once he also took pills provided by the prison infirmary and swallowed almost all of them at once. In such a situation he was taken off to the infirmary and brought back after being given a sedative. He spends a large part of the day in bed. He only comes down at meal times. He eats a little, he walks around, a little inside, a little outside and we cannot say anything to him. If we do he becomes angry with us. if you look at his movements, behaviour, eyes and the things he says it is as though he is not here. He says "I smell a snake," as he goes past. If we say nothing he does not even listen to us. After one petition after another had been sent following the onset of his illness, months later (in June) he was transported."

It was necessary for Aziz to go to hospital once a month for a check-up but every month the necessary approval from the Ministry did not come.

Aziz is the son of a poor Kurdish family. His wife and son cannot come for visits because of poverty, only his brother can come and on March 18, when his brother came for a visit, a 60 minute visit was ended after 40 minutes because they were speaking Kurdish, and Aziz was brought back to his „room”.

After this, one of his friends in the „room” said: „When he was brought back early from the visit, he thought he was going to be beaten, that he had to phone his family and they would start crying. He had violent headaches, Later he started hearing voices and said he heard his mother's voice speaking in his ear. He told us this three days later. We tried so hard to tell him that it was not so. His family lived far away and economic problems basically prevented them from coming to visit. Later the voices in his ears became louder. He started crying, saying `the voices do not leave me alone.' This continued. There were crises. He could not look after himself. And when every alternative was exhausted we rang a bell to call the prison guards. Every

time he was brought back after being injected with a sedative.”

Gunay Eren continues to tell about events. Because it is not only about Aziz but about dozens of prisoners facing various types of health problem. A typical example is Zeki Dogan, who stays in the same cell and has also begun to be affected by the situation and have health problems.

## **Agitation, trembling, emptiness...**

Zeki Dogan was imprisoned following the November 5 (2001) massacre. At the time Zeki came, Aziz was not yet showing signs of illness. But after Aziz became ill, Zeki was also affected by psychological problems.

When Aziz had a crisis, he sometimes attacked Zeki. As time passed Zeki began to be affected by sleeplessness. His body started to tremble involuntarily.

Zeki himself explains what he is feeling: „Sometimes I become agitated for no reason. I start trembling. My heart starts pounding and I feel it all over my body. I cannot even write, nor do I walk around. I am trying to keep myself motivated... I feel a great emptiness inside.” After the situation arose Zeki put in a request. It described his situation. Moreover Metin Dogan also described Zeki's situation to the authorities. And yet another comrade put in a request of behalf of Zeki. However these efforts were fruitless. Zeki stayed there for over a month. And later he began to show signs of the same illness. His friend described his situation most recently. „He was affected by Aziz in the `room', he lived through the entire cell psychology and said that he would become like Aziz and he could not tolerate that. All he talked about was not developing a cell psychology and not becoming like Aziz. He could not sleep at night, he said that he would stay on guard until 4am near the heating system. He thought he would be killed by Aziz. This was because Aziz had tried to choke him. Here (in a new place) he said that at times his body was numb and his head was like felt. He said he had physical illnesses. His head and body felt numb, he shook, he felt cramp in his stomach and his heart was racing. It was going very fast. The radio got on his nerves. We tried to tell him to have confidence, he would not become like Aziz.

## **Isolation Cell Epilepsy**

These are two examples from three-person cells. Certainly it is unnecessary to add that the situation of those who stay in isolation cells is even worse. One of those in this situation is Turan Bulut.

Turan has been a prisoner since 1996. In the first days of the F-Type prisons, he was held in an isolation cell for a month and a half. During this time he developed an illness

similar to epilepsy. From time to time he fainted. On several occasions when this happened, he hit his head on the concrete floor. After applications were made, a brain scan was taken in July 2002. No physiological illness appeared. But the fainting attacks continued. When he went to the toilet, friends had to watch in case he fell as a result of a fainting attack and hit his head. This is how he described his own situation: „The neurologist said, the fainting attacks are psychological, you don't need to worry about them, make sure you don't.' In these conditions, how could I do what he said?\" How could Turan do as he said? Of course he couldn't. He underwent a crisis.

He became ill on October 15. While his friend was away on a visit, he fell down the stairs, hit his head, had a crisis that lasted half an hour during which his head and back kept hitting the concrete floor.

This is what his comrade said: „Yesterday he became ill while I was on a visit. He fell down the stairs. I returned from the visit. Yesterday he went to the prison infirmary. Today (October 16) he went to hospital. Since yesterday morning he has not eaten or drunk anything. He shakes in a way that

is like having contractions. If you wake him to ask him a question he gets up with a start. He says his head hurts and there is pain in every part of his body. He supposed he was in the „section\" (a term for the interrogation room at police headquarters).

He was given an injection in hospital and medication was prescribed, then he was brought back. Following this crisis and falling down, for a time he was unable to remember any events after 1995. Then he started to rally and remember more recent things. Most recently he has been able to remember comrades, though with a great effort. But at any moment a new crisis is possible.

We will continue to report the health situation of prisoners in the F-Type prisons. Almost the whole world knows the situation of those who were incarcerated in Germany's Stammheim Prison. Everyone will also hear of and learn about the effects on human beings of the isolation conditions in the F-Type prisons, conditions which supposedly do not exist.

*December 23, 2002*

## ***THIS IS WHAT HAS BEEN EXPERIENCED BY THOSE IN TEKIRDAG ,F TYPE PRISON, YESTERDAY AND TODAY...***

*On entering Tekirdag F-Type Prison...*

*In the nearly two years that Tekirdag F-Type Prison has been open, the prisoners and convicts there have been subjected to many attacks, arbitrary practices and pressure. In the F-Types, torture starts right from the moment **you** arrive at the prison gate...*

The entrance to Tekirdag F-Type Prison is a section called „under the door\". Without exception, the „welcome\" everyone gets is a beating.

After the prisoners' identity documents, fingerprints, registration and other procedures have been carried out, they are taken to a room accompanied by the prison director and are subjected to dishonourable pressure from a bunch of guards and soldiers, pressure which goes under the name of a „search\". They want prisoners to take all their clothes off here. (Even though prisoners have been searched many times before arriving here.) Even the most ordinary human being reacts against this dishonourable situation, this provides an excuse for them to receive a beating from the guards.

And the shaving of heads and beards, making people lie face down, bursting their lip while searching their mouths, forcing them to have their anuses searched, scattering their belongings left and right, stealing them, swearing at prisoners, insulting and threatening them - all these things are quite openly practiced and known about. And it is stated that „F-Types are not like other prisons, everybody should watch their step.\" These practices happen to everyone, without exception. We will just give one example of what people go through...

The new prisoners brought here in February 2001 from Kartal Special Type Prison experienced all these practices in various forms.

Erkan Bulbul was subjected to a serious attack on arriving at Tekirdag F-Type, despite the fact that he was on the 30th day of a hunger strike, and his stomach and chest in particular

were kicked and punched. His hair and beard were forcibly shaved off.

Ercan Gullu was attacked in a similar way, and in addition his teapot and other belongings for making drinks were confiscated and not returned. When the guards were told he was on hunger strike they seized him by the head and arms and took him in front of a vehicle where there was food, they offered him some, saying that nobody would learn that he had been eating, and they did these things to him as a form of torture.

**The isolation rooms...**

***THIS IS WHAT HAS BEEN EXPERIENCED BY THOSE IN TEKIRDAG F TYPE PRISON, YESTERDAY AND TODAY...***

After being tortured during the search on arrival at the F-Type prison, the prisoners are put in isolation rooms. The aim of the isolation room is to break the resistance of newly arrived prisoners right away, to make them feel alone and to create indifferent and unconditional obedience towards every kind of illegality and arbitrary pressure imposed by the administration. They spend days in the isolation room and the needs of prisoners are met in an arbitrary manner, depending on whether or not they obey. Those who are on hunger strike do not have any of their needs met and their own money is not given to them. The food of those who are not on hunger strike is brought to the door and the guards push it in with their feet.

New arrivals at the prison do not have needs like cigarettes, water, lighters, newspapers and so on met until they emerge from the isolation room. During roll calls the prisoners are pressurised to stand at attention and loudly shout out their own names and surnames. Those who object to these practices encounter an increased level of torture and threats.

The prisoners named Erkan Bulbul, Ali Sahin, Adiguzel Ozdemir, Mehmet Ali Tokay, Ercan Gullu, Oktay Yildiz, Gultekin Toprak, Bulent Coskun, Tuncel Ayaz and Zeynel Karatas were transferred from Kartal Special Type Prison to Tekirdag F-Type Prison and immediately all of them were subjected to similar practices.

Again Halil Ibrahim Sahin, Hasan Gokhan, Ismail Bahadir, Muharrem Bal and Mehmet Koc were transferred from Kandira F-Type to Tekirdag and were subjected to similar attacks and practices.

On March 2, 2002 Serdar Karacelik, Birol Abatay, Turan Bulut, Suleyman Acar, Gunay Eren, Ivan Eren and Riza Yildirim and 10 prisoners whose names we do not know were brought here from Edirne F-Type and subjected to similar practices.

The ordinary prisoners Umit Gunger and Serdar Karacelik were injured in the December 19 operation and despite their wounded condition they were tortured on arrival at Tekirdag. Serdar Karacelik's right foot and left knee had bullet and shotgun pellet wounds, but these areas received blows and the prison director himself threatened to kick him. When Birol Abatay was transferred to Tekirdag from Edirne F-Type, he was forcibly shaved and his hair was shorn, and when there was a commotion his lip was split after he was struck several times. Even though the prison doctor issued a report confirming this, when charges were made against the prison staff who attacked him, nothing came of it.

On March 3, 2001, a group of 30 people were transferred and exiled from Edirne F-Type to Tekirdag F-Type and were exposed to the same attacks at the prison entrance. Among them were Hakki Akca, Erdal Koc, Nurettin Erenler, Mustafa Tosun, Gencali Karabulut, Asian Bahar, Hasan Sahingoz, Kemal Ayhan, Guldede Ceven, Umit Gunger, Cahit Solmaz, Mehmet Kulaksiz... At the prison entrance everything was taken from them, their hair and beards were shaved off, their personal belongings were scattered everywhere and confiscated, they were threatened and then put in cells. Everyone being brought to the isolation rooms of the prison cells was gripped by the arms, sometimes by the neck, prevented from looking to left or right and kicked into their cell.

The ordinary prisoner Halil Ibrahim Sahin and those in the neighbouring cells were attacked by the prison administrator and 30 or 40 guards. Those who were exiled here from Edirne F-Type had handcuffs attached to their wrists and in addition they were chained to chairs.

This is what was experienced by those who were taken from the isolation rooms and put in cells: in their first days in Tekirdag F-Type they were put on the ground floor during counts and pressurised to stand at attention, and call out their names and surnames one after the other. For days and weeks everybody who did not conform to these sanctions was attacked by a large group of guards as well as the prison director and were kicked, slipped and punched by them. Any requests by prisoners that did not end in the words „I submit

a petition” and „respectfully” were not dealt with. Guards did not take their petitions. At every roll call — and note, this is not a search but a roll call - they were searched thoroughly, harassed, their belongings arbitrarily strewn about and attempts were made to steal them. Those who protested against this were attacked, threatened, put in isolation, made the subject of proceedings and other sanctions were also put on the agenda. Newspapers started to be brought in days late and handed in during the evening meal. The essential needs of prisoners were either not available from the canteen at all or were only available at inflated prices. Basic cleaning materials like soap, detergent, brooms or buckets were not given and when money was handed over they were still not given. The doors to the courtyard were opened in a totally arbitrary way at noon, or in the morning, or during the day or indeed at any hour, and closed just as arbitrarily.

Letters and accusations (concerning abuses) were placed under restriction and despite hundreds of accusations by prisoners about being attacked on entering the prison and about practices in the cells, not one single person responsible for these things has been brought before a prosecutor, nor were statements taken. Those who are ill are not taken to the prison infirmary, if people are able to go on account of being injured as a result of attacks, reports are not submitted concerning their injuries or no importance is attached to them. Serdar Karacelik, Serif Kurtoglu and Volkan Kartal were removed from a three-person cell in June 2001 for arbitrary reasons and forcibly placed in isolation cells. In these cells the door to the courtyard was not opened, some belongings were not handed to the prisoners and basic items like tables and chairs were not given. In protest against this situation, the ordinary prisoner Serdar Karacelik announced that he would take nothing except water and sugar. When he did not back down despite threats and pressure from the prison administration, the cell doors were opened three days later and belongings, a table and chair were handed over. Serdar Karacelik was punished with 15 days' denial of visiting rights for his behaviour. It was stated as an excuse that „the decision was taken not to put him in a three-person cell because he formed organisational ties in the prison”.

Those who are in the cells are forced to change them on arbitrary pretexts, and people who do not know each other are put next to each other in a deliberate effort to cause problems.

During roll calls, those in every cell who do not stand up and call out their names in order are attacked, threatened and cursed. Their belongings are scattered and the entire prison is reprimanded. As a result of these attacks, Kemal Ayhan's skull was fractured. Halil Ibrahim Sahin received damage to the bones of his hands and even though a year has passed they have not healed.

Letters and requests are not accepted and letters to prisoners are not given to them on the pretext that „they did not stand up”. Letters for Erkan Yirdem, who is on the Death Fast, Salih Cenik and Vedat Duskuner who share the cell with him, are delivered to them by means of the prison staff throwing the letters in their faces. Nurettin Erenler, who stays in a one-person cell, was attacked by guards who crowded into his cell during a roll call, knocked him about and struck him.

#### **Experiences of those who go to or come from court...**

Prisoners going to hospital or to court are subjected to a search as soon as they leave the door of their cell. Shoes are forcibly



removed or else they are compelled to pass in front of an X-ray machine. Before you pass through the X-ray they want you to remove your shoes, belt, glasses, jacket and anything on you. This is despite the fact that the X-ray machine is designed to detect metal and other objects which are not supposed to go into the prison, thus making a search unnecessary. But things work out differently in practice. Even before one passes through the X-ray machine, an unexpected alarm may sound and the prisoners might be told to undress. If they do not and simply wish to pass through the sensor, an attack and a commotion will erupt as the guards try to undress them by force.

Shoes are removed and scattered around. Even if some items are removed there may still be problems going through the X-ray machine because the machine is put at the most sensitive setting and even a zip or a trouser button may be enough to set it off. Thus the X-ray always has the potential to create the basis for an attack and the prison staff are not afraid to exploit that.

Ivan Dogan, Tayfun Koc and Ufuk Ince, who were brought to the Istanbul DGM (State Security Court) on March 4, 2002 to attend a hearing, were attacked one after the other while passing through the X-ray machine. Ufuk Ince suffered injury to his nose as a result of the attack. After the attack he went to the infirmary and received a medical report testifying to his injury. Despite the medical proof a later complete about the incident he lodged was unsuccessful.

Taylan Aydogdu was attacked and beaten while passing through the device on the way back from court. The doctor was indifferent and haughty when he went some days later to the infirmary to obtain a medical report about his quite obvious injuries. The doctor had Taylan removed when he complained, thus creating a basis for him to be attacked again. After his family complained Taylan was brought to the Prosecutor's Office to make a statement but nothing came of it.

Muharrem Bal was attacked on November 9, 2001 on the way to court, when he was passing through an X-ray, and he dislocated his back. He has had back pains ever since. He complained about the incident but nothing came of it.

Selami Kurnaz was attacked when he was being brought to a hearing in Istanbul, just as he was passing through the X-ray machine, and received injuries from blows. He complained about the incident but without result.

Ozgun Saglam rejected an arbitrary search in July 2001 at the X-ray machine, and was then taken to a prison department where there were no surveillance cameras and he was there beaten and threatened. Cengiz Bal was attacked on the way

to court in Istanbul because he would not take off his belt. His complaint about the incident achieved no result.

And not just here... The attacks and arbitrary behaviour also continue in the prisoner transport and in the DGM itself.

After Mehmet Kulaksiz, Riza Yildirim and Hikmet Kale shouted slogans outside the DGM in 2001, their hands were chained to the vehicle seats.

In August 2001 Serdar Karacelik was taken to court. Because he rejected an arbitrary search by the soldiers, he was chained to the vehicle seat and taken to Istanbul and back in this manner. While being taken to court in July 2001, Hasan Sahingoz was attacked at the X-ray machine and his bare feet were stepped on and crushed. His hands were chained to the seat in the transport vehicle.

Biro] Abatay and 10 other people were put in a small vehicle which travelled for hours without ventilation, causing five of the prisoners to faint. One of them had to be taken to hospital. When Zeki Dogan returned from his November 20, 2002 hearing in Istanbul, his wrist was badly swollen because on the long journey the soldier in charge of him had deliberately tightened his handcuffs. He still suffers pain. All complaints about all these occurrences have yielded no result.

None of the duty personnel even had investigative proceedings started against them. Prisoners' shoes are forcibly removed. Prisoners took off their shoes and went to the hearing barefoot as a form of protest. Then the state decided that the shoes were a weapon for use against the soldiers and a protest against the court. So it started proceedings against the prisoners.

Handcuffs are not removed even to go to the toilet. Cigarettes, matches and lighters are given or not given depending on the caprice of the senior soldier in charge. The journeys to court take place in poor hygiene conditions, in vehicles divided into cells.

Eating during a 12 hour journey in handcuffs is very difficult, especially when food like jam or butter is distributed. Going to and from court is an additional form of torture. With hands chained to seats it is almost inevitable that prisoners' arms or wrists will be broken if the vehicle crashes. This is all derived from a state of mind dating from slavery times, enshrined in no laws or statutes but still put into practice.

### **Searches and pillage...**

In a high-security establishment where all those who come and go are strictly checked, searches take place every two weeks in the form of destruction and pillage.

During searches everything is laid waste and all objects that appeal to the guards are simply stolen, openly or covertly. Letters which have already been checked are sometimes removed individually from their envelopes and left lying in the room. All kinds of newspaper articles, photos, written material etc. are confiscated at a whim. Those who object are accused of endangering security and a written record is made, leading to punishment. This was why the prisoner Ergun Gun was given a six-month disciplinary punishment and a one month denial of correspondence. If somebody objects to the searches the staff simply do more damage and leave everything lying in the middle of the room. Even items bought from the canteen and not opened, such as sugar, tea or detergent are opened and poured on the floor. Half-full garbage sacks, which are supposed to be put out when they are full are emptied outside in the courtyard (the „courtyard”

is no bigger than the cell) or else in the middle of the cell itself. Mustafa Capardasa, Faruk Kadioglu, Ergun Gun, Hasan Gokhan, Ismail Bahadir, Ayhan Ozyurt, Uzeyir Karahasanoglu, Biro] Ozan, Bayram Saz and many others have had the garbage emptied into their cells in this way. Some writings of Hakki Akca, Suleyman Acar and Umit Gunger were confiscated during a cell search in the middle of 2002 and when a complaint was made, Suleyman Acar had his right to correspondence taken away. During one of these arbitrary cell searches presents made personally by Fikret Akar were secretly stolen, as was a songbook belonging to Ozgur Hancioglu and an address book belonging to Serdar Karacelik.

Moreover, it has become a general practice for books, archive materials, medical prescriptions, home-made newspapers and magazines and plastic bottles to be confiscated by the staff. All complaints are fruitless. Either it is claimed that there is not enough proof or else no investigation is carried out because the prison administration tells lies about the incident. The prison director and a lawyer are supposed to be present during cell searches but it never happens. And because they are not present when items are stolen no written proof can be supplied. If enquiries are made about the items later, it is said that they have not been found, or else no reply is received whatsoever.

#### **Letters and complaints by prisoners ...**

Letters are the most basic and important means of communication for prisoners. But one can only guess how many letters coming in and out disappear. One is forced to send letters by registered mail or a courier service and spend more. Some of the letters coming in or going out are deemed „disturbing" and are destroyed. Four registered letters Mehmet Kulaksiz sent to people on the Death Fast were destroyed, even down to the stamps. A complaint about it proved futile, for reasons that are well-known. A letter was sent to Fikret Akar in January 2002 mentioning an article about the Death Fast in the New York Times. For this reason the letter did not reach Fikret Akar and was destroyed. A letter sent to Serdar Karacelik in August 2001 was removed because a photo was glued to the paper. When he complained about this arbitrary and unjust measure he was told there was no proof and proceedings were stopped. A letter sent to Ergun Gun was returned to the sender. It also contained a note from the prison administration warning him not to send such letters again. Ercan Gullu wrote to the prisoner Ali Sahin, who is on the Death Fast and is in Bayrampasa Prison Hospital. The letter was returned with the claim that there was no such person. But Ali Sahin is still there. The letters that Nurettin Kaya, Savas Oner and Veysel Demir jointly wrote in August 2002 and sent by registered post to Kutahya were destroyed because they had been written jointly. All complaints were unsuccessful. One could give dozens of other examples of arbitrariness in relation to letters. For example, the price of stamps was raised from 200,000 lira to 400,000. This was abolished following protests. Yet a further problem arises from the „reading commission" which crosses out words and sentences it finds disturbing in letters, thereby making the letter partly illegible.

#### **Health problems and transportation to hospital:**

Arbitrariness and indifference are dominant here. Nobody who goes to the prison infirmary is given a proper

examination, the symptoms are merely noted, medication given and the prisoner is sent back. Some doctors do make efforts but the prison staff prevent a proper doctor-patient relationship developing. This adversely affects therapy. Even though it is a high-security prison, searches are carried out every time people go in and out of the infirmary and doctors and patients are not left alone in the treatment room. Because the doctors do nothing, dozens of cases of illness are not treated. Not only is there no examination but sometimes the wrong medication is prescribed, causing serious health damage. Complaints are futile.

Sinan Toku went to the infirmary with a problem. The medication he was given worsened his condition and he had to be hospitalised. In hospital he was told that the wrong medication had been prescribed and he was given new medication and a new appointment was made for him to be examined. But he was not able to come to the follow-up appointment.

Fikret Akar needed a filling, but he was told that the equipment for that was not available and they tried to have his tooth removed. He refused and with difficulty he managed to get a hospital appointment. But treatment there was prevented on the grounds that they did not have the right equipment. And then he was not able to have an eye check-up - the excuse was that he did not have 40 million lira in his account.

Ahmet Aksu has chronic sinusitis, headaches and shortage of breath. But the needed medication is not supplied, supposedly because it is too expensive, and the doctor sends him back with an aspirin and does not bother to give him an examination. When he complained of weakness the doctor told him: „Eat something and it will go away." But he feels as unwell as he did before.

Adiguzel Ozdemir fell ill suddenly and was only taken to the infirmary after hours had passed. The doctor there thought nothing was wrong and prescribed medication that poisoned him. So he lost all confidence and no longer takes any medication. Prisoners' appeals to be transferred to hospital for the treatment they cannot receive in the infirmary are only granted after numerous applications. And even those who make it to hospital often don't get treated because of the arbitrary behaviour of the soldiers. Turan Bulut was taken to hospital twice for blood tests. But he could not be treated because the soldiers would not remove his handcuffs. Turgay Kurt has had eye trouble since October 2002. He was taken to hospital after long delays but he was returned without treatment because the soldiers did not remove his handcuffs in the treatment room. When he complained to the state prosecutor the latter replied, „What if you had escaped?"



Erhan Ozkaya was taken to hospital three times because of his problems. He was supposed to be X-rayed but did not have 30 million lira in his account. So he just went to the hospital and back. He was only X-rayed in the end after a payment was made.

In October 2002, Ozgur Hancioglu rejected treatment in the infirmary in the presence of prison guards, so he was sent back without receiving treatment. When he complained, nothing was done. The infirmary doctor swore at Emrah Akbaba and threatened him, because his application for medication did not conclude with „Respectfully yours”. Gencali Karabulut, Guldede Ceren and Aziz Dogan have psychological problems and suffer from frequent attacks but nothing is done.

The health problems that arise from medication and treatment are accompanied by problems arising from lack of hygiene in the cells. The water is only turned on for 20-25 minutes a day. Because it is drainage water, it is not sterilised and so is unhealthy. Nor can this water be boiled, because prisoners have to pay for electricity. Warm water is only available once a week for 20-25 minutes. Often it does not flow. Sometimes there is no warm water for weeks. Anyway, it is impossible for three people to take a shower in just 20 minutes. Besides, there is no warning as to which days the warm water will be turned on. Sometimes it is turned on in the early morning hours, sometimes in the middle of the night. It depends on the whim of the prison administration.

#### **The canteen and medication ...**

Necessary items like underwear, towels, stockings and so on which are brought to the prisoners by their families are not taken. In the canteen, these items are far more expensive than usual. In this case the most basic human needs of the prisoners are not met unless their families hand money over. Moreover, items ordered from the canteen are not supplied on arbitrary grounds, or else the wrong items are delivered. This can go on for weeks, and items that are really needed like strong thread, mirrors, scissors, adhesive tape and so on are not sold. Even items for cutting hair are not sold or made available. Sometimes even items like thread and mirrors which were previously on sale in the canteen are later removed from the cells. The tokens needed for making purchases from the canteen are handed out one by one. If something is needed and it is ordered it often happens that it is not supplied, nor can it be bought, so problems arise with regard to meetings one's needs.

#### **Denial of the right to a defence**

Firstly, prisoners are unable to meet their lawyers for long periods, because of arbitrary searches. If you can see your lawyer you can only prepare your defence based on the points that they themselves have noticed. Prisoners cannot take paper, pens/pencils or writing materials with them. So they forget many details of their conversations with their lawyer and are not able to incorporate this in their defence. The lawyers' case files can only be handed to the prisoners if the prison administration gives permission.

It is entirely up to the caprice of the prison administration whether prisoners get to read the files, and how long they are allowed to if they are. For example the case files of Mehmet Kulaksiz were only handed to him a month after his lawyer submitted them. And the files of Ali Kaplan, Nurettin Kaya, Serdar Karacelik and Galip Dogan were not handed in to them

for a long time and this only changed after a complaint was made. Frustrating the right to a defence is not just observed in meeting the lawyers. Hundreds of complaints about violations of legality in the prison regulations have been unsuccessful up to the present. Or else legal proceedings are avoided. And the court of appeal is prevented from taking it up because one is forced to exceed the 24-hour deadline since the prison administration only gave the response of the prosecutor's office after this delay elapsed. Until recently the prosecutor's office did not even think it necessary to investigate complaints. If somebody was brought to a hearing, the prosecutor did not deal with it but left the details to a secretary. The complaint lodged at the second Tekirdag penal court about such inexpert and illegal behaviour was unsuccessful.

Fikret Akar's defence, which he wished to lodge with the state prosecutor's office in October 2001 was taken away by a prison guard. The pretext was that it contained sentences critical of the F-Type prisons. Fikret Akar stated that this was an arbitrary excuse and wanted written proof. After that he was taken to a room and beaten. (He made complaints about these incidents on 8.10.2001 and 10.10.2001.) At the same time the defence of Gencali Karabulut was taken away by prison guards. Nothing is known about what has been done in relation to these charges, which concern events not covered by surveillance cameras. Oktay Yildiz was not brought before a court, on the grounds that there had been no judicial request. Notes that Hikmet Kale and Mehmet Kulaksiz made for their defence were removed during a search and never returned. The right to a defence was excluded. Letters that Birol Abatay sent to a friend accused in the same case which offered a pattern for what defence to make disappeared. Prisoners accused in the same case are not allowed to see each other, cannot hold joint meetings with the lawyers and so there are serious problems in preparing a defence. The visiting day for lawyers is Friday.

The searches which happen every two weeks take place as well as cell transfers take place on these days and this considerably shortens the amount of time prisoners have to speak to their lawyers. So the right to a defence is being undercut. In addition to the difficulties the lawyers have, there is another problem. Mustafa Capardasa could not see his lawyer, so he wrote letters to the lawyers Bedia Cicek and Ali Ryza Dizdar on January 17, 2002. But the lawyers never received these letters.

#### **Some violations of rights and attacks that are experienced**

Ali Kaplan was sent a watch by his family in October 2002. This was rendered useless and then given to him. He asked the prison administration about it and was given the unserious reply that „It was already broken, so make a complaint about that.” When Yilmaz Coskun intervened at the visitor's cabin in October 2002 because his wife was verbally abused, he was subjected to attacks and threats. His complaint was not followed up and he was punished. The cell of Turgay Kurt, Orhan Ogur and Mahir Ates was attacked by the director and guards in July 2002, on the pretext that they were carrying out a search. They were attacked when they sought to defend themselves. As a consequence of these attacks Mahir and Turgay received contusions as well as abrasions to the arms and legs.

In addition Orhan Ogur broke his nail and it started to bleed. After the attack the assailants left the cell quickly. The wounded were treated in the infirmary only hours later, and it was done in a quite negligent manner. Their complaints about the attack were fruitless. As if that were not enough, they received a six-month disciplinary punishment and a 45-day denial of correspondence. At the same time they had problems with the water supply. As if it were not enough that they had no water for days, they also received nothing to eat because they could not wash their eating utensils. Because of the stench and the filth, the toilet could not be used. Their cells were changed after the prisoners complained. In August 2002 there was a problem with a plug in the cell of Nurettin Kaya, Veysel Demir and Savas Oner. A technician came, but so did eight to 10 guards and they carried out an arbitrary search in the cell and laid waste to everything.

Serdar Karacelik looked out the window on to the corridor in February 2002. By chance somebody was going past and he said hello. Then a horde of guards charged into his cell.

This event was recorded in writing and when he rejected the threat made to him about looking out the window, he was forcibly brought to see the prison director. Serdar Karacelik asked the latter what law stated that it was forbidden to look out a window and asked if it was written down anywhere. The deputy director said, „in my law” and demanded a statement. When Serdar refused the statement, he was attacked and wounded. Later he made a complaint asking whether it was some law of the prison director. But he never received a reply and the matter ended there. And when he was back in an isolation cell he was personally attacked by the head guard and the prison director for resisting an arbitrary cell search.

Nurettin Kaya ordered newspapers from the canteen in October 2002. Although he had money in his account, he was not given the newspapers with the excuse that no money was forthcoming. Later money was taken out of his account for the newspapers that were never delivered. All his complaints were fruitless, his money was stolen from him.

Ahmet Guzel, Mehmet Kulaksiz, Hikmet Kale and Faruk Kadioglu were not given photos of family members in October 2002, on the pretext that it had nothing to do with them. Complaints were fruitless. The complaints of all prisoners about the execution of Yunus Guzel in the Istanbul Police Department were not pursued on the grounds that it had nothing to do with them. (If the massacre and torture of political prisoners did not concern them, the question is, whom does it concern, that is an entirely different aspect.) The complaints to the prison administration about their arbitrary behaviour were fruitless.

When Sinan Keskin exchanged a bedsheet, he was threatened and a written statement was made about it because a corner of the sheet was torn. This was done by the same prison administration that had given him the torn sheet in the first place. In August-September 2001, charges were made against Oktay Yildiz, Gultekin Toprak and Ercan Gullu because their bedsheets were torn at the edges and they received a six month disciplinary punishment and a one month deprivation of correspondence.

When items belonging to Turan Bulut went missing while he was being transported from Edirne in March 2001, he made a complaint. The administrations of Edirne and Tekirdag F-Type prisons accused each other but a positive result never came of it.

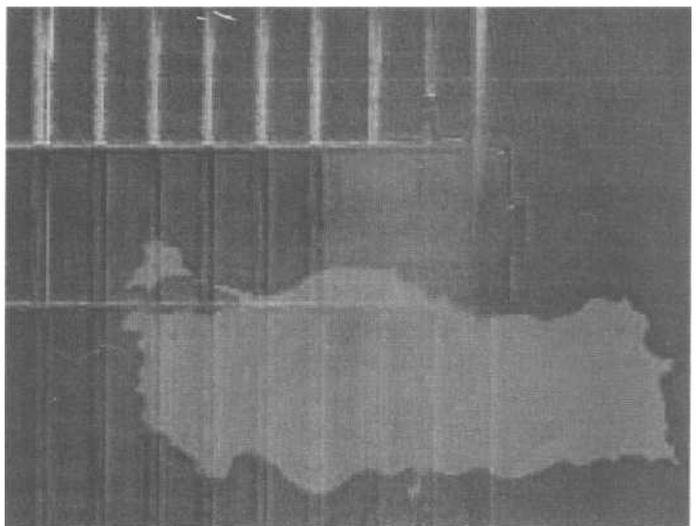
On November 15, 2002 a book of poetry from Ahmet Tellil to Yilmaz Gok as well as an encyclopaedia sent to Ayhan Ozyurt and three books sent to Ufuk Ince as well as a book sent to Hakki Akca all had their bindings torn. The excuse was that they were made of a hard material. Complaints about the incident were futile.

In a cell occupied by Erkan Bulbul, Taylan Aydogdu and Cemal Agirman in August 2002, broken chair was not replaced for weeks. Complaints about it were not processed. Only after their families complained were steps taken to replace it. In a cell occupied by Mustafa Capardasa, Faruk Kadioglu and Ergun Gun a spoon made out of soft material broke. Although the prisoners made any number of applications to the administration to replace the spoon, this wish was not granted, and they were told over and over again to make an application. Thus a simple problem was deliberately turned into a complicated one.

Selami Kurnaz was forced to undress and be searched at the prison entrance while returning from a court appearance on August 1, 2002.

Vedat Duskuner was brought to Bayrampasa Prison Hospital at the end of 2001 because he could not use his arm. Although treatment was not complete, he was brought back to prison. At the entrance he was pressurised to undergo a humiliating search. When he refused he was attacked and the attackers particularly targeted his lame arm. After the attack he was completely unable to move his arm for two days.

Various torture methods are used: In some cells a power cut is triggered from outside. In others loud music is played, after the corridor window is left open. Restrictions on books



continue. One person can have a maximum of three books. Any more than that are confiscated by the administration. A prisoner has no money. Another wants to give him a kettle because he already has two and wants to deposit one. But this was not permitted on the grounds that he has first to ask the Justice Minister. So a deliberate effort is made to disadvantage prisoners who have little money and to undermine solidarity among prisoners. Family members who do not speak Turkish have difficulties at the visiting cabins and their visits are hampered. Those who speak Kurdish are sworn at, threatened and even physically attacked. The meeting of the prisoner Hasan Gokhan with his mother who travelled specially from her home town was repeatedly interrupted and undermined and the threat of stopping the

visit altogether was made. A complaint to the prison administration about it was at first rejected because they disputed that the incident had happened, but later a request was processed. But nothing further came of it. In the visiting cabins the light is turned off before the visit ends, and family members are told in a coarse and insolent way that the visit is over. This is done to put pressure on the families.

Newspapers brought by visitors and not banned are arbitrarily held back for days and only handed over after numerous applications. Food is often left in the corridor uncovered and distributed in ways damaging to health. The guards bellow while handing out the food, which often has hairs and dead flies etc. in it. The food is sometimes shoved right into the cell through a slit in the door in a humiliating manner. Those who were wounded in the prison storming of December 19, who still bear the traces of innumerable gas bombs on their bodies, have never received treatment. Fifteen of the victims of the assault have symptoms like hair falling out, itching, reddening of the skin, a burning sensation, pimples, shortness of breath etc. The applications to treat these prisoners in hospital were dismissed as trivial. Serdar Karacelik received gunshot wounds in the right leg, the left knee and the hand on December 19, but was not treated for a long time.

When he was in Edirne, he received an appointment to go to the hospital on March 2, 2001. But he was transferred to Tekirdag the same day. So his treatment was prevented and he has had to become accustomed to foreign bodies. Kemal Ayhan made a sacrifice action while on the Death Fast. The consequences have never been properly treated. Since bits of wire have never been removed from his foot, his problems continue.

After a court hearing, they wanted Halil Ibrahim Sahin to strip naked. When he objected, they said: „This is an F-Type prison. When you come back you are stripped naked and searched.” Then they attacked him and undressed him by force. When he was then ordered to undress and refused, he was attacked again. Complaints about the attacks were futile. Nurettin Erenler has been held in an isolation cell from March 3, 2001, the day he arrived in the F-Type prison of Tekirdag, until the present (December 2002).

This is just a small selection of what is experienced in Tekirdag F-Type Prison.

P.S.: The information set out here is from a letter of complaint by the prisoner Umit Gunger, who wrote to the State Prosecutor's Office of the Republic on December 12, 2002.

## ISOLATION PRISONS *in Spain*

### Short history of the prison struggle in Spain

At the end of the sixties and the beginning of the seventies there was a revival of social and revolutionary struggles in the whole of Europe, also in Spain. Strikes, occupations of factories and the formation of independent workers' councils („asambleas") rose together with the renewed armed struggle, like the one of the MIL and the Autonomous Groups. The transition of the fascist dictatorship to a „democratic state” in the middle of the seventies made no difference, at least on this point: the repression was severe and the prisons were overpopulated. The struggle for the liberation of political prisoners altered quickly towards a struggle for the liberation of all prisoners and the abolition of the prison system.

In January 1977, with the `Manifesto of the prisoners of Cartabanchel', the regular prisoners intervened in the struggle. A rebellion in prisons all over the country broke out, with 35 mutinies and a number of protest actions. The prisoners organised the struggle in general meetings in the prisons and in February 1977 the COPEL (coordination of prisoners in struggle) is a fact. After a hundred young people were beaten severely in a correctional institution and three detainees were stabbed, a bloody uprising started; 26 prisoners cut their stomachs open the moment the police arrived, others swallowed various objects, one prisoner who was transported to hospital managed to escape. In the hallways of the prison, an injured prisoner writes the word COPEL on the walls... The day after, 98 detainees are transferred to various prisons and 40 self-mutilators disappear into a penitentiary cell. From that moment until 1979, uprisings, hunger strikes, refusal to do prison work... All these continue unceasingly all over the

country. The demands of the COPEL contain amelioration of prison conditions, amnesty for all `social prisoners' and the end of all laws and structures inherited from the Franco era. The answer of the state was, like always, a dual one: on the one hand, negotiations, on the other, brutal repression. The COPEL was infiltrated and the most active members eliminated. Many of them were locked up in the newly-built special prison of Herrera de la Mancha. Herrera is the first of a series of prisons specially constructed to observe, divide and isolate the prisoners, where physical and psychological terror are practised systematically and where we already find



**FJO ,4.00**

M'a1.YUY !!! A/TU'i'irib IMi üfll'i1wl. iñA1111EYHTU

the characteristics of a prison within a prison, or what will be the FIES later on. In these prisons, in the words of the general director of the prisons Carlos Garcia Valdes, the `maladjusted' or those considered the `most dangerous' detainees are locked up. The running of these prisons was also in the hands of the Guardia Civil, not the regular prison guards. On arriving at Herrera de la Mancha, the prisoner is put in first degree observation (total isolation). If he does not infringe any regulations, he is put in second degree observation, where the differences in treatment are minimal (a little bit longer in

the exercise area, with a couple of other prisoners). When the prisoner goes through all the various degrees without infringement, he is transferred to another prison.

In spite of the very repressive conditions, uprisings also break out in these prisons. For example, in Meco (Madrid), at the beginning of the eighties, where the prisoners set up the APRE (Asociacion de Presos en Regimen Especial, Association of Special Regime Prisoners). The struggle is ruthless, the prisoners refuse every form of dialogue and a radical minority wants only one thing: to kill the guards and policemen, seize their weapons and fight to the death. The repression that follows, and the fact that in the eighties the revolutionary elan ebbed away, meant that there was almost no struggle in the prisons for nearly a decade.

At the beginning of the nineties there is a small revival of the collective prison struggle. On June 27, 1989, there is a mutiny in Puerto de Santa Maria, the insurgents are transferred to Herrera de la Mancha and put into isolation. In the same year, the political prisoners of GRAPO also start a hunger strike that will last 435 days and bring a lot of commotion. On February 14, 1990 the prisoners took hostage guards in Alcala-Meco. They demand the release of Juan Redondo Fernandez and of the prisoners in Herrera de la Mancha. In March, uprisings follow at Daroca, Nanclares de la Oca, Caceres II, Alcala-Meco and Fontcalent. In October of that year the APRE(r) (APRE reconstituida) is established. On March 18, 1991 there is a gain a new revolt in Herrera de la Mancha, in support of APRE(r), followed by another one on July 11, 1991. As a reaction to these revolts the state installs the FIES. The most active members of APRE are locked up under the FIES regime; and a lot of those who have now started the fight again, are already in their 10<sup>x</sup>, 15<sup>"</sup> or 20<sup>h</sup> year in the darkest dungeons of the Spanish prison system.

### FIES

The FIES was introduced through a simple circular under the management of the General Director of the prison Antonio Asuncion, now head of the Socialist Party in Alicante. Although the Constitutional Court temporarily put an end to the FIES regime in 1994, after a complaint by two prisoners, it still exists to this day. The new penitentiary regulations, under article 93, provide a regime consisting of:

**ISOLATION**, with an individual exercise cage for a maximum of three hours with a maximum of one other person.

**UNLIMITED IN TIME**, normally the statute is revised every three months but in reality it is extended every time so that isolation lasts years, even decades.

**LIVING CONDITIONS**, totally up to the whims of the penitentiary centre. They can introduce censorship and limit correspondence, refuse visits only allow open air exercise in a cage, a complete search with the arbitrary use of X-rays, continuous physical and psychological torture...

### FIES en lucha

Struggle against the FIES has always been there by individuals or small groups, but only recently a number of FIES detainees have realised the necessity for coordination, and through letters to other prisoners and support groups they started to organise the struggle. Their first action consisted of 'txapeos' (refusing to leave the cells for a walk) but they quickly saw that if their struggle didn't extend to other prisoners and if there wasn't enough radical support from outside, the consequence of their action would only be a

sharpened repression. Through actions, letters and communiques the struggle expanded to other prisoners and groups outside the walls, like AFAPP (Association of Families and friends of Political Prisoners, linked to GRAPO), Mothers Against Drugs, and after a while an agreement came about with three basic demands:

- 1) Abolition of the FIES regime and every form of isolation
- 2) Against the dispersion of prisoners (towards prisons far from the place of residence, family and friends, the spreading of prisoners over different prisons and in the prison itself)
- 3) Immediate release of incurably ill prisoners.

With these demands a collective hunger strike started from the 16<sup>h</sup> to the 19<sup>"</sup> of March 2000. In spite of all the difficulties about 400 prisoners participated in 21 prisons. It was a symbolic action (four days like the four walls of a cell), a sounding out of the balance of power, after the unexpected growth of the movement both inside and outside the prisons during the previous weeks, in Spain and beyond the borders.



### AFAPP during a protest action for the prisoners

In Barcelona, the creation of the AAPPEL (Asamblea de Apoyo a las Persona Presas en Lucha, Assembly for the Support of Imprisoned Persons in Struggle) contributed a lot to the cause; information was spread through conferences, the radio, demonstrations and various actions. Also in the Basque country and Galicia, information was disseminated and actions were carried out. In Madrid a FIES dossier was assembled and in spite of friction between the support groups, demonstrations and actions were carried out. Also in France, Belgium and Italy support groups were set up and information was disseminated, accompanied by actions. Prisons also joined in through solidarity statements, or, especially in Italy, by carrying out actions themselves.

In the following months actions continue inside and outside prison walls. Of course the state reacts. On the one hand there is severe repression: transportation on a massive scale, censorship, beating, torture... Communiques from the prisoners are alarming, there are even a couple of deaths. On the other hand, there is a media campaign full of lies. The prisoners in struggle are presented as dangerous criminals. It is claimed that they are led by ETA...

On April 24, 2000 a letter bomb was sent to the 'journalist' J. M. Zuloaga of the newspaper *La Razon*, very active in the spreading of deceitful articles about the struggle. The attack

was later claimed by „Los Anarquistas”. After this claim, several prisoners in Villanubia refused to come out of their cells for a walk as an expression of solidarity with those who sent the bomb. From May to July, several letter bombs were sent to fascist newspapers, though none of these exploded in



an effective manner.

On November 9, two anarchists, Eduardo Garcia Macias and Estefania Maurete Diaz, were arrested; they were charged with being involved in the letter campaign. Houses were searched in several cities. The media did their

best to send the police version of events around the world: Eduardo and Estefania were supposed to have formed an armed group with prisoners (held in isolation?) and to have organised attacks. Estefania was released though the charges against her were not dropped. She is the friend of Santiago Cobos, one of the most important prison activists, and probably they wanted to break his resistance by arresting her. Eduardo was released conditionally, but on November 17, following heavy pressure from the government, he was re-arrested and locked up in Soto. He is a member of the Anarchist Black Cross and that might be useful to the police, zealously looking for a non-existent „international conspiracy” or an „international criminal organisation” to create a basis for arresting and convicting large numbers of prisoners, a common practice.

In the meantime in the prisons, the call for an unlimited hunger strike grows louder and louder. A couple of prisoners have already started it, such as Laudelino Iglesias and Gabriel Bea Sampedro. On December 1, 2000, a collective unlimited hunger strike starts. It ends after a month, with 50 prisoners participating while 150 others carry out support actions. It seemed that repression and a total media black-out led to some demoralisation.

But the evaluation of it is not all negative, a more sober and realistic assessment of the situation was made now. A „communique from the resistance fighters in the La Moraleja prison”, issued in January 2001, read as follows:

„Greetings comrades,

*Our evaluation of the hunger strike last December is rather positive in relation to the Movement of Prisoners in Struggle and solidarity on the street. That we are making a positive evaluation does not mean we are unaware of the fact that the forces we mobilised in prison and our possibilities to put „pressure” via the street are still very limited... Let's try to be objective. But remember that this is a reflection of a certain moment in the development of our struggle and that as a movement we have only taken our first steps, laid the foundation to move forward in a coherent and effective way, and that if we can pursue this line of organised resistance we will broaden little by little our radius of action and will gain greater strength inside as well as outside prison. There is no other way if want to move in the right direction: from the perspective of making our struggle into a continuous activity against the capitalist system, we take the struggle against the prison apparatus as the point of departure.*

*For the first time since the time of COPEL, a collective stand has been taken against the criminal policy of the State in the prisons, in a collective and organised manner, with clear objectives in the short, medium and long term, and this*

*movement persists and appropriates the methods of winning the struggle.*

*In our opinion it is crucial to lend continuity to our struggle and to secure a basis making it possible to hold on to the objectives we have set ourselves.*

*Further, it is a fact that our struggle has brought about a dynamic with the consequence that a solidarity movement was born in the streets which spread every day and delivered proof of being citizens. Because of the great diversity existing within the movement, there were many contradictions, these came to the fore especially in the weeks before the December hunger strike, but nonetheless, it was shown with our „mobilisation” that these contradictions could be tempered and unity in action prevailed. This solidarity movement in its turn is made up of different sections of the Resistance Movement, which broadens the narrow margins of its departure point; anarchist unions, associations of family members and friends of political prisoners (AFA PP), committees of the unemployed, anti-imperialist committees, neighbourhood committees (like Amaitu), etc. actually did support our struggle. And then include those from beyond our borders. As we strengthen our bonds with them and join their struggle, the beating of our drum will call forth a greater response, which it will be more difficult to silence, isolate or suppress ...*

*The combination of these two aspects, inside and outside the prisons, has given an important additional value to this strike.*

*We are sure that a lot more people than just our comrades can appreciate and observe this. For certain, the State cannot let all this happen, and it tries to break the movement with all the means at its disposal. This is the origin of the political frame-up against the anarchist comrades in Madrid, the house searches in Barcelona and other places to spread fear, the ruthless criminalisation campaign meant to de-activate and curb support for the strike, the absolute information black-out during the strike, etc. not to speak of the repression in the prisons themselves. Of course, there are other cocks who crow, now, like the humanists, the Christians and all those reformists who until recently monopolised the „struggle” in the prisons, using those who run and control the stable.*

*Now they can't do anything to us any more and neither their means nor their influence can affect us, we have to fight them too. As we said already in a previous communique, they are part of the social mechanism of the State and Capital, and through our struggle we have come into direct confrontation with them.*

*If the enemy starts to „worry” so much about our little world, that is only because of one thing, we are on the right path. It is always distressing to get no reward from hard work, as was the case during the December hunger strike. But we don't even think of „opportunistically” putting our immediate objectives before our ultimate objectives, because we are aware that our hard struggle has been transformed into a really inspiring and binding force for a whole range of diverse concerns which begin to unite in the struggle against the yoke of oppression and capitalist exploitation which began somewhere within these damned walls... And which might in time grow into a „material force”. From the spark comes the flame. Unity and struggle gives power! Resistance inside and outside!”*

It is thus clear that the struggle will be long and hard, and that such a **prolonged struggle** will demand determination

and a whole range of forms of action that leave room for individual and local initiatives according to circumstances (for example, many prisoners are seriously and most of them cannot participate in long-term hunger strikes). All prisoners can take action, talk about their own situation and put their own demands forward, but they will always connect with the moment by adding its principal demands: the end of FIES, the end of dispersal, the release of all incurably sick prisoners. At the start of 2001, a **fourth demand** was agreed upon: the release of all prisoners who have completed 20 years of imprisonment (which should be, according to Spanish law itself, the maximum time), and a call is made to fast every month. Besides that, at the outside, the AAPPEL is transformed into ACOP (Assembleas Contra Los Prisons), building a network to support the prisoners in struggle, „to break the isolation and silence and to go beyond the concrete demands (which we consider necessary) and to denounce the penitentiary system as a tool of those who are in power to maintain their hegemony and the existing situation of social injustice”. The unity and continuity of the movement are thus secured by the four basic demands, punctual collective actions (like the monthly txapeos and hunger strikes), broadening and strengthening the coordination inside and outside, debates about the prison struggle and its place in the social and political struggles going on. The whole of next year, and up to today, one can see a steady stream of letters, communiques, testimonies... of prisoners in struggle, talking about the daily horrors and repression they have to endure and about the resistance and struggles going on inside (txapeos, hunger strikes, refusal to work, letter campaigns, sabotage etc.) Also in the streets, a whole range of actions take place all over Spain — demonstrations, info-meetings, conferences, direct action etc. Internationally, the prisoners connect with prisoners and support groups in France, Italy, Greece, Portugal, Belgium, Great Britain, and the USA, where prisoners join by writing solidarity statements and/or by participating in the monthly hunger strikes. Many also participate in the solidarity actions with the prisons in struggle against the introduction of the F-Type prisons in Turkey. The struggle in Turkey (with the ongoing Death Fasts, the brutal military assault on the prisoners on December 19, 2000, the struggle of the families) as well as the struggles of the prisoners in the US, such as a collective hunger strike in the isolation units of Texas in September 2001, make clear that the struggle against isolation units really is worldwide.

In March 2002 another collective hunger strike took place in 38 prisons in which close to 500 prisoners participated. In the face of the success in getting such a number of prisoners to participate, and also the important mobilisation of women prisoners (in Alcala f.e.) the silence of the press, imposed by the Ministry of the Interior, is deafening. On May 28, 2002, a huge uprising takes place in the Quatre Camines prison in Catalonia. Following the beating senseless of two young prisoners by guards, more than 250 prisoners decided to refuse their labour. A strike committee was formed which formulated 12 demands and demands to speak to the Director of Penitentiary Institutions, and the presence of the councillor of the Justice Department of Catalonia and the Red Cross is also demanded. Negotiations start but it is clear that the Direction won't

give an inch. The next day the *Mossos* (Catalan anti-riot police) storm the prison and the rebellion is crushed with brutal force. This time the media couldn't ignore the actions and the problems in the prisons but as always, they just repeated the official, state-sanctioned version of the facts. It was supposedly about a „group of dangerous prisoners” who rebelled because they didn't want to work and whose rebellion was „contained” by the police and prison authorities. Not a word about what the prisoners had been saying for almost three years. Except for some small armed attacks on the outside (such as those carried out by 'International Solidarity'), all actions up to now have been non-violent. The answer of the State, though, is nothing but violence. Inside, the repression continues unabated, with constant transfers, censorship, denial of visits, humiliation, abuses, beating, torture and death. And although Eduardo was freed on bail (November 2001), many other have been arrested and put in jail; overall, repression on the streets is growing.

With the appearance on the European continent of the so-called „anti-globalisation” movement (Prague, Gothenburg, Genoa, Brussels, Barcelona...) the second Intifada and the brutal military assaults by the Israeli army (which also moved and mobilised the Arab and Muslim communities in Europe), the popular revolts in Latin America, September 11 in the USA... it seems that the party of the ruling classes of the world is over and they are seriously starting to worry and to prepare themselves to carry out another reactionary assault. The new laws against „terrorism” undoubtedly mean a fascisation of the whole state and society, and it is no coincidence that it was Spain and Italy (and Turkey) who eagerly followed the USA and urged the European Union to accept the-laws — which they can now legitimise and use to intensify a „dirty war” which has in fact been going on for years. In the last half year we have witnessed a wave of arrests; dozens of members, ex-members or alleged members of the armed groups (GRAPO/PCE(r), ETA, RB, N17, DHKP-C ...) have been arrested and imprisoned. The last year we have seen more and more also the support groups becoming a target of the machinery of repression, with of course the outlawing of all political groups related to ETA, but also members of AFAPP, Socorro Rojo (Red Aid) and the Cruz Negra Anarquista (Anarchist Black Cross) have been subjected to surveillance, arrest and imprisonment because of their involvement with „terrorist groups”. These are of course developments which we should carefully follow, analyse and discuss...



# ISOLATION PRISONS

*in France*

## The QHS

### Historical survey on isolation in France

Inspired by the model of imprisonment introduced in the United States in the first quarter of the 19th century, France opted for the prison regimes used in Pittsburgh and Philadelphia. Unlike the prison at Auburn, set up in 1824 which used a mixed system of isolation at night and work



with other prisoners during the day, in silence, these two prisons organised a regime of strict isolation day and night. So in 1841 a circular defined what the French prison system would be in the years to come: The principle of a cell of 9 m<sup>2</sup> permit work, individual walks and cellular visiting rooms were coupled with panoptical architecture. Proposed in 1791 by the Englishman Jeremy Bentham, the panoptic is a circular or semi-circular structure allowing general and continual surveillance from a central point. Forty-five prisons based on this model were built from 1852.

The Berenger law of 1875 made cell-type imprisonment general in the prisons of departments and envisaged total isolation in cells for those on remand and for those sentenced to less than a year of imprisonment, in return for remission of a quarter of the sentence. Prisoners were forced to remain silent and to wear a hood while on the move outside their cells. It is the beginning of Fresnes, a prison model dedicated to isolation ...

#### 1972 : isolation quarters

Certain reforms introduced on the eve of the Second World War did not change real conditions of detention in French prisons and the cell regime in force hardly changed for a century. These conditions were the cause of numerous rebellions at the end of the 1960s and the major mutinies from 1970 to 1972 were a pretext to step up repression by installing the Quartiers d' Isolement („isolation quarters"). The QIs are a tool for destroying those who refuse to accept gradual death.

#### 1975 : QHS and QSR

Faced by struggles inside and outside the prisons, the authorities introduced various reforms which were supposed to improve prison conditions (radios, free visiting rooms) while introducing the Quartiers de Haute Securite (QHS — « High Security Quarters ») and the QSRs (Quartiers ä Securite Renforcee — « Increased Security Quarters »), whose declared aim was to put an end to prison revolts. The reforms improved the general prison conditions while in parallel with that punishments and sanctions were made more severe. In fact the most rebellious prisoners were more and more subject to the arbitrariness and violence of the prison guards. From 1975 to 1982, numerous struggles were conducted against QHS by the prisoners: refusing food trays, hunger strikes and mutinies followed one after the other, but there were also many beatings and suicides. On February 26, 1982, the QHS were officially abolished.

#### 1982 : The QI

The QHS were abolished, the Quartiers d'Isolement (QI) reappeared. Though officially putting a prisoner in isolation is not a disciplinary measure, but is supposed to be a way of temporarily «setting a prisoner aside », in practice it is often used as a disguised form of punishment, replacing the QHS. The will to destroy any desire to rebel remains the same.

Since then, isolation in the QI has become a new prison in a prison. Never challenged by the authorities who contented themselves with putting forward certain guarantees, such as duration of isolation, access to a doctor... But the consequences for the individual remain unchanged.

#### Today

All French prisons have Quartiers d'Isolement, and this form of imprisonment is going to be made more general in new prisons now under construction. Despite its character being unofficial up to now, isolation has been imposed and henceforth is a normal means of imprisoning people. The humanitarian aspect of individual cells no longer conceals its destructive aspects and isolation is considered the best way of breaking collective protests and suppressing individual revolts.

#### The words of prisoners

«After some weeks in isolation, it becomes [...] practically impossible to concentrate on a book or write some words on paper. Isolation is total, it invades your entire mind and alters your thoughts and senses. So much so that the sensory stimulation of everyday life does not reach the person who is in isolation. Here the light of day does not get through the

clouded glass windows, nor does the sound of voices, only howls and cries of despair get through the doors. An ordinary day passes by and I have seen nobody, nobody has seen me except a rat which emerged from the toilet in the floor and is staring at me, and that is everyday life in isolation. »

(Abdelhamid Hakkar, Sante prison, August 1997)

You « see » the day or night without really distinguishing one from the other. You lose time, you lose all desires and

finally you lose yourself. That is total isolation, the extermination of all social, human behaviour and of your internal being, aiming at dividing your body from your mind by the death of your relexive unity, your identity. »

(Nathalie Menigon, Fleury Merogis, 1988)

From APA (Agence de Presse Associative), France

# ISOLATION PRISONS

## *in the USA*

### THE CONTROL UNITS

I seen them carry one inmate down the corridor with a guard on each leg and one on each arm. The assistant warden comes down the hall and grabs the inmate 's testicles and starts yanking on them, saying,

'Who's doing it to who now, boy?' Well that was a signal for every guard in the place to do whatever the hell he wanted. I can 't describe it to you—I never seen beatings like that. At least fifty guys got it, maybe more." (Lassiter, 1990: 76)

#### **What is a Control Unit Prison?**

A control unit prison is a prison or part of a prison that is in a state of permanent lockdown, a usually-temporary condition used to control and suppress disruptions within a prison by severely restricting prisoners' rights. In theory, control units warehouse the „worst of the worst”, the most violent prisoners who threaten the security of guards and other prisoners. This once temporary condition has been increasingly adopted as the new model for US prisons.

Before 1963, Alcatraz prison in California supposedly housed the most dangerous prisoners in the US. In 1963, the federal prison in Marion, Illinois took its place as a more modern, more technologically advanced maximum security prison. In 1978, Marion became the highest security prison in the US. It also became the most violent prison. Marion became the first control unit in 1983 when two prison guards were killed and Marion was put into permanent „lockdown”. Marion has been the model for prisons across the country, which are rapidly becoming more and more repressive in the hopes of subduing any and all resistance to unjust treatment. Now more than 30 state prison systems, as well as the federal system, have some form of control unit.

More than simply fulfilling „security needs,” control units employ sophisticated methods of behavior modification which not only controls violence but any form of resistance at all. The creation of control units has not reduced the level of violence within general prison populations. In fact, assaults on prison staff nationwide rose from 175 in 1991 to 906 in 1993 (Prendergast).

Control Units are used to isolate and punish those people who present a threat to the established power; for example, those who have filed lawsuits against prison officials, participated in work stoppages, or actively pursued their religious and/or political beliefs. In certain cases, political prisoners, such as American Indian Movement organiser Leonard Peltier and Black Liberation Army member Sekou

Odinga, are sent to Control Units directly from trial, thereby disproving the claim that prisoners in Control Units have earned their punishment by their own violence or disruption once in prison.

#### **Conditions Inside Control Unit Prisons**

Long term isolation and sensory deprivation Prisoners are kept in solitary confinement for 22-23 hours a day, in cells that are usually 6 feet by 8 feet.

#### **Forced idleness**

Prisoners are denied standard vocational, educational, and recreational activities, including access to law libraries. Excessive restraint Beatings, cell extractions and „hog tying” are widespread. Prison guards have testified to shackling prisoners to their beds and spraying them with high pressure fire-hoses. This is usually billed as punishment for those who „misbehave”; yet what is called „misbehaviour” is arbitrarily decided by the guard on duty (and has been known to include refusing to make beds, or complaining about clogged and overflowing toilets). Toxic environment Prisons are often built near environmental hazards. Prisoners have gotten cancer and lead poisoning from contaminated water. At least one control unit is in an area with dangerously high levels of uranium radiation.

#### **Limited human contact**

Physical contact is prohibited during visits. Phone calls for prisoners generally cannot exceed ten minutes a month. No congregate dining, exercise, or religious services are permitted. In Florence, prisoners are shuffled through remote-controlled electronic doors to their destination, without ever seeing another human being. Human rights violations There are many accounts of human rights violations and abuses in Control Units, including denial of medical care to injured and/or sick prisoners (including diabetics and epileptics), refrigerated cells during winter months, arbitrary beatings, psychological abuse of mentally unstable prisoners, illegal censorship of mail, extended isolation and indoor confinement, denial of access to educational programmes, and administrative (rather than judicial) decisions about punishment for „misbehaved” prisoners. There is no evidence that such abuse decreases violence within the overall prison system. A guard stated: „the public is fooled if they believe placing a man in supermax will have a positive effect on the offender” (Schroeder).

# PRISONER'S STATEMENTS

**We have had written to prisoners of all the world, several political and social prisoners have been on hungerstrike for 3-10 days. This hungerstrike was an action to welcome the announcement of the International Day of Struggle against Isolation and to protest against the massacre of 19 December, 2000 in the prisons of Turkey. We publish the messages of prisoners, which were sent to us in this relation.**

**Georges Ibrahim ABDALLAH,  
Prison of Fresnes, France**

Comrades,

Two years after the criminal assault on December 19-22 (2000), the hunger strike „in the open coffins” still continues in Turkey's prisons. What a terrible struggle, what revolutionary self-sacrifice! Although they have no other weapons than their unbreakable willpower and a highly-developed class consciousness, our imprisoned comrades courageously assume all the responsibilities of the most advanced communist and revolutionary vanguard in Turkey; they conquered these revolutionary outposts with the highest level of struggle; over the years, they have become one of the major obstacles to imperialist normalisation in Turkey. The destruction of the revolutionary movement is a sine qua non for integration with imperialist Europe and the bourgeoisie of Turkey can no longer tolerate the existence of these revolutionary outposts. It has to destroy them as to the destruction of hostile organisations all over the world. So for the bourgeoisie, normalising the situation in the prisons is of more and more pressing urgency and has to be brought about as soon as possible, hence the importance of this heroic struggle against the F-Type mortuaries. The outcome of this battle is of key importance for the future of the living forces in Turkey and in the region.

Today, our comrades are still there, in the place they have made their own. For 25 months they have opposed implementation of these attempts to destroy them, attempts aimed at the entire revolutionary movement in that country. Since the start of the assault on December 19, this heroic resistance has gone beyond the confines of a struggle against repression in the prisons; so far there are a hundred martyrs and an even longer list of people who have been left crippled. Despite this unbearable human cost and every imaginable bourgeois form of repression and manoeuvre, our comrades have not given in. They have continued the action with the same slogan and the same fervour, thus giving ample time to **ALL THE OTHER PARTS OF THE REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT IN TURKEY TO TAKE UP THE RESPONSIBILITIES AND THE TASKS THAT ARE THEIRS.**



Our comrades demand „the closing of the F-Type prisons” as a non-negotiable condition, which must come prior to any cessation of their strike. Our comrades know very well the real weight of the solidarity manifested in their favour; despite their terrible struggle and the enormous sacrifices they have made, they are aware of the very feeble mobilisation made in support of their principal demand. They are perfectly aware of the balance of forces at the national level and at the regional and international level. And yet our comrades maintain their demand that „the closing of the F-Type prisons is a precondition of any suspension of the strike”.

Our comrades are in no way despairing and exalted suicidal types, drowning in an endless, mystical and macabre delirium. Our comrades have nothing in common with the „Branch Davidians of Waco” or any other sect of beleaguered cranks driven to collective suicide.

Our comrades are communists, full of generosity and humanity; optimists like all revolutionaries, they love life, their journey itself is a hymn to life; besides, that is why they are engaged in a resolute struggle against capitalist slavery and every form of exploitation and alienation. Our comrades face death so that millions may live in dignity and prosperity; they embrace death with a smile, aware that the future belongs to us and that it is a certainty that we will win. They remain eternally alive in the hearts and consciousness of the popular masses. Our comrades know that the capitalist system, like its vermin the torturers and other criminal parasites will end up in the dustbin of history and no matter how much they strive, they will not escape revolutionary justice. Our comrades' determination calls out to all of us today; it reminds us of our duties to them and the most worthy comrades of Mahir CAYAN, Ibrahim ERDOGAN, Sabahat KARATAS, Sibel YALCIN, Mustafa CETINER, Sibel SÜRÜCU and all the others.

Certainly solidarity is sacred, as was rightly said by Pierre CARETTE in his letter to the signatories of the Platform, and naturally we are fasting in solidarity with them, not simply for the four days demanded by the comrades in the International Platform of Struggle Against Isolation but an entire week, as suggested by Comrade Pierre in his statement in the name of signatories to the Platform dated June 19 and addressed to the next meeting in Noordwijk. It is merely of some use to recall that **SOLIDARITY IS A WEAPON THAT ONE MUST KNOW HOW TO USE ABOVE ALL IN ORDER TO ADVANCE THE STRUGGLE**; now this is closely connected to the strategy and the immediate objectives proposed by the diverse parts of the fighting communist movement in Turkey and not simply, not primarily by the

comrades in prison. Since the start of this terrible struggle; just one detachment, the prisoners, has assumed its full responsibilities and given rise to a certain amount of quite limited mobilisation; all the other parts of the communist movement, that is all the fighting communists in Turkey, these revolutionary vanguardists, have so far not really been in position, like those in this movement against the F-Type prisons. Besides, in part this explains the paltry mobilisation at national and regional level in support of this terrible struggle...

Some of us find it very worrying, even completely incomprehensible that the fighting communist movement in this country mainly looks to the prisoners to create a certain spirit of solidarity and has only found a way to wage this battle exclusively by means of the heroic resistance by the revolutionary prisoners.

Of course, as revolutionary prisoners, signatories or not to the June 19 Platform, we can only show solidarity to these valiant comrades in their struggle, and we will spare no effort which might be of use to them. However, for many of us, it is necessary that the fighting communist organisations of Turkey clarify their positions **BEYOND THE RAG-BAG OF SOLIDARITY...**

Evidently the unbearable human cost that the revolutionary communist movement has paid and continues to pay in this country as well as the absence of initiatives developed around this heroic resistance can only move us to go beyond legitimate expressions of sympathy and emotion. In the face of this heroic and dramatic resistance, it is time to make a clarification of the situation with a degree of detachment which allows us to approach this struggle in a way that goes beyond emotion. This is a task particularly incumbent upon communist organisations in Turkey...

Some of us think that today, the struggle of the comrades imprisoned in Turkey above all requires appropriate initiatives which will prevent the fighting communist movement from bogging down any longer in this exhausting defensive passivity. Of course extricating oneself from the swamp of

defensive passivity in no way means abandoning the struggle in the fascist prisons, and particularly the F-Type prisons; only, however important this field of struggle is now, it can only be taken up as part of the global dynamic of class struggle and also taking account of the currently existing balance of forces.

Some of think that the fighting communist organisations are called upon to **RADICALISE THIS STRUGGLE AGAINST THE F-TYPE PRISONS YET FURTHER, PRECISELY THROUGH ASSUMING THE PLACE AND THE ROLE THAT IS THEIRS AND IN NOT MAKING SOLIDARITY AND OPPOSITION TO REPRESSION THE ONLY SPHERE OF THEIR ACTIVITIES, AND IN PARTICULAR IN NOT CONSIDERING THE COMRADES IN PRISON TO BE THE ONLY ONES EFFECTIVE IN THIS BATTLE...**

From behind bars, together we call on all comrades, all revolutionary forces to engage themselves more firmly beside those who are fighting against the mortuaries called F-Type prisons and that they do so at the high level of the sacrifice they have made!

In responding favourably to the suggestion by the IRSP/INLA comrades concerning the appeal by Comrade Pierre CARETTE for a solidarity hunger strike from December 16 to 22, commemorating alongside Comrade Cakir ERDOGAN the martyrs who fell during the criminal assault on December 19 to 22.

Solidarity is a weapon!  
Honour to our martyrs!

Long live the resistance of the revolutionary prisoners in Turkey!

**TOGETHER WE WILL WIN!**

Georges Ibrahim ABDALLAH  
**Prison of Fresnes**

December 16, 2002



## Basque political prisoners, La Sante Prison, France



La Sante Prison,  
December 19, 2002

We Basque political prisoners incarcerated at the Prison of La Sante in Paris, France; wish to express our solidarity and support for the Turkish and Kurdish political prisoners who are

struggling in the prisons of Turkey in defence of their dignity, giving up their lives in so doing.

For nearly 800 these fighters have been conducting an indefinite hunger strike, the last form of struggle available to

prisoners who confront prison guards who are armed to the teeth!

On this date, the second anniversary of the attack by the Turkish forces of repression on prisoners which cost the life of 28 of them, we salute and praise the dignified and thoroughly courageous behaviour that our Turkish and Kurdish comrades have shown and are showing today. May the strength that moves them in their struggle continue, as it is the one and only way of defending, of preserving the rights that repressive states do not cease to ignore.

Courage, we support you always...

The Basque political prisoners incarcerated at La Sante Prison (Paris, France).

• ve mffel&lipswrpt sit, r. Aiala piotre paimopi

**Marcos Martin PONCE,  
Yvelines Prison, France**

Marcos Martin PONCE  
GRAPO political prisoner  
64224 –Yvelines Prison  
78 395 Bois d'Arcy

Bois d'Arcy 30th December 2002

Dear comrade,

I don't know the French language very well. But I'll try to do my best.

I received your letter of December 9, 2002 too late: on December 27, 2002. But before that, I received a letter from Erdogan Cakir who is a DHKP-C pp (political prisoner) on December 1st where he calls for a hunger strike for the same reasons you explain. I followed this hunger strike from December 16 to December 22. I sent my participation to APA (alternative press agency), to the judge and to the prison director.

Solidarity is very important but unity of action is also very important. Why two convocations? Why do we divide our forces? Why not struggle against the enemy, against fascism like a single fist?

We, all of us have our own organisation but when there is a solidarity call, why not to do this in unity of action?

The struggle of the Turkish comrades is a struggle for justice. This struggle is exemplary and heroic. And as revolutionaries, our duty is to support it.

**FRATERNAL GREETINGS AND COURAGE FOR ALL  
THE FIGHTERS IN TURKEY**

**DEATH TO FASCISM !!  
VICTORY OR DEATH !!**

**Josu Ordonez Fernandez, Basque political  
prisoner at Nanterre, France**

Josu Ordonez Fernandez  
Basque Political Prisoner

**KAIXO !**

I am writing to you after receiving your letter and what I would like to say to you is that your letters (two of them have been received here) were received on December 22. I don't know what date you sent them on (the postmark is December 2, 2002) but they have arrived late. Also I didn't know about the International Platform of Struggle Against Isolation; if you have a bulletin or some other information on the various struggles you are conducting, I would like to receive some information.

Without further ado I say farewell, sending you my heartfelt greetings and courage ... To struggle always carries a cost...

**JO – TA – KE!**

Josu  
Nanterre, France, December 24, 2002

**Xabier Irastorza,  
Gradignan Cedex, France**

January 30, 2003

Kaixo lagunak! (Hello friends!)

I have just received your card with „a slight” delay, as you can see.

Perhaps sometimes it seems to you that we Basques live in a world of our own, separate from everything else. And the truth is that our reality and the rhythm of our struggle is not entirely understood by other people.

In any case you know that from here with all our errors and successes we also participate in the fight for a more just world, for a free people and for free peoples.

A revolutionary embrace and hasta la victoria.

**JO – TA – KE!**

Xabier Irastorza 52350  
17 Rue du Chouiney BP109  
33173 Gradignan Cedex  
France

**Aguitzane DELGADO IRIONDO,  
MAF Fleury Merogis, France**

**Letter from Aguitzane  
DELGADO IRIONDO  
MAF Fleury Merogis 36547-  
A  
Quartier disciplinaire  
9, av des Peupliers 91705 Ste  
Genevieve des Bois**



Fleury Merogis December 20,  
2002

Dear comrades,

Today, 20th December, we received your letter. We inform you that the Basque women political prisoners of the Fleury Merogis prison unite with your initiative of fasting until December 22, in order to celebrate and to be in solidarity with the powerful struggle of the Turkish political prisoners which is conducted with so much dignity and suffering. We inform you that we are at your disposal for further initiatives but we would like to receive your letters with anticipation because our correspondence suffers from severe delays.

**SOLIDARITY IS THE TENDERNESS BETWEEN THE  
PEOPLES**

**FORWARD COMRADES !!**

Fraternal greetings  
Aguitzane  
Women political prisoners in Fleury-Merogis

Jose Luis Elipe Lopez  
310642 / D-4/D-3.23

**Elipe and Pena,  
Fleury-Merogis, France**

MAH 7, av des Peupliers  
91 705 Fleury-Merogis (France)

February 5, 2003

Dear comrades,

We received your letter of 9th December in which you proposed to carry out a hunger strike in solidarity with Turkish comrades. Of course, we support this initiative but we received your letter in January and so it wasn't possible to win the hunger strike. The letter is under the control of the fudge and the prison and there is always too much delay.

As you say well, „links that are more than family ones unify us beyond the walls, the barbed wire and the borders”. The class solidarity is more important than ever in this period of the threat of war and fascist repression. Precisely, governments of Turkey and Spain distinguish themselves as being among the more repressive states.

Thus, the solidarity with the Turkish comrades in prison has a special importance. Today, more than ever, the struggle must engage everybody.

We send you our revolutionary greetings to you and to all the imprisoned comrades from Turkey.

A fraternal greeting

Elipe and Pena



**°Innocent EDDIE GILFOYLE,  
HM Prison Wakefield, UK**

26-11-2002

Innocent Eddie Gilfoyle  
C Wing 3-45  
HM Prison  
Love Lane  
Wakefield  
WF2 9AG



Dear Sir,

Thank you for your letter calling for support to mark 19th December as International Day against

Isolation. I fully support the initiative and in order to show my support I will decline food for 48 hours on 19th and 20th December to coincide with the international conference. I send my respects and regards to everyone who is involved both prisoners and organisers alike.

In total solidarity

Innocent EDDIE GILFOYLE

**RAY GILBERT,  
prison of Woodhill, UK**

Dear comrades,

I support your stance against isolation by capitalist and imperialist systems. Those in Turkey are suffering torture, inhumane conditions, starvation and deprivation. A battle by the state to eliminate class struggle by ethnic cleansing. As I am being kept in the same isolation unit as those in Turkey, but with a bit more freedom, I will support them on 19/12/02.

Tell our fellow brothers to continue the fight for their human rights and the injustices of the penal system.

In the struggle

Solidarity and respect

RAY GILBERT H10111

Woodhill

Tattenhale Street

Milton Keynes

MK4 4DA

**RON EASTERBROOK,  
HMP Whitemoor, UK**

11-02

Dear Friends,

The strike by political prisoners in Turkey is exactly the same for all prisoners all prisoners. Isolation is the first step towards effective oppression, leaders in all countries recognise this, divide and rule is a basic rule.

Here in England we have „good order and discipline”, known by its acronym and imperative „G.O.A.D” which simply that on a governors discretion he can order that one be kept in punitive conditions for 28 days and thereafter for a further 28 days for an indefinite period on the say so of a board of visitors - these are local worthies anxious to see that no punitive sanction is overlooked. These automatically repeated 28 days can, and do, sometimes continue for years on no other grounds than the governor thinks your total isolation benefits him in running the prison.

Instance. Some five years ago I was put on a concocted charge before the governor. I objected vigorously and he had me sat upon by five staff and thrown in a strip cell i.e. all clothing taken and given a tear-proof nylon top and short pants and locked in a cell where the „bed” is two planks of wood set in concrete, no bedding and no heating. Only in there for five hours, but incensed at my treatment I started a „dirty protest” and was then placed in a protest cell on G.O.A.D for the next 20 months and charged on a regular basis. These were the conditions.

Glaring white plastic walls held in place with 813 plastic bolts (I counted them many times), a foam mattress on the floor, two windows covered by a wire cage, and a cardboard chair and table. No pay for 20 months, or canteen, no use of phone, no personnel possessions whatsoever apart from pen

and paper, no reading material of any kind, and of course no radio or TV.

Restricted to pints of water a day - which was frequently reduced to one pint by enthusiastic staff - and which was contaminated with disinfectant as a matter of routine. A new doctor took a urine sample after 14 months, and puzzled by the condensed and acidic nature of the urine questioned me, unable to believe what I told him he left to check what I had said, then returned to stay he would be writing to the Home Office at once asking that I be allowed more water on „humanitarian” grounds. Three weeks later I was allowed twice the amount of water. On two occasions I found shit in my food, the first time only finding it after biting into a bread roll and finding the shit plastered underneath.

The second time it was hid under the rice of a curry. I never left the cell except for an hour a week when they cleaned it.

For one 12-day period my cell was flooded between one and four times a day by turning on various taps on the wing and building a barrier of sheets and towels outside my door so that as the partly blocked drain forced the water through the grating and under my door. My bed and two blankets were saturated. I tried sleeping on the dismantled cardboard chair and table, but specially treated to make the fireproof them fireproof they still disintegrated from water.

Intimidatory behaviour was daily routine from 3 to 10 officers at any one time. Only one member of staff stood out, he

refused to act in any way contrary to his terms of work, this alone shows what pressure must be applied to individuals in order to bend any principles to the prevailing oppression. I had two breakdowns, the first I hid successfully so as to deny staff any satisfaction, the other they could see coming on when I myself was unaware and I was placed in the hospital, though why I was in there I can't recall.

All this and more show the perils of isolation and its gift to those whose nature it is to oppress. The injustice of it all is pointed up by the fact that the original charge I was put in segregation for and which I could find every man on the wing to give the lie to and so incensed me, was never proceeded with, instead, I was charged with assault after I was attacked on the governors „nod”.

Fight isolation all you can, it is the tool of all oppressors.

Sincerely  
RON EASTERBROOK  
Ron Easterbrook B88459  
HMP Whitemoor  
Long Hill Road  
March  
Cambs PE 15 OPR

p.s. At the end of the 20 months I was warned by a senior member of staff to give up protesting or I would be destroyed. Three days later I was sent to Belmarsh prison

where in even worse conditions and complete isolation they started to starve me by given me increasing smaller amounts of food, after six months of this and feeling very weak and ill I was forced into an official hunger strike in order to deny them the opportunity to say they had given me food and I must have thrown it on the floor and they hadn't noticed when cleaning out the cells. I was 66 years of age at that time.



**SUE MAY,  
HMP Foston Hall, UK**

**Pierre Carette,  
Leuven Prison, Belgium**

To the conference,

I wish to offer my support to the International Day against Isolation. My struggle for justice began in 1992 and until I clear my name, the fight goes on.

However, injustice is world wide and in solidarity, I will fast throughout the 19 December - I will do it with pride and willingly.

In support of all who face injustice

SUE MAY

HMP Foston Hall  
Foston  
Derby  
DE6 5DN

At the end of October 2000, the revolutionary political prisoners in Turkey started a struggle of the greatest significance. Hundreds of them went on hunger strike to demand the closure of the F-Type prisons, the abolition of the „anti-terrorist” laws, the dissolution of the State Security Courts and the punishment of those responsible for massacres in the prisons.

The year 2002 has ended and this terrible battle is still going on. It has already cost the lives of 98 comrades. Some have died of starvation, others from torture, yet others have been shot dead or burned alive during police assaults on the prison dormitories. All have sacrificed their lives for the cause of the people of Turkey. At the same time, through their struggle, through their sacrifice and their heroism, they have served the cause of all the world's people.

Isolation, torture and the liquidation of political prisoners are concrete projects advanced to a greater or lesser extent in all the imperialist countries. Turkey is an outpost of this fascist barbarity. The „democratic” European states are unobtrusively preparing themselves in view of the inevitable class conflict, arising from capitalism's historic crisis. We too defend the Death Fast pursued by the prisoners in Turkey, we current or future political prisoners, in Belgium, France, Spain, Germany and elsewhere.

For the third time since the start of the conflict in the Turkish prisons, the revolutionary, anti-imperialist anarchist or communist prisoners in the June 19, 1999 Platform want to hear witness to our solidarity, recognition and fraternity towards the comrades who are pursuing the Death Fast there. WE WILL BE ON HUNGER STRIKE DURING THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 16 TO 22.

Our thoughts during this modest action will go out towards those who have given everything in the struggle, to those large numbers of people who have lost their health, their vision, their sanity in the confrontation with the executioners.

Our thoughts will also be with those on the spot who are ferociously repressed because they refuse to be silent, to be accomplices of the murderers, through silence or evasiveness. Our comrades have a right to expect in Europe a mobilisation and solidarity that is much greater, firmer and more radical. Those who claim to be revolutionaries or even just sincere democrats can no longer shilly-shally. The mass graves of the future are being dug now in Turkey.

Solidarity is a weapon!

Down with the fascism of the Turkish state!

Long live the resistance of the revolutionary prisoners in Turkey!

Long live proletarian internationalism!

We will win!

Leuven Prison

December 16, 2002

In the name of the signatories to the June 19, 1999 Platform  
Pierre Carette



## Claudio Lavazza, FIES, Spain



A warm greeting to you all from the F.I.E.S. module in Huelva, Spain. We are prisoners who have been struggling from the very first day we were locked up in order that the F.I.E.S. system of isolation is abolished, just like so many comrades in Turkey and other parts of the world who like us are victims of a repressive

prison policy.

Since its introduction in 1991, this system is one of the gravest infringements of human rights committed by the Spanish State. It is a Special Regime which is not even regulated by their own laws and it gives carte blanche to the prison authorities to repress those inmates who struggle against the prison system. They are structures created to prevent any contact with other prisoners.

These are prisons inside a prison, and they try to annihilate us and cause us to lose our mental equilibrium under the weight of prolonged and indefinite isolation...

It is one of their main objectives, replacing the death penalty with something worse, locking you up for life or an unlimited period. Living like that for the whole 24 hours of a day in a hutch where all you see is a small piece of sky and you walk alone in a courtyard for a few hours, something that produces devastating psychological effects on the mind of a prisoner. When we are subjected to beatings, torture or death, the penal institution says it is lies, and it is backed up by doctors and investigative judges.

In 1999-2000, 57 prisoners in isolation died and 147 made charges about torture and ill-treatment, although only in one case were the guilty punished.

This year 81 prisoners died...

But we will keep fighting to put an end to that because we have nothing to lose, they have taken almost everything from us, but we still have our dignity and we show it in struggle and in the great hatred we feel which we use to keep resisting.

An embrace to all the comrades who struggle for a free world and without prisons.

Claudio and the other comrades

CLAUDIO LAVAZZA

C.P. Huelva



**Santos Perez Ayaso,  
Mansilla de Mulas — Leon, Spain**

Santos Perez Ayaso, imprisoned in the jail of Mansilla de Mulas - Leon, an extermination prison of the fascist Spanish state. By means of this letter he shows his eternal and sincere solidarity with the prisoners in Turkey in their Hunger Strike in the open coffins; in opposing the F-Type isolation cells in which the Turkish comrades are tortured and the torturers have total impunity; already 99 Turkish comrades have fallen in this struggle rather than cooperate with the corrupt and fascist state against whom struggle is eradicate torture in Turkey and wherever else in the world these atrocities are practised against human beings whose only crime is to struggle for the most basic rights of prisoners, the right to dignity, the right to life and the right to be treated like human beings and not animals.

On December 19, 2002 it will be the second anniversary of the assault on 20 Turkish prisons by the military, a brutal assault in which 28 prisoners resisting the F-Type prisons were murdered and others were tortured and burned.

I am showing my solidarity with the families of the victims who are also suffering the attacks by the Turkish military.

I am also showing that, in the fascist Spanish state, the harassment, ill-treatment and torture continue to be practised, in particular against comrades subjected to the illegal F.I.E.S. REGIME, who are defenceless owing to the fact that in the EXTERMINATION BUNKERS where the prisoners are completely isolated and defenceless, something that facilitates the prison staff practising abuse and torture with the complicity of the medical services who conceal these tortures; with the complicity through passivity of the judges tasked with supervising the prisons, and the General Direction of the Penitentiaries.

We have united after three years of struggle against the henchmen of the General Direction of the Penitentiaries and this struggle permits us to struggle alongside our comrades outside prison for our most basic and human rights. And that will go on until we obtain our NON-NEGOTIABLE demands. These demands are:

\* The abolition of the illegal F.I.E.S. system and every kind of isolation.

\* The end of dispersion as a method of psychological torture directed at the prisoners and their families.

\* The release of prisoners who suffer from incurable and irreversible illnesses.

\* The release of prisoners who have served 20 years in prison without a break and continue to be confined in the extermination prisons of the fascist Spanish state.

\* The end of every kind of torture, whether physical or psychological.

Those whose signatures are given below also express their solidarity with the struggle being waged by the Turkish prisoners.

SANTOS PEREZ AYASO

and Santiago Izquierdo Tranco, Luis A. R. Diaz\*, Javier Fernandez Serga\*, Martinez Gonzalez\*, Fernandez Rodriguez\*, Jose Maria Gutierrez Medira\*

(the signatures with asterisks against them are not very legible in the original letter)

**Amadeu Casellas Ramon,  
Brians extermination centre, Spain**

Good comrades, again I address myself as much to those who like me are confined in extermination centres as to society in general. Today I can maintain and cry out to the four winds that just in Catalonia alone there are centres of extermination, exploitation, torture and annihilation directed against individuals; all of them are directed by authoritarian dictators, fascists like in the worst period of Nazism.

Since I was put in this extermination centre, I have been deprived of all the letters that you send me, and they do this with impunity because I, like those imprisoned by a fascist regime, am handcuffed and defenceless and outside the prison nobody stands in the way of these Nazi torturers. They are using every possible method in the attempt to silence me, but nothing they do is further from reality than robbing me of letters, and it only confirms what I and my comrades have been complaining of for some time.

In my case, there has been no surrender, quite the contrary, my spirit and hope has been reinforced as is the case with all who rebel against this new fascism, this new dictatorship. At times like this we must be at our most united if we want to go forward and defeat these cowardly fascists.

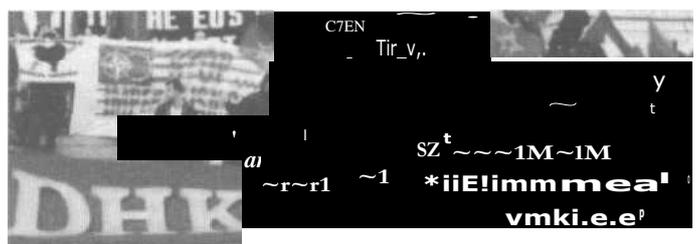
Many anarchists send me letters of support which I must suppose never reach me; but as an anarchist, I would like to be able to participate in forums and express my opinion, but it is not possible because I have been imprisoned illegally; but I do what I can and I appeal to all anarchists to take direct action against fascism. If we have suffered repression, we have taken action, and known what it was to suffer, whether it is violence. torture, abuse and so on... And in this situation one does not fight by giving in but with the same weapons. Anarchism has survived for centuries through the tenacity of the anarchists, because we do not give in and we stand up to these bargain-basement fascists.

The fascists want to make into their whipping boy, but that is not important if the anarchists show we are alive and do not have the slightest fear of the fascists. My main desire is, from this state hiding-place, to make people know that anarchists are here and to make an active presence felt. If this leads to me being chained up even more, then so be it. Liberty or death!

GREETINGS AND ANARCHY!

If we fight, we may lose, if we do not fight we have already lost.

AMADEU CASELLAS RAMON, currently illegally imprisoned in the Brians extermination centre.



**Jose Antonio Lopez Cabrera,  
Lerida Ponent M9, Spain**

Lerida-Ponent M9-Sunday, October 18, 2002 (21)

..Although we cannot avoid certain death, we can no longer withdraw into a corner in a state of *fear*, waiting for our annihilation. In the same way, we can no longer permit the had news every day to turn us into pillars of salt, nor turn them into an excuse to do nothing, to uselessly and Impassively withdraw behind imaginary walls and pretend that nothing can affect us."

**JOHN EDGAR WIDERMAN.**

..The law is nothing other than the (political) continuation of politics by other means"

**D. KAIRYS.**

..We are given powerful mind-altering drugs, prescribed with total impunity to prisoners in order to drive them mad: SINOGAN, HALOPEREIDOL, ALAGARTIN, ETC..."

Television is more than a powerful means of escape from a horrible situation, in which one is in prolonged isolation and :t is uncertain how much time it will last. It is a kind of psychological cosh used to intimidate - to blackmail those who dare to resist the dehumanising isolation in lives led in closed modules. If somebody is found guilty of a breach of



the rules the TV is taken away. Here in Catalonia, for months that can be prolonged into a year or even **y e a r s,**

Irrespective of how you alter your behaviour or how well ti ou behave, they are the ones who decide in such matters; ou are a „good boy” when they decide you are, and with this aim in mind they concealed coercive measures and psychological tortures with the aim of humiliating and denigrating you and in many cases to obtain information against other prisoners, denunciations, pursuing investigations etc... The worst human misery flourishes (it is possible that there are different circumstances in death cells), in the prisons, modules or galleries covered by the special regime or closed off for 21 or 22 hours.

.Visits face to face are not permitted, it isn't a security measure P put rather a mechanism used systematically to cut off emotional relations by reducing to nothing the physical contact with prisoners during visits". And this is the trademark of their programme of intervention, used here and now with the person writing this diary. I am prevented from communicating with anyone who is not a close family member, a father, mother, brother or sister. What other interest does it serve other than to deprive me of visits? The institution Pans everything including post or packages, that does not come from direct family members, and it is a way of distancing me from my own ideas; first of all from my principles, secondly from my personality and thirdly from my girl friend

and friends and comrades; in short they want to distance me from myself, from my contact with reality, to drive me mad and reduce me to a pulverised state...

„After months and years without visits to one another (or through a glass screen) with few telephone calls, every day more and more separated from family and friends, many prisoners use the TV as a kind of umbilical cord, as a psychological connection with the world they have lost (the world outside). They depend on it in the same way that people on their own turn on the TV to create the illusion of having company and hate to be separated from it... For many the loss of the TV is a price too high to pay for a show of resistance."

**MUMIA ABU-JAMAL.**

„The ultimate aim of visits without physical contact is to weaken and finally cut family relations. By means of this policy and practices, the state deliberately and cleverly denies to those it convicts a basic element of expressing one's humanity, maintaining physical contact, which slowly undermines families' ties which suffer as a result of the distance between home and prison.

Prisoners are isolated in time and space. Because of the action of the state, they `die' in front of those they know and love and also in themselves. For whom do people exist if not for their parents and their friends?"

**MUMIA ABU-JAMAL.**

„The act that is the most unpleasant and harmful in the whole of prison life” KARL MENNINGER, a psychiatrist describing visits where no physical contact is allowed, calling this a „violation of the basic principles of humanity” Doctor KARL M. described this as being „as horrible as it is painful..."

That nobody is honest for not stealing,  
That those who steal are not thieves for pleasure,  
That if there is no pleasure in things, one is not alive,  
That to have a sense of life it is not necessary to forget that death exists,  
That you can be dead while alive,  
That it take a body and a mind to be able to feel,  
That there is a cost in being sensitive and not being wounded,  
That those who put up walls will reap nothing from them."  
(Fragments by **MARIO BENEDETTI**).

Do not remain still at the edge of the road,  
Do not blockade hope.  
Do not give up your last breath as a present.  
Do not surrender, Jamal.  
„I, we are everything”,  
And all of us are the road.  
(From Jose @.. L. C. to Mumia Abu-Jamal).

„To fight is to live with intensity”  
(P. Kropotkin, a Russian anarchist, said this or something like it).

„It doesn't matter what the constitution says: the Supreme Court is governed by election results”.  
(Old saying of Mr. DOOLEY).

**JOSE ANTONIO LOPEZ CABRERA**

**Jose Manuel Ferreira Quintas,  
C.P.Gate 1, module 1, Spain**

Greetings and liberty, comrades!

From Gate 1, module 1, we prisoners who have been on strike and not going into the courtyard since July 18, 2002 in protest at the physical and psychological torture practised by the prison guards and doctors in Gate 1 against prisoners and also to protest the constant worsening of our own situation. We are continually threatened by the prison guards and the doctors. They blame us for complaining and say that we get treated much better than we deserve, and they continually threaten to make it look like we hanged ourselves in the cells.

It is very frustrating and even to believe it, just like living through it, is surreal, namely that you can be threatened with death by a doctor.

But let us remember that these are the same doctors who refuse to let seriously ill prisoners be released. The same doctors who collaborate with the prison guards in torturing prisoners and using truncheons. The same doctors who deny medical assistance to those who have been tortured and falsify medical reports to make sure that possible charges against prison

guards made by political prisoners they have tortured do not proceed any further and it is the prisoner who is punished for being attacked and wounded.

The true function of the doctors in prisons is to regulate physical and psychological torture.

Where are the human rights or that democracy they talk about, I am 31 years old and I have never known them, all we know is oppression, torture and inequality.

We denounce them as torturers to the Judge for Supervision of Penitentiaries and to the Judge for the Guardia. But these judges are simply different executioners and they cover up for the torturers or consider what they do to be a lesser offence, what is important is to wear us down and keep us down. They will also keep the media of the powerful well loaded with stories designed to criminalise prisoners and make it appear as if there are swimming pools in the prisons and so on.

It is the system that is criminal and which does not function, not the prisoners who in most cases are victims. Victims of inequality, drugs, and an education system full of mirages, hypocrisies and falsehood.

Greetings and liberty to you all. Neither F.I.E.S., nor dispersion, nor the sick kept in prison. Freedom!!!

JOSE MANUEL FERREIRA QUINTAS. C.P. Gate I, module I.

**Sundiata Acoli,  
Control Unit and federal penitentiary  
at Marion, Illinois, USA**

**December 19th statement**

Greetings to all,

My name is Sundiata Acoli, I am a Black political prisoner in the u.s. who has been in prison for the last 29 years. Twelve of those years I did in control units. I did 4 years in the Management Control Unit (MCU) at Trenton State Prison,



then I was transferred 1000 miles away to the federal penitentiary at Marion, Illinois, a Control Prison, where I did 8 more years in lock-down/isolation.

I send solidarity greetings to you and all who fight against ISOLATION TORTURE both inside and outside prison. Though we are separated by the ocean we are one with you in the struggle against those who brazenly declared their intent to lock down, or dominate, the whole world and to pre-emptively attack/destroy anyone anywhere in the world who opposes them, or who even attempts to amass enough power to defend themselves from this domination.

They have thrown the gauntlet, the challenge, down to the whole world: „SUBMIT OR DIE"! Well, I'm for LIFE, and if we are to live we are going to have to FIGHT for it by any means necessary and each in their own way. I send my solidarity with you in this worldwide fight against ISOLATION TORTURE and for survival and freedom.

Struggle,

SUNDIATAACOLI

## Herman Wallace frame-up in Angola penitentiary, USA

**Testimony by Herman Wallace** (one of two ex-Black Panther prisoners imprisoned on a frame-up in Angola penitentiary in the USA. The other is Albert Woodfox)

May 29, 2002, while on the exercise yard, I witnessed Camp J security guards abusing a prisoner even though the prisoner was in full restraints.

October 28, 2002, I was removed from the Camp J internal mess hall and placed on the Level 3 unit. It was here I happened to run into the same man I had seen abused in May. I decided to try my hand at interviewing to expose some of the torture that goes on here in Angola. This is uncensored and unedited:

Q: Please state your name, number and present living quarters.

A: Michael Alford, #97675, Camp J, Cuda-2-R-10

Q: What were you sent to Camp J for?

A: It was a Rule 3 (Defiance). I got in to it with a freeman who came on the tier and tackled me to the floor.

How long have you been here in the Camp J Program since originally sentencing to Camp J?

A: Two years.

Q: On or about May 20, 2002, while I was exercising on the front yard, you were on the back yard?

A: Yes, I remember.

Q: Can you tell me exactly what happened that day?

A: You know I'm a runner. I was on the back yard running in a small animal pen. I had been running at least 40 minutes of my allotted hour. I looked up and saw security guards running towards my pen with sticks. They got to my pen demanding I come to the gate so they could put me in restraints.

Q: What went through your mind?

A: I know of too many men back here who got the hell out of them while in restraints and so figured if they are trying to kill me then it would be with me fighting back. Ltd. Robertson told me to pull my jumpsuit up so he could see the crotch.

There was a hole in it.

Q: But most all of the jumpsuits have holes in the crotch, right?

A: That's true and they are the ones who gave it to me to wear on the yard with. Anyway, Ltd. Robertson told me: „I'm kicking you up for a 21 rule\*“. At that point I told the Ltd. to get me a Captain.

Q: Who were the ranking officers involved?

A: Colonel Honeycutt, Captain James, Ltd. Robertson, Ltd. Zarr, Ltd. Mills....

Q: Why did they come at you in the first place?

A: The female guard in the tower called in and told security I had a hole in my jumpsuit. She tried to tell them I did not do anything, but security felt a need to kick my ass that morning and that is what they did.

HW: Since the female tower guard admitted you committed no act of disrespect what was the purpose of the Disciplinary Court finding you guilty?

MA: I was not written up for Rule 21, they wrote me up for Defiance because I refused to let them restrain me before I

spoke with responsible ranking officers. I pled guilty to having refused the order to be shackled at that time - I did not plead guilty to Rule 21. But after they put me in restraints, they beat the hell out of me. They beat me on the back, head and legs.

HW: You told me earlier that the guards carried you holding you by hand and foot occasionally dropping you and allowing you to fall on your face. I saw this with my own eyes, do you know the name of the officers involved'?

MA: Sgt. Perkins from the shakedown crew and Ltd. Robertson.

HW: Did they take you to the hospital'?

MA: Yes.

HW: Were you treated at the prison hospital'?

MA: Yes, and I was given some stuff for my back burns and pain pills for the back spasm.

HW: It is the policy of this institution that all inmates be given timely reports to know what they are charged with and ample time to prepare their defence.

Were you given a report and if so when'?

MA: No, I was not given a report in a timely manner and when I did get the report, I was shocked at all the reports they put on me in the Disciplinary Court.

The people who hold court are far worse than the guards that lie about us.

HW: What were you charged with'?

MA: Aggravated Sexual Offence ( Rule 21); Defiance (Rule 3); and Agg. Disobedience ( Rule 5).

HW: I see that you have reports filed by three different reporting officers on the same offence. Is that correct'?

MA: Yes, they are just trying to make excuses for the abuse they forced me to endure.

HW: You were found guilty and sentenced three times as I see you had to pay \$2.00 three times for the burst of mace used against you, is this correct'?

MA: True, ain't that some shit'? They just keep proving how racist they are.

HW: Brother Alford, please explain to the readers because it appears the prison administration uses fabricated reports to keep men here in Camp J for years even though it's a six month programme; are you an exception to the rule'?



Herman Wallace, Albert Woodfox (l. to r.)

MA: (Laughter) I file ARPs against security people and they don't like that. Look, I'm just tired of getting beaten for no reason. I need some help.

HW: Do you still have physical and mental pain from the beatings?

MA: My back hurts me all the time and my legs are giving me problems. When I see these guards, I get really spooked.

HW: I see you have also initiated an ARP against those who beat you. Since you are indigent, what type of help are you seeking?

MA: I need some support and someone to represent me in this plight. They really dogged me out. This kind of thing should have never happened to me or anybody else for that matter, yet, they do it all the time and get away with it because nobody seems to care. When they were beating me they didn't care who saw them. They hurt me bad, but I will always fight for what I believe is right.



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### Louisiana State Penitentiary in Angola, Louisian

attempt in 1999.

Remember it was Cain who killed his brother Abel.

HERMAN JOSHUA WALLACE

It is my intention to expose the brutality here at Angola. I know I will continue to be attacked as a result of my efforts, but this must be done. I'm calling on all comrades to step up and expose the hidden abuse going on behind prison walls. Don't take it for granted that the masses of people aren't

listening - they are there.

We have a very corrupt warden running Angola and he has surrounded himself with more corrupt security people. In the book, God of the Rodeo, Cain told the books' author that if an inmate holding a shovel was still holding it when he returned, he'd kill him. This is the same administration that shot and killed one inmate and beat the other unmercifully after an unsuccessful escape



# SOLIDARITY STATEMENTS

Already before the symposium we asked organisations and individuals in different countries to send their contributions on the question of isolation imprisonment. We received several statements from different countries, in which organisations and individuals described their point of view on isolation, both from its political and human dimension. Here we publish those statements who reached us both from organisations and individuals who joined the symposium, both from those, who weren't able to attend and expressed support for this initiative.

## ADDAMEER

### (Palestinian Association For The Defence Of Prisoners) Palestine

#### Isolation and the case of Palestine

When talking of Palestine we undoubtedly confront a special case. A case in which the isolation imposed by the Zionist occupiers assumes a completely unequal aspect; and in explaining this situation, one can speak of two levels:

The first level is that of the isolation practised on Palestinian prisoners; two types of isolation are perceptible here;

The first starts with being arrested on the basis of Israel's laws. The Palestinian prisoner is completely isolated for the first 18 days of his or her arrest, without any possibility of contacting anyone, and he has no right to inform his family or contact a lawyer... And besides this total isolation is the object of torture, which the Israelis refer to as psychological pressure.

After the first 18 days, based upon the file existing for each person, some prisoners are victims of another isolation, and they are put in individual cells which may last the entire period of their detention, they are forbidden to have contact with other prisoners, and it is rare for their parents to be allowed to visit them. It is the normal situation for isolation imprisonment throughout the world.

The second level of imprisonment experienced by the Palestinian people is the splitting up of the territory in the hands of the occupation forces, a situation which has existed since 1996 when the territory was divided into three zones, Zone A, Zone B and Zone C, each zone completely separated from the others and passage forbidden without authorisation from the occupying authorities. Leaving one zone for another is like going from one country to another, and checkpoints put up by the forces of occupation prevent movement. And the entire occupied territories are cut off from the outside world in their turn, when you remember that all means of going to and from these territories and neighbouring countries are in the hands of the Israeli forces, so that the Palestinian people are isolated from

the outside world, which is why some Palestinians say that we are in a huge open prison.

ADDAMEER  
(Palestinian Association For The Defence Of Prisoners)



# AIK (Anti-Imperialist Camp) International

## the defensive nature of the Left

The situation of the political prisoners is playing an important role in the organised opposition movement, due to the fact, that there is a worldwide cut of freedom of political expression and the arbitrary interpretation of human rights. The isolation cells are measures of torture, in order to destroy the political structures of the prisoners within the prison, where political and ideological issues could be discussed.

The isolation will make it impossible for the political prisoners to struggle for more than to be simply allowed to have some contacts with other human beings. Isolation also serves as deterrence. It is the Convention of Human Rights which is the first victim of those states that have signed it. Today human rights are only used as a pretext to attack states that do not submit themselves completely to the New World Order, like Yugoslavia and Iraq.

There are different reasons why the political prisoners become more and more important within the liberation movements. In the past, under different conditions, the liberation of political fighters was connected with the liberation of the people. The liberation of the people, the revolution had been expected and for some movements it had even been determined to come soon. Today, under different and more difficult conditions, the liberation of the political prisoners became an issue in the political work itself. The struggle for freedom and rights of the political prisoners, as well as the struggle for being registered as a political prisoner became one of the most important activities of the left since the end of the Soviet Union and the defeat of the left in general.

This is not just because of the number of prisoners and the importance of the imprisoned cadres, but also because of the lack of possibility of political work.

The question of the political prisoners remains for the revolutionary movement, which is on the complete defensive, on the one hand in order to avoid losing the contact to the society, and on the other hand to show the real character of the state, that tries to hide behind a democratic mask. Nevertheless the question of the political prisoners must not be treated as one that is separated from the general situation. Today the revolutionary movement must be aware of the fact that it is on the defensive. Of course, the political prisoners are fighting a heroic struggle for their rights and for their humanity, and for every democratic and revolutionary man and woman it is a duty to support them and to show them their solidarity. But at the same time we must never forget, why they gave their lives or are in prison. Although these reasons may seem more far away than ever, it is - as revolutionary movement - our duty to learn from the mistakes of our past, to start a new dialogue in order to form a common political programme, that helps us to get out of the deep crisis the left finds itself in all over the world.

In a world that faces global oppression only global resistance will be successful. Only together the revolutionary forces will once again start with an offensive.

**Freedom for all political prisoners!**  
**Long live international solidarity!**

## PAME (All Workers Militant Front) Greece

Dear colleagues,

I convey the class solidarity of dozens of thousands of workers - construction workers, metalworkers, textile workers, workers at the dockyards, workers of the privates sector, that rally around **PAME** (which is the initials of our organisation All Workers Militant Front) to the INTERNATIONAL DAY OF ACTION AGAINST ISOLATION.

Dear colleagues,

We live in a new period of imperialistic brutality in the Balkans, the Middle East, Latin America, all across the planet, with thousands of dead people, of tortured people, of political refugees and economic immigrants.

A small group of plutocrats, in order to live in wealth, nominate the idea of „more and more profits” as the utmost

value, and the law of the market as the utmost law. All these presuppose the social majority to be marginal.

They plunge entire peoples into poverty, millions of workers in unemployment or at the antechamber of it. They increase the exploitation level of workers' force, they foster racism and xenophobia, in order to divide peoples; they push young people into the fuddled state of drugs, of crimes and prostitution. They destroy the environment and violate peoples' freedoms and human rights.

The central-right wing and central-left wing governments and parties transform their curtsies to capitalism into legislative violence and police terrorism.

Their allies:

The barons of the media and the so-called intellectuals that feed themselves on the European programmes nurse the

\_ppression of the crises, of thought, of consciousness, of ope.

The union bureaucracy, like CES and the state-sponsored non-governmental organisations, aim to lead the workers' and peoples' movement, which activates, questions and counterattacks. The wish to disarm the movement of its anti-imperialist and anti-monopoly disposition.

As you probably know already, the NATO Summit took place in Prague on November 20, where it decided amongst other things to create an army of rapid intervention.

The European Union Summit in Copenhagen a few days ago proved the multinationals' demand for expansion of the capitalistic restructuring in new countries too. Their plans concerning the Euro army and the Euro police are on the way.

During the Greek presidency of the European Union in the first semester of 2003, very serious issues concerning the peoples were discussed.

Dear colleagues,

What we say is not unfamiliar to you. Our aim is not to ascertain how ugly this situation is.

We have to replace the question, „What can we expect?“ with „What should we do?“

The appeal of the Communist Manifesto, „PROLETARIANS OF ALL COUNTRIES, UNITE“ still has value in our time.

Our history has shown that the OPPOSITION to imperialism is the international cooperation and action of the anti-imperialistic, anti-monopoly movements of the countries.

Dear colleagues,

As you probably know, the workers' and peoples' movement in our country has experienced political persecution. Thousands of strugglers have been tortured, imprisoned and killed. We experienced the military coup of 1967-1974,

headed by the USA. Our country remains an imperialist base of operations against the peoples of the Balkans and the Middle East.

I guess you also know the huge anti-imperialistic and anti-war struggles of our people, as well as the huge mobilisation some years ago against Clinton's arrival in Athens. We have expressed in every way our opposition to the persecution of all those that oppose imperialism.

We stand beside you.

We condemn the Greek government and the political parties for their unacceptable position to the torture of ISOLATION against the strugglers of our neighbour country, Turkey.

PAME will utilise the documents of the International Symposium by informing our country's trade unions.

It will also take initiatives in the framework of the European Regional Office of the World Federation of Trade Unions, of which PAME is a member and which is based in Athens.

Dear colleagues,

On behalf of the secretariat of PAME, we invite you to participate in the mobilisations that will take place in our country in June 2003, on the occasion of the European Union Summit in the Greek city of Thessaloniki.

I'll close with some words of Nazim Hikmet:

***We'll meet again, my friends***

***Yes, we'll meet again***

***We'll smile together to the sun***

***We'll struggle beside one another***

***Oh, my friends***

***My brothers in struggle***

***Comrades of labour***

***See you soon***



# Laboratorio Marxista

## Italy

The comrades of the Laboratorio Marxista (Marxist Laboratory) participate in the International Seminar against Torture by Isolation in Noordwijk with the intention of contributing to the construction of a vast front of solidarity against repression able to put a stop to the reactionary offensive of the imperialistic middle-class and to permit a better defence of the political and also democratic rights of revolutionary organisations and „areas” in Europe and throughout the world.

Naturally, we do not believe that reaction and repression can be stopped simply by international solidarity or with legal defence or by providing counter information. We are convinced that the main weapon available to combat repression is that of developing the class struggle.

Certainly, even the intensification of the class struggle could bring a greater level of repression; if you don't struggle for your rights, you won't be repressed.

However, the intensification of the class struggle brings also a greater capacity of resistance and a greater solidarity of the masses and this can even be a „deterrent” for the repressive actions of the state.

In any case, each simply „democratic” conquest cannot be seen as the fruit of a magnanimous concession from those in power, but the fruit of well-defined relationships in balance of forces.

We are well aware of the resistance of the Turkish prisoners, their reasons and the heroism with which their resistance has been carried out over the last 2 years.

When, in December 2000, the Turkish army and police sprang an attack on the prisons causing the death of tens of prisoners, we immediately launched a series of solidarity initiatives and counter information on our territory. At that time, the Italian press and state television drew little attention to the attack, and the same is true also of the left-wing press.

Our task was mainly to make known the resistance and struggle against F-type cells, to break the silence and contribute to the construction of international solidarity.

We have continued to make known the position of the imprisoned Turkish revolutionaries, as we are convinced that their struggle in the prisons (as well as the struggle of revolutionaries outside the prisons), is a common struggle against imperialism.

In Italy, the increasing repressive tactics are carried out on two levels; at a social level against the movements and on a political level against political groups and unions. We are thus facing with a mass and at the same time selective attack with the objective of planting panic among the masses and isolating their avant-garde.

Over the last few years, Italy has been the theatre of a mass repression, the type of which has not been seen for many years.

The whole world could see how peaceful demonstrators were savagely beaten under the cameras of journalists from all over the world.

Now, also Italians have a first-hand feel for what happens on a daily basis in many parts of the world.

The demonstration against the WTO conference in Naples in March 2001, and most of all, the demonstrations in Genoa against the „G8” meeting in July 2001 saw repression on an extremely violent scale.

On both occasions the repressive forces moved as in an orchestrated military manoeuvre, which brought about the massacre, arrest and torture of thousands of demonstrators.

Up to the killing of Carlo Giuliani, in Genoa, on 20th July 2001.

It is worth noting that the demonstrations in Naples were repressed by a centre-left government, whilst those in Genoa were repressed by a centre-right government, which makes it all too clear that there are no so called „friends” for the people in the institutions of capitalist power.

Even from a legislative point of view, steps are being made towards an even greater repression.

Even before September 11th, in May 2001, the centre-left government, unanimously supported by the entire parliament, passed a law for the extension of protection custody (arrest without trial) from 18 to 24 months (using as an excuse the killing of Marco Biagi).

After September 11th other clauses (270 ter and 270 quater) were introduced to Article 270 of the Penal Code.

Article 270 was introduced in 1930 by the fascist regime with the declared objective to strike against anarchists and communists and is part of a code (the „Rocco code”, which takes its name from the fascist Minister of Justice who proposed it) which is still fully in force.

Not even after the Second World War, with the advent of so-called „democracy”, was this article abolished and it has often been used against communists and anarchists even in recent years.

This is further proof that in Italy, elements of fascism are still present in the judicial and political institutions even after fascism was „formally” defeated and replaced with this so-called „democracy”.

In particular Article 270 ter defines as „international terrorism” any type of political and economical support given to organisations categorised as „terrorists” (for example, those inserted in the ill-famed „black lists” of the U.S.A. and European Union).

By doing so, the authorities are attempting to obstruct solidarity among the revolutionary organisations and movements throughout the world.

For this reason, we are engaged in a political battle against these „black lists” which outlaw resistance organisations from many countries (such as Palestine, Turkey, Colombia...).

Recently, the normalisation of Article 41 bis (with the consent of almost all political parties) has been approved, which makes provision for „hard” prison (detention in isolation cells) for the „mafia” members, but also for those accused of political „terrorism” and accused of „international terrorism”.

In Italy, over the last year and a half, hundreds of immigrants have been arrested with the accusation of being suspected members of Al Qaeda. They were then released after months of detention for the complete absence of any proof.

This is a confirmation that those arrests were made under raise pretences and served purely for propagandistic purposes.

campaign of counter information is in progress against the -ll bis and we are trying to give our modest contribution.

We have also expressed our solidarity to anarchist comrade Marco Camenish in the battle against isolation and for the safeguard of the rights of political prisoners.

We consider solidarity towards political prisoners as a primary -lement in the activity of communist or anti-imperialist movements.

As in our September 2000 issue, „Seminare per raccogliere” .To seed in order to collect”), which outlines our political mase. we wrote:

\_Revolutionary prisoners have always been subjected to two :v pes of treatment: repression for those who do not collaborate, adulation and concessions for those that do.

Repression has been used to break the unity and resistance of prisoners, to separate them from the masses and to create :error in the ranks of all the revolutionaries. Via this ..collaboration” the aim is to obtain information and show ho is the winner.

isolation, denigration, physical and psychological torture are :he means used by repressive forces to break down :volutionaries. For this, even more merit goes to those who, :aced with endless difficulties, resist and continue to keep on 'wing the flag of the proletarian revolution.

=v eryday, all over the world, tens of thousands of :volutionaries are imprisoned, subjected to inhumane :reatment, forced to resort to extreme resistance, such as :lunger strikes which, in many cases, leads to their death.

But history teaches us that the struggle of the masses and :hat of political prisoners are indelibly linked. Thus, the .Iefence of revolutionary prisoners and solidarity towards them s one of the fundamental duties of every communist.

Expressing solidarity towards revolutionary prisoners does not necessarily mean being in favour of all of their choices, zowever it means supporting their revolutionary nature.

Since revolutionary prisoners remain imprisoned simply for being revolutionaries, because they fight against imperialism and for communism, each initiative of solidarity towards political prisoners must be supported and amplified by other communists, just as each initiative which highlights the history and experience of revolutionary organisations, their mistakes and their intuition must be supported.

We must not allow for a situation whereby the middle-class can portray (as it wishes) the history of the class struggle.

This also includes Italy, and the history of her resistance movement and the struggles of the 1960's, 70's and 80's.

We can't leave the middle-class to reconstruct our history -. is information provided by turncoats and those that Disassociate themselves from their own past. We must be able to ensure a representation of true historic facts that can ?e used as an example, or a warning, depending on the situation, for our present and future activities.

Only he who is still a communist has the political legitimacy o do this, and certainly not he who has renounced the class struggle, and amplifies the middle-class voice which describes 3 completely imaginary, peaceful world without conflict”.

Having for years participated in events promoted by other organisations, this year we decided to „celebrate” on the 19th of June, the International Day of the Revolutionary Prisoner

(a day in which we also commemorate the 300 Peruvian political prisoners murdered in 1986 by the government of Alan Garcia). This event, which has taken place over two days, represented a useful occasion to reflect on the question of political prisoners.

We have invited comrades from Argentina, Palestine, Turkey and Spain to participate and discuss together the situation of Italian prisons and those around the world.

Naturally, the question of political prisoners cannot only be remembered one day a year.

As previously outlined, the struggle of prisoners is part of the struggle against imperialism and its everyday consequences.

Recently, arrests have been made in relation to inquiries about Genoa 2001 (in Cosenza and Genoa).

To all the comrades of the various areas hit we express our solidarity, independent of our differing political ideas.

We have also expressed our solidarity with Francesco Caruso, one of the leaders in the italian „no global” movement, with whom we do not have any political sympathy, especially after the unacceptable declarations which he, and his „comrades” Casarini, Agnoletto, Bertinotti... made in relation to violence in Genoa, and after their intolerable dissociation (in certain cases, out and out denouncement) towards specific areas of the movement.

A salute to all Turkish comrades, and to all comrades present from your comrades of the Laboratorio Marxista.

Noordwijk, December 2002.



# Isolation Torture

## Germany - Turkey

There is isolation torture in both Turkey and Germany but it can be abolished through international solidarity. First of all, I want to describe the common aspects of isolation torture in Germany and Turkey.

In 1990, an official delegation from Turkey inspected Stammheim Prison in Stuttgart. Stammheim was known internationally as the newest „export model high-security prison“. The PDS (Party of Democratic Socialism) member of parliament Heidi Lippmann informed the public of the delegation's visit. The partnership of Turkey and Germany is a multi-dimensional one. It has economic, political and military aspects, covering all areas... Without the support of Germany the regime in Turkey could not exist and would collapse. Turkey is supported as a very important NATO member.

Some examples:

- Consignments of military hardware were moved from the USA's biggest military base in foreign countries, Ramstein in Germany, and sent to the NATO base at Incirlik in Turkey for use in the war in Afghanistan.
  - Germany's ban on the PKK (Kurdistan Workers' Party) and the DHKP-C (Revolutionary People's Liberation Party-Front)
  - At German Minister Schily's request, the transfer of nearly 150 Turkish and Kurdish prisoners to Turkey
  - The German consulate's refusal to grant entry visas to TAYAD members who wanted to influence German public opinion
- Turkey continually receiving IMF credits, leading to those on the Death Fast rightly saying that „we are fighting against the IMF's isolation torture“.

Germany has been practising isolation torture for 30 years. Experiments to this effect were carried out at Hamburg University's Eppendorf clinic. Nine prisoners died. Isolation has been used against militants, urban guerrillas and groups like the RAF (Red Army Faction) and the Second of June Movement. But it has been used against everyone who resists in the prisons, including Turkish and Kurdish prisoners.

### How is isolation practised in prison conditions?

RAF prisoners have been put in isolation for six to eight years and later this was intensified using special practices like isolating people in small groups, and practising severe censorship right up until final release.

### Special Isolation Measures

Dead cells (*Toter Trakt*) like the one at Cologne Ossendorf. Sensory deprivation, with all sounds being muffled. Four RAF prisoners were totally cut off from the outside world. No light or sound could enter the cell. The walls were painted grey.

### All relations cut off

In 1977 an RAF commando took former Nazi and leading capitalist Hanns Martin Schleyer prisoner, with the aim of having 11 RAF prisoners freed from isolation. In response all the prisoners were put in total isolation, meaning any ties

to the outside world were cut. There was no permission to visit them, they had no right to receive news and it was forbidden for lawyers to visit their clients. Their right to a defence was curtailed right up to their imprisonment.

The relatives, friends and those who visited prisoners were criminalised and put in jail.

### The aims of isolation:

In the first days, to force them to make a statement. Later, to destroy the prisoner or get him or her to abandon the struggle. Prisoners have called this method of operation a method aimed at causing destruction. Prisoners have carried out 10 collective hunger strikes to oppose this. These have brought isolation to light and on a small scale, rights have been gained.

There are still five prisoners in isolation, which has not been abolished. Birgit Hogefeld has been in isolation since 1993, for over eight years, Eva Hanle has been in isolation for over 15 years, since 1986, Brigitte Mohnhaupt and Christian Klar for 19 years, since 1982, Rolf Clemens Wagner for over 22 years, since 1979. Rolf Heissler was released a short time ago after 22 years on a conditional basis. At present the chances of release for 5 RAF prisoners are nil. Christian Klar will be in prison for at least 26 years, until 2008. His application to study mathematics was refused. The health condition of the prisoners is bad. They feel unwell, have difficulty concentrating and suffer from memory loss.

### Why are the RAF prisoners still inside?

They do not feel repentant about the past and have not capitulated. In December Christian Klar said this on TV. The prisoners come from the 1960s struggles that took place all over the world and they are still struggling for a classless and free society. During the Vietnam war they conducted a political and military campaign against the USA which has a powerful presence in Germany. While the USA was warring against the people of Vietnam in 1971, they destroyed its central computer at Heidelberg. In 1981 they attacked the Ramstein airbase. The RAF stated that it organised this action to oppose the 1980 NATO junta in Turkey.

The practices used previously against RAF prisoners are now being used against Turkish and Kurdish prisoners. An example:

### Nuri Eryuksel

Nuri Eryuksel was in prison for 10 years in Turkey. In 1999, after efforts by the German Federal Prosecutor's Office, he was arrested in Switzerland and sentenced to six years, six months' imprisonment in Germany at a DHKP-C trial. He is triply isolated, isolated from other prisoners from Turkey (with the exception of one), not allowed to take a German-language course and having only 5 per cent vision in his eyes.

As the example of Turkey shows, Germany has exported isolation torture to other countries. In 1987 a Peruvian delegation visited Cologne Ossendorf prison, and moreover isolation torture was presented as being beneficial to countries like France, Spain, Euskadi, Israel and Chile. In 1975 the „Institute for the Study of Conflict“, a NATO institution, issued a study. It recommended that „prisons must not be a

school for terrorists". With this aim in mind, all prisoner collectives in Europe were broken up.

Despite these setbacks, successes have also been gained in the struggle against isolation torture. Ilhan Yelkuvan, a DHKP-C prisoner from Turkey, is one example of this. He was condemned to life imprisonment by a court in Hamburg and he went on the Death Fast for 63 days to oppose the isolation to which he was subjected. His solitary confinement was lifted.

#### **How was this possible?**

Through his own resolute struggle and the support of prisoners in Turkey, Germany and Western Europe and protests outside the prisons. All these actions forced the German state to lift isolation of Ilhan Yelkuvan.

Let us turn to the struggle of the prisoners in Turkey.

The hunger strikes and Death Fasts which started on October 1. 2000 are the longest prison resistance in history and are still continuing after more than 500 days!

European prisoner collectives were destroyed, now the aim of the ruling class is to „Europeanise Turkey"! The idea behind this is to restrict the people and destroy any collective organisation by the prisoners.

In place of the previously existing dormitories of up to 30 people, there is isolation imprisonment modelled on the „European Standards Made In Stammheim" label.

Of course the aim is to destroy the last prisoner collectives in Europe!

#### **International solidarity actions in support of the prisoners in Turkey**

Rainer Diettrich is an inmate of Lubeck Prison. Since the hunger strikes started on October 20, 2000, he has engaged in a solidarity hunger strike, rotating several days of fasting with days where he breaks his fast.

Last November the European Parliament deputy Daniel Cohn Bendit made a protest. And he is someone who has actively opposed the revolutionary struggle for the past 25 years. When he went to Turkey in June he tried to get the prisoners to stop struggling against a prison system aimed at destroying them. These are just two examples. But it is necessary to strengthen the struggle against isolation in order that the demands of the prisoners in Turkey be accepted.

„I think that democratic and revolutionary forces in Germany are in the same front with the revolutionaries in Turkey. Here we have a very special responsibility. Because in history and today, German imperialism is the biggest exploiter of the peoples of Turkey." This was said by an internationalist delegation to Turkey for May Day.

Our duty is to stop isolation prisons being exported to Turkey! If we can establish links between Turkey and here we will achieve something!

The victory of such an important struggle will at the same time be the basis of joint work in future!

#### **VENCEREMOS**



### **Al-Oufok**

## **(„Horizon", press organ of the Arab Democratic Movement)**

„Friends, comrades,

Your struggle is just and that is why you will win.

Certainly, the price to pay is a high one, very high. It is measured in human lives. It is the price that Capitalism demands of human beings who lay claim to their humanity. Capitalism works to fashion the world in accordance with its

own interests. It is obliged to do this by History but it is digging its own grave thereby!

I greet you fraternally and wish you great success in your work at this symposium."

Al Faraby

[www.aloufok.com](http://www.aloufok.com)

# Solidarity With Hunger Strikers in Turkey

## Dublin, Ireland

'Solidarity with Hunger Strikers in Turkey', the Dublin based support group for the Prisoners of War on Death Fast, sends our solidarity greetings to your gathering opposing the isolation prison policies in Turkish jails.

Our group has been active in Dublin since May 2001 in raising awareness of the Death Fast. We held a national march of several thousand people in Dublin in September 2001 and also hold vigil pickets on the Turkish Embassy in Dublin each time a hunger striker dies. We have also held street 'black flag' protests and a 'Boycott Turkish Holidays' campaign, along with media, political and community work to raise public awareness of the struggle in Turkey. We work in co-operation with various Republican groups and individuals, human rights defenders, community activists, socialists and anti-fascists, as well as a Kurdish support group in Ireland.



In the 20th century twenty two Irish Republican Prisoners died on hunger strike during the struggle for Irish Freedom.

Many of our group lived and campaigned through the 1981 H-Block hunger strikes when ten Republican Prisoners of War died opposing the British war machine in the concentration camp at Long Kesh in the six counties of Ireland still occupied by Britain. We find it difficult to comprehend the tragedy and horror of 101 deaths of comrades in Turkey. We send our solidarity and sympathy to their families, friends and comrades and are thinking of you at this time.

'It is not those who can inflict the most, but those who can suffer the most, who will conquer.'  
(Terence McSwiney, Irish Republican Prisoner of War. Died on hunger strike in Brixton Prison, London in October 25, 1920)

Solidarity With Hunger Strikers in Turkey (Dublin)

## Class Against Class

### Salzburg, Austria

#### One's Own Self and the Walls

First of all we would like to greet all participants in this symposium, its organisers and the various organisations involved. More importantly, we greet and embrace even more warmly all the prisoners who unfortunately cannot be among us at present.

In our work with political prisoners we have become familiar with the most varied aspects of isolation. We heard descriptions which brought tears to our eyes and our anger over such arbitrary behaviour became immeasurable. And yet our knowledge of isolation as torture always remained abstract.

This symposium makes it possible to think more closely about the subject, and to understand a little better what it means to be subjected to a monopoly of violence through the instrument of isolation. The many political prisoners here who were themselves affected by it, the medical aspect that is covered, the groups which have campaigned against isolation for years and the judicial aspect are all dealt with.

We only want to offer a quote about isolation which serves to make everything a little more comprehensible.

It is a statement by one of the Red Army Faction's prisoners: „In isolation conditions, with time one loses any mental conception of everything. And then a hole opens and one loses oneself in it. Because nothing is concrete any more. Nothing is comprehensible any more. Just one's own self and the walls.”

With all the knowledge we have accumulated about isolation torture, the most important aspect concerns us directly.

It is the responsibility of acting rather than any longer remaining mere interested spectators who are indignant about such arbitrary behaviour unfolding before our eyes. Isolation was, is and remains in essence a tool of the ruling class aimed at breaking down political identity, the personality and all collective thoughts.

It is designed to make clear to all people right from the start that resistance to prevailing conditions will be fought against savagely, and that things are better left as they are.

Precisely the opposite must be the case. The struggle of political prisoners worldwide and now in Turkey is a sign that this is the case. And precisely there, it is about much more than preventing political prisoners' transfer into solitary confinement cells.

It is a struggle for the political identity of us all, and we must understand that. And it is not something that the prisoners in this struggle should have to do for those of us who are not in prison. Let us be the ones to take up that task.

And finally there must be a short pause to remember all those who have lost their lives in this struggle. They must not be forgotten.

We wish you a successful symposium.

**Class Against Class, Salzburg, Austria**

# Colectivo Europeo contra la Impunidad (European Collective Against Impunity), Belgium-Chile

Currently there are dozens of political prisoners (men and women) in the prisons of Chile. These people are subjected to a constant and planned policy of isolation, repression, constraints and organised violence. They are Chilean social militants and Mapuche (indigenous Indians of Chile) who have dedicated their lives to the just causes of liberty, democracy, social justice and respect for the rights of the people.

Like the thousands of persons during the dictatorship, they have been confronted with the violence of an anti-democratic state based on the 1980 Pinochet Constitution, a violence which has not hesitated to use all kinds of methods to pursue and punish the legitimate revolt by the people's militants.

An outrageous arsenal of special laws have been used to keep any anti-authority people in prison for an indeterminate number of years. When all is said and done, the civilian and military tribunals, just like successive governments of the dictatorship, have recourse to obscure manoeuvres and to the commission of obvious legal aberrations, going well beyond their own proper authority. By means of these intrigues, most political prisoners have already spent over eight years in «preventative detention», that is, they are imprisoned without having even been found guilty or being able to benefit from any presumption of innocence.

in Chile,

- Political prisoners are judged by military tribunals even though all of them are civilians who have never belonged to the armed forces of the state. Those who judge political prisoners and keep them in prison are the same ones who repressed and condemned militants who opposed the dictatorship, and they are also the ones who passionately defend the freedom from punishment of all those who violated human rights;

- Political prisoners are subjected to a double trial for a single alleged offence. This strikes a blow at fundamental and internationally recognised rights. Nobody can be condemned twice for the same act. But in Chile, political prisoners must be subjected to trial before a military tribunal and are then charged with the same crime by the ordinary courts;

- Political prisoners are arbitrarily subjected to the anti-terror law. In Chile, there is no people's organisation which has the aim of causing fear among the population (as was the case with DINA and the CNI, state security services, during the dictatorship). Political prisoners recognise that they are fighting against the state and the Pinochet institutions which they oppose but they reject the use of terrorist methods. This is even the view of the Justice Minister Francisco Cumplido, who reformed the anti-terrorist law. He states that the courts have put into effect an erroneous interpretation of this law and the result was to commit a new injustice against political prisoners.

Torture is constantly used against comrades, all of whom have suffered ill-treatment in the police stations. Beaten, deprived of

food and sleep for days, drugged, this is the «democratic» treatment used to obtain confessions by the forces of law and order with the consent of judges, the perennial accomplices of torturers and murderers, who are still protecting them. On the same lines we denounce the fact that ordinary prisoners are equally subjected to these same violations of human rights. Political prisoners are put in a prison that favours the use of torture and isolation. The prison termed a high-security one has been condemned by the parliamentary deputies on the human rights commission, who are not known for sympathising with revolutionaries. Inside this prison, political prisoners are beaten and given electric shocks, a process helped by the isolation which makes it impossible for them to defend one another.

These people's militants are mostly workers manual and social workers, Mapuche and students. In many cases they were direct victims of the Pinochet dictatorship's repression. All were tortured under civilian governments by the same executioners using the same methods current under the military dictatorship.

The political prisoners struggle for liberty and justice, against exploitation and oppression. For this, the same State which is diligently protecting Pinochet and his accomplices, turns on them with ferocious hatred, claiming to be handing out exemplary punishments to terrorise people's organisations and paralyse the struggles of the people, penalising rebellion. The following are the basic demands of a platform of democratic struggle in relation to imprisoned comrades:

- We demand immediate freedom without exception for all political prisoners,
- We demand that the state authorities do what is necessary to make this liberty concrete and without delay,
- We support the categorical refusal of political prisoners to accept certain manoeuvres which would use them as bargaining counters in a possible «political way out» for the murderers and torturers who violated human rights,
- We support the struggles of political prisoners, their families and their friends for liberty, justice and human dignity.

We make an appeal to all authentic democrats, defenders of human rights, people's militants, youth and international solidarity to mobilise all possible means to demand the liberation of political prisoners in Chile. Now!



## EMGANN

# Movement of the Breton Left-Wing Independence Movement Breizh

### **SUPPORT FOR TURKISH AND KURDISH POLITICAL PRISONERS**

From December 19 to 22, 2002, on the initiative of the prisoners of war of the Irish National Liberation Army, a solidarity hunger strike in support of the political prisoners of Turkey who are struggling against isolation will take place. Alongside other imprisoned militants, our compatriot and comrade Gael ROBLIN, imprisoned because of his influence over the Breton independence movement, will take part to show our solidarity with the Kurdish and Turkish revolutionaries struggling against the barbaric prison conditions of the fascist Turkish regime.

We make the demands of the revolutionary militants who have been struggling for more than two years our own and these are:

- \*Abolishing the F-Type prisons
- \*Abolition of the anti-terrorist laws
- \* Dissolving the State Security Courts.

These arrangements are only aimed at gagging and destroying them and those who struggle for the rights of the peoples to

self-determination and for social justice in the state of Turkey. We address here for the present a fraternal and warm greeting to the Turkish and Kurdish revolutionaries currently still engaged in this exemplary struggle, which is the same as the one we are conducting against the extraordinary laws called anti-terrorist in Western Europe.

Savage repression will not make us give up!  
Equally, we wish to salute the Irish, Belgian, Basque, Dutch, Italian, Spanish, Kurdish, Palestinian, Chilean and Turkish participants in the Symposium of Noordwijk.

Solidarity is a weapon!  
Bebet Breizh, Bevet hor stourmo !  
Ha don Bertan !

For EMGANN- The Breton Independence Movement of the  
Left  
Gwenael JEQUEL

Responsible for international relations

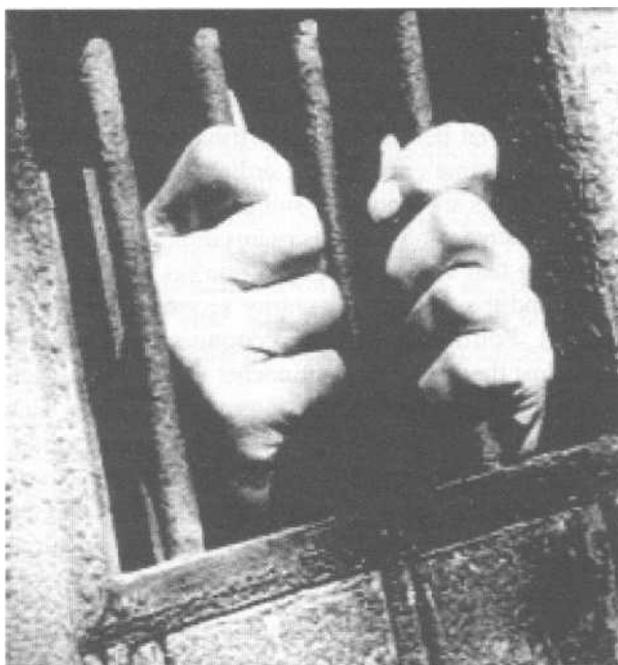
## Soccorso Popolare (People's Aid) Italy

### **For the attention of the organisers of the Symposium on prison isolation**

Dear comrades, brothers and sisters, all my condolences and those of my comrades and all our solidarity on the death of Comrade Feride Harman.

We translated your statement right away and distributed it to all the anti-imperialist lists in Italy. We have also put it on the site <http://www.venetocontroguerra.net> which we are using to organize a mass action against the imperialist war. We are planning a mass action against the large US base, Camp Ederle, at Vicenza. We consider that open warfare, that against Iraq now, for example, and the repression taking place in every country are the same thing, two aspects of the same policy, from the same cliques. The aim of the war is repression in order to maintain the capitalist system of exploitation of man by man, the superpower's regime of imperialist exploitation, with imperialist state dominating the peoples, and a regime of murderous exploitation run by cliques and mafias holding sway over the entire people. Above all, we must seek to withstand all that, to put forward solidarity, fraternity and mutual aid among all the oppressed, exploited and repressed in all parts of the world.

Honour to Feride and to all the comrades who have fallen in the struggle. Final victory will go to the workers and the peoples of the entire world.



**Sergei A. Novikov**  
**(on behalf of the Chairman of the Committee in Defence of Political**  
**Prisoners - Fighters for socialism Anatoly Viktorovich Kriuchkov)**  
**Russia**

The Committee is very grateful to you for the invitation to the International Symposium, planned for December the 19th-21st. We consider this gathering as an important international event in the anti-imperialist struggle and wish you most of success. Unfortunately we failed to send our delegate mostly for financial reasons. However we are ready to support your heroic struggle in the following way.

Firstly, you can find in attachment to this message our appeal to the participants of the International Symposium with the expression of our support and solidarity. We hope, that in spite of late terms this appeal will be reported and may be circulated among the participants.

Secondly, we are going to organize a picket near the Turkish embassy in Moscow on the 23rd of December and to overhand to the Turkish authorities our protest against the isolation and torture, that is also attached to this message.

Thirdly, we are determined to give more coverage to the Death Fast in our Committee's bulletin and other newspapers.

With the best Communist regards

Sergei A. Novikov

on behalf of the Chairman of the Committee in Defence of Political Prisoners — Fighters for socialism  
Anatoly Viktorovich Kriuchkov)

Dear comrades!

We, the Russian revolutionary communists, regard the Death Fast in Turkey as an outstanding example of heroism and self-dedication in the anti-imperialist struggle, that will be ascribed by golden letters in the history of revolutionary struggle for independence, justice and socialism.

Turkey is now the most evident example of those countries, that turned out to be under a double oppression of the global imperialism, mostly that of the US and NATO countries, and their own bourgeois oligarchy. And it is the most vivid example of the modern bourgeois democracy under imperialism, when the appearance of a sort of parliament and electoral process is just a cover for tyranny and repressions against those, who really defy the system of exploitation, hunger and misery, that plunges millions of people, living in a rich country, and who are able and willing to work, into humiliating poverty and unemployment. This is a system with fascist features under a democratic cover, that is so typical in one or another way for the most of the rest of the world outside the USA and Western Europe. It is the system, where the so-called electoral process is nothing but a game for simple-minded people, who believe, that their ballot can still change anything.

A great achievement of Turkish revolutionaries is that after many years of parliamentary illusions and obsession with elections of all sorts they stated, that the system cannot be changed by ballot boxes and resorted to the most militant sort of revolutionary violence. And then the bourgeois imperialist system showed its true face: it permitted to the tame opposition to claim for parliament and to exercise its political activity in legal conditions, because this opposition poses no danger for the system and, even more, they help to beguile millions of still naive and inexperienced people, speculating on their hope for change without revolutionary violence. This kind of opposition is safe, because they are not a threat for the safety of the imperialist system. Meanwhile those, who pose a real danger for the national and world bourgeoisie, are outlawed, arrested, imprisoned and heavily tortured. So now one should pay a high price to be a true democrat and revolutionary, and our Turkish comrades are the ones who have been the first to do so. And for this reason we, Russian revolutionary communists, are definitely on the side of our Turkish comrades. It is time to remember, that with all our differences we, communists of the world, are one family and ought to defend one another in every possible way. And it is the more important, that under the pretext of struggle against terrorism imperialism is now trying to terrorise all liberation and democratic movements, that threaten its profits and political hegemony.

Since the end of the 1990s the problem of political prisoners arose in Russia as well. The Committee in Defence of Political Prisoners — Fighters for Socialism was created in February 1999 to protect Andrey Sokolov, a member of the Russian Youth Communist League (Bolshevik), who was accused in terrorism for political reasons. The first success was followed by the aggravation of the bourgeois dictatorship in Russia as well as some changes among the initiators of the Committee. Now we are defending nine political prisoners such as:

- \* Nadezhda Raks (arrested on the 23rd of February 2000) and
- \* Larisa Romanova (arrested on the 6th of March 2000), who are still under investigation and since then kept in prison without trial in violation of all Russian laws;
- \* Tatiana Sokolova (arrested on the 3rd of March 2000 on the same case), who was set free as a result of the Committee's struggle;
- \* Andrey Sokolov, who was repeatedly arrested on the 20th of June 2000 and sentenced to 5 years' imprisonment;
- \* Alexander Biriukov (arrested on the 10th of July 1999);
- \* Alexander Shalimov and others.

At present the Committee unites the six following organisations: the Russian Communist Workers' Party —the Revolutionary Party of Communists (RCWP-RPC); the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks (ACPB); the Communist Party of the Union (of Belorussia and Russia); the Movement in Defence of Childhood; the Russian Youth Communist League (Bolshevik) (RCYL(B)) and the Vanguard of Red Youth (VCY).

These collective members of the Committee hold joint manifestations of protest and solidarity with political prisoners, trying to attract public opinion to the problem and thus to promote the idea of basic change by means of revolutionary violence, for which these young people were actually imprisoned. We do hope to establish reliable international ties with similar organisations in other countries, who are of the same opinion.

**Down with the F-Type prisons and isolation cells!**

**- Down with political repressions, massacres and tortures of revolutionaries!**

**- Down with the Black List and other examples of the imperialist and pro-imperialist terrorism and hegemony!**

**- Long live international solidarity!**

**- Long live independence from imperialism, democracy and socialism!**

**- Long live the new socialist revolution!**

(...)

**Respected Ambassador!**

On behalf of the Russian Committee in Defence of Political Prisoners—Fighters for Socialism we express our anger and indignation against such brutal repressions as F-Type prisons and solitary confinement, that made our Turkish comrades to resort to the Death Fast in order to protect their health and human dignity. We are sure, that such repressions will not save the present Turkish tyranny from inevitable defeat. And those, who are trying to save themselves by means of such newly-invented brutalities as the F-type cells only aggravate their historical responsibility for the pro-American oppression and exploitation of the Turkish working people.

We resolutely demand an immediate cease of any tortures in Turkish prisons, especially the application of F-type cells, and liberation of all political prisoners. You should remember, that true communists are one family whatever is their nationality, and your life in Russia will not be quiet while the Death Fast is going on. Sooner or later the Russian middle class, providing Turkey with tourists and traders, will get to know, that Turkey is a big concentration camp, rather than a paradise for tourists, and it will accelerate the end of the pro-American Turkish semi-fascist regime.

- Shame to those, who resort to torture and massacres of political prisoners!

- Down with the F-Type cells!

- Long live the Turkish fighters for true independence, democracy and equality!

- Long live international solidarity!

## **Bulgarian Communist Party**

### **Bulgaria**

We thank you very much for the invitation to participate in the Symposium and the Concert on the occasion of the 2nd anniversary of the Death Fast against isolation and torture, which has already taken the lives of 102 young fighters against imperialism and globalisation.

Much to our regret, due to financial difficulties, we cannot participate in the events. But we sincerely support all your efforts and congratulate the declaration you intend to accept. Please give our fraternal greetings to all participants in this humanitarian activity.

We hope that very soon the happy day will come when on our planet there will not be any more exploitation and all people will live in freedom and mutual understanding.

Without any doubt this can be achieved only after the victory of the Communist revolution. And in order to accelerate the achievement of these goals, it is necessary to render a massive support to all anti-globalisation, anti-imperialist and anti-fascist movements in the world against the aggressive and terrorist activity of the USA and its NATO satellites.

We are sure the 21st century will be a century of the total victory of Communism in the whole world. There is no alternative for Communism.

Long live Communism!

Vladimir Spasov

**General Secretary of the Bulgarian Communist Party**

## **Izquierda Democrática Popular y Colectivo Libertad**

### **Italy**

Comrades.

We have received through the Anti-Imperialist Camp the statement against the isolation of prisoners and we add our signatures in solidarity and in fraternity.

**Izquierda Democrática Popular y Colectivo Libertad**  
(People's Democratic Left and Liberty Collective)



**APK**  
**Workers' Communist Party**  
**Denmark**

Dear Comrades,

It has not been possible for us to be able to attend the International Symposium, which we consider to be an important event of building solidarity and strengthening the imperialist struggle. We wish you success - and look forward to further cooperation.

LAUS RIIS  
**Workers' Communist Party of Denmark, APK**

**Anti-Fascist Committee Duisburg**  
**Germany**

I am sorry but we must say present our apologies. We simply can't attend since we're in the final phase of preparing a book, and that is a lot of work in itself. We wish you much success with the symposium and send our greetings to all participants. We'll let you know when the book is ready. Warm and internationalist greetings  
HEIKO

**Rifundazione Comunista**  
**Italy**

With my solidarity to the DHKP-C political prisoners incarcerated for the cause of the people's liberation. Also my condolences to the TAYAD families

Signed: Dr GIOVANNI BARBAGLI, head of the **Rifundazione Comunista group on Tuscany's Regional Council (Italy)**

**Info-Turk, revue**  
**Belgium**

**To the organisers of the Symposium on prison isolation**

Dear friends,

I send this message to you in the great bitterness of learning that prison resistance to the F-Type prisons has just claimed its 102nd victim.

The new government in Ankara, supported by all the hypocritical forces, is conducting a campaign of lies maintaining that all the Copenhagen criteria have been put into practice and that Turkey clearly deserves to be allowed to join the European Union.

As for European leaders, they do not hesitate to applaud this so-called Turkish step down the road towards democratisation. Now, after the Islamists have been in power for a month, five political prisoners have fallen victim in the course of their resistance to inhuman prison conditions.

The new government in Ankara has already forgotten its promises of democratization and it gave in immediately to the directives of the

military. Their policies are defined by the National Security Council (MGK), by briefings of a demeaning nature issued by the General Staff of the armed forces and by the National Intelligence Organisation (MIT).

They have already stated that they will be complicit in the new imperialist offensive against Iraq.

For all the talk about democratization in Turkey, more than 10,000 political prisoners are still suffering in the prisons of Turkey.

The holding of your symposium on prison isolation and white torture will without doubt be a real slap in the face for the liars of Turkey's regime, as well as their accomplices abroad, and especially inside the European Union.

In wishing you great success in your work at the symposium, I particularly salute the courage and combativity of the TAYAD Committee.

I also send all participants in this meeting my warm appreciation for their exemplary solidarity with the political prisoners and their families in Turkey.

DOGAN OZGUDEN



# SIROOS MIRZAEI, Hemayat Austria

Excerpt from a lecture titled: „Socio-political dimensions from a medical point in work with survivors of torture and warfare”  
SIROOS MIRZAEI, Head of the Hemayat Association for Looking After survivors of torture and warfare,  
Senior doctor at the Institute for Nuclear Medicine, Wilhelminenspital, Vienna, Austria  
I would like to stress three key points here in relation to work on preventing torture:

Prison isolation and hidden places of detention:

In isolation cells there are conditions of detention in which the prisoners are totally isolated from the outside world with the intention of breaking them physically and psychologically. According to reports in the literature, longer-term detention in isolation cells leads to physical and psychological symptoms like a weakening of the immune system and hence susceptibility to further illnesses, headaches, migraines, inability to concentrate, physical and psychological lethargy, chronic bronchitis, tinnitus and so on. Moreover these cells make it easier for those in the cells to become victims of violence, and without witnesses. In October 2000, numerous political prisoners in Turkey's prisons started an indefinite hunger strike against the introduction of these F-Type prisons. Since then more than 90 of those on hunger strike have died, and 12 are still on the Death Fast.

Those prisons were stormed and the prisoners were shot and smoke grenades which caused burns. A woman patient who

was a victim of this attack, was examined by me after her arrival in Austria for the purpose of a doctor's report as part of an asylum claim. She has typical burn marks on her back and says that in the prison, smoke developed, gas spread everywhere and even got under her clothes, everyone screamed and she assumed that she was on fire. „There was no fire,” she said. After contacting the CPT (Committee for the Prevention of Torture) the information was confirmed that this involved „smoke grenades” and these were what caused such injuries.

An example of concealed places of detention are private houses where people are held prisoner. There is no official documentation on these.

A client, a journalist by profession, told us recently that he was held for six months in a „dog cage”, was stripped naked and was virtually compelled to stay on all fours in the cage. Food scraps for him were thrown on the ground. He had to relieve himself in this position. In the following four years he was held in the cellar of a house without a window. He was finally released and went home a physical and psychological „wreck” with his hair and beard reaching to his knees. His family helped him to flee, he came to Austria and first of all he became acquainted with „deportation detention”. At the moment his asylum application is being processed and he is undergoing psychotherapy in the Hemayat Association.

## Juliette Beghin on behalf of the International Supervisory Body for Prisons Belgian section



High-security and isolation prisons constitute a choice of political prison that must be **s t r o n g l y** condemned. Particularly since these special regimes are based

on criteria of „dangerousness” for which it is impossible to obtain a definition that is unanimously accepted. When this „dangerousness” is applied to «political» prisoners, as in Turkey, the problem becomes an extremely troubling one. Just as troubling is the inadequate national and international reaction to the number of deaths on hunger strike among prisoners.

According to the CPT (2000), the new F-Type prisons in Turkey are a form of progress by comparison with the earlier prison system which consisted of big dormitories in which the conditions of life were very degrading. The CPT

nevertheless asks whether there is sufficient guarantee of activity outside the cells. So at Kartal Prison its delegation noted that «some facilities existed for communal activities; however, the delegation noted that they were virtually unused. **This raised doubts in our minds as to the extent to which prisoners will in fact be involved in activities outside their living units in the new F-type prisons** ». Regarding conditions in the disciplinary and supervisory in Bursa E-Type Prison, the delegation noted the following deficiencies: „Prisoners placed in that section are held in cells which are inadequate in size and very poorly lit and in which they spend periods of up to 25 days with lack of outdoor exercise.”

There is every reason to believe that living conditions in these prisons involve isolation, in other words «a prison within the prison».

Isolation most often displays the following characteristics:

- Prohibitions on communication or contact with other prisoners;
- The prevention of any communal activity and the absence of activity outside the cell;

- Many control measures (searches, a high level of surveillance, censorship of mail, etc.)
    - the view of many specialists, these regimes are counter-productive and dangerous. According to Belgian research on prison violence dating from 2000, various effects of isolation have been put forward:
  - Various people questioned (among them prisoners who had been put in isolation conditions) describe such a system as arbitrary and dangerous, causing disastrous psychological effects. After two or three months prisoners are described as „going up the wall”.
  - The progressive destruction of one's identity; Being under constant surveillance, the physical and psychological after-effects, the absence of perspective and the feeling of having nothing left to lose can result in extreme behaviour.
    - short, isolation aggravates the harmful effects of being imprisoned. Isolated, the prisoner loses any possibility of cramming his or her own life to at least a minimum degree. With the loss of dignity, the personality is progressively destroyed. Prolonged isolation causes real and irremediable psychological damage, severe physical suffering and damage morale as well as sharp psychic troubles which can lead to extreme acts of despair. Finally it creates feelings of fear, wish and inferiority among its victims, humiliating them, "sing them and breaking their physical and moral resistance.
- disastrous effects of isolation are also described by those who have experienced them, often over a long period, in

„special” quarters: *The mind is murdered by putting in place an extreme system of prison oppression, causing death through psychological destitution. Far from protecting society it is a factory for creating the beasts and murderers of tomorrow* (Mesrine); *One only has death to gain (...), sensory death, neutralisation through destruction of all vital impulses* (Roger Knobelspiess)

In Belgium we can also cite an order dated November 9, 1987 by the judge for interim cases concerning a complaint with regard to the high security regime (called the U Block): *There is sufficient proof from hearings and from reading files that the U Block regime as currently imposed on prisoners is inhuman and degrading punishment in the sense of article 3 of the European Commission on Human Rights. All human beings need a way of programming their way of life. They need to alternate solitude with relations of trust with someone. Hell is just as much too little as too much of other people.*

In a period based on the promotion of human rights, these are situations which can no longer be tolerated which must be strongly condemned. Forcible isolation is thus a practice contrary to the most basic human rights.

A message was sent by Sergio Ortiz, General Secretary of the Party of Liberation of Argentina, entitled „Nothing to celebrate” describing the legacy of colonisation in Latin America in the 510 years since Columbus arrived in the New World and spoke of the destruction of the original inhabitants.

## Bonnie Kerness author USA

Statement by **Bonnie Kerness**, one of the authors of „**Inside the Walls: Control Units, Supermax Prisons, and Devices of Torture**” by **Rachael Kamel and Bonnie Kerness**



**Supermax prison from in- and outside**

Heartfelt Greetings to all of you participating in this most important conference from myself and Masai Ehehosi, my associate in the American Friends Service Committee's Prison Watch Project. The use of isolation as a tool for social control expanding throughout the world. Last year, we read of the many brave Turkish prisoners protesting the use of this form of torture and know that some died as a result of their fight for social justice. They join those throughout the world, and throughout time who have struggled for peace and justice. The United States is not only exporting the concept of supermax prisons, we are also exporting the architects to build them, training the people to maintain them as well as exporting devices of torture that we often see used in them. Devices such as restraint chairs, restraint tables, stun guns, stun belts, riot hoods, shackles and chains are „money-makers” for many corporate entities in this country. Their use violates a number of the United Nations Treaties and Covenants signed by the United States. The use of isolation along with these devices is an increasingly world-wide phenomenon, which makes conferences such as this critical. Those of us who have been monitoring the use of

extended isolation in control units and supermax prisons have seen an expanded use particularly for prisoners who are political or legal activists. Here they tell us that supermax prisons are used for the „worst of the worst”. When we examine who is currently being held in the endless isolation, it is not prisoners who murder other prisoners or guards as they say, it is the prisoner activists - and too often the mentally ill. It is of great meaning to see young people throughout the world gathering on issues of importance to all of us committed to world-wide social justice. Prison issues are the bottom line manifestation of poverty, racism, corporate greed and a world wide crises of the human spirit. Masai and I have been working for social justice and social change since the early 1960's. It is so good to see the next generations push forward. You have our love. If there is any way in which we can help this struggle move forward, please be in touch with us.

**BONNIE KERNESS**

# HENRI ALLEG

writer, anti-colonialist fighter and ex-political prisoner

France

My total solidarity with the prisoners and their families in the struggle they are conducting in order to obtain humane conditions of detention. My deep condolences go to the families of those who have fallen in so tough a battle, and I wish success to the participants in this symposium.



countries of the continent and demand that the government of Turkey act in a way that conforms to its statements, right at the time when it seeking to negotiate its membership in that very same Europe?

## To the participants in the Noordwijk symposium

At a time when the whole of Europe echoes with solemn statements and affirmations by governments concerning their support for the defence of Human Rights throughout Europe and the rest of the world, men and women continue to suffer and die in the prisons of Turkey. Their untiring struggles and sacrifices, up to and including death, for the sake of obtaining humane conditions of detention come up against a wall of rejection and cruelty on the part of the authorities in Turkey, and their appeals for aid and solidarity from European governments remain unanswered. It is as if the same governments only want to listen to declarations by Turkey's leaders claiming that they are working for progress in the spheres of democracy and Human Rights, while in reality they remain obstinately deaf to the cries of the prisoners being tortured and assassinated in the jails of their country. When will this criminal hypocrisy cease? When will the voices of officialdom and government bestir themselves in all the

Only a massive demonstration by millions of citizens in all the countries of Europe and the world in favour of respect for human beings, liberty and democracy, only an intransigent demand on their part for justice can ensure that the dramatic appeal of the prisoners who are continuing to die is heard and taken into account, and only such an action will end their continual martyrdom and put a stop to the constant threat of death hanging over them.

That is why I send my greetings to this symposium organised by TAYAD and to all those taking part in it, certain that together we will succeed in ensuring that the just claims of the prisoners are vindicated and that, in addition, they are freed.

With my most cordial greetings and all my solidarity in this just struggle.

HENRI ALLEG

## Jerome White-Bey

(MPLU- Missouri Prison Labor Union)

USA

Greetings comrades,

We understand that Solidarity means mutual aid, working voluntarily and co-operatively with others who share the same goals and interests. So we, the MPLU, stand in complete solidarity with all of the comrades there. I believe that Ret Maria said it all:

„The most noble, pure and true love of mankind is the love of oneself. I want to be free! I hope to be happy! I want to appreciate all the beauties of the world. But my freedom is secured only when all other people around me are free. I can only be happy when all other people around me are happy. I can only be joyful when all the people I see and meet look at the world with joy-filled eyes. And only then can I eat my fill with pure enjoyment when I have the secure knowledge that other people, too can eat their fill as I do”.

Comrades, regardless of miles and seas that stand between us, our solidarity is the bridge that links us together as one. So comrades as set in this prison cell miles away from you, yet I stand in complete solidarity with you there and I extend a Clenched Fist salute to all of you, and we must continue to fan the flames of our discontentment.

In Struggle

## Xavier Susperregi

(Kalegorria review)

Euskadi

As it is not possible to take part, I am sending you this brief letter, with no intention other than to encourage you in your fight against injustice and for the liberation of the people. One day isolation will end, but you will succeed thanks to your courage and determination.

Today the solidarity in the face of repression is the tie that connects the oppressed citizens and people, tomorrow the tie will be the fraternity of the liberated prisoners who will rejoin you.

Today (19-12-2002) in Euskal Herria, there is a general day of protest against the fascist measures directed against our people, as part of which the banning of political parties and associations has become a matter of everyday routine, as well as the imprisonment of supporters of Basque independence for no other reason than their political affiliation. This is shown by the arrest and imprisonment of Juan Mari Olano, who has only been charged with taking part in an association which supports Basque political prisoners.

Solidarity greetings

Euskal Herria 19-12-2002

Xavier Susperregi (Kalegorria review)

# Hüseyin Karabey

## film director

### Turkey



#### THEY THINK UP THESE THINGS, CARRY OUT TESTS AND THEN DO THEM

At the start of June 2000 the Justice Ministry wanted to the validity of the F-Type prisons to be accepted and a wide-ranging discussion started among the public in Turkey. In that period my attention had been drawn to a statement by the Justice Ministry. „We will bring Turkey's prisons up to European standards. Our prisons will be like Europe's” it said. About 11 months previously I decided to see Europe's prisons and make a documentary film explaining what these standards are, because for some reason it was assumed in this country that everything coming from Europe was good and the Justice Ministry would not do such a thing (they think that the Ministry would not do anything that was inhumane to prisoners, a belief that is not without foundation!) and it was believed and claimed by quite a few people who wanted the European system practiced that it could not be introduced and never would be.

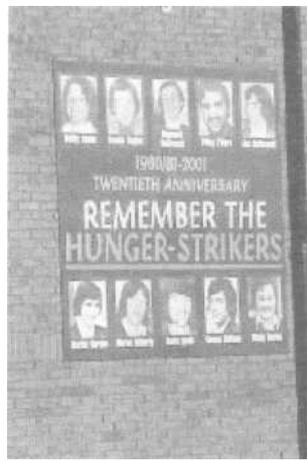
Documentary research started on Germany a year earlier using the Internet, continuing with Spain, Northern Ireland and finally, and finally the United States were added to the project. Quite obviously the system we are confronted with was one that was a frightening one even for those researching it. The prison system widespread in Europe and America and which is summarised under the word „isolation”, inspired those who want to establish the same system in Turkey as well. The essence of the system can be summarised is that the prisoner's personality is to be destroyed by depriving him or her of human sensory stimulation, that is, the outside world and everything that is natural, replacing it what the norms the system wishes to impose. Of course, it is these norms or something! It implies permission for a person to destroy him or herself (last year in France, 125 people committed suicide while held in isolation cells). We have seen that these practices are carried out as a result of 100 years of research by scientists with regard to human nature and the scientific work carried out in total cooperation with governments. They were first of all thought up, experiments were conducted and finally they were put into practice. Generosity has also been shown in the matter of wanting to share with friendly countries the system we are facing. We have seen that the experiments conducted in Germany were in due course shared with Spain, Chile and Peru, amid severe criticism. Now prisoners in Peru and Chile are subjected to European standards, like our prisoners.

In the 1970s isolation was extensively used against RAF prisoners and this is continuing to the present day. While this was only used on political prisoners to start with, now a treat many prisoners are held in these conditions, as is the case in a number of European countries. This is essentially how such a system is defended: „It is not enough to punish the most harmful elements in society. We must also get them to give up their beliefs. So that they are like us.” At first glance this is not done in a very blatant way and they start

with those who are least likely to be defended by society, that is, the terrorists. This is a concept that is in itself in dispute. Dangerous beliefs which may change society are targeted and people who propagate these thoughts are removed from society. If not biologically, then sociologically, by isolating them until they show repentance... Exposing people to isolation is turned into death in a social sense. Europe does not think the death penalty is necessary because it has more effective sanctions available than execution. Moreover, deaths continue in the form of suicide even if not as a result of execution! Last year nearly 70 people killed themselves in Germany's prisons. This number is not so different from the number of deaths in other European states. Even in the prisons of France, this has become a routine situation. The friends and relatives of prisoners learn of the death when they come to prison on a visit. The state does not even think it necessary to inform the families beforehand of the death. The suicide rate is so high in France because many prisoners in isolation go into a depression. I asked a Basque political prisoner who had been held for a long time in French prisons about these suicides. He said: prisoners who go into a depression because of being held in isolation are given anti-depressants by the prison administration. At least once every year the prison administration transports prisoners to another prison (this is part of isolation practices. In this way, possible social contacts are prevented.) After being transported, the prisoners are not given anti-depressants and various bureaucratic procedures are necessary before they can be issued again! It is at this point that suicides are most frequent. This is why political prisoners are never given anti-depressants. This shows that the intention is to commit a crime against them because this is done despite it being well known what might happen, but the crime is committed in a very clever fashion.

The system in America is pursued in a situation somewhat different from the one in Europe. In the USA, when one talks of the prisons, they have gone several steps further. Here the system is essentially one of rewards and punishments. Everyone can be placed in isolation if the wishes of the prison administration are not met. In recent times these wishes have focused on prison work. If prisoners who are required to work do not do so, they are kept in severe isolation conditions for 30 days and this can be extended until they agree to work. There are no less than 2.2 million people in US prisons, that is, 1 per cent of the population. This is the highest proportion of all countries in the world. In our country the proportion is one in a thousand. In other European countries the proportion is over 1 in a thousand. In the USA this proportion has not changed over the past 10 years, you either go in and do not exit or else the laws are changed so that if you do leave prison you go back there before long. Europe also wants to put this system into effect, for the worse. The essence of this system is the privatisation of prisons. In the name of the state and society, persons who have committed an offence are rehabilitated more cheaply by using them in the special enterprises which exist in 60 per cent of US prisons. Moreover there is nothing surprising about the practice in this country.

Slavery in this country is still a matter for controversy and an actual system of slavery in another form practiced against other human beings does not raise too much concern. Already, of the 2.2 million people in jail, 2 million are Blacks or Hispanics. In short, US prisons being taken as a model for us would be to adopt a system of complete and terrifying exploitation. It is necessary to question the views of Mrs. Melda on this who has continually claimed to be an expert on this in Turkey! The factories closed down in the USA are no longer in the form you expect, they are not re-opened in countries that are a cheap labour paradise, instead they are re-opened around and even inside the prisons of their own country. Either forced labour or solitary confinement ... this is the US prison system. OK, isn't this a terrifying situation all over the world? Moreover, I only looked at the prison models to be found in developed countries, including in films and books. To be more exact, these were forms of prison isolation practices. Perhaps Northern Ireland refers us to the possibility of different practices. The highest point of severe practices against the IRA was reached during the time of the Iron Lady Thatcher. In this period the practices in the prison system worked out by Thatcher were not different from those used against the RAF prisoners in Germany. But in this period, starting in 1980, the resistance of IRA prisoners and the support of the people for the prisoners meant that the isolation system in Northern Ireland was lifted. Centres of resistance in the prisons which do not have the support of the public are not able to remove the prison system completely. But with the support of the people, today there are no isolation practices in the prisons of Northern Ireland and all political prisoners were released. (Editor's note: The H Blocks were closed but there are still political prisoners in Ireland.)



This book may not be able to prevent the use of isolation but it may be helpful in breaking part of the isolation that society is exposed to and which also includes us. Because isolation is not simply a matter of prisons. Isolation is a practice directed at society at the same time. As a society, practices experienced in prisons will also affect our rights elsewhere. And even if it doesn't... Do we know what is happening in these places right now? This time the practices we are exposed to are very serious ones. These practices do not have short-term aims. They are ready and those who are able to resist for long years

on end are aware of it, those who are exposed to it are aware of it but those who may be exposed to it at any moment that is, ourselves outside prison, free people, those who remain silent, we are not sufficiently aware of it. Moreover, we aren't at all. Only some of us are aware that we are losing something but even they do not know what they are losing... The aim of isolation is to destroy a person's awareness of the past. To be made to lose our memory will also mean that society pays the same price. Many people will ask whether we did not lose it a long time ago. Yes, we have begun to lose it, but this is the latest stage (for the time being!). Until now we knew what we had lost, we could remember, even if only a little. From now on we will not be able to remember what we have lost.

Finally I want to say that this work is the result of a self-criticism. Personally I question myself and the only essential thing is that I am able to change. I have thought, I am learning and I will change.

**By Huseyin Karabey, director of Turkish film *Silent Deaf***



# John Nixon

## (former Blanket protester/hunger striker)

### Ireland

During the Blanket protest in the H Blocks of Long Kesh (1976 - 1981) the use of isolation or solitary confinement as a primary weapon of psychological and physical punishment used by the establishment not only against the individual but also against groups of prisoners who were determined not to be 'criminalised' or made to conform to normal prison rules and regulations. In isolation (or solitary confinement) the battle for psychological survival is fought on two fronts; the conscious and the subliminal. The purpose of isolation particularly for long term periods is manifold. To weaken or break the individual or group, to control and manipulate them, to demonstrate who is in control, i.e. the prison regime and its political bosses, and ultimately to frustrate any attempts by the prisoner/s to organise and assert their individual or organisational authority and identity within the system. It is them and us; it is them and me.

In the case of isolation being used against 'politicals' another dimension is added to its use; to send out a message that the *status quo*, i.e. the state, cannot be changed and is prepared to use any methods, inhumane or otherwise to maintain and defend itself.

In isolation the prisoner experiences fear and vulnerability. He feels totally at the mercy of his captors who are prepared to go to any lengths to break his will and spirit, to deprive him of identity, to challenge every aspect of his personality and self-being. On the physical level there is sensory deprivation of every conceivable kind. In H Blocks the punitive use of Number One diets or deprivation of sleep exacerbated both physical and psychological discomforts. The mind becomes the ultimate battlefield and convictions, commitment and resolve are laid bare against the basic desire to survive and to be unburdened from gratuitous suffering. His commitments, beliefs and principles are being called into question.

The battle for psychological and physical survival does not begin when a prisoner is isolated. That happens when he enters

the prison but the isolation cell becomes the crucible in which the sum total of all that makes up the persona is tested and tried. Isolation is not just about being held incommunicado. It conjures up unknown and untested strengths and weaknesses. The notions of not backing down or seeking the easy way out are juxtaposed at once. There is tension and there is ease. Isolation produces a schizoid mindset or psychosis where the prisoner is confronted with a constant desire to escape from harsh realities into the realms of fantasy. There is the possibility that the prisoner may become too divorced from realities and 'lose it all'. There is despair and a feeling that there is no sense of an ending to his demise. There is always the option of giving up and conforming and in creating the rationale to do so, all of which is weighed up against a backdrop of consequences of such action for himself and for others who may look to him for strength and leadership.

Isolation presents the regime with a window to observe the very nature of the captive. To suss his weaknesses and strengths and to be seen to be doing so all of which induces states of paranoia. The prisoner is constantly made aware by the authorities that he is a voyeuristic object. He is made to feel mindful that isolation can produce suicidal tendencies even if he abhors the notion that his vulnerability could produce such notions or that the seeds of such thoughts could even germinate or take root. He is afraid for himself and others that latent weaknesses may surface and be exploited, that such weaknesses will compromise his own insincerity or lead him to guile himself into a *rationalised* conformity.

Ultimately isolation creates a subliminal state of confusion and a conscious state of dependency on the capacity to harness all human and even superhuman resources for psychological and physical survival

John Nixon

# Kenan Gorgun

## journalist

### Turkey

Hello to all the friends from the Tayad Committee.

Unfortunately I cannot be present at the Symposium. But I am very close to the moves and actions of the Tayad Committee in favouring a more humane system of imprisonment. I wonder what would happen if the people who decided to install the F-Type prisons, claiming that it was a more „humane” form of imprisonment, would like it if they had to spend a spell in solitary in one of these cells. Since it is difficult to express the great drama of this isolation, it would be necessary for those who make the decisions and turn a deaf ear to learn by personal experience what it is that

the prisoners have denounced as being a completely inhumane system. Yes, I wonder..



## ROSO ZAPATA. Venezuela

Dear comrades.

Please accept my solidarity and I am at your disposal for whatever activity I can engage in from here (Venezuela) which can aid this noble cause (opposing prison isolation). However, I must tell you that for the first time in its history as a republic, Venezuela enjoys total political freedom, there are no political prisoners and there is also no prison isolation. In the same way I must also tell you that last April the people of Venezuela foiled a fascist military coup directed against President Chavez, a coup which only lasted 48 hours, time enough to unleash ferocious repression against the people.

At present, since December 2, another version of the fascist coup has been on the march. Since that date there has been a strike by the high-ups in the petrol industry, a terrorist sabotage seeking to strangle the national economy and make it collapse, with the sole aim of getting the president to resign and be replaced by a government financed by international finance capital with its centre among the „gusanos” („worms”, anti-Castro elements) of Miami.

If their scenario comes to pass - very unlikely because they people are united by the slogan „No pasaran” with the progressive sections of the armed forces, which are in the majority - the prisons of Venezuela would be filled with political prisoners and a new experience like that undergone by the fraternal Chilean people would be implanted in our homeland. So we ask for your solidarity so that fascism does not triumph in the land of the Liberator, Simon Bolivar.

HASTA LA VICTORIA SIEMPRE

Your comrade and friend

ROSO ZAPATA

Caracas, Venezuela

## GILDA Italy

Sometimes I cry for you and with you and it seems to me that I understand the pain of no longer being oneself in these kinds of imprisonment which is the new model of torture for the vanguard in Europe and in the world. A lot of people do not understand this type of suicide. For my part I think it is not suicide but homicide by those in power committed against men and women who have need of freedom and ties with others in order to live. It's like removing flowers from water.

They are being left to die, it is as simple as that. I hope that this small reflection of friendship on my part will unite with many other small drops to alleviate your suffering my friends.

Ciao from Italy

GILDA

## A song sung by George Brassens from a poem by Paul Fort

*The little horse*

*The little horse in the bad weather*

*How much courage he had!*

*It was a small white horse*

*Everything was behind, everything behind*

*It was a small white horse*

*Everything behind and him in front!*

*There was never good weather in this poor countryside!*

*It was never spring*

*Neither behind, neither behind,*

*it was never spring,*

*Neither before nor after!*

*But always it was content*

*taking the village boys*

*across the black rain of the fields*

*Everything was behind, everything behind*

*Across the black rain of the fields*

*Everything behind and him in front!*

*His carriage followed him*

*His beautiful, wild little tail*

*It was then that he was content*

*Everything was behind, everything behind*

*It was then that he was content*

*Everything behind and him ahead!*

*But one day in bad weather,*

*A day that he was wise*

*He was killed by lightning*

*Everything was behind, everything behind*

*He was killed by lightning*

*Everything behind and him in front!*

*He died without seeing the good weather*

*When he had so much courage!*

*He died without seeing the good weather*

*Neither behind, neither behind*

*He died without seeing the spring*

*Neither behind nor ahead!*

Paul FORT)

## THE FINAL DECLARATION AT THE SYMPOSIUM AGAINST ISOLATION

During the Symposium against Isolation, which was held in the Netherlands from 19-21 December 2002, and joined by 55 representatives from Turkey, the Basque Country, Palestine, Spain, Italy, Germany, Greece, Belgium, Lebanon, Morocco, Peru, France, Austria, Colombia, Portugal, Denmark and the Netherlands, the following decisions were taken:

### Final declaration

December 19-22 were the days when in the year 2000, 28 prisoners in Turkey were killed in the struggle against isolation.

As almost everywhere else in the world, the intention is to totally isolate the political prisoners in Turkey in order to break and destroy them.

These prisoners have been leading an exemplary fight for more than two years with a Death Fast, the longest hunger strike in history, against state terrorist isolation torture. This struggle has already cost over one hundred lives and still goes on today. Isolation is one of the most extreme forms of repression, like disappearances, most particularly in the Arab world and Latin America, torture and murder. Isolation is a means of destroying thoughts, especially political thoughts. Isolation is torture, torture is a crime against humanity and this form of torture was initiated by imperialist states, like the USA and the countries of the EU. We call upon all peoples to fight against all kinds of isolation as part of today's struggle against oppression and exploitation.

That's why we want to call the days from 19-22<sup>nd</sup> December worldwide days of action against isolation imprisonment.

We agreed that isolation is harmful in the human and medical sense and is illegitimate.

Each person should put the struggle against isolation into practice within his or her own framework.

**FREEDOM FOR ALL POLITICAL AND WAR PRISONERS!**

**LONG LIVE INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY!**

