

Their fundamental objective was to destroy us. If they couldn't destroy us they wanted to pacify us. If they couldn't do this then they would silence us. Of course too they also planned on handing us captive to the Turkish gangster state. They had succeeded in doing only one thing and that was in subjecting us to a very great and unjust attack with serious repercussions. In any case, we had kept all these things clearly in front of our eyes when we first started this business. It is necessary to display these sufferings in order to live as a decent human being and in a free country. At the present time it looks as if it will be down to history's mature sense of responsibility to determine who will pay the price for what our spotless children with no knowledge of anything have had to go through.

Part Five

FROM MY JOURNAL

Welcome, little Keyqubat

19 September 1998, Saturday

Today was a different kind of a day for me. I received the most moving news. They came in the afternoon and passed on a message from my lawyer. A child had been born to me. We had been expecting my wife to give birth since early September. I was worried as the birth had not happened by the normal date. If by September 17, my wife had still not given birth they were going to have to operate. Today I got the news that the birth had been without complications. Tomorrow is the day when I'm allowed to phone. I'll get more precise information. The birth took place at five o'clock in the morning and it was a healthy birth. Since September 8th I'd been feeling very irritable but with this news comes a great sense of relief.

Life continues in opposition to the Turkish mob and Holland's double-crossing. My fourth child has been born. A boy. I was present at the births of my other children. But it is on account of the Dutch government's unscrupulousness that I was not able to be there for the birth of this child of mine. This has upset me greatly. Every father must be there with his children from the time that they're born until they come of age and in

this period must be there for them in every way. I set great store by this and have taken particular care over this. But my not being present and ready for my child's arrival into this world was prevented by the extension of a very foul conspiracy. I'm so sorry.

20 September 1998, Sunday

It was my day for being able to use the phone and I spoke with my wife. The birth did not take place at five, it was seven she said. Because it was ten days overdue they induced labour. My wife went through a great deal but came through fine in the end. Both my wife and child are healthy. The baby weighed three kilos and 650 grams. My daughter Hezal liked the baby's name a great deal. Keyqubat... but she was complaining about not being able to pronounce it.

We gave our new born child the name Aryan Keyqubat. "Aryan" is the race to which the Kurdish people belong; as for Keyqubat, it was the name of the first King of the Empire of the Medes formed by the means of a confederation of the Kurdish clans, or tribes. I set great store by this name. With this name I want to recall and give an example of the first Kurdish Empire and of Kurdish historical unity and solidarity to the pathetic and corrupt enemies of the Kurds who constantly assert that the Kurdish people never joined together and could never establish a state. Additionally, since it's the first time the name's been used (in a long time) I think the name should be brought back to life and for this reason I gave it to my son.

Of course, too, the Median Empire was not the only empire to be founded by the Kurds, but it was the first. If some historians say that the name of our empire's first king wasn't "Keyqubat" but "Keyxusrev", Kurdish historians are united in agreement on "Keyqubat". During this same period of empire, Keyxusrev was the representative of his tribe, a member of the confederation, and the administrator of the empire.

Our people have been at war with the State in Turkey because Kurdishness and the Kurdish language have been outlawed. Because the Dutch government forbade me to speak in Kurdish I am unable to speak with either my mother or my small son, Tengur Renas. In any case, my mother understands no other language than Kurdish. And because we speak Kurdish in our home my three year old son also knows only Kurdish. Despite the Dutch authorities being fully aware of this, they did this ugly thing to me to satisfy the Turkish mobster state. Even so, in a determined show of resistance in the face of these two nations, our children's names are registered in Kurdish, and again, in spite of them, our children's names bear our history like a flag and fly in the face of the immorality of these states. Today, I make my stand once again against the Turkish state, the Dutch government, and all enemies of the Kurds, and I experience this emotion to the very marrow of my bones.

My son Ferhat said of the new baby, "He really is very tiny and his eyes are closed." Yes, the birth of my new child concluded happily. It is my wish now that he will both lucky and productive for our family, for our nation, and for our homeland. Aryan Keyqubat, welcome, my little one ...

26 September 1998, Saturday (00.03)

Yesterday, or in other words, on Friday 25 September, a civilian delegation wanted to see me. I was taken in a closed vehicle to another wing. The wing I was taken to was said to be a new unit being run under the Ebi system. That's where they saw me. I spoke to the delegation from behind a glass partition. There were three of them, all men. The one in the centre spoke first as head of the delegation.

He said, "We are independent of the prison administration. We represent the government, and we want to find out about the problems here and whether your friends, that is, the other prisoners, have any complaints and if so what they are."

As the officers had informed me prior to the visit I had prepared a list with twenty-eight items on it. I showed them the list, said that I was ready, and that by their leave I wanted to read the list out item by item and explain.

"First of all," I began by saying, "books here are a problem. We can tell the library what we want to read but not only can we not find what we want, we can't get it either. Nor can we get books brought in from outside, because it is prohibited."

The chief cut in saying, "What kind of books do you want that you can't find them in the library?"

"Political and historical books, books on health, books on law... I want to study law; my lawyer can send me whatever books I require, but the administration will not accept such a suggestion. I've been waiting three months for the books I last ordered through the administration. I wanted a dictionary but I can't even get that. That's the kind of books I want; the other prisoners want different books."

"Why do you want to read about, and study, the law? Don't you have a lawyer?"

"Whatever, I'm here, aren't I? I want to make the most of my time. Is there anything abnormal about this?"

"(Laughing) I was curious that ..."

"We all find that our visits are being blocked for different, but very commonplace, reasons. I've been here some three months now and I haven't been able to see my visitors. Are there any other people who've not been able to see visitors for a year? Visits take place behind a glass screen in any case, so what's the problem? We can't speak on the phone with our relatives. We wait months for permission and then finally a negative answer comes through. If they do give us permission we can only talk twice a week for ten minutes at a time. This possibility is also being obstructed. For example, they say that there was no answer when they make our calls and we can't do anything about it. I am only able to call my lawyer once a week. Most of the time

they say he isn't in his office. Three days ago they called my lawyer again and twice that same day they told me, "There's no one in your lawyer's office - the answering-machine is on." The next day my lawyer came to see me and he said he'd been in his office at the time and what's more there is no answering-machine in his office although the officers made that same excuse at least ten times and thereby prevented me from speaking with my lawyer. In such situations as this our hands are tied.

- I can't speak with my three year old child because he doesn't speak any other language than Kurdish. They have forbidden me from speaking Kurdish. One of the other detainees can't speak with his wife and child because they say he might speak in code. The food is quite inadequate and unhealthy. We can't get anything nourishing to eat or drink from the canteen. We can't get olive oil or liquid oil, it is banned. We are only able to have margarine and this is not sustaining. We can't obtain any drinks without sugar. One of the detainees had his teeth broken by police officers and four of his lower teeth are also loose. Not only is the man in pain, he can't eat properly either. They aren't fixing his teeth. It's a very upsetting situation. We are only allowed to change our clothes twice a year. I mean by this that we can only send out and get new clothes twice a year. This is a ridiculous situation and we don't even do this because we think it might prevent us from getting our visits.

- There is no window in the cells. The fan does not work. It's not clear at all when it will be fixed. There's no ventilation system in the sports unit and no window either. This can cause asthma.

As I was explaining this the head of the delegation would yawn from time to time. He wasn't yawning from weariness, he didn't want to hear me out.

"Is there much more?" he asked.

"It will end when it ends," I said and carried on. "There are many unnecessary regulations here and this also makes it

difficult for the officers. Since it was you who called me over to see you, why are you uncomfortable?"

"We're not uncomfortable, we don't have any time."

"There is a very important matter at hand. We are being detained alongside convicted prisoners. We are kept with a sick maniac rapist who has been convicted and this is a very ugly situation."

They were a bit taken aback by this. They asked about it again and again.

"Call the officers and ask them yourselves" I said and "I have nothing to say about the intense security. But as a person who has not been convicted, who has not been found guilty I do not find this situation right at all. Nor do I consider it right that we have fewer legal rights than in other prisons. Moreover, on the wing I'm staying all the inmates are foreigners. There is no Dutch national kept here at all, and it is like a kind of colonial unit..." I carried on saying such that the delegation said that the meeting had come to an end. If I should write down and give the rest of the information I had to say to the officers, the officers would get it to them they said. I had only been able to explain half of what I had down and after this meeting I learned that the civil commission was nothing but a formality, in actual fact it was not a civil or independent commission at all.

27 September 1998, Sunday

The heaters in my cell were not on. Last night was very cold. I hadn't been able to sleep because of the cold. At two in the morning I pressed my alarm bell and told the officer who came about it and reminding him that I had mentioned the situation the day before to the officer on day shift I said, "Nothing was done. It's so cold that I can't sleep."

"I can't do anything about it at this time of the night. I'll take a note down so that they take a look at it first thing tomorrow," he said.

I thanked him. I put on a double pair of socks, wrapped a towel around my head and put on a track-suit and sweater over my pyjamas. Even if I was able to protect myself from the cold in this way I still couldn't sleep. I twisted and turned till morning.

At 10 am we went out to the fresh air area. I spent the hour of fresh air time running. I warmed up and worked up a nice sweat. When I got back from the fresh air area I asked the officers whether they'd looked at the heaters in the cell or not. "No," they said. When I asked why they said they had no information about it. I explained that I'd spoken about the situation to the officer on day shift the previous day and that the officer on the night shift had said he would note the matter down. They went to investigate and said that neither the day nor the night shift had taken down any note about this problem. I got really wound up and behaved quite bluntly with them. It was my luck right then that these particular officers were good people and they responded with understanding. They said that the heaters in the other cells were working and said, "Yours has been closed off from the central system. We hope it's just a mistake."

I got even more angry.

"My letters get lost; nobody is given permission to visit me; it's forbidden for me to speak Kurdish and I can't speak with my three year old child; my calls are not being connected to my lawyer, and even when there is no answering-machine in my lawyer's office they claim that the answer-machine answered the call; my possessions, my provisions go missing; despite a ruling by the Dutch court my Turkish lawyer is not given permission to see me; the heaters in my cell don't work; every day some dirty new thing happens ...what do mean by mistake?" I shouted.

I had a whole lot more to say. The officer went into my cell very politely and sat down on the chair and tried to explain the situation to me with delicacy. "Perhaps certain people are doing dirty things, you're right. That's what it looks like by the

circumstances. We are going to go and look into it. The authorities at the very top want to damage you. The police took an unjust stand against you. Everybody in Holland knows this. But again, in our country the law applies and the vile acts being committed will not go unanswered..." and he tried to calm me down saying this and similar things.

This conversation took place at 11.20. I told the officers I believed that they were well-intentioned but that I had no doubt at all that their country's laws and its legal system would not fail to fit Hitler's shoes to the extent that they were inhumane. The officers were most sorry indeed.

Let's see what will happen in the night.

It's almost midnight and the heating still hasn't been restored and so I'm cold. According to the statement the officer had made to me in the daytime the heating ran off a central system and the channel to my cell had been closed off. He said that this wasn't something which had just happened automatically but that it had been done consciously and he had added that they themselves wished that there as not any intentional harm done to me. Whereas in fact the intention was blatantly clear. Why else would it stop working of its own accord and shut itself down. What's more they said that only a specialist could come and open it again. Because it was a Sunday they said they might not be able to find a specialist.

Now it's three in the morning of the 30th of September gone 1st October. Still the heating isn't on and the cell is very cold. Sleep has abandoned me. Even if I felt drowsy it would still not be possible to get off to sleep in this cold. I went before the court on Wednesday 30 September. All the way there it was a real comedy. At the exit section of the prison the plainclothes police blindfolded me, handcuffed my hands and locked them to a belt around my waist. In this situation, one of the policemen takes me by the arm and we walk as far as the car. We travel to Breda, where the court building is, in convoy with a number of other vehicles.

On the way there they removed the blindfold. At the intersections, junctions and red lights the car I was in and the rest of the convoy put on their sirens. It was pure farce. I saw four other cars in convoy with us, all of them Mercedes. The plainclothes police were dressed roughly, most of them wore earrings. There was a smell of beer on some of their breaths. If they were to have given me a beer too, I wouldn't be so affected by the smell, but in such a situation the stench had an overpowering effect on me. If you were to see these policemen out on the street you'd think they were petty criminals. By the sour looks on their face these men were no doubt forbidden to smile.

"Ilhan Metin knows nothing at all"

Inside the courthouse I heard an officer's voice call out, "*Number eleven cell...*" My eyes and hands were freed in the cell. After the plainclothes police had gone this time a uniformed policeman knocked on the door and asked if I would like to order tea or coffee. I said I wouldn't have anything to drink. The cell was very small. It was two metres long and perhaps not so much as a meter wide. The walls were covered in writing and pictures. Most of what was written was swearing at the police. Some wrote from anger, others expressed their innermost feelings. I counted more than twenty Turkish names. Someone had sketched the picture of a mermaid on one wall and there were many more sketches of girls. There were also sketches of birds and all had been well drawn. In addition, amongst the writing were a number of messages like, "*Such and such a policeman is a fascist; so and so is a spy.*" Some recalled the police by name and swore at them. Amongst it all, a little scrap of writing caught my attention: "*Ilhan Metin knows nothing at all.*"

Ilhan Metin came from a Kurdish family from Sivas. They were known as *Baba Mansurlar*. He was a journalist in Istanbul. Everyone spoke of him as my nephew. He had a heartfelt respect

and empathy for us. İlhan had had a lot of problems in Europe. I'd met him in Amsterdam. He was a very active, very handsome young Kurd. Unfortunately he had not psychologically overcome the habit of fawning. I had taken some interest in him. Having done so I expected he'd develop some greater national awareness and sense of who he was. I found out later that he'd exhibited quite the reverse. He dropped my name all over the place and when I found out that he'd used rough force against some weak Kurds I was most upset. I called Metin and brought him right down. I was upset about breaking the heart of an eager young man but it had been necessary to do it. I told him that if he didn't pull himself together I'd break his neck.

Two weeks after we'd been arrested they'd arrested him too. It was said I'd talked to him about killing that low-life Mehmet Marsil, but that he hadn't killed him. So why go and arrest him? On the day of my arrest this İlhan Metin calls up my lawyer tells him how sorry he is and says he'll do whatever I want. İlhan was bold and full of fight. If I should say, "Go and kill the Queen of the Netherlands" he'd go. And he'd probably be able to carry it out. I suspect that he'd made the Dutch police on account of this character of his and by calling my lawyer and saying he was read to do whatever I ordered. On account of this, they'd arrested İlhan so as to be able to keep him under control.

Now I was looking at the writing on the wall which read, "*İlhan Metin doesn't know anything.*" I wondered if he thought I might get to read it. Had he meant to say that he knew nothing about events or was he giving vent to some anger against himself?

Someone opened the door and in Turkish said, "Hello Huseyin Bey⁵." He said he was a policeman in service of the court and came from Kırşehir in Turkey. He expressed his pleasure at being

able to speak with me and walked with me as far as a cell adjacent to the court-room. If I'm not mistaken his name was Nuri.

He said to me, "your case is a very big one."

He knew what prison I was being held in. He was a polite sort of person.

After that I went into court. I recognised a number of faces. These people were sitting up on the top floor behind a glass window. Amongst them I saw my cousin İbo. I'd told this donkey to go on back home. He had a wife and child. I saw my younger brother Yavuz. Yavuz's elder brother had joined the guerrillas. His given name was Yücel but he'd adopted the *nom-de-guerre*, Nizam. Yücel had spent a lot of time with me in Istanbul. He was a very farsighted Kurd and a real man of the people. He'd come with me to my summer house in Istanbul. One time I'd asked my watchman whether or not he'd had my guard-dog inoculated when Yücel reproached me saying, "*Huseyin Abi⁶, an inoculation for a dog...?*"

The dog roamed about freely and if it was to go and bite someone, that bite could turn out to harm the person's health and I'd been held responsible, but I'd been unable to get this situation across to Yücel in any shape or form. Again he carried on with his reproach in a respectful, abashed sort of fashion, "*Huseyin Abi, an inoculation for a dog!*" Yücel had been right but a dog was necessary where we were living and you were obliged to inoculate them. But Yücel had been living a life in the mountains as a guerrilla and, when injured, our brave people fighting our war of national liberation had been forced to carry on living without either medicine or treatment for days on end and he had seen this himself. I, the Kurdish Huseyin, would have been committing an injustice if I'd expected my brother

⁵The use of 'Bey' in Turkish when addressing a man is used in normal polite etiquette.

⁶'Abi' is a form of address used by younger males respectfully of an older brother or older but not aged man. It means 'Older brother.'

Yucel to say, 'you're right'.

Later on in time we heard that Yucel had fallen martyr for his homeland. We've given thousands of our brave people like Yucel trying to cleanse our homeland of Turkish fascism and to realise independence. How much more remains for us to give is as yet unknown. All our martyrs hold a very warm place in the deepest part of our hearts and there they shall remain. But is it enough just to say this? Will this bring our brave people back to us?

Yavuz was our brave brother Yucel's brother. Yavuz was very knowledgeable and had developed himself well. His personality was a shining example of someone who had safeguarded his inherent Kurdish nobility. He was in a strong position with the promise of a bright future, but one needed to show an interest in him. When the German government had refused his application for political asylum he came to Holland and there the police arrested him. He instructed a lawyer who took up the case with concern and I had gone and visited him in prison. Yavuz was the only person I'd visited in prison. There were a lot of people I showed a concern for, but Yavuz was the only one I'd actually gone to visit. I'd found Yavuz's mother's phone number and had requested the documents required in order to obtain his release. They let him go afterwards. I had arranged for him to be collected from the prison gates. My assistant then brought him to my office in Hofdorp and we were going to have met up the next day. But in the early hours of that same morning, I was arrested.

Does one even have to pay a bribe so the God of independent countries will look down and see us? No, you can't go playing God and the like; we will save ourselves from this situation, there must be no doubt about that.

Gathered in the court room were also countrymen of mine from Lice and Diyarbakir. I saw a number of faces smiling out at me and yet others looking across with respect and sympathy. I knew the brave warm Kurdish hearts behind the smiling faces.

I would have told them, 'Go back to our country. We've liberated ourselves and our honour lies there,' but I doubted whether they'd be able to hear my voice. As I asked myself whether or not my voice would carry across the courtroom to them the bell sounded again for proceedings to begin and the members of the judiciary came inside. I only found out very late that the voice was able to be heard.

The case got off to a farcical start. But it would just as apt to call it a tragedy. The judge stated my full name and asked whether I could confirm it. Is there any address, he asked.

"It's not as if there wasn't," I said, and gave the address of the prison.

"That's temporary," he said, "your address in Holland." Then I stated that also. Whatever, they always read out the wrong address at every hearing and I would always have to correct it again. But this time the judge had really got all the information about me mixed up. He stated that I'd been born in Belgium. I hesitated a moment.

He asked again, "You were born in Lice, Belgium, weren't you?"

Saying "I was born within my homeland's Kurdish geography" the judge replied, "But here it is written down as Belgium."

"The name of my country is Kur-dis-tan, and that's where I was born. They turned the name of my country into Turkey. Now, if all of you here have gone and turned it into Belgium, I really cannot be said to know anything about it," I responded.

Displaying his agitation and discomfort, the judge again said, "It's written here as Belgium. Very well, then, tell me just where you were born?"

"I am telling you, and it was Kurdistan," I answered.

They couldn't turn me into a Turk, so had they decided now to turn me into a Belgian? If this was some kind of mistake, then it demonstrated quite plainly just how seriously this trial

team were going to take the case!

Once again the prosecutor catalogued a whole load of unfounded and malicious allegations. My lawyer had prepared a rather unusual critique in writing which he gave to the court. Everyone including the prosecutor received a copy of it. My lawyer read out the document in the proper manner. The prosecutor supposedly responded to my lawyer but was cavorting about like a Turkish belly-dancer. This was a new prosecutor. Because he was new, the lies he told were also of necessity new and he took pains to enunciate the crimes of which he accused me in an altogether different fashion.

Then I was given the opportunity to speak.

"The prosecutor states that this or that thing happened in Turkey, but even we do not know if these events he speaks of really happened or not. What's more, what is it to you or I what happens in Turkey? Are you a civil servant of the Turkish government? Is this a Turkish colony? You said that the files would be ready by 30 September, so where are they? When the Turkish media is already busy writing up what's inside the files, you are still claiming that they aren't prepared and therefore you can't disclose to them to us. If that's the case, then why are you giving them to the Turkish media?"

As I followed each question up with another, once the prosecutor had passed a quick look at the judge, the judge cut me off.

"These are the essentials. Do you have any requests to make - if so, then make them known," he said.

"It looks as if before we'd even got here you've already made your decision and you're not even letting me speak. If that's the case, then what did we come to court for?" I asked.

The hearing closed with this comical show. We'd gone there for nothing. I figured actually, one should have rejected the court appearance and not gone up before the court again, but my lawyer didn't accept my decision on this and said it wouldn't help us.

The situation in prison carried on in just the same way. The fresh-air area was like an iron cage. It was comprised of three sections. Two people could stay in each section at a time. I ran and worked-out while I was there. Sometimes just one, but mostly two or three officers waited and watched outside. There were cameras mounted on all sides and the cage was entirely made of iron struts. On the outside the guard-rails had sharp pointed ends.

The way the guards walked about on patrol was most odd. Some of them were of a natural normal type and their stance and gestures were likewise so, but the way some of the others walked far outdid the goose-stepping of Hitler's troops. When some of them walked, they swung their arms so much you'd think they were going to come loose from their sockets. One of them shook his shoulders as they walked. Before Bedrettin Dalan came to office in Istanbul there were a number of hang-outs in the Tarlabasi quarter and the pimps who roamed the district walked in just this same fashion. Thanks to Dalan, the area got cleaned up. Dalan was a Kurd from Bayburt from the Shaikhbizini tribe. He is one example of how the Kurds have cleaned up something corrupt and dirty. Who knows, one day maybe a Kurd will clean up the filth here too!

The critique my lawyer presented to court contained a section concerning my cousin Nizamettin and the Dutch police sent the file on to the German police and the translation of the entire file was deliberately falsified as the German court was able to prove. This was a good development. The Dutch courts on the other hand would not even allow us to check the translations. I believe that to be able to explain the true inside aspects of our trial and the ugly collaboration in it, this will provide a fitting example.

The judge presiding at today's hearing was around fifty years old (maybe sixty), grey haired, plump-faced and an unsatisfied sort of a type without an aesthetic trait to present to the world.

He had that same look as when a thief goes into a house and is caught eating the cake with half of it on his face. This was how the judge struck me, like a “cake thief” not ashamed of getting caught red-handed...

1 October 1998, Thursday

A very interesting development occurred. At around ten this morning the Director spoke with me. He had a very ugly duty to perform. He said, “It has been forbidden for you to speak with your family on the phone for a month.”

The director behaved like a person who was forced to live beneath a bridge smelling the honey. He slammed his hand down on the table and thrust out his lower lip like a camel.

Thrusting his head back and forwards in a most ungainly manner, he said, “On Sunday the 27th of September when talking with your wife, it’s said that you spoke in Kurdish for the last two minutes. Don’t you know that it’s forbidden for you to speak in Kurdish? Isn’t it right that I told you in person that Kurdish was forbidden and that you couldn’t speak it?” he rebuked me. What I should have done was break his neck but I endured it. Understanding that I couldn’t fully control my conscious self I got up and walked around the back towards the exit door. When I came abreast of the door I saw that as many as ten officers were waiting in the corridor. I had been a fully organised prison trap! When I’d gone into the Director’s room there had only been two officers with me and also an officer on duty in the room... Everything appeared quite normal.

The esteemed Director had been in quest of provocation. I found afterwards that when I’d been taken to the Director’s room the other detainees had been taken from their rooms and conducted to the sports salon. According to them there had been some 15 officers put on alert at the end of the corridor. So, this all means to say that some 25 officers had been gathered ready for an attack against me. When I sensed that I was likely

to lose conscious control once I started arguing I’d ruined their plan by leaving the room.

Saying that I’d spoken in Kurdish with my wife had just been a pretext. I knew very well that I hadn’t spoken with her in Kurdish at all as I understood that if I did the calls would be cut. Such events were no longer much of a surprise to me. In fact I was anticipating further dimensions to this viciousness. We were suffering the scourge of our statelessness. Had we been able to live freely in our land we would not have had to be subjected to all this. At the end of the day what this boiled down to is that we must safeguard by whatever means the possibility for the Kurdish people to live freely in their own country or else the generations after us will also have to suffer all the ugly indignities of what we have been put through.

This development occurred at around ten on Thursday morning. I had a rendezvous at nine with the art instructor. The instructor was a famous painter and a very agreeable sort of person. He had written a book entitled *Art in Prison* and his name was Legs Boelen. He was somewhere between 45-50 years old and a most sensitive person. I sketched from time to time and he liked my work. We would discuss general matters and most importantly of all I had the sole possibility of getting paper, coloured pens and paints which were, unfortunately, almost useless in quality through him for sketching and drawing. The prison administration was so vile and sadistic they wouldn’t even give permission for better quality materials to be given to me. We had permission to meet for the period of one hour, but they came half an hour early and cut it short. The instructor was most upset and argued in Dutch with the officers, then turning to me with the same sad expression said, “You have to go and so do I, and perhaps we shall not be able to see each other again for some time.”

“Is there a problem?” I asked, to which he waved his hands and shook his head in the negative.

Indefinite hunger strike

I took this decision very badly. With each passing day these men were intensifying the pressure on me with new deceptions and viciousness and this latest situation did not look like being the last of it. I kept thinking to myself that I needed to do something about it. I thought about making some protest by destroying the prison's electrical system but I would have needed the co-operation of the other detainees and I didn't think this right. I thought about setting the prison on fire. But the last thing which came to me was going on hunger-strike and I took the decision to do just that. I would only drink water, I wouldn't touch food at all. The officers can't have been expecting any such thing because they were really surprised. It was clear that some of them were upset by it on a humanitarian level. Some were amazed and hung their heads with impotence and despair.

Our food and drink supplies were kept in a depot. Whenever we wanted or needed something still we'd be given just a mouthful. This was true too whether it was salt, bread, water or soda. Sometimes even when we'd asked for something three or four times still they "forget". Sometimes our supplies would be mixed up. Off the same corridor where we were held was a depot of the same size as our cells in which every person had his own shelf and in theory each person's supplies were kept separately. There was also a refrigerator where everyone's supplies were held. I was in cell five and the depot was exactly opposite my door. When I wanted something to eat or drink they'd sometimes forget to close the slot in the door and I could see the depot through it. What I'm trying to explain here is how despite repeating on occasion as many as three or four or even five times that we wanted something to eat or drink from the depot it would be forgotten. Or because they'd mixed everything up they say, "*There isn't any of what you wanted.*" Sometimes even if it went against their own wishes the officers would say, "I

couldn't find it," and get out of it that way.

Since I went on hunger strike however one after the other, the officers would come and go, asking, "Would you like this, would you like that?"

Without distinguishing I'd just say, "No."

"Very well," they'd say and leave again. This situation really made me happy. It was as if we were acting in some film.

I've been here four months now and it's the first time any officer of religion has been to see me.

He began by saying, "I'm the person in charge of the religious workers. I know the Kurdish people and the situation they are faced with in their countries very well. Moreover, I teach at various universities and constantly speak to the students of the Kurds and the tragic situation of their countries. I therefore know your situation very well. I understand and respect your stand, your anger. I know you don't want to speak to anybody and I understand your anger. If you permit me, I'd like to come and talk with you from time to time," he said without interruption. The window to my cell had been opened and he was speaking there squatting down in front of it. I was sitting on my bed at the time and was thinking to myself, "Where on earth has this guy sprung from? What does some researcher want out of this hell?" and the man saw that I'd failed to react.

"You're absolutely right not to believe me" he began and continued by saying "but I'm speaking sincerely, believe me."

"I believe you. I don't think you're lying to me," I replied.

He said that he was very pleased. We chatted a bit and he left saying he'd come back to see me again and we'd talk like friends. Then he was gone. He hadn't mentioned the hunger strike.

The doctor and social workers had come to see me but I hadn't spoken to them at all. In addition to seeing them as the clowns of the system, I also viewed them as servants of the Director. Some of the officers had approached me and made underhand sorts of comments like, "Do you see your wife and your children as your

ideal?" Their underlying aim was to adversely influence my thinking and try to warp my sensitivities. Some of them would even say things like, "Your enemy will be very happy if you die." It was manifestly clear that the officers were trying every means to get me to come off the hunger strike.

I began to feel real hunger on the second day. By the third I had a migraine and my head had begun to spin. On the morning of the seventh day I vomited. Being unable to sleep was my greatest difficulty of all. Various members of my family were becoming very worried and upset, and I couldn't get that out of my mind. Just thinking about it did my mind in.

On the afternoon of the seventh day, my lawyer and his wife (who was also his legal partner) came to see me. I couldn't speak comfortably. We argued about the situation. They were going to try to make some headway through the press, the parliament, the court and such routes. I said I would fast to the death in protest against the assault and the intrigue against my siblings, my cousins, my friends and relatives, as also against the vile fascist stand of the prison administration, saying I deplored what was being done to us, I'd made my protest clear and I wanted all the world to hear how it had been forbidden for me to speak in Kurdish with my family.

By this time I was not in a very good state at all. Being on hunger-strike on one hand, on the other I was still sketching and writing and remaining very active. I went to the fresh-air area constantly but I'd put an end to the meetings with the other detainees, or taking part in the sports. Out in the fresh air space, a Bosnian by the name of Senal warned me I'd quickly wear myself out if I remained so active. He'd gone on hunger-strike himself in the past, once in England and twice in Holland and was therefore more experienced than I was on this matter. I therefore paid his warnings real heed. From the eighth day even if I couldn't sleep I rested in bed and my actions had slowed right down. I suddenly lost all appetite and stopped the

sport. My entire body ached. In my head from my brow to the nape of my neck it was one continuous ache.

The ninth day was Friday. When I was least expecting it my lawyer called. He succeeded in getting two minutes permission to speak. He said that they'd made a press statement and they'd been besieged with phone calls. Everyone had shown great interest in the situation and had reacted against it, had spoken with the parliament and at ten o'clock on Monday morning after a meeting with the judge in the Hague, "A decision was given. It was the same judge who decided against your deportation to Turkey," he said.

This was a positive development and took me by surprise. But with my lawyer saying, "When the prison director said you were eating, it put us in a difficult position," I felt my headache intensify and I felt all my nerves begin to tremble and shake.

"Come to see me today with a specialist physician and the press and the real situation will become quite apparent to you," I said.

"That's good. However, I have to ask you once again, you haven't eaten anything since Thursday and have only taken water, is that correct?"

At precisely this instant, the officer on duty signified that time was up - it was the end of the phone-call.

"The officer is saying that the time is over and is going to wrest the phone from my hands, but I'm telling you again that since I spoke with the director on Thursday, I haven't eaten a thing and am only drinking water. The director is lying. If you come today with an expert, you'll be able to prove the director's deceit," I repeated.

"Very good, I understand. So you're drinking water?" he said

After confirming that I was drinking water I said, "Look, I'm telling you this in front of the officer, the director is lying," and I gave the phone to the officer because he was insisting that I do so.

Come the tenth, the eleventh and the twelfth day I was very

bad. I could no longer get out of bed. I couldn't even go to the fresh-air area. Nonetheless, everyday I was taken to the shower. They forced me to go out so that they could search my cell. This was one of the rules of the place such that if you went out of your cell ten times a day you and your cell would also be searched ten times. They were obliged to search me and my cell at least once a day. Beyond cutting you off from normal life they tried every means to destroy the mechanisms which sustained your nervous system starting with your soul and your mind. It was as if you were a prisoner in the clutches of some Nazi group. I felt that the director and the other administrators around him must certainly have suffered from some psychological illness. From another side however I figured they must also have been in a position of strength for the government not to have stepped in about their methods. I don't know just what kind of illness they had but there was definitely something which meant they weren't normal. They made up rules according to their own wishes. If it didn't serve them they wouldn't even observe the rules they'd established themselves.

Holland is very interesting. An Israeli cargo aircraft carrying chemical compounds and nerve gas crashed into a block of apartments. Twenty-four people were killed in the accident and many others were injured. A number of people living in the vicinity of the accident still complain about the detrimental side-effects of the chemical elements and nerve gas. In the same way that Holland suppressed the story for years, it also failed to undertake any precautions. Only the other day they made a statement saying they had some suspicions about the contents of the cargo plane which had been found. Israel warned them sternly in response saying, *"The chemical elements and nerve gas were obtained from Holland. Holland has been aware of this situation from the outset."* CNN broadcast this story constantly. Actually this event is sufficient to expose the system in Holland and the outlook of the state.

Today is Tuesday and it is my thirteenth day on hunger strike. It's as if I'm in a vacuum, but my aches have abated. I understand how important it is not to be active. My lawyer explained that the judge will make his decision on Wednesday next week and that he would think about it until then. My lawyer was hopeful of a positive decision. My stomach gives constant rise to nausea and I'm aware that my situation isn't good. I learned from my lawyer that following our talk on Friday the prison administration accepted as true the claim that I hadn't taken any food and had only drunk water. The word "bastards!" slipped from my tongue. My lawyer also said, "They really are bastards!" and that whether at the level of the press, the parliament or the court we'd achieved our aim.

"We have a fight ahead of us. We'll give it all we've got. We want you to be healthy, not to die," he said.

I explained to him that my intention was not to punish myself but to respond to these unscrupulous people.

"You're utterly right, it's not that I don't accord you this, but I'm saying that you've achieved your aim. Think about it," he said.

"Let's talk about it tomorrow when you come to visit," I said.

"I'll certainly come tomorrow if I can get permission and if not, the day after," he replied.

The doctor was insisting on seeing me but I was refusing. My situation wasn't very good at all. I know my own body. I hadn't eaten anything for thirteen days. Before going on hunger strike, I would exercise every day for two hours excluding Sundays when I'd rest, and I'd been healthy. I was just 43 years old.

Today I went out to the fresh-air area. Out there, beside the iron cage a rather overweight nurse called me over in a laughing, sympathetic way. I went over to him.

"I haven't been here for a week. Once I got back I wanted to find out about what was going on with you. I can understand your position but it still saddens me," he said. He asked what stage things had reached, explaining that he'd learned about

the situation from my lawyer's statements in the papers and how my lawyer had gone to court over it.

I told him,

"The judge will make known his decision next Wednesday."

"Fine, but wouldn't it be logical to give it a break until then?" he asked.

"Maybe, but I'm not planning on doing so," I responded.

"You're an unusual person, everybody knows that," he said and then asked about my wife and children, and added, "Are you drinking water?"

I told him how I had been but that on this particular day I'd vomited so I didn't feel like drinking anything. He recommended that I take some lukewarm water even if it was just a little, but that I must absolutely take some.

We then went on to speak about the situation in prison.

"The directors are maniacs. Someone should tell them when to stop," I said, and he laughed.

He said that the rules of the prison were very harsh and severe. I tried to say that what was primarily harsh about it was the way the administrators actually carried out their rules. Saying he agreed with me, he repeated his advice that I should take good care of myself. He seemed upset. Of the Dutch officers I saw here who were well-intentioned I'd interpret it to myself saying, "*These can't really be Dutchmen.*" Therefore I didn't imagine that this nurse was originally Dutch either.

I have to say that hunger strike is not my preferred course of action and that I consider it to be a passive form of resistance and one that is not productive. But running my circumstances before me there again it seemed to be an effective form of action. Perhaps the directors were showing concern over the situation so as to obstruct press and public interest, anxious that their unlawful methods might be exposed. Otherwise, in my view this interest did not spring from some humane concern or sense of responsibility.

15 October, Thursday

My lawyer did not come yesterday. We were able to meet this morning at 9.15. He'd brought various newspapers which were published in Holland. They'd given considerable space to the hunger strike. He also told me which newspapers and magazines would continue to follow the story. He said there was some interest from certain television programmes. Mehmet Ulger had been very upset and was working comprehensively on the matter. He'd spoken with some Dutch MP's. They'd taken up the matter with a serious determination. He'd written to the new Minister of Justice outlining the situation. Protests had been organised outside various consulates in Holland. Members of my family were disturbed and upset. They were working extraordinarily hard. The issue had been placed on the agenda of the European Parliament.

The other day the doctor had weighed me during a monitoring session. When I'd first come here I weighed 92 kilos. It is one of the rules of the prison that everybody who is brought here is weighed, measured and a medical examination undertaken and put down in the doctor's records. At that time my weight had been recorded as 92 kilos, now it was down to 76 kilos. Since going on hunger strike I'd lost 16 kilos in weight. I'd thought that I could lose about 10-12 kilos but now my trousers were so loose I could scarcely keep them on. My lawyer was also saying my face had become gaunt.

After he'd listened to what I had to say he gave a long and logical speech to dissuade me from continuing with the hunger strike. He also told me that my English friend Brian Jones had been very upset and said that he wanted to come and see me. On the Wednesday the judge would be making his determination on my case. After this two-way discussion with my lawyer we agreed that I would end my hunger strike. My lawyer was delighted.

On the tenth and eleventh days of my hunger strike a nurse had come to my cell. There were officers with him – which didn't look at all like the officers here.

I'd told them, "I have no need of your interest, please turn off the light."

The nurse shouted to the other officer harshly, "Open the curtain as well. He made the room even brighter. I pulled my towel over my head. In a very serious fashion the nurse pulled the towel from my face and said, "When I speak with people I look into their eyes. At this point he was examining my skin. He pinched and released the skin of my hand and then massaged it. He behaved like a real human being towards me.

He asked "Will you tell me why you have gone on hunger strike?" and I explained.

He asked about my wife and children and how many days I had not eaten for. I answered these questions too.

After telling me that he understood he told me that he'd come to see me every day.

When I said, "Don't waste your time for nothing, what's more I'll feel uncomfortable ...

"I won't be disturbed and I won't be offended either." On the back of this he reminded me that I hadn't accepted the doctor. "Give your permission and let him come to see you," he said.

Saying, "Let the doctor come and see the director. It's the director who's ill," he smiled in an open way and, "Even if he does so he'll still want to see you," he said by way of insistence.

Replying to him, "If you'd wanted permission to come and see me I wouldn't have accepted you either," he smiled back and left me.

The second day he came, he took my pulse and blood pressure. Again, he wanted me to accept to see the doctor. I made the same reply as I had on the previous occasion.

"You are healthy. There's nothing wrong with you," he told

me. His behaviour towards me was utterly humanist. He wished me the best of luck. I said I had no need of luck but that I was thankful to him anyway. He smiled warmly as if it was just the sort of response he'd expected.

Two days after my hunger strike ended I managed to get down some milk and crackers. On the third day I boiled a kilo of onions with a piece of chicken and consumed it. My stomach was upset from drinking milk all the time and had become as hard as stone. My constipation set my nerves on edge. I'd expected the milk to disturb my stomach but not having been to the toilet for fifteen days had had a negative influence on my gut. The headaches and darkness in front of my eyes also worried me.

On the day I'd begun my hunger strike they'd also begun to withhold my newspapers whereas my contract with the vendor was still valid until the seventeenth of the month. Because I was shut up in my room all day, the newspapers would have been welcome. However, on 15 October, on that same evening of the very day I ended my hunger strike, all my newspapers were bundled up together and given to me. Here was another typical example of the way this place was administered with its deliberate policy of pressure aside from its torture and so called reforms.

During these last fifteen days I'd made a few sketches and written some poems. I wrote, I drew and I made hopeful plans. I should also add that I'd a lot of dreams.

Bringing my hunger strike to an end pleased my lawyer more than anybody. The overweight nurse also said how pleased he felt about it. It was also possible to see by some of the officers' faces that they were pleased too. The nurse and the officers who were glad I'd stopped fasting made suggestions as to what I might eat and drink. Some of the other officers displayed their hostility and lack of good will in outlook and action commenting "you did what you did." For whatever reason, they

couldn't actually bring themselves to look me in the face. The officer known as team leader who wore a moustache and was handsome and smiling drew up in front of my cell, asked me how I was feeling and made some suggestions to me. He asked whether there was anything I needed or wanted. On the same front, there was a tall officer with a goatce beard whose snake-like looks by way of response did not warrant any kind of reaction from me at all. Unfortunately both the newspapers and letters were under his control. If you were to show this man's picture to any children they would definitely be unable to sleep. He was a most untrustworthy individual.

Because I hadn't been getting the papers I'd been unable to keep up with developments and Turkey's vitriol towards Syria. I'd only been able to follow the story afterwards on CNN and the BBC's news bulletins. When my lawyer and his wife had come to see me I'd been on the seventh day of my hunger strike. They'd asked what my view was on the tensions between the two countries.

I'd said, "Turkey can only howl like a dog and make a political spectacle."

They'd both laughed and said that the situation was serious.

"I know my dog" I said, "what's more if Turkey were to attack Syria it would be the end of her. Turkey will become like Afghanistan and the Turkish government knows this very well."

I still hold this view – if Turkey attacks Syria it will turn into another Afghanistan. The Kurds today are not as they were back in 1920, uninformed, without support and scattered.

Even if by contemporary standards we have no specific strategic force, we are not so weak that the sovereign strategic powers would not take account of us. If war were to break out it would contribute any more negative weight to the Kurdish people. They were up to their necks in war in any case. If there is nothing left to lose, on the contrary there may something to gain. They cannot annihilate Ocalan. And even if they could

the Kurdish question would not go backwards, it would accelerate. The Kurdish people will stand up for their own principles. In such a situation they would become even more aggressive towards the Turkish State. The rulers of Turkey understood this very well.

It was Demirel and Yilmaz who were responsible for creating the climate of war. They created this false atmosphere so as to alter the agenda when the Cakici affair came home to roost on them. Why else has there been no such matter on the agenda until today? Naturally there were other items on the agenda in the bag belonging to the governors of Turkey but they'd used them once too often and thereby exhausted them. When Mr. Yilmaz Esquire was in the United States for a meeting at the UN he stated concerning the Cakici affair: "We sent the file to the US authorities but for whatever reason they didn't arrest him," in such a way seeking to cover up the matter by laying at the door of the US. They'd embarked on trying to lay the foundations to create a false agenda on the pretext of the US bringing Barzani and Talabani to an agreement but they took a shot at their necks and were made to sit down on their arses.

In actual fact relying on the justification that the US authorities hadn't wanted to arrest Alaatin Cakici was sheer nonsense. Cakici was roving about with a Turkish diplomatic passport, not an American one. Later on it was Yilmaz who sent Cakici the message to leave the United States and this was revealed when a telephone conversation between Cakici's minister and Yilmaz's close ally Eyup Asik was exposed. This was another dimension to the affair. When it became known that Cakici had spoken with Demirel about a number of State contracts, so as to bury the matter they raised the stakes crying, "We'll go to war with Syria" and that's all there is to it. Turkey is accustomed to such situations. The nature of Cakici's relations and the Syria Crisis came as no surprise to me. Because this was the very make-up of the State. If the people of the country were aware of it they

had no other option than to take part. Those who opposed it were proclaimed prime enemies like myself. Regardless, these prime enemies would multiply and bring an end to the counterfeit agenda. There could be no other kind of ending for such a beginning.

We know full well that Holland provided information and intelligence to Turkey in a number of different contexts. I experienced several instances of it in terms of the events surrounding myself. Information was passed to Turkey by Dutch participants in a number of international meetings in which Turkey could not officially take part. I found this out from my discussions with Interpol officials and British, German, Russian, American and Greek officials. In my former relations I was privy to information about a certain consultative group that a Turkish military official active with the Dutch Ministry of Justice was in and what went on inside it. The individual in question is still actively engaged in such business affairs.

The scope of my relations with the Turkish State structure were not only broad but had existed at the highest levels. In particular, after I returned from England to Turkey on 7 December 1988 these relations had broadened even further. The war undertaken by the PKK in 1984 drove the Turkish government down a grave road of no return. As the outlook between the military and the civilian populace diverged even more than hitherto officials from the Turkish government in the Kurdish region – instead of carrying out their duties as state officials – they established groups to serve their own interests. Organs such as the army, police, MIT, special teams, and the village guards set off on the road forming gangs within themselves. They'd made no accounts beyond advancing themselves and competing against one another in the pursuit of their own best interests. The forming of such groups even included the judiciary. The MP's, the generals, even the journalists ranked themselves on the side of the various groups and worked

for them. Whether it was an MP, a General, or a journalist whom I was speaking with, one and all spoke in relation to the profits they were calculating. Even the players involved in the justice system were involved in making the same calculations. The same could be said of the universities.

When I sat with the General Secretary of Istanbul University, Huseyin Cavusoglu, in his office or when the two of us sat down with other university lecturers in the campus restaurant I was not witness to a single occasion when education or the country's problems, or the resolution of those same problems was ever discussed. When I found myself in the company of MP's or ministers whether in the parliament or dining outside, in meetings, or discussions in their offices not once was a single word uttered about the country, politics or the future. In every encounter it was solely a matter of keeping account of the profits.

Of course, it was not entirely without exceptions. One of the people I sincerely respected was Recai Iskenderoglu who had acted as a senator and minister. In a number of meetings he'd ask my views and would make the most subtle and to the point evaluations.

For example he'd said, "Turning a blind eye to the Kurdish reality is leading this country into darkness." Was Mr. Iskenderoglu expressing his feelings or giving me a leading question?

The mayor of Diyarbakir, Turgut Atalay, whom I considered to be a fine person would say at each of our meetings how upset he felt about the people being killed and he was sincere in his feelings.

He'd say, "It's a great pity for the country and the people of this country. He also emphasised how it would be very difficult to resolve. Not once did he speak of the profits to be had. He wanted to serve the country. I have no idea to what extent he was aware of the dimensions of the gangs and the profiteering. Perhaps his saying the problem would be difficult to resolve

was down to this. I wanted to discuss such matters with him but I didn't think it would be useful.

I visited him once in his home in Ankara. He'd been attacked in Diyarbakir. His car had been bombed and he'd been shot at. He'd been discharged from hospital in Ankara and was continuing his treatment at home. Numerous splinters from the bomb had lodged themselves all over his body and this was very distressing.

"If my driver had not become confused we could have gotten into the car. Neither he would have died nor would I be in the state I am now," he said when we met. He displayed no signs of fright or fear. He joked saying the person who'd fired the bullet was very well dressed and handsome. I was very sad. Observing this he said, "Look after yourself, it's not clear who's who. If necessary I'll go and talk to Demirel for you."

Had I said, "Ah, there you have it! I know Demirel and his family very well and we have a number of business dealings. At bottom, it's none other than he who's the head of the mob," what would he have replied, I wonder.

In the periods when Abdulkadir Aksu was an MP, a minister of state and also when he was in the Ministry of the Interior despite having had both special and meetings in general he said on TV that he didn't know me. Not the extent of one Mehmet Ali Yilmaz. Bravo Mehmet Ali Yilmaz!

"Alaatin Cakici is a good kid, of course I'll speak with him. Is it forbidden to talk with Cakici?" he said as plain as day. Of Sedat Peker he'd say, "he's our nephew." Mehmet Ali Yilmaz had been a minister of state and sports minister. He was a person who'd served in the ministry when Demirel was Prime Minister. Those taking part in the television programme uttered not a single squeak when this was said, neither the journalist, the politician nor the lawyer. I began to feel a sense of respect for Mehmet Ali Yilmaz on account of this frank behaviour of his.

The man intended to say, "This is what Turkey is. This is what the State is made of. Why are you trying to sink me and those close to me?" He was right and he spoke the truth.

Of all the men in position I'd see, Hayri Kozakcioglu was the most open.

He said to me, "If you listen to me, one hundred million dollars a year will be enough for you and enough for us. It won't end it all if we pour our troubles down over our heads," and added "how many people are there out there with your talents?"

Semra Ozal was standing as a candidate in Istanbul for the Motherland Party (ANAP). Above the main entrance of the Marmara Hotel – after getting off the escalator you turn left and go into the bar. There are only elevators on that floor. You get off the escalator and the elevators are situated right opposite. Mehmet Agar and Abdullah Catli were standing side by side in front of the elevator. Ahmet Karaevli stood between myself and Mehmet Agar. Agar was between Catli and Karaevli. Karaevli addressed Catli and said, "Mesut says if we help Semra and we win we'll guarantee the general chairmanship."

Because Karaevli was of shorter build than Catli and Agar they were both bending down to listen to him. At that moment Mesut Yilmaz arrived. Karaevli and Catli were about to go straight to the bar with him when Semra came out of the elevator and everyone fluttered about to make way for her. She said a few things to my MP pal Agar stood beside me. After Semra had gone downstairs we all went on to the bar, including Yilmaz.

I, my MP friend beside me and Karaevli sat down at that same table. Catli, Yilmaz and a number of other people remained standing and talking. When Yilmaz was speaking with Catli he behaved as if he was speaking to his boss. If I'm not mistaken, Yasar Okuyan was also there at the time. During this period these same scenes were also frequently played out inside and

outside the officers' club in Harbiye. If the security videos from that period should be delved into you'd be able to find many a charming sight.

Yilmaz had claimed that he didn't know Catli. When Oral Celik said, "Abdullah Catli settled Mesut Yilmaz's gambling bill in Brussels," Yilmaz burst out with, "Is this fellow crazy or what! I'll sue him!" However with the passing of time he must have been persuaded that everything was forgotten because when Oral Celik became the Chair of Malatya Sports Club Yilmaz telephoned Celik and congratulated him. In such a way no doubt Yilmaz was making his apology for his response to Celik's earlier utterances. In short, Yilmaz had been caught red handed as having relations with Cakici. I imagine that by such examples the tangled web of relationships in Turkey at that time can be understood.

I also had meetings with top level operatives in MIT. These officials did not like the way things were going. They held the view that this kind of carry on would be the undoing of the country but they also stated that there was nothing they could do about it.

The examples I've given and the things I personally experienced were the realm of rule of Turkey. Here, in this same realm the ordinary people, and particularly the Kurdish people were suffering the most heavy and vile oppression and established the main necessities for life. Even those who were working, forget all the luxuries, the majority were ground down, without work and utterly desperate, this should not have been difficult for anyone to perceive. These conditions drove the people to seek out other alternatives but the people in power were not concerned in the slightest about this. Emphasising how on one hand it's necessary to see this as a quite natural situation, the Kurdish villages, towns and hamlets were being razed and destroyed and the people drive from their lands. The emergence of HEP (People's Labour Party) expressed the hope

for the Kurds of there being an alternative. In 1991, HEP agreed to go into the elections with the SHP (People's Socialist Party) and took their place in Parliament. But with HEP taking their seats the state's oppression of the Kurds did not decline, quite the reverse, it intensified. When respected figure Mehmet Sincar became an MP for Batman he was murdered. On the back of his killing similar murders followed one by one.

This tactic was entirely down to Demirel's planning. At the period where Demirel used a "softer" manner it was with the aim of cutting the path from under Ozal's feet. The late Mr. Ozal was the one leader who fought for Turkey's future without personal interests, who thought positively and who tried to apply his ideas in practice so as to bring them to life. Because he took this stand he became the target of Demirel's mob and was liquidated.

They wouldn't want me to return to Turkey

I understood full well that after I'd fled from Turkey if the gangs were unable to annihilate me then they'd decided at least to pacify me. They tried to lay every incident that occurred at my door or upon the individual members of my family. Pretending that events which had never even happened had occurred they cried out that we were behind them, after the slander of "*They carried out this incident, they carried out that*" they'd go on with further lies like, "*Look! they were arrested there, they were arrested here.*" ... In response to this situation I'd begun to speak up and say what I knew. First and foremost MEIOTV, *Emek* and *Aydinlik* newspapers and a number of home and overseas press and broadcasting organisations responded to what I was saying with the utmost attention and detail whereas other quarters were completely silent. In particular organs of the press which fed at the hands of the state, and newspapers and television channels one by one gave an impression of it being their everyday business and ran an unstinting campaign of monstrous lies in the attack

they'd launched against me. Within a short time some of the press in Holland, Belgium and Germany had taken up the same hue and cry. Not for a single moment did they hesitate about portraying me as some kind of a bogeyman but virtually became the spokespersons of the Turkish mob adopting its same line and worked to establish the foundations for an all out attack against me. They did this in a very masterful and subtle way. From my discussions with the these same countries' officials I saw that they knew very well what was going on just as they knew everything there was to know about all the individuals in power in Turkey.

From this point of view if I were to say that I wanted to return to Turkey everyone would fall into a frenzy. Most of all it would be the Dutch and Turkish governments which would go into a panic and would do everything possible to block me. When I'd made my preparations to go to Turkey when I hadn't been assassinated as they'd planned, they'd rigged up some files to have me arrested and cut off all contact between myself and the outside world. I was following developments on American, British, German and Dutch television. They were talking about the crimes of organising the drugs trade and such business.

"Hey, boy, hey! We're the strong ones, we have the power to crush you, we have the right. We're telling this story and you're going to listen to it!"

German television was stressing the Serb's oppression of the Albanians in Kosovo. They were also making programmes about the South African Blacks and the sufferings they'd undergone, the destruction of their culture and their new-won freedoms - just as if it hadn't been them who had collaborated with the white rulership under Apartheid and kept it propped up. The powerful German automobile manufacturers like Mercedes and BMW had carried on their production in South Africa in the Apartheid period. It was Holland and Germany which had established the legal basis for the white racist rule. The official

language was Afrikaans, a Dutch dialect and their flag was the same as Hitler's. Those collaborating with the Apartheid regime in South Africa and plundering all the wealth of the country were these same nations again.

And I feel it necessary here to remind you that Turkey was one of those countries to enter into the most formal agreements with the Apartheid regime in South Africa. During that period the white regime in South Africa did not exact any taxes on any goods coming from Turkey. After the long-suffering Nelson Mandela was elected President they collected some thirty percent tax from Turkey. The German and Dutch governments think that people are blind and stupid. Come on and tell us! Dutch state television channels were going on about the tragedy and suffering in Indonesia and Surinam just as if it had not been they themselves who had exploited and condemned those same countries to their suffering.

It was a crime, it was punishment, it was justice - all these were just crocodile tears!

The truth was that whoever was the strongest, the most powerful relied on the most ugly methods. I still believe that a strong structure can be implemented which will be able to say stop, let things not keep on going the way they are, and let the world be a better place to live in. As human beings we have to believe that this can be so. we shouldn't get ourselves stuck over whether some people out there won't be pleased or are going to be hurt by it. We should not alter our stand because of fear or for the sake of interests. We must speak the truth in conformity with our beliefs and not be dissuaded because its going to cause us a headache.

21 October 1998, Wednesday

My situation is improving after ending the hunger strike. But the dizziness and headaches continue even if intermittently. After the seventh day of my hunger strike I experienced heart

palpitations and this situation continues even now. The sports instructor has taken an interest in my welfare to the extent of coming all the way to my cell. Under normal circumstances a fitness instructor could not visit the cells. But this fellow is one of the best of all the officials involved with sport. He was very satisfied with my work-outs and my boxing endeavours and helped me frequently. Both his concern and his help in my physical training far exceed that of a normal officer and altogether transcends the mentality of a warden or police officer. In twenty minutes I can complete exactly five thousand metres on the treadmill. Sometimes I do more. I follow up the twenty minutes on the treadmill with another forty minutes non-stop work-out. I also work out and run when I'm in the fresh-air area. The sports coach is very pleased that despite being 43 years of age I play sport and work out regularly in an organised way. I guess his concern and his sympathy play a large part in this.

My hearing took place today. The judge in the Hague found against me. My lawyer said that the judge's decision contravened precedent, was not in accordance with procedure and that therefore he was going to appeal. According to this decision the prohibition placed on me of speaking Kurdish was also recommended by the Dutch State Courts. In other words it was ugliness upon ugliness.

With regard to the hearing no other information was given to us aside from the telephone conversation. In any case they couldn't come up with any supporting document or witness. The prosecutor kept saying they were going provide us with copies but I don't believe there to be any such thing in their possession. There are some so-called phone conversations. Of course it is an easy matter for the police to listen in to the phonecalls. Then they can arrange what they want to and pretend it came from us and pass it to the court. The German court proved that the conversations concerning my nephew

Nizamettin had been put together by the Dutch police and the prosecutor and not only were the contents false so was the translation incorrect and basing their decision thereupon they rejected the file. We know very well that the other files were put together in just the same way.

22 October, Thursday

I saw my art instructor. He'd read the papers and been very affected by them. He explained how he'd also undertaken an eleven day hunger strike. He hadn't eaten anything but he'd drunk all kinds of fluids. Reminding him that I'd taken only water for fifteen days he commented that it was a very long time.

"I did it just to test myself," he explained, "but I could only hold out eleven days."

At 3 p.m. the head of religious instruction came to see me again. He is a most knowledgeable man. He took down notes about my problems. We discussed Mohammed, Jesus, Moses and spoke of religion.

He said by way of asking, "You have some knowledge of every religion. Do you believe in God?"

"Believing, having faith in and an expectation of hope – should I answer them all together? Year after year Turkey, Iran and Iraq has been killing Kurds with the weapons they got from you. There's no difference between what's being done to me here and what's being done to the Kurds in Turkey. The oppression continues. Very well, then tell me where God is in all this. It's not justice just to say as you do in your country, 'We're a just country.'" The injustice done to me is also oppression. God does not see any of this and doesn't do anything about it either. I guess I have the right to say, *Where are you, eh God*, don't I?"

To this he responded, "I understand you."

He said it saddened him to listen to me.

"These things should not be going on in my country," he

said and added that he believed me and stood with me so as to help me. On the back of it he asked, "Do you pray?"

"Sometimes I do," I told him, "but not for myself. There are millions of half-starving, half-fed people. There are millions dying of hunger. In my country there is oppression. Numerous people are disabled. There are people whose heads, whose bodies, are joined. I pray for them and for those people who are in a worse situation than I am. I don't pray because I think it's going to accomplish anything but pray because I cannot help them in any other way. What's more, if God is going to help somebody it will happen in any case. I don't believe that God is going to help someone because of some other individual's prayers," I replied.

Continuing by saying, "Jesus is a saint who has become one with God according right to respect. Everything he says is good and true. Moreover he does not say that he met and spoke with God. Jesus is one of our region's people. We know the value of Jesus and we believe in him," I wanted to go on to say that at best they themselves did not believe in him, they didn't follow him, they just used him."

The religious instructor's face muscles flexed but I had no idea of what was going on inside his head. After a short pause he said that I was right and that he would pray for me.

This officer had listened to me very closely and had said that he'd come to see me so as to help me. I rather have the opinion that after hearing me out he'd changed his mind about trying to help me. It makes me uncomfortable if people think they're trying to help me. Look, I'd see it as some kind of a crime to myself if the officials of this country should help me when their country is the origin of this filth. What's more I don't really imagine that this officer is really a religious worker at all. He was very able and the questions he asked me had no bearing on religion. The meeting lasted a whole hour. The other officers behaved towards him very formally and respectfully. After the meeting was through I felt that I'd gathered my strength.

23 October 1998, Friday

At 10 am I spoke with my lawyer on the phone. My brother Abdullah had been set free. I can't express my joy. Whatever, I looked around for someone I could share it with. I began to draw a picture I found very pleasing on account of my happiness. I'll finish it within four or five days. This picture will be for the pleasure of my brother Apo.

26 October 1998, Monday

I signed, dated and inscribed the name of the place (Vught) on my drawings. I would never have thought that the day would come when I'd be signing pictures done by my own hand. The pictures are not masterpieces in their own right. These pictures are just that of an uneducated Kurd who came all the way here from Lice, someone whom all the world has tried to wipe out and who came face to face with an accusation from the underworld. These pictures reflect Baybasin's inner world and such is their value. I have no ruler or measuring tools, water colour or brush. All I have are coloured pencils of a single style of which the ends are constantly snapping. Every time I use the pencil sharpener the points keep breaking. In addition to this I am only given these pens to use in my cell between 13.00-15.00 hours. I have to add that I have no real knowledge or painting or special talent. But I think that the drawings I do and the poems I write will reflect my inner reality. At least I hope so.

To constantly work out, eat, drink, sleep in prison is a real waste. I have no relations with the outside. Tomorrow seven months will be up and still nothing has changed. I'm trying to be productive with the pictures, by writing poems, prose and even some stories. I believe that if a person works at it he can succeed. If uneducated people like myself can achieve this much then what cannot the well-read and talented achieve?

When we look at the achievements of those countries which

have populations of under ten million people, then the Kurdish population which is close to fifty million, even if a colony, can achieve whatever the Kurdish people put into it, so I maintain. We'll be able to grasp that opportunity to live as decent human beings if we just start getting used to the idea of working for ourselves for a change. I wanted to prove, to demonstrate by my own example before I die how struggle is necessary and that what sort of struggle is necessary in order to be able to win and that one must live for the sake of this struggle. I want to shout out at the top of my voice that it is a dishonourable thing to put one's own individual profits, expectations and desires as the sole thing in front of you and believe that I am expressing this in the way I'm choosing to live my life. I want to show that there is nothing useful in fearing the day of death, but quite the reverse that we've overcome the fearlessness of the appointed time. What I'm getting at here is that it's necessary to work at achieving things selflessly and with determination hand in hand with a sense of fearlessness, with knowledge, having a clear plan and pursuing it systematically.

Above all, I want to shout out loud to those making superhuman efforts for the sake of my people's national liberation so tell them that they're not alone, that their great contribution is recognised and how creative it is.

To every Kurd who asks, "I wonder, what should I be doing,?" I would say, "Your honour lies in your independence and freedom, stand up for it."

If you should say, "I'm not standing up for the sake of honour; I'm leaving everything as it is," then that's up to you. But whatever happens, the day will come when you too will die and when that day comes, do you really want to leave your lack of honour behind you as your sole legacy?

This is what I want people to be asking themselves. I want them to be able to see that there's always something for them to do. For various reasons, I'll be saying, "*Bağışta kardaş, şîir*

*yaziyiğ, resim yapıyiğ, hani ma sen ne yapisan?"*⁷

Today I met the delegation of the so-called independent commission. This took place at 9.30 in the morning. Three members of the commission, a secretary, and Mrs Bohler - my lawyer at the time, seated themselves on one side of the glass partition in the visiting room and I sat down on the other. They'd brought eight of my complaints onto their agenda: -

1. The police, prosecutor and prison administration were obstructing my meetings with my Turkish lawyer despite all my cases devolving from Turkey and the court having found in my favour on this matter.

2. Although I hadn't spoken in Kurdish with my wife on Sunday the 27th of September, they had introduced a ban on my speaking with my family for a month under this pretext and the ban would be up finally in four day's time.

3. It had been prohibited outright for me to speak Kurdish with my wife and children.

4. The ventilation system in my cell did not work.

5. There was no air-conditioning system in the sports area or kitchen, nor any windows. There was no window in my cell.

6. Permission had not been granted to my friends Selahattin Celik, Mehmet Salih Ceviker, Mehmet Ulger and other visitors to be able to come to see me.

7. The problems relating to the canteen.

8. The fact that a letter sent to me by my daughter had been withheld from me.

Before they'd even reached the eighth item, the visit was at an end. I had wanted my daughter's letter to be given to me. Whatever the reason behind it, the commission did not take

⁷ Look here brother, we've been writing poems, we've drawn pictures, so what are you going to do?"

this issue up. Perhaps they had nothing to answer for it. But for every item on the list the head of the commission would comment, "*The director says, the director says...*"

And I would rebuke him saying, "I applied to you because I'm appealing against what the director has said. You're just wasting your breath if all you can say to me in answer is '*the director says this, the director says that*.' The ventilation system in my cell doesn't work yet you're telling me the director says, '*We renewed all the components in January*.' I've been here for four months now and the system in my cell has never worked at all. They're all telling me over and over that they've made the necessary recommendations, so, let's go and take a look together. It still doesn't work and it's of no concern to me whether the components are new or not!"

The same kind of answers came back in response to every case we made. In other words they tried to mess us about by turning things inside out. The commission members looked just like hot air balloons to me - great big fat toy balloons... I'd applied to them on the issue of speaking Kurdish, and about my having supposedly spoken in Kurdish. In the application we'd lodged in the Hague court the judge had emphasised this point. When the head of the commission mentioned this my lawyer jumped in to answer ahead of me. She reminded everyone of the applications which had been made and of her discussions with the director. What's more she said, "My client's discussions are recorded and sent to the interpreter's office for translation. The same office can just as easily translate from Kurdish. If there's any practical problem, let me help with it. My client will meet the costs. We've also come to an agreement with the chief state prosecutor over the Turkish lawyer and it was decided that the Turkish lawyer could accompany us when seeing the client. This will mean an increase in the expenses per visit and depending on the time involved will be in the region of between one to two thousand gilders. My client has accepted to pay this also.

Regardless, the Turkish lawyer will be speaking in Turkish with my client which I don't understand. This will create additional expenses. Despite this, we accept that as all the cases originate in Turkey it necessitates the Turkish lawyer's involvement. Essentially, all the cases brought against my client are baseless. But in the work we are doing we keep on coming up against political obstructions. If, even as lawyers, we come up against such problems, then I have no difficulty in understanding the kind of difficulties that my client is presented with here."

In no way had I expected such a statement from my lawyer and it was as much a surprise to me as to anyone else.

The head of the commission was unable to reply. He turned to me and said, "I don't know anything about you or your lawsuits."

My lawyer and I had given full explanations about the case.

Turning to me again, the head of the commission said, "*It is alleged that by selling drugs, you ensured the economic support of the PKK.*"

Just a moment before, he'd been saying he didn't know anything about my case and here his own words were proving him to be a liar. I got very angry.

"I was the first person to go on television and say how representatives of the Turkish government, persons travelling on diplomatic passports were trafficking drugs in Holland; how they carried out a number of murders, arson attacks and kidnappings and that the drugs were sold from their mosques and cultural associations."

"It's true," the head of the commission replied.

I was going to add, "Come on, you said you didn't know anything about my case?" but I abandoned the idea.

"Your own Professor Bovinkirk proved me right in this," I said. "Afterwards, a number of your organisations and institutions also proved me correct. The Susurluk Report - the official

enquiry published by the Turkish government formally accepted the truth of this. This same report was published in all the Dutch press, yet despite it the Dutch authorities did not launch a single enquiry. Turkish officials in Holland are still running the same operations in Holland and nobody touches them. Your government is making no comment about people openly involved in such criminal activities, but on top of it all you try to penalise the first person who exposes these crimes – myself. You keep me in prison on trumped up charges. My right to a defence is impeded. For the past seven months not a single document has been produced to us in evidence. All they do is go on about my so-called telephone conversations, and that's it. What are you basing your comments on when you say I assisted the PKK by selling drugs?"

In response to these unsparing comments, the head of the commission merely replied, "I said, that's what you're accused of."

"Your government may accuse me groundlessly just because it has the power to do so. Very well, so what about those crimes which are already out in the open? It is known just who is responsible and they themselves have accepted that they did these things. Why is no legal action whatsoever brought against them?"

The chair of the commission said, "You're right."

But you could feel that he regretted having ventured onto the subject.

When I asked him, "This sort of thing is going on in Turkey all the time – isn't the same thing happening now in Holland too?" he chose not to reply.

"It is also forbidden to speak Kurdish in Iraq, Iran and Syria," he said then as if because Kurdish was forbidden there, Holland would also have to follow suit.

"Actually, it isn't forbidden to speak Kurdish in Iraq, Iran and in Syria. There are schools in Iraq and Iran where the education is given in Kurdish. It's only forbidden in Turkey and Holland,"

I said.

But when the chair of the commission – behaving just as a Dutchman, said, "But Iraq and Iran are also killing you –"

I replied, "Yes, it's true, but with your weapons. Isn't that right?"

The head of the commission squirmed awkwardly and finally said, "I didn't come here to speak about these things."

"Then why are you bringing them up if you didn't come here to speak about them? Because you mentioned it, I'm obliged to answer you," I said, and added, "Iran is ruled by a religious regime, Iraq by a dictatorial one. I don't consider either of those regimes to be positive, or right, but the rule of both these countries is more transparent than yours. It's your view that Saddam is mad. But if you hadn't gone and supplied him with chemical weapons, in his own madness Saddam would have done more harm to himself than to anyone else. He wouldn't have gone and massacred six thousand Kurdish civilians in Halabja with chemical gas, would he?"

The head of the commission became very uncomfortable at these words.

"We must accept that you're our very special guest. The officers here must observe this too," he said.

No doubt by this he meant to imply, 'We'll have to find another way to change you'. They left me saying they'd make their decision known within two weeks.

After the commission's visit, the behaviour of the officers towards me changed. Those I saw on a day to day basis started to behave in a friendlier way and more warmly, but the top-ranking officers would look at me askance. As for the director! Sometimes when we were out in the fresh air area he would pass by. He'd give me such a look I can't begin to describe it... it was just as if I'd taken the toy out his hands and broken it!

We ate at around 12.00 noon. To bring my food to me the officer in the central officer would pass the keys from the

opening in the door to the officers stationed out in the corridor and between these officers near my cell the keys would pass to those in the intermediary door leading to the second corridor.

One of two officers would open the door for the food trolley; the other would take the food marked with the number of my cell on top, and then the officer who opened the food-trolley door would close it again. Next he would open the door to the linking corridor. After opening this door by key, the officer stationed in the central office would wait for the same door to be opened electronically. After this particular door has opened electronically, the two officers would pass through into the corridor where the cells were located, and the officer holding the keys would close the door again. At the same moment the door also locks electronically.

During this interval, I must set my toothbrush, comb and pen down on the floor and approach the door at a distance from the washbasin, displaying my hands. The three bolts on my door and the lock are opened by the officer with the keys. The procedure is monitored on camera by an officer stationed in the central control room. There is a second control room where another officer monitors the guards in our section's control-room as well as those out in front of the cell door to see that they are following the regulations. If everything is perceived to be in order, they say in Dutch to one another, "*Yah, yah,*" and then the electronic lock to our own special hell opens with a leap, just like in some film.

One of the officers holds the door open, the other holds the tray out towards me saying, "*Your meal*". You have to take hold of the plastic tray immediately. The officer hurriedly says, "*Good health!*" and at once closes the door. You hear the sound of the locks snapping shut.

Noises echoing in my brain

The sound of the locks produce an effect on me as if they were striking at my brain. Just after it you can also hear the sound of the locks opening and closing out in the interconnecting corridor and by the central control-room. You can also hear the officers talking to one another, just as they can hear every sound which comes from our cells. The cameras and listening apparatus are all state of the art technology. The military-style behaviour of the officers and the mechanical tones in which they speak with one another can all be heard loud and clear. These same sounds repeat over and over again out in front of each cell.

Sometimes they don't open the cell door but pass the food in through the opening in the door. There are two slots in the door located half a metre apart from one another. The bottom hatch is 30 centimetres wide and 10 centimetres high. It is more difficult to open and close this hatch than the cell door. After they've given you your food, they pass you in a knife, fork and spoon through the upper hatch which is 10 centimetres square. Half an hour later they retrieve the plastic tray again from the large hatch; the knife, fork and spoon from the top one, whereas they could actually retrieve the tray at the same time as the cutlery.

When they give you your food, if I ask for pepper and salt, or something to drink the officers follow the same procedure and go to collect the keys for the depot and then bring you what you asked for. This is how it goes:

"I gave number five some salt."

"Number five received his food."

"Number two wants some water."

"We've given number two his water..."

In this fashion, they shout every action out as they complete it. Or in other words, they inform the officer in the control room of the action they're about to take and when they have

completed it, and they get their instructions from there. The noises get louder and louder inside my head...

During the night, after the officers have checked the doors of the corridor and the cells on the dot every hour, they check on you inside your cell through the top hatch of the door. The sounds of the corridor-doors opening and closing and of voices can be heard for what they are. At the head of each hour, I witness all these noises. It would be superfluous to say how well, or how much, I manage to sleep!

Rankling interrogations

On Sunday November 1st, I phoned home. I heard from my wife how much the various members of my family had been affected by my going on hunger strike and how upset they'd been.

My daughter, Hazal, and son Hasan Ferhat grilled me down the line. 'Where was I? Had the phones stopped working again? Seeing as how the Turkish government had destroyed most of the Kurdish villages and people were being forced to live in tents where was I sleeping? How was I managing to wash? Where had I left my clothes?' I was stunned speechless.

My daughter was seven and my son was six years old. They watched television. They analysed events. When I was to say, "We have several houses in Kurdistan and I stay there," my children's interrogation continued unabated till finally they said, "Okay, if that's the case, then let us come to see you."

"You have to go to school. I'm doing all the things I have to do, so you must do what you have to do. Your business is to go to school, to play sport, to pay proper attention to your teachers, to get on well with your friends and to get on well with your mother and everyone else in the household (and here I mentioned all their names one by one). If you carry out your business well, you'll make me very happy," I told them.

The questions went on, "Okay, *Baba*, but what if you get sick,

what will you do then?"

Their questions seemed to be never ending: "When would I get to the end of my work - one month, one year, when...?" "Where are the Kurdish children born at home in our country?" "Is there a hospital in the tent?" "How do the mothers give birth to the children?" "When are you going to save our country?" ... and so on.

Now go and try and deny everything to my little ones. Feelings of anger, sorrow, impotence all came rushing at me together. I was deeply moved by my children's sensitivity and by their concern. Their questions deserved an adequate response. The children shouldn't be allowed to become estranged from their own identity and national values. For them to be able to get on with their education effectively they needed to be healthy in the full sense of the word.

Our circumstances were very difficult, but the situation in which most Kurdish people found themselves living was much more grave. So tell us just how it was for those who were fighting for our sake in the mountains and the conditions they were living under ... or of our martyrs' families ... of our people's sufferings in the Turkish torture-chambers and that of their families... Of our people who were homeless, hungry, and who had scarcely a thread of clothing to stand up in...

Which of us did not have the right to complain? But what's the use in complaining?

My little babies, my children, my people's children were our common future. They needed to be brought up with awareness and a knowledge of their country, and with the spirit to be able to stand up for their nation and go forward successfully. I needed to set my own difficulties aside and be sensitive to the needs of my children.

"Kids I'm fine, but the Kurdish people and their children are in a very difficult position. Even so, one day these difficulties and sufferings will finally come to an end. If you get a good

education, when you grow up you'll be able to do my job. Because I didn't get a good education, I'm not doing what I have to do very well. But if you get a good education, when you're grown up you'll be able to carry out your work much better, so because of this, let's talk about you and your situation. When we get together again we can talk about me and the things going on in my country" I said, and thereby discovered the remedy.

To this my kids cried back, "So when are we going to get together, then?"

"Listen, kids, I came to England to see you and take you to school, and I stayed with you before. And then you came and stayed with me in Holland, didn't you? Which all goes to show that when the time is right we do get together, don't we? The time will be right again and then we'll get together. But right now, leave me to get on with my job while you get on with yours. You can't help me out with my work just now, but I can help you. My situation is fine. I have a home, a room. I have a bed too. I'm telling you the truth. Don't worry about me, let's talk about you instead," I said.

My children listened to me and we spoke about their school, their lessons and their life at home.

Hazal expressed her thoughts to me, seeking my approval and didn't fail to ask, "Isn't that right, *Baba*," as she told me how they'd been shopping for clothes in Oxford Street for the rest of the children, and after telling me how much each thing was she said she'd got a sweater because that was all she needed and that she didn't get things she didn't need and that it wasn't right to spend money on unnecessary things and then told me which things were necessary.

"That's right, my girl, so are you pleased with your sweater?" I asked, and she said that she was. When I asked, "did everybody like what was bought for them, dear?" She'd say, "Yes, yes!" and one by one tell me who got what and what they liked. The

things I talked about with Ferhat were of the same sort.

Today is Sunday and the last day of the week. The period I was not allowed to make phonecalls in came to an end yesterday. As of today, I am exercising my right to two phonecalls a week for ten minutes a time. According to the regulations the telephone cuts off automatically once ten minutes are up. The call has to be connected twice. This is another of the unnecessary rules.

Today I used up the right to both two calls and hoped to have convinced my children. It was good that I had this opportunity. They could have said I wasn't allowed to make both calls in one day. I knew that my kids would grill me but I hadn't expected it to this extent. You wore me out, but well done kids!

On Monday 2 November all the officers changed, or to put it more accurately, were changed. Not one of the former officers remained on duty.

They put me out in the fresh air cage with that same perverted rapist as before. On Tuesday, they did the same thing. On Wednesday it was the same again ...

On the Wednesday, this piece of dirt had started acting cocky and I figured there must be some reason behind it. The man didn't say directly, "Go on, hit me!" but he goaded me to lay into him by his vile behaviour. The officers took pains not to notice all this as it went on. It was as if they were blind to it. They didn't make the slightest intervention.

Tomasilav, the Yugoslavian whom we called Thomas, was a really irritating smart-arse type. He was openly behind that piece of filth, but he didn't even say a word but from everything he did, it was plain that he was very frightened and close to panicking. Thomas was egging the filthy rapist on, trying to give him the courage to incite me. Senal, the other Yugoslav, whose surname was Alipasic said to me, "Let's go beat that chicken-shit perv' up."

I told him, "Come on, wake up! That's exactly what they

want us to do. There's a whole lot of them gathering around and that's just what they're waiting on. This is a plot to try and trap me but it seems that Thomas has made some kind of bargain with them."

Senal was a bit taken aback. He was calling that rapist louse "chicken".

I shouted at Thomas, "You're stirring things up."

While I was arguing with Thomas, some of the officers gathered at the door called me over. If I hadn't gone over when called they called me I'd be guilty of some offence. At this same instant they opened the door and then they locked me back up in my cell. As for Thomas, they moved him on to a better section. When I say it was better I mean it was more open and privileges like the canteen, the cooking facilities, the sports and fresh air area were better and the cell had a bath. Thomas was rewarded in this way.

In the evening, after I'd called my children, I went to "recreation" (a social meeting) or in other words a venue where the detainees came and met together. Senal and the other louse were there too. That was where I found out that the guy called Thomas had been sent on to a better section. Even if you speak in a very low voice the officers can still hear you. Despite this I tried to explain to Senal what kind of a game was afoot. He said he understood and congratulated me saying, "You won because you behaved sensitively and appropriately."

"It isn't over yet. Be very careful" I warned him. The other creature had sat himself down in the corner and he really had turned into some kind of a chicken. Senal said he was very surprised about the other Yugoslav.

Six years ago in Amsterdam, Senal had been shot. The bullet was still lodged in his buttocks. I'd helped him out quite a bit. He was very weak-willed and easy game. He couldn't stand the conditions here, but I still kept trying to get on top of things. Senal would get depressed and would sometimes do things and

talk to himself. He had been here for two months when Thomas entered the picture. He'd then began to talk big and started to brag and show off. Senal was one of the Bosnian victims. He'd applied for political asylum in Holland but all kinds of problems had beset him.

On a few occasions he'd told me how Thomas couldn't cope with prison and he'd shown an interest in him because of this so he wouldn't go round the bend and I'd tell him, "You've done well." Lately, however, Thomas had really been going overboard. In my view he knew exactly what he was doing. He was trying to get out of this unit. When he was with us he'd swear at Holland and the Dutch and the officers but as soon as he got alongside them he behaved like a belly-dancer instead.

When I'd been on hunger strike and they'd brought me my food, when I said I wouldn't have any they'd go and give it to Thomas instead. He'd go gobble it down saying, "Good, good!"

I was in cell number five. Thomas was in number four, and consequently it wasn't hard to hear that my food was being given to him and how he'd react. Senal had talked to him about supporting the hunger strike. He'd said, "Let's go on hunger strike too. This is for the good of all of us."

In reaction, Thomas had been thrown into a panic and had said out in the fresh-air area, "I'll die if I don't eat everyday!"

When I interrupted him and said, "But you do eat everyday and you're eating my food as well this means in effect that you're not going to die!"

He stammered and couldn't answer. Senal told me about the things that'd passed between them with regards to their joining in the hunger strike.

When I said, "If you join in the situation will change, our paths are different. I don't think it right for you to take part because of the reasons for my protest. Please don't do it," Senal said that it was everyone's duty to protest about the conditions here and added, "It will be more effective if we all act together."

“You’re right,” I said, “but that will be deviating from my main aim.”

Senal took it graciously. But he was very disappointed in Thomas taking my food. Before starting the hunger strike, I’d make a meal everyday and invite Thomas, Senal and Baldaras to eat too. At the time I went on hunger strike, Baldaras, and an Indonesian named Salomon, were sent off the unit. The Indonesian had been staying in cell number six and hardly ever ventured out. He’d only occasionally go to the fresh-air area. One time I asked him why he didn’t go out.

He’d answered, “I really enjoy saying ‘no’ the officers ...”

When I started the hunger strike he’d often call to me and ask how I was getting on. When I ended the hunger strike and went to the kitchen where the sports area and social activities room were located I discovered that Thomas and that animal rapist cooked and ate their food together. I felt sick to the stomach. Thomas was also hanging out in the fresh-air area with that filthy swine. They’d become birds of a feather! In the three to four month period where I’d looked upon him as a human being I’d felt depressed by his spoiled behaviour, whereas now it made me sick to see him in the same light as that other animal.

After these events of the Wednesday, I told the officers I wanted to see the head of the section. The area head was only able to come on Thursday evening, and thus it was that I was able to see he had also been replaced by someone new.

“You’re putting that dirty rapist out in the fresh air area with me everyday. You don’t say a thing about all the filth he talks. You don’t raise any protest, nor make any kind of intervention when he tries to provoke me. I can see this is being done deliberately and I’m going to make it known to my lawyer,” I said.

After the chief had asked a few questions, when he said, “We’ve just come here recently as a team. We aren’t aware of the situation, I’m sorry,” I had to laugh.

“Everything that goes on here is logged down on computer and you know it all very well too. I made a formal application and told you I didn’t want to be put in the same place as that disgusting creature but you didn’t make a murmur and when I argued with Thomas then you sent him on to the better wing and rewarded him. Are you trying to tell me now that you know nothing about it?” I asked.

I spoke with the section chief for about half an hour. I gave him precise examples of how the administration was knowingly manipulating this game.

On the Friday, the officers came to my cell and held a meeting on the matter. They said that from now on that animal would not be left in the same place as me and that they’d be very pleased if I were to tell them about any problems I might have. On the Thursday the night before, a two hour programme had been broadcast on CBS television about our unit called Nieuw Vosseveld but because it was screened in Dutch I couldn’t understand it.

Today is Friday. Senal told me how good the programme was and that it had dug up all the dirt on the administration here. He said they’d concocted all sorts of fake reports and although it was illegal they’d been listening into conversations between lawyers and their clients. Some of the officers who’d left the place had reported how the directors had given orders to some of the officers to put pressure on the detainees and the kind of illegal methods they’d resorted to.

Such events as these were of just the kind that we had been suffering on a daily basis and had been going on here for years. Even so, the director and his men must have been in a strong position within the fabric of the Dutch state because everyone was afraid of their group.

A day after my hunger strike ended I was to have been cooking some food in the kitchen. It was a Friday. On the Monday, my meeting with the commission had taken place. At two o’clock,

we went along to the fresh air area and worked out between three and four. Between four and five the meeting between the detainees was going to be held. By 15.00 I was ready to go and cook my food in the kitchen. I'd requested the ingredients I needed beforehand. The officer was to give me the things brought from the depot by passing them through the little window between the kitchen and the officers' station. After I'd taken the ingredients I said, "Will you give me a knife?"

The officer said, "Very well."

At exactly this point the director had walked into the office. At once the officer sprang up from his seat. The director said one or two things to me but I didn't understand him. I thought he'd probably said something like, "*What's new*" or "*Are you well?*" but as I say, I didn't understand. This officer was the same one who had forbidden me from speaking my mother tongue and who had been at the root of my resorting to the hunger strike so I didn't consider it necessary to reply to him. I simply stared him in the face and gave him a dirty look, that was all. At seeing my look, the director's face blanched. The officer was still standing to attention before him like a soldier. Slim of build, about 1.80m in height, brown-haired and with a moustache the officer barked at me, "*What do you want!*"

"A few moments ago I asked for a knife and the rest of the ingredients. I'm waiting for you to give them to me," I replied.

He shouted back again in the most serious tone of voice, "What will you do with a knife and such things?"

"You know I'm going to cook, and I asked for a knife to cut up the meat and onions," I replied.

In the same tone of voice he said, "*Very well, take them!*" and passing them through the window at me slammed shut the window. I was upset about his situation. My ire against the director increased four-fold.

News of my hunger strike had been reported in all the Dutch press. They'd wanted to talk with me for the recent programme

but they'd spoken with my lawyer instead. I'd been the first person to stand up and speak out and especially to resort to hunger strike to make the situation public and take the administration to court over its lies, bent practices and illegality. After I'd taken this stand all the eyes in Holland came to rest on this same administration. I considered it very significant that this TV programme should be made right afterwards and I was very pleased about it. It was also significant that the Algerian rapist, Salah Khalid and Thomas the Yugoslav had been set to work to provoke me and that right on the back of it my meeting with the commission took place. Had I sparked off some incident in response to this provocation I'd have been presented to the members of the commission and the public as the wild card who'd sparked off this incident and would have been placed in complete isolation thereafter, this I can now see much more clearly. They would then quite certainly have tortured me physically. In all probability they would have finished me off and explained it away by saying, "*During the disturbance he didn't hit his head on this, he hit it on that.*" What I was most apprehensive about here was the possibility of there being some poison put in my food or in what I drank. That they hadn't done so already, I put down to the fact that my lawyers were honest people who took a genuine interest in my situation and that I had an influential circle around me.

As a consequence of its relations with Turkey, Holland had been Turkified. I'd like to think that this transpired on account of its relations with Turkey and that it hadn't been that way beforehand, just in the same way as at one time I'd wanted to believe in the existence of a real state in Turkey... just as I hadn't wanted to believe that the country was being run by a group of thieving gangsters ...

12 November 1998, Thursday

Ocalan is in Italy. The Kurdish leader flew from Moscow and landed at Rome Airport where he applied for political asylum. The Turkish authorities have gone rabid. The Turkish press is full of nonsense, running crazy headlines like, "*The 45th day has ended*" "*The end has come*" "*The PKK is scattered*" "*Turkey's victory*" and such empty garbage... Even Cengiz Candar headed his column, "*President Apo and the PKK revolt*," proclaiming the good news that they were finished. I was no longer so ignorant as to expect any kind of moral value to come from people who conducted their lives in accord with Turkish conditioning and its cultural deprivations. But everyone concerned with Turkey must be aware that the problem was not "*President Apo and the PKK...*" The problem was the Turkish government's policy of annihilation towards the Kurdish people. President Apo and the PKK were just a consequence of this, but as a result all the world was aware of it too.

Turkey should finally save itself from its pathetic complex that "*a Turk is worth all the world*" which had reduced it to so laughable a position. It should work towards making peace with the Kurdish people, apologising to them and embracing them and for so long as it failed to do so would it be to Turkey's detriment.

Italy is a democratic country with a democratic tradition. It laid claim to a past with a proud, strong people and the might of the Roman Empire. It was a member of the European Union and of NATO. They had overcome Mussolini's regime and taken to the path of becoming today's respectable nation. In the recent past, the Italian prosecutors had exposed the Gladios which had been organised from within the Italian gendarmerie. Just how much affect this had can be debated because organisations of the same kind as the Gladio were known to be found within the very heart of NATO. However for the Italian prosecutors

to have gone after the organisations in the very depths of the state could be reconciled with the deeper historical understanding of the Italian people.

President Apo had taken a very apt decision. May it prove fortunate for the Kurdish people.

The enemy of the Kurds was playing a very underhand game. Knowing this, the Kurds showed their support for Apo and flocked to Italy. There were protests, demonstrations and hunger strikes across the whole of Europe. Even in Turkey, thousands of Kurdish patriots and women foremost amongst them were holding rallies in display of their loyalty to their leader. The Kurds were standing up for Ocalan and for themselves and this even despite the lynch mobs beneath the very eyes of the police.

18 November 1998, Wednesday

Today finally, my lawyer from Turkey, Berzan Ekinçi, accompanied my lawyer to see me. They brought me fresh news of what was going on in the outside world and in Turkey. We discussed the case files and the political developments. As many as 50,000 Kurds had gathered in Italy in front of the hospital where Ocalan was being kept. They slept and ate there. It was being shown on all the televisions. Two Kurds had set themselves on fire in protest in Moscow. This wasn't just a regular kind of action. It was the first time two PKK supporters had taken such an action. Every day in Turkey Kurdish political prisoners were setting themselves on fire. Today's papers carried the news that eleven prisoners had set fire to themselves. A Kurdish girl in the Yuksekova region of Hakkari had penetrated a group of soldiers and exploded a hand grenade strapped to her body. As she was blown apart a number of officers and soldiers were also killed. They left notes behind them which read, "*A curse upon the World Order and Turkish government which had brought the Kurds to such a stage!*"

20 November 1998, Friday

Yesterday the Italian President said “*they would not give Abdullah Ocalan to another country and recommended that a political solution was found to the Kurdish problem citing the examples (of ethnic nationalism) in England and Spain.*” Turkey was beside herself with rage. The media displayed a lamentable worthlessness. That unfortunate creature, Guneri Civaoglu in his column in *Milliyet* on 19.11.98 gave an example comparing Ocalan with Arafat. Of Arafat he wrote, “*He had all the petro-dollars of the Arab sheikhs behind him and the power of Arab oil brought Europe and America to their knees.*” Then on the back of it with a complete and utter shamelessness he asked the question, “*But who is backing Apo and the Kurds?*”

Saying there was no power-backing behind the Kurds, did this then give him and the fascist state he served the right to rely on a policy of annihilation towards the Kurds? You nourish yourselves on the blood of the Kurdish people and it would seem that now you're in a panic over where you're going to be able to suck your nourishment from.

Ocalan had the strength of Kurdish hearts behind him, the anger of every Kurd and of his country. You who rely solely on the destruction of the Kurds, do you really expect them to stand up and thank you?

Today Italy released Ocalan. CNN broadcast the news constantly. If CNN says that America supports Turkey it was still trying to make the Kurdish problem known to the world and in order to open a door towards a resolution of the conflict I believe it was showing a way along very subtle lines. It used expressions like, “*The Kurdish demonstrations exhibit a peacefulness the like of which has never been seen before. The Kurds who are fighting for their land.*” And they showed on screen one of our Kurdish girls as she said, “*We want our own land. We want our country.*” On the back of it they broadcast the threats of the Turkish Prime

Minister. They broadcast the Italian government saying, “*We shall act in accordance with the dictates of our laws.*” It was said that America sought Ocalan's extradition to Turkey. But when all was said and done no enmity could be seen. Germany abandoned its arrest warrant and stressed that there was no longer any situation of Ocalan being tried. They said, The reason why Turkey had not been accepted into the European Union was on account of the human rights abuses it perpetuated against the Kurds. Of Ocalan, the term used was always “Kurdish leader.”

It was certain that the US and Britain were pursuing a parallel strategy. Their influence on the issue on the world stage was quite clear. The historical relations of both countries with the Kurds is well known and it was just as clear that they took a long view of the Kurdish issue in terms of their own economic interests. As far as we Kurds are concerned, we should be formulating a strategy as to how we conduct our relations paying attention to this element.

On 19.11.98 Cengiz Candar wrote in his column in *Sabah* newspaper a mixed up sort of a piece, “*Don't you see?*” asking the question, “*We've fallen into a state where we no longer know what we should be doing because of our own anger. Don't you see that we're being coerced by certain quarters and marginalised in some struggle of dubious success?*”

Good Morning, Mister! As recently as yesterday you were writing, “the revolt is over”. So just hold on a minute and let's see. Today is today. And then there's tomorrow, and all the tomorrows after that.

24 November 1998, Tuesday

I am following the developments in *Ozgur Politika*, *Milliyet* and *Newsweek*. I read Cengiz Candar's piece, ‘Certain defeat of the revolt’ in *Ozgur Politika's* selection from the press section. Later I took note of that confused piece which he penned. In the same column in which Candar had appeared in *Ozgur*

Politika on 23 November 1998 a heading for a story from the day before entitled "From the Middle East to Europe" compared such issues as the economy of Italy and Turkey, inflation, income, the level of welfare support and such matters. It emphasised how in a situation where Turkey was making economic investments in Italy Turkey would emerge the worse off for it and said "We wrote a piece entitled the *"Certain defeat of the revolt"* but the news did not prove to be true. Mr. Candar wrote that he'd been wrong because he'd of the false statements made by the Turkish authorities. Everyone in Turkey under the present circumstances was confused.

The headlines in *Milliyet* became more and more confused with each passing day. On 23 November 1998, one of *Milliyet* newspaper's columnists, Yasemin Congar, warned Turkey in a piece headed, "*Apo warnings.*" In a letter sent by Human Rights Watch to the Italian President, Massimo D'Alema it criticised the censorship of sections to do with Turkey. Saying, "*The circumstances outlined by the United States give cause for alarm*" it warned the country. Yet, not one of these Turkish journalists stands up and says, "*Hey, Turkey, hey people, for years we've colonised and driven the Kurds from pillar to post. We peeled them down like onions. We slaughtered them and still couldn't finish them off. Our assimilation policy didn't work. On the one hand we're trying to wipe out the Kurds and on the other we're calling them our brothers. Such fascism and immorality just isn't on. Let's go and tell them we're sorry. Let's end the oppression, embrace and make peace. Let's advance hand in hand together. Let's expose the games and prevent the destruction.*"

We Kurds didn't know how to stand up for our own principles. We've endured a long period of war, and despite having expended great efforts we haven't prevented the Kurdish people from being scattered, our country from being destroyed and the people from being reduced to misery. For the first time our people are showing real organisation and in conformity with the rules standing up for our principles. The development of this is most important.

29 November 1998, Sunday

I'm going to call my babies at 10.00. It's now 7.00. The coalition government in Turkey formed between Ecevit, Yilmaz and Cindoruk has collapsed. Mesut Yilmaz and Tansu Ciller managed to defeat the proposals to investigate them for using party property to their own advantage. Mesut Yilmaz and his party had put forward the proposal for Ciller to be investigated for usurping party funds. Tansu Ciller and her party shot a missile back at Mesut Yilmaz putting the same accusation before parliament. During this phase, Tansu Ciller even used the term "worthless corporal" of Mesut Yilmaz. Of Tansu Ciller and her husband, Yilmaz used some really base expletives and called them "the summer-palace gang thieves" and made a whole raft of documents revealing the misuse of authority public. Now they were in the act of whitewashing one another. On this issue all the television channels and organs of the press including CNN ran news flashes.

In *Milliyet* newspaper in his column on Wednesday, 25 November 1998, Hasan Puler wrote of a "holy alliance" between Mesut Yilmaz and Tansu Ciller and added a footnote, "The black at the bottom of your pan is blacker than the bottom of mine. Let's tin them over together! Let's paint each other white!" Thank you for these words, Hasan Puler, but it was you and the people in your position who praised and defended them. Once again tomorrow, those like you will start to praise them afresh. When that time comes we reserve our right to say "you'll be the ones to be tinned."

4 December 1998, Friday

Today the police, the examining judge and my lawyer came. We were finally able to listen to sections of the tapes. Today we listened to three different conversations. All the Dutch

government has in its hands to accuse me with are these tapes of telephone conversations. A person cannot be sentenced on the basis of telephone taps alone. What's more, there's nothing criminal in any of these tapes and even if there were, they would not be sufficient to secure a conviction. From the tapes we heard today it became clear that they had been incorrectly translated. This means to say that the conversations which had been taped had been translated by the police and the conversations recorded had been given different meanings and handed over to the examining judge. They'd been deliberately translated so as to be read negatively against me. It had been established that the translations were incorrect. We'll also listen to some of the other tapes. On Monday the 7th of December, I am to go back to court.

On the 3rd of December 1998, the editor of *Milliyet* newspaper, Guneri Civaoglu wrote a piece headed, "*Not letting him become an Arafat*". This article gave vent to all that is basic and impoverished in official Turkish ideology. Again on this same date in *Ozgur Politika* on its first, second, twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth pages the Turkish state's barbarity was serialised in pictures. Photographs were displayed which showed what kind of chemical weapons had been used by the Turkish government since 1992 and in addition pictures of the people who had been murdered, photographs taken by Turkish soldiers of the villages they'd burned down and others depicting Turkish soldiers and their commanders in official testimony to the killing of Kurds with their victims heads and arms chopped off and grasped in their hands as they posed. There were photographs showing them posing with their boots standing on the corpses of Kurdish people tortured and finally dismembered. God, where were you that a revolt might be spared?

Ocalan abducted as part of a conspiracy

When I first heard that Abdullah Ocalan had been kidnapped in the course of an international conspiracy, the Kasims and the Bekos sprang to mind...

It was in the daytime when the officers came by and muttered something, but I didn't understand just what it was that they were saying. They were on edge and hung about making wisecracks. Whatever it was they were saying they weren't saying it directly.

First off they sort of asked, "You don't know do you?" and as I tried to make them understand that I hadn't grasped what had happened they'd gravitate towards the door saying, "You'll find out later."

When I reacted they explained the matter in an altogether summary fashion...

Our televisions were turned on at 17.00 hours. What I was told occurred at around 15.00. The officers were explaining the main part of the affair on one hand while on the other they were trying to gauge my reactions. They asked me what I thought but it was as if my blood had frozen. This news was totally unexpected. I couldn't quite believe it but they way the officers put it across finally convinced me that it was true and again they asked me a number of times what I thought about it.

"Such things happen in war. It's very bitter but it's one of the facts of war and its real," I answered.

The officers made it clear they were satisfied with my answer and expressed how sorry they were about the matter. When it was time for TV to be switched on I was sitting there ready and waiting. As they removed the blindfold from his eyes the adhesive got caught in his hair and it hurt him. His eyes fluttered. I understood right away that the people alongside him were commandos. The clothes they wore were up-market brands. They'd rolled up their sleeves. The area between the wrist and the elbow showed quite clearly that these were not the arms of

sportsmen.

When I first watched the news I didn't even notice that I was crying. My eyes were full of tears and my mouth was bleeding from where I'd bit my lip unconsciously. I couldn't sleep those nights. My hands could not grasp anything and I couldn't write. Food had lost all taste. I felt the difference between strength and weakness to the very marrow of my bones. I got angry with the Turkish government. But I was even more angry with the Kurds who sought their honour in their drawstrings. I was also angry with Islam. I was angry with my own inability and inadequacy. I thought to myself, "If I'd been out, perhaps this thing wouldn't have happened in quite this way" and I got angry with myself again for being inside. I suffered on account of the Kasims and the Bekos. I tried to find consolation by focusing on ideas like independence, the Kurd and his country.

I lived through the most difficult moments of all when I phoned home. Because I'd been forbidden to speak here in Kurdish with my children I had to speak English with them. I spoke with my wife first. She explained the sequence of events to me briefly then my daughter Hazal came to the phone. Hazal was very angry and upset.

"Yeah, and what if they kill him?"

"They can't kill him," I said.

"And what if they hurt him?"

"My daughter, my baby, they can't hurt him. Don't worry. This is a war and such things happen in times of war. Now, your job is to work hard at your lessons and to give as much importance to your sports and music classes as to the other things and to develop your talents so that you can become strong and can defeat those who don't like us, okay, my dear daughter?" I said, trying to calm her down.

After this my son Ferhat took the receiver. On the 9th of March, Ferhat would turn seven.

"I'm going crazy, *Baba*," Ferhat was saying.

I listened to what my child had to say and when I told him not to worry he said, "If they kill him, I'll kill all of them."

I repeated, "Don't worry. They can't do it" But he was asking the same thing saying, "And what if they harm him...?"

I experienced the greatest difficulty in holding that conversation with my children that I'd ever had. And the worst of it was that our conversation was restricted to ten minutes. If you subtract the two minutes it took to put the call through...

In such a situation one needed to be able to devote more time for the children but being here, this was impossible.

I was also in their sights

A few days before Mr. Ocalan was abducted and handed over to the Turkish government the officers brought me a piece of paper. They told me that if I signed it an official from the Turkish Consulate would come to see me. When I asked what an official working for the Turkish Consulate wanted to come and see me about they said they had no idea. I asked them what was written on the piece of paper because I didn't understand Dutch and it had been written in Dutch. After this I said that I couldn't sign the piece of paper but that a copy of it needed to be passed on to my lawyer. According to what the officer told me, if I was to sign the paper I would be giving the Turkish Consulate's official permission to come and see me. A copy was given to my lawyer. My lawyer said to me, "If you'd signed this piece of paper you would have been giving power of attorney to the Turkish Consulate."

I found out afterwards that had I signed it that having given the Consulate the power of attorney they could have executed a document in my name and sent me to Turkey.

A short while after Mr. Ocalan had been taken prisoner and abducted, on the 24th of February 1999, the Turkish Consulate wrote me a letter. The letter had been typed in Turkish and sent to me from the Embassy in Rotterdam. The letter also bore the

official stamp of the Embassy. In the letter it was stated that the military attaché, Orhan Onay wanted to speak with me. I still have the letter in my possession. I told my lawyer about it. My lawyer called up the person in question and asked what he wanted. All they said was “we want to talk.” In my view this game clearly showed us what we were up against and told us plainly, “*Surrender to Turkey or you'll remain in prison.*”

Epilogue

Distrust of the Dutch lawyers

After dismissing his previous Dutch lawyers, Lian Manhaims and her husband Carl Evareart (who had represented him in his asylum application and over the conditions of detention when contesting Turkey's extradition request) Mr. Koppe from the same firm took over the case. Huseyin Baybasin felt that he was forced into taking on Mr. Koppe by virtue of the over-polite pressure tactics employed to keep him with the firm. This happened even though he was not pleased with the services of the previous partners and the exorbitant fees they'd charged him which amounted to some 60,000 Dutch guilders – this for the asylum application alone. Mr. Koppe and his wife Brita Bohler then took over Huseyin Baybasin's case. During the period they represented him they received almost 1,250.000 guilders in fees.

After Huseyin Baybasin had dismissed them they presented him with a further bill and sought to extract this from him threatening to go to court over it. Baybasin discharged these lawyers believing them to be playing a double game working with the Dutch and Turkish governments at the same time.

When PKK General Secretary, Abdullah Ocalan, arrived in Italy, Brita Bohler took on the representation of Mr. Ocalan as well. In order to represent Ocalan, Bohler portrayed herself to those around him as having been sent and recommended by