

dissuaded from living with human dignity. This situation will be our true 'Coming of Christ'.

So long as the attacks against us continue we'll work to safeguard the liberation of our people and clothe ourselves in humanitarian values. It will be the Turkish Mafia State and its collaborators which stand accused.

Huseyin Baybasin

Holland

Part One

STORY OF AN EXILE

The reason I abandoned my homeland and went into exile lies in the phase at the beginning of the nineties. During this period - whether in the Kurdish heartlands or in Turkey - some of the foremost Kurdish journalists, political figures and a great many thinkers and patriots were murdered by the Mafia gangs composed from within the framework of the State. The killers would steal up on our people from behind and gun them down in broad daylight right in front of everyone. But despite this no "known" person was ever arrested. It was said that the murders were committed by "persons unknown" but the Kurdish people knew their enemy very well. The war had not just begun today and what we were living through was a continuation of the long war that had endured across the centuries.

The phase in 1991 I'm referring to began when Vedat Aydin, a well-known Kurdish political figure, was abducted from his home and murdered in cold blood. This was the starting point for all the murders that were to follow and for the people who would suddenly disappear from their homes, or from out in the street, until it all became part of our way of life. During the period when such murders most intensified news began to be heard of how at the highest levels of the State anew initiative had been embarked upon and that this was to be one of utter

annihilation targeting Kurdish politicians, businessmen and intellectuals. Things eventually reached the point where people whose names were rumoured to be on the hit list paid the Mafia in lump sums of up to a million dollars to have their names removed. Despite this it was blatantly clear that the heart of the matter lay in the State's power to make such decisions and that even the payment of several millions of dollars would not be enough to save such a person's life. The State had the matter completely sewn up.

The situation was very grave indeed. A meeting was held in Ankara and the identities of Kurdish individuals to be liquidated would be clarified. One of the MIT officials present at such a meeting, named Mehmet Eymur would then personally take the list to the Prime Minister of the time, Tansu Ciller. After the matter became known, government documents revealed what a number of individuals and organisations had been saying all along. Aladdin Cakici formerly imprisoned in France also took part in this meeting and this too was duly reported to the press by his former father-in-law, Dundar Kilic.

The State's plan had matured and the arrow was out of the quiver!

I was very worried. You could sense that at any moment the attacks would begin but there was nothing I could do about it and this bothered me even more. For much of the time I was pondering over what kind of precautions might be taken against such eventualities. I discussed my thoughts with Savas Buldan first. He laughed and went away. After that I got together with Behcet Canturk on the matter but our meeting ended in serious disagreement. He could see sense in what I was saying, but because he believed that Suleyman Demirel had given him adequate guarantees he didn't feel it to be necessary to take any additional precautions.

At that time Haci Ali Demirel and Yahya Demirel were never far behind him. The Demirel family were partners in a number

of his business enterprises. Behcet placed his trust in these relations and got himself killed for it. But this was not a situation unique to Behcet alone. It can be seen that a great number of Suleyman Demirel's intimate circle were Kurds. But he would always use these Kurds and once the job was done they were of no further consequence. Just as we'd seen with Behcet. . .

Suleyman Demirel had founded the Cyprus Investment Bank in Northern Cyprus through his nephew, Yahya Demirel. The Bank's capital and all its accounts ran off the black market. All the main international intelligence organisations were aware of this in both Europe and the United States.

The plane was kept waiting for an hour when Behcet was late for the flight from Istanbul to Northern Cyprus to attend the opening of the bank. When I'd been present Haci Ali Demirel had insisted on Behcet participating in the trip. He wanted Behcet to go along to Northern Cyprus with them and take part in the bank's opening ceremony. But I put an obstacle in Behcet's path.

Although I was not directly involved in any business dealings with Behcet, we were still very good friends. His elder brothers, relatives and everyone who knew the two of us were intimately aware of our close friendship although there were great differences in Behcet's and my own outlook on life. Linked to this there were also differences in our world view. But despite this both of us came from Lice and for both of us the most important point about what made us close was our intense patriotic consciousness. In terms of his left-wing constructs Behcet believed in the 'brotherhood of Turk and Kurd.' I disbelieved in it. Behcet believed in the existence of the State and that by becoming more powerful inside the State the Kurds would thereby benefit, whereas for my part I could only believe that the Kurds would be diluted within the State in such a way. I was proven right.

In the run-up to the 1991 elections a number of people

worked to bring about an alliance between the SHP and HEP. Behcet worked for it hardest of all. The proposed coalition had come to encapsulate Behcet's political vision. In such a way, the SHP-HEP coalition perhaps constituted the one chance for such an outlook to be realised. Ugur Mumcu also lent his support to the formation of this coalition and penned numerous articles in the current affairs column of *Cumhuriyet* (Republic) newspaper to this end. A great many meetings were held in Behcet's Mecidiyekoy office to try to have the coalition come to fruition. In those days, Mumcu would call up and speak with Behcet almost daily. Hikmet Cetin² was probably the closest observer of the relationship. I don't want to place Hikmet Cetin in a difficult position but if people say "*Mumcu's killer was Behcet or the PKK*" and if I know this to be a lie, then I won't be put off by anyone else's tears. Because after this blood had been shed, it was nothing less than "human duty" for witnesses to these events to speak out. The matter of the individual is of course most important here. Not that I'm looking for any individual worth in the people who put their own profits and political careers above the national interest; but then again, perhaps by saying "maybe" I'm keeping my hopes alive and saying that perhaps pure (Kurdish) blood will bring about some such initiative.

Before the '91 elections, Suleyman Demirel was also lobbying for the alliance between SHP and HEP. Following the elections, the coalition government that was to be formed was exactly as the State had publicised it before the elections. Those who'd worked to achieve the alliance aimed to bring the Kurdish question onto a legal platform through the coalition claiming that once this stage had been reached they could begin to advance a political solution to the (Kurdish) problem.

² Hikmet Cetin is of Kurdish origin. The author comments that he hopes Cetin's Kurdish blood will encourage him to do the moral thing so far as the killing of Behcet Canturk is concerned.

Immediately after the elections in which the DYP (*Dogru Yol Partisi* – True Path Party) came in first place, as DYP General Secretary, Demirel's asking the SHP before any other party (in which the HEP MPs were included) to form part of the coalition was the greatest possible testimony to the determination behind the alliance being brought to life. Moreover, Suleyman Demirel and Ismet Inonu's first post-election tours were to be to Diyarbakir which they had not even visited during the election campaign. As people will remember, it was during this tour that the words "*recognition of the Kurdish reality*" were spoken out loud for the first time.

At about that point, Behcet received a threatening letter sent in the name of a religious organisation. We talked this over for a long time. Behcet's family were also aware of this letter. At about that time too the existence of a group created by the State called "*Hizbi-Kontra*" had also begun to be talked about. Even if Behcet did not take the matter very seriously, it was being said that it was the State which had arranged for the despatch of the letter to him. The views of Talat Polat and Ugur Mumcu were even sought about it.

Along with all the political activity Behcet didn't neglect the night life for an instant. He frequented the casinos and night clubs and enjoyed the lifestyle. There was a top-notch restaurant in Baghdad Street. We had our own table on the top floor of this restaurant and whenever we went there that was the table we'd sit at. Everyone working in the restaurant was related to Behcet. We'd sit face to face across this table and talk long and hard up there on the top floor. Sometimes Behcet's elder brothers would join us in the discussions which could go on till daybreak. And something I'll never forget, on one occasion Behcet's elder brother Zabit sat there beside Behcet and complained about him to me right in front of him.

Even if we didn't go about in the open together we were still very good friends, Behcet and I. It was me that didn't want us

to be seen out and about together.

Once we were both attending a mutual friend's wedding in Bursa. Myself, Behcet, his elder brother, a nephew and some of my relatives living in Bursa got stuck into a deep *Lice* conversation. At some point or other I said to Behcet, "Tomorrow our being here together will make the headlines in the papers."

At that point in the programme Ibrahim Tatlis who was up on stage insisted on inviting us to get up and join in with the dancing. The host of the wedding, Behcet, and his elder brother Zabit kept on saying "If Huseyin doesn't get to his feet, we won't either," and then everything got mixed up and all of a sudden I found myself up on my feet in the middle of the dance floor.

The following day we made the headlines!

My name too was on the list

While we went about our daily activities, reports continued to filter through to us of the State's operation of annihilation. I had relations with the army, with MIT, in the Parliament, with the police, and with the upper levels of the justice apparatus and this was no secret. In fact, I still enjoy meetings with some of these people who are all in the top ranks of their professions. The President of the Supreme Military Court, Ilhan Senel Pasha was one of those people whom I'd meet with closely. I would be received as a guest in the Generals' residential quarters in Ankara. We were welcomed within the family: I had close relations with his wife, his son, and daughter. One day, Ilhan Senel Pasha called me from Ankara saying, "*Be in Istanbul tomorrow. One of our friends will meet you*".

In the past, exchanges between us had been of a similar kind, but this time there was tension in his voice. The following day, Pasha, his wife and son were my guests in Istanbul. "*The friend*" he'd referred to the day before had been none other than himself.

When he got to Istanbul, Ilhan Pasha said, "Let's have a picnic at your farm."

We went to the farm together. Pasha was most up-tight. When we reached the farm he said he wanted to walk around the garden with me a little and as we wandered about he said openly, "There's a police chief working with the Istanbul Police by the name of Umit Bagbek. They're going to haul in everyone who's close to the PKK: you are also on their list. They're going to go for you too..."

I interrupted him: "My dear Pasha, if they're going to take me, let them do it," I said, the tension telling in my voice.

"The situation is not what you believe it to be, Huseyin. They're going to eradicate everybody close to the Kurdish question. They're saying that they've proved your involvement in things. A PKK activist by the name of Vahdettin Karakeci has passed on information about you. They're also saying that you've been putting pressure on some of the MPs," Pasha told me.

The Vahdettin Karakeci element was true, but the point about my pressurising MPs was not. Sure enough, I'd told a number of the MPs of Kurdish origin that they had to stand up for the Kurdish question, but it wasn't possible for Ilhan Pasha know this. In other words, Pasha was not just bluffing. It was clear this information had been passed on to him. Nor was it just the MPs I'd made such declarations to but also to a number of Kurdish businessmen telling them, "It's a debt of honour you owe to stand up for the rights of the Kurdish people." I'd always be saying such things. Those who chose to construe my words as 'pressure' were simply exhibiting their own inner corruption. Whether it was the MPs or businessmen who'd come to seek my support I'd told them all invariably, "My bill is just that you help the Kurdish people." Now how can this be read as pressure? Of course I could not have explained such things to Ilhan Pasha. But Pasha also made a number of other remarks. Of all the information he gave me for the most part it was well-informed.

Naturally enough there were also one or two discrepancies and inaccuracies... But in short, Pasha was saying: "Kurdish businessmen, politicians, artists - however close they are to "Kurdishness" - whosoever is close to the PKK - will I be taken and eliminated. When Ilhan Pasha remarked about these things his voice was cold as steel. Afterwards, he added "the State has to do this, Huseyin!"

Pasha had found a solution relative to his own position. He was trying to State it in these terms: "If you can't reach some kind of consensus with the State, then there's nothing we can do to save you."

I interrupted him again. "We stand by the State, my Pasha. I pay my dues, but what more should I do? I'm a Kurd. I can't say I'm not a Kurd and then suddenly turn into whatever thing I've said."

Pasha silenced me with his hand and carried on in his own way: "One going under the name of Umit Bagbek is to go and meet the team. You go on television and denounce the PKK and say, 'There's no Kurdish problem in Turkey. We're all Turkish citizens. Our State, our flag, is one,' and the State will give you everything. You're well liked. You're wealthy, you're strong and you're smart too. Your family is rich and powerful. If you support the PKK, the State will kill you and if necessary, I'd also be killed. The State finds itself in a difficult situation. It won't take either you or I into account."

Pasha was head of the Military Supreme Court and because of this, his words deserved special consideration.

I'd also received similar advice in the past. With that and Pasha's words taken together . . .

Do us a favour, ditch it!

I'd enjoyed very close relations with Ilhan Pasha. We'd go to the Place of the Justices together, dine in the provincial chambers and even accompany one another to Military quarters. We

frequented the Kurdish restaurants in Ankara. A number of times we'd even been to Parliament together. On occasions when I was in Ankara I'd use his official vehicle to get about the place. Everyone knew this. Accordingly I knew very well when Ilhan Pasha would speak as a friend and when he'd speak with a sharper tongue. Pasha aside, in meetings I had with Hayri Kozakcioglu, Mehmet Agar and Huseyin Kocadag they'd all warn me on this point. On the evening of the same day when I'd been speaking with Pasha I'd told the whole story to Behcet but he didn't accord these things any immediate relevance.

Around that same time, something very interesting happened. A friendly act I'd once performed and hadn't a second thought to perhaps actually saved my life. I'd helped out a person in prison whom I later found out to be a staunch right-wing nationalist (*ulkuaci*). He'd found himself sitting in on a meeting where the discussion came around to focus on a group of Kurdish employers and political figures who were going to be killed off. At some stage, the subject moved on to elaborate an attack being planned against me and who was to take part in it. I was scheduled to attend a certain meeting and they'd found out about it. According to their plan, the police were going to stop and search me on the road and a look-out was to be put on guard at a chosen spot. If there was any interference when I was shot this look-out was supposed to protect the police shooters.

Everybody knows more or less what conditions inside Turkish prisons are like. The administration and the Mafia run things jointly and all manner of corruption is the order of the day. I'd helped the person in prison who'd asked it of me with no further thought of return. While the discussion raged on about the death list being drawn up in Ankara this same person was one of those who was to be given the task of carrying it out, but because he respected me beyond the fact of his debt he felt a need to tell me about it. Because of this I went well prepared to the meeting in

question. Or more accurately, I actually made my way there in the official car of the Chief of Police. In this way the police and their bodyguards protected me without realising it.

I also came under attack on a number of other occasions...

Following this, I called upon certain government officials, including the Interior Minister, and got the same answer out of them all: "*Either protect the State, or you'll be eliminated.*"

Despite these developments, the notion of abandoning either my Kurdishness or the Kurdish question was never at issue. In the same sense, it was equally clear that I wasn't about to become a *jash* (village guard) for the State. But I had to be logical. They'd certainly execute me, that much was certain. They'd mutilated the body of our much beloved Vedat Aydin who was of very fine character, and finally they'd slaughtered him. Musa Anter, the grand old man of Kurdish literature, had been set-up and finally became the target of a bullet.

We'd gone through a great many events, some of which I've referred to here and some of which I haven't. Behcet and our other friends were all very well aware of this situation. The State was openly threatening us saying: "either be my vassal, be my slave, or you'll be killed!"

Various television stations had broadcast how the Turkish Prime Minister, Tansu Ciller, was intending to annihilate the PKK and all those behind the PKK, one by one. Ciller's mention of "*the PKK and those behind it*" were those whose names were on the death list which she carried around in her pocket.

If we didn't accept servitude, being someone's vassal and compulsory Turkification then living in Turkey simply meant death. And a very cheap death it was too. Maybe once, twice, they'd failed in achieving my "disappearance," but one day, without doubt, they'd enjoy their success. Failing to recognise this would be tantamount to blindness. From that time on, I therefore decided to leave Turkey...

On the night when I planned to leave, Behcet came to the

house where I was staying and where I'd been living in secret throughout that period. Behcet was still going to his office every day and still carrying on with his old night-life just as before. We talked about the situation. While I was speaking so gravely about it all, Behcet was holding my daughter Hazal in his lap and playing with her affectionately telling her how his daughter's name was Hazal too. Smiling over at me he said, "They're afraid of you! They're having to shadow you whereas I'm always right before their eyes and meeting them. They can't find you and this makes them uncomfortable."

From this it was clear that despite everything we'd been through, Behcet still believed that the situation could be brought under control and that the Turkish State would not annihilate the Kurdish people.

Behcet had brought his nephews along to this last meeting of ours and a little while later they left the house. We stayed on alone together for several hours afterwards, eating and chatting. But I didn't even tell Behcet where I was planning to go. Finally, we took our farewells of each other and from that day to this I've not been back to Turkey. Even the Turkish State only found out that I'd left two years later.

The State trembles with my disclosures...

I gave a number of press interviews after I left Turkey and my name was cited in a number of books. But for the most part the interviews which appeared were distorted. Those interviewing me preferred to deceive the public rather than tell them the truth. In this way, people were manipulated. Some newspapers went still further and when they'd not even met me reported the story across their pages in a question and answer fashion as if they'd conducted an interview. But what was common to all of them was that, whether they'd spoken with me or not, they still wrote to satisfy their own best interests. In so doing, they sacrificed one of the most fundamental precepts of journalism

- the duty to inform the public - to their own narrow vested interests.

The Bab-i Ali (State Gate) founded under the guardianship of the State could never be liberated from this same guardianship. Newspaper owners and senior staffers sipped from the same plate as those in power and maintained close relations with them. In this way most of the time, the control over the papers coincided with political interests without hindrance. Those involved all fed off the same pie and shared out the biggest slices between themselves.

In the face of these sordid realities, there were just one or two in the Turkish press who were different. This difference hinged on those journalists being honourable, straight, and true to their profession. It's a lamentable fact that so far as the Turkish press is concerned such primary qualities which all journalists should have in common instead became the attributes of the minority, albeit a mark of their superiority.

To give an example, the *Aydinlik* (intellectual enlightenment) Media group always took care to report my statements in that sense in which I'd intended - aside for the things I said about the military and Suleyman Demirel. As far as I could see, the *Aydinlik* circle also followed the path laid down by the State. Concerned to keep to this path, in practical terms they preferred to side-step certain topics so as to protect the edifice of the State. And coming first in the order of such topics was the army and Suleyman Demirel. But as everything has its rightful place, I am equally certain that my statements have been preserved in their archive. It must be accepted that they also needed to take stock of all kinds of things within the boundaries of their own existence. As well as having been established according to a very old political tradition, the *Aydinlik* circle had also amassed a very great deal which they needed to safeguard.

During this period when I saw a person like Bedri Baykam within such a group along with a whole host of disrespectful

characters - enemies of the Kurds - paying open homage to national chauvinism, it started me thinking. Accordingly when the opportunity arose, I spoke openly with some of my friends in this same circle and debated the issue with a number of others, depending on just how close they were to me. What I observed from these tête-à-tête encounters with people I was close to was that whether it be the *Aydinlik* circle or the *Isçi Partisi* (Workers Party) at almost every level there was a feeling of unease amongst people over this and concerning similar sorts of things happening in their midst, but I presume they just couldn't do anything much about it.

The situation of Baykam and the type was really most interesting. Baykam was a central committee member of the CHP (Republican People's Party) but also a writer with *Aydinlik*. Now, it's not just any old newspaper or magazine we're talking about here. If Baykam should write for any other newspaper, for example *Hurriyet*, well you could say, "in creeds we believe," but *Aydinlik* was the organ of a particular political movement and everyone was aware of this. In this instance therefore, it's critical to ask those people associated with *Aydinlik* and with Baykam what the reason behind the relationship was. Whatever the answer may be, I still have to say that the *Aydinlik* circle always behaved honourably towards me and demonstrated a friendly solidarity towards me.

With the murder of Behcet Canturk - a murder carried out by the Mafia State in keeping with its history, culture and old custom of purging - the State stopped at nothing thereafter to try to make my family and the Canturk family fall out. The first thing they tried was to take on the task of reporting the news shaded in a particular way in both the print press and organs of the broadcast media which were under their control. This business reached the stage where a number of television channels began to report in their first broadcasts that "*Behcet Canturk was killed by Huseyin Baybasin.*" Immediately in the wake of this,

people would phone my family and make threats like, “*We’re Behcet Canturk’s nephews. We’re going to kill you all!*”

Precisely at this time, *Aydinlik* approached the affair with due responsibility. In those days *Aydinlik* published my responses without any distortion and by so doing effectively prevented a number of people from both my family and the Canturk family from getting killed. Reporting the news in an independent and honest manner, *Aydinlik* newspaper crushed the Mafia State’s insidious plan. Halil Nebiler in *Cumhuriyet* newspaper also gave space to the subject.

I called up Behcet’s elder brother Nizamettin Canturk and underlined the danger we were confronted with and asked what ideas he might have as to how to prevent it. Nizamettin was fully aware of the game certain quarters were intent on playing against us. During our discussion he said to me, “For God’s sake, we’ve got to be careful! Those who are calling you on the phone are the ones who murdered Behcet!”

I told him, “I’m far away! I can’t establish sufficient contact with people just by phone. You can be more effective over there. Please do something before its too late!”

Nizamettin agreed that I was right. “Anyway, I’ve made a statement to the press but the phonecalls are serious. I’ll talk to everyone necessary because of that. Don’t worry!”

Behcet had just been murdered, yet despite this Nizamettin displayed great strength of character and sensitivity. He never let go of himself. Nor did he allow himself to become side-tracked. I found his behaviour utterly laudable.

At the time had it not been for *Aydinlik*’s friendly overtures the Mafia State would have killed a number of people from both my and Behcet’s families and afterwards they would simply have said: “*they killed each other.*” Both Nizamettin’s steadfastness and *Aydinlik*’s honest stand played a large part in preventing this plan from having a successful outcome.

The quarrel with the State heats up

Rusen Cakir of *Milliyet* newspaper met me in Paris before my arrest. Rusen, a highly informed person of integrity, published his interview with me immediately after I was detained. Although it was a highly independent report, a number of vital details were left in the shadows and only the main content of the meeting was summarised.

Ozgur Yasam (Free Life) magazine ran a front cover story. Before my arrest we’d conducted a short interview. After I’d been arrested, they took the statement I’d made and published an extensive report.

Some time before these interviews and events – I suppose it was about a month before – Oktay Yildiz of MED TV had interviewed me. Stressing in this programme that I’d be making more detailed statements in future, I invited the people I’d named in my exposures who’d made allegations against me to respond on camera in the MED TV studios. The comments I made on MED TV referred openly and in depth to the issues currently under discussion; dates and places were specified, and I also gave the names, surnames and addresses of those involved. After advertising the programme a full week in advance, the report was finally broadcast. Oktay Yildiz presented the programme along with additional material which was even more stunning than I’d anticipated.

Ozgur Ulke (Free Country) magazine used the MED TV report and reproduced it in Turkey with some well-weighted commentary. The Turkish press and TV ran headlines in response like: “*Shock Revelations!*” In a piece of responsible reporting, *Milliyet* newspaper ran the story under the headline: “*Shock Revelations from Baybasin*”. It was the first time someone had actually come out in the open and said, “*The Mafia gangs are running Turkey*”

Actually, I’d said before then that the mobsters were in control of Turkey, but either what I’d said had been inadequately reported or the organs of the State gave secret directives preventing any

broadcast of my statements and finally went so far as to impose an official ban altogether.

In 1992, an interview I'd made with Sevket Okant was broadcast on Star TV. I'd warned everyone at that time. There was a lot coming down on me. All manner of lies and fictions were constantly being hurled at me. Trying to use the law to disclaim any of these things was of no use whatsoever.

Osman Ayanoglu had been killed and the perpetrator was arrested at the scene. It was said the person responsible was a former policeman and right-wing extremist and the case was resolved. Despite this, Sari Celal (Chief Commissioner and former head of the Political Branch and a nationalist-extremist) now chief of the First Degree Murder Desk, Second Branch had summoned five journalists together including M. Emin Demirel and told them, "*Huseyin Baybasin killed Osman Ayanoglu*".

This news then appeared in *Hurriyet* newspaper with the by-line: "*this was reported by a top ranking police authority.*"

I took out a lawsuit against *Hurriyet* and a second against M. Emin Demirel whose name was cited as the author of this report. Certain people must have warned M. Emin Demirel because he became somewhat nervous and made it known through Sevket Okant that he wanted to meet me. We did in fact meet. He explained the situation to me and tried to reassure me that he had no grudges against me, nor any ulterior motives. With Sevket Okant as witness, he told us step by step how the incident had developed and then named Sari Celal. I promised to take the matter no further on account of my good friend Sevket Okant and told him I had no personal grievance against him either. Yet Sevket Oktay's own role in Suleyman Demirel's political comeback, DYP's having taken the lion's share of the vote, Demirel's exoneration and his political ascent all the way to President must not be underestimated. In Demirel becoming a headache to Turkey all over again Sevket Oktay's sin is considerable.

I spoke with Sevket again in Amsterdam in 1997, this time for Channel D. At this particular meeting, I reminded Sevket of just how great his responsibility had been due to his labours on Demirel's behalf and the subsequent State into which the country had fallen.

"It's true!" he confessed. "We didn't really understand Ozal. We believed in Demirel. Otherwise, I really had no personal expectations."

I believe him.

In 1992, I'd also given an interview to Fehmi Koftecioglu of *Ekonomi Politika* (Economy, Politics) magazine published by the Dogan Group. The interview was published with a good deal of courage and honesty at the time. Following publication, Necdet Menzir phoned in person and made some veiled threats. All the directors and staff of *EP* deserve my sincere respects because of this. There wasn't anything particularly new about the report they ran but that they'd published what I'd said without any distortion. I'd warned the government and the gangsters quite candidly. Because I'd also commented that Necdet Menzir was also an influential gang member he must have become nervous. In the end it cost *EP* dearly to print this report. A short time afterwards the magazine was closed down and a number of frank and honourable members of the press were left without their jobs.

A while later, an interview I'd given to *Aktuel* (Actuality) magazine's Raif Turk and Reha Maden was also published. Charges were brought against both Reha and Raif over it. Both two men were journalists of integrity, true in the most minute degree to the principles of their profession. Reha Maden later talked with me in Grave Prison in Holland for *Radikal* Newspaper which was also published by the Dogan Group. Reha was a person of outstanding quality as the example I'm about to give you will show.

Ugur Dundar at work

As I've been saying, a great many lies and fallacies were written about me in Turkey. But in all my life, I've never encountered so deceitful and so immoral a reporter as Ugur Dundar. A few days after the *Kismetim-1* ship incident the *Lucky-S* affair exploded. One day before the *Lucky-S* affair became public, H. Sehmus Das was murdered. Both the *Kismetim-1* incident and the killing of Sehmus Das were pinned on me. The personnel and owners of both ships and Das's son had been taken into custody. Because my warnings had been broadcast at exactly that time, they tried to hang everything on me. However, when these things happened I wasn't even in Turkey. Naturally enough, I felt a need to get a grip on these accusations and use the press to show what lies they were and issue a few warnings of my own in return. But the Mafia was much more powerful than I was. In the *Arena Programme*, Ugur Dundar had the people who'd been arrested in connection with the two ships speak out from where they were under arrest. These hapless individuals recited on television in parrot fashion exactly what the police had given them to rehearse. I knew Ugur Dundar very well as a *habitué* of the Yesilyurt and Yesilkoy gambling dens. I've been a close observer of the difficulties under which members of the press labour in Turkey and had also been witness on a number of occasions to the ordeals and troubles that beset a great many of them. Just as I understand how hard it is for them to carry out their duties in keeping with the principles of their profession, with human and moral values in such circumstances, so too am I convinced that Ugur Dundar played a part in this dirty game with complete foreknowledge and even with zest.

I spoke with Murat Oztemir at the time. Murat was also a capable, knowledgeable and resourceful journalist. Murat, who had researched a book on the Yezidis – always safeguarded his reputation and remained white. Despite the serious economic constraints he was suffering under during this period he never

betrayed his pen for profit, never bowed down, nor betrayed his personal values. Murat came from a good family. His father was a judge. In his discussions with me he said, "We'll come and see you with Ugur Dundar."

Without hesitation I refused and answered, "If I see his face I'll tear him apart!"

Saying, "Come on, do it for my sake!" Murat kept trying to insist but I turned him down flat. He continued insisting for a further week.

I said, "Look, I don't trust him! Come on, you think I'm not going to be tempted to rearrange his features for him for your sake? What about trust? Don't try to prevail upon me where that snake is concerned."

Finally Murat understood I was serious and came to see me alone. We met in South Africa over the course of a week. Murat was not going to hand the interview over to Ugur Dundar. But once he'd returned to Turkey Ugur Dundar managed to prevail upon him and got hold of his tapes saying, "It's a very good interview! What this man has to say is most important" and promised Murat it would appear on *Arena* and be published in *Tempo Magazine*. To all of this Murat simply replied, 'Well why not!'

As a result, the police arrived at his house in the middle of the night and carted Murat off to the Central police station. This happened even though he was in the home of his father, the judge. The tapes were seized and by a decision passed in the small hours of the night the Mafia State of the Turkish Republic prohibited all use of the interview which Murat had done with me. In reaction to this, *Tempo Magazine* left the pages blank which had been reserved for the interview, in protest over the event.

I reacted telling Murat, "You've drained the life out of this! All the work you put in was in vain. On top of it all you've become a policeman!"

Murat took it to some extent, but what a pity he only had

himself to blame for having given the tapes to Ugur Dunder. Moreover, he'd done this despite my incessant warnings.

Now there was no one who would conduct an interview with me officially in Turkey. And during this interlude a volley of accusations, lies, and deceits were cobbled together and written up. Nobody consented to acknowledge my right to reply and as a result I was deprived of all means to a defence whereas I'd actually wanted to be able to share what I knew with the public. Things in Turkey should not have been carried on in this way. Ordinary people didn't deserve to have to suffer the side-effects of the Mafia administration's filth. Blood had become a commodity in Turkey. What's more, it was all being done in the name of "*the homeland, the nation, faith, and God as well as in the name of Kemalism...*"

In Turkey, a mobster's gang constituted the State. Suleyman Demirel presided at the head of this Mafia.

I knew Suleyman Demirel's family very well and I was acquainted with this same mob just as closely. Every single day in Turkey scores of people were being liquidated and the payments which were being made under different headings were draining the State's coffers. Mehmet Agar and Tansu Ciller officially handled the drugs traffick. Under the guise of running the "gambling" business, Omer Lutfi Topal and a number of others robbed people in broad daylight and the money obtained in this way went back into the Mafia's coffers. Whatever was left over for Omer was just the tip of the iceberg.

My many sighs over Ugur Mumcu

At some point, an article appeared in *Nokta* magazine. They claimed this to have been the last thing that Ugur Mumcu had written. Ugur Mumcu had posed the question: "*It's clear who the Mafia is, but just who are the others?*" and the magazine had stressed it was about to reveal "*the others*".

Everybody knew that although Ugur Mumcu was a partisan

of the State he was also courageous and that he carried out serious research. In the past he'd made some extensive research on smuggling, on the gangs and right-wingers and this had been published in book form. He'd proven that the attempted assassination of the Pope had been planned by the fascists in Turkey and how when Mehmet Ali Agca was still in prison in Turkey he'd said, "Just let me out and I'll kill the Pope." Thereafter Mumcu had gone off and had gathered documentation detective-style in Bulgaria, Italy, Switzerland, Germany, France, Holland and Spain and authored a book called "*The Mafia, the Pope and Agca*". He'd also put his own name against his research, 'Rabita', and 'A Dark Voice' and by the same means had exposed how former leaders of the right-wing MHP (National Action Party) like Murat Bayrak had ties with the narcotics traffick. Now he was on the trail of the "*others*"...

Immediately after the interview I'd done with Sevket Okant was known about, Mumcu made contact with me through another journalist friend of mine. Telling me, "Ugur Mumcu insists on seeing you," my friend gave me a number to call in Ankara.

We agreed on a date and a time. I called...

When I identified myself, the voice at the other end of the line said, "*How am I to believe you are really Huseyin Baybasin?*"

I replied, "It was you who wanted the meeting, wasn't it?"

I said one or two other things. These related to the friend in common who'd brought me the news and who'd tried to ensure that the meeting took place.

"Very well, I recognise your voice" said Ugur Mumcu.

I told him he had enough problems to deal with in Turkey without taking on mine into the bargain adding, "The full dimensions of this affair are not confined to a mere handful of people."

"For example?" he said.

"Demirel, the army, Turkes," I said so that he shouted back,

“*What are you saying?*”

He was taken aback. In an excited voice he went on, “*These things can’t be said lightly.*”

I said, “Indeed! I know just what I’m saying. What I know, how I can prove what I know, how difficult it all is and the enormous danger behind it is something of which I am at all times only too aware.”

He became a little more reflective. “If you can convince me, it’s enough” he said.

In return, I gave him some clues saying: “At one point, *Kismetim-1* was empty. The goods on board the *Lucky-S* were not impounded and are going to be put back on the market quite safely. Who’s going to do it, where it’s going to happen, and how it’s going to be done – I know everything.”

I understood from his tone of voice that Mumcu’s excitement was rising. He said he wanted to meet up as soon as possible.

I answered, “It’s very dangerous. My life is at stake – I’ll have to make some preparations first.”

“Could it be someplace here?” he was asking, but telling him that was impossible, I said, “*I’ll let you know.*” Repeating that we’d see one other soon, we said our goodbyes.

Our friend in common would meet one of my relatives and after passing the details on to him I said, “It could be Mozambique, or Azerbaijan, but he must not leave straight from Turkey – moreover no one is to know about it. I’ll make myself ready.” I added, “There must be no hitch. The greatest precaution is secrecy,” and giving him a time, I said I would call Mumcu again a day later.

The next day I telephoned Mumcu at the pre-arranged hour. We decided on Azerbaijan. I gave him the names of the countries in a roundabout fashion. For example, instead of saying Azerbaijan directly, I said: “There are a lot of things over there, like Tugrul Turkes’s place, and so on.”

“Will I be able to see them?” he asked.

“The things I see you’re going to see too,” I told him,

“Great!” he said.

“Don’t make light of the element of secrecy!” I warned.

He asked if there was anything I wanted and giving the names I mentioned a few books and magazines.

“See you soon!” he said and hung up.

According to my calculations we would soon meet in Azerbaijan and have an all-embracing discussion.

But just a few days after this phonecall, this highly-experienced journalist had been murdered.

I told *Nokta* Magazine about the affair and said, “I’ll divulge to you what I’d wanted to tell Ugur Mumcu.”

The directors of *Nokta* held some meetings which carried on over a number of days, and in my view they also consulted others. Finally, they said that the business was extremely dangerous and they’d be exceeding their limits. I understood right away that my assertions were not going to be published. The mob within the State had managed to block it by every possible means and were quite prepared if necessary, to threaten the life out of people, if necessary to kill. They would stop at nothing.