

# ISHA BULLETIN

No.1 • 1 FEBRUARY 1988



**The Migros strike is over**

**Visitor of solidarity from Ireland  
Türk-İş issues a stern press statement  
Interview with the President of Petrol-İş**

FORTNIGHTLY BULLETIN OF NEWS AND  
INFORMATION FROM TURKEY

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(Labour and Trade Unions)

Press Agency

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Arif Mardin

Baskı: Alaş

## editor's note

Dear readers,

Here is the first issue of the ISHA Bulletin. We apologise for the slight delay which occurred beyond our capacity to control it. The bulletin aims first and foremost to communicate news and information on the labour movement of Turkey to the other fraternal movements throughout the world. As the President of the Türk-İş Confederation, Mr. Şevket Yılmaz, stated right from its start, last year was a "year of action". The strike waged by the independent trade union Otomobil-İş against NETAŞ, an affiliate of the multinational company Northern Electric, the active strike and demonstration of the leather workers have indicated that the obstructive and intimidating nature of the anti-democratic labour laws can be overridden with determined action. As the massive Petrol-İş and MIGROS strikes come to a successful conclusion, the three month old strike waged by the transport workers under their trade union TUMTİS has set a good example of putting active democratic struggle into action.

The developments are indicating that throughout 1988 the working class will be the leading force in the struggle for democracy in Turkey. Nearly 1 million workers, 600.000 of which are employed in the public sector, will commence their collective bargaining talks in 1988. In these talks, the attitude of the public employers against the economic and social demands of the trade unions will be an indicator as to whether they will be able to continue the unfavourable attitude they have been showing since 1980.

With the hope of meeting you again on this page in a fortnight's time, we wish to send you our message of friendship and devotion from Turkey.

A Mardin

## news from türk-iş

# TÜRK-İŞ PRESS STATEMENT

*Shortly after the elections in 29 November 1987, which ended with the return of the Özal Government for another five year period, various ministers, most notable of which is the Prime Minister Özal himself, stated on several occasions that the government might have a difficult period dealing with the trade unions. The call of Türk-İş to its members during the election campaign not to give any votes to the Motherland Party (the party of Prime Minister Turgut Özal), prompted the members of the Cabinet to take a tougher action against the prominent trade unionists in the labour movement.*

*The Executive Committee of Türk-İş then issued a press statement, outlining the views of its leadership on the declared policies of the Özal Government and what all this means to the labour movement in Turkey. We give below a slightly abbreviated version of this press statement:*

**T**he Özal Government is continuing to transfer resources from the poor to the rich. Citizens with modest incomes, particularly the workers, employees, peasants, pensioners, widows and orphans are pushed towards terrible financial hardships under new taxations introduced as price increases. The social state anticipated by the Constitution is being demolished. Turkey is figuring at the top of the countries with the most unjust distribution of income. The share of the salaried workers from the national income in 1980 was 33%. Today this share has gone down to 17%. If it goes to decline at this rate it will be below 15% in 1988. Those circles who are known to have an opinion on virtually every subject, why do they prefer to remain silent when an overwhelming majority of the Turkish people is being oppressed, when precautions to put the distribution of income on a more just basis are

directly or indirectly hindered, and the Constitution is openly violated?

### Preparations to repeat the old scenario

**T**he ANAP (Motherland Party) Government is making preparations to repeat the same scenario that it stages at the beginning of every year. The "inflation plus 10 points" formula of Mr. Ahmet Kurtcebe Alptemoçin, the Minister of Finance and Customs, has been used as a mechanism to increase further the uneven distribution of income over the past four years. At the bottom of all this, there is an attempt to deceive, mislead the public opinion. The starting point of this formula is not the inflation which is "materialised", but the one that is "planned". The Minister of Finance and Customs is disclosing this with the expression "expected inflation". The working people have been exploited under this formula over the past



*The Executive Committee of Türk-İş*

four years. Because of the bans on strikes, and procedures which completely eradicate the effectiveness of the free collective bargainings, the imposed wage increases according to the planned inflation have remained well below the actual, materialised inflation. People with poor or constant income have been continually robbed with this policy and the unjust taxations which have been introduced under the name of price increases.

### **The employers are continuing their irresponsibility**

**W**hile the hardships suffered by many groups are leading to various demands which nobody knows how to achieve, the employers and their organisations are continuing their irresponsible behaviour which aims to maintain the ruling of the conditions of exploitation. The question is how long the economically poor sections of the population will continue to feed those who are economically more powerful. It is a question of injustice in the distribution of income. The collective bargainings are not the only means to correct the disastrous situation experienced in the distribution of income.

**W**hat needs to be done is, apart from introducing a collective bargaining order which is based on the principles of free collective bargaining, a new tax, interest, money-credit policy which will give a breathing spell to the majority of the economically poor people who are oppressed by the price increases which have been turned into a continuing policy, prevention of lavishness, increase of production, and the use of other similar economic measures to halt this dangerous escalation. In this respect the Executive Committee of Türk-İş is inviting, first and foremost, the government, the employers and all the concerned groups to put into action a policy of urgent and radical measures to meet the losses of the large popular masses and the salaried people.

### **Tomorrow may be too late**

**T**hose who postpone these measures, and those who do not see that Turkey is at the brink of a very grave social crisis, should know that they will be the first to pay the bill.

Turkey is approaching step by step a point at which one would not be able to get more from what one gives to the worker. This warning should be taken into account without further delay."

## **THE JOINT DECLARATION OF TÜRK-İŞ AND HAK-İŞ CONFEDERATIONS.**



The Executive Committees of the Türk-İş and Hak-İş Confederations held a meeting at the Turk-İş Headquarters on the 9th November. The outcome of this meeting was made public by a joint declaration published the next day.

Here is the full text of the joint declaration: "Members of the Executive Committees of the Turk-İş and Hak-İş Confederations held a meeting on the 9th November, following a request made by the Hak-İş Confederation.

Both Confederations are in full agreement that the laws related to the labour world, and the Constitution adopted in 1982 in particular, are severely restricting the rights and freedoms of the workers.

In addition to the distresses caused by the

Constitution and the relevant laws, the economic and social policy of the political power is perpetually operating against the rights of workers and the trade union freedoms, and that the labour peace and the social peace are being drawn to a dangerous point. This view is shared by both Confederations.

It has been decided that, in the face of a new government and a new parliament following the general elections of 29th November, a mutual attitude should be pursued in order to surmount the edifice preventing the full functioning of democracy with all its institutions and principles, and to overcome the obstacles in front of the free trade union movement. The principles of solidarity should be determined together as a result of mutual exchange of views. The public opinion is respectfully informed."

### Government and Employers refuse a payrise: **STRONG REACTION FROM TRADE UNION LEADERS**

**F**ollowing the victory in the general elections which took place 29th November, the government of Turgut Ozal spent no time to introduce a whole series of price rises touching virtually every public service and every commodity in the market. The public transport prices went up as much as 60%. Fearing a massive protest from the public with poor income in particular, the government had to draw it to 40% after few days of the announcement of the first price rises.

The trade unions were in a period of wait-and-see before getting together to decide what kind of action to take. The trade unions' demands for pay rise was taken up at a high-level meeting between the prime minister Turgut Ozal and the president of the Turkish Employers' Federation (TISK) Halit Narin, on 28 December. Following the negative outcome of this meeting to give the workers any pay rise, the trade unions have no longer any expectations of automatic results. Some of them are thinking to harden their attitude towards the government-employer front and go as far as staging a general strike. Here are some of the trade union leaders' reactions:

**Hasan Basri Babalı (Kristal-İş, Crystal Workers' Union, affiliated to Türk-İş):**

"Now it is high time to show the strength of the working class. Under the light of the latest developments, the Council of Presidents of Türk-İş should urgently convene and decide which course of action to take. We will support to the end every step forward of our Confederation."

**Yener Kaya (Deri-İş, Leather Workers' Union, affiliated to Türk-İş):** "The Council of Presidents of Türk-İş should convene and put its decisions into action at once. The trade unions should not act individually, but collectively. Nothing should be expected from Ozal. Effective decisions must be taken at the Council of Presidents of Türk-İş, including general strike."

**İlhan Dalkılıç (Otomobil-İş, Metal Workers' Union, independent):** "The rights of the workers are not given, they must be seized. Türk-İş must take the lead and speak up for the workers. It must be efficient in the society and

must strive against the abolition of the workers' rights."

**Meral Ekin (BANK, Bank Staff's Union, independent):** "Complete and true solution passes from the correct determination of the course of action to be taken under the leadership of Türk-İş. Correct actions should be determined and put into action in full. We cannot limit ourselves with a pay rise only. The main struggle must in fact be waged to regain the fundamental trade union rights. We are ready to obey the decisions to be taken by Türk-İş, including legal general strike."

### **PETROL-İŞ DEMANDS FURTHER PAY RISE**

**T**he Petroleum, Chemical and Rubber Workers' Trade Union (PETROL-İŞ) demanded a further pay rise of 50% in the shortest delay.

Münir Ceylan, the President of Petrol-İş, said that the government of Turgut Ozal had introduced a series of price rises ranging from 50% to 100% even before the official results of the general elections were announced, without showing the courage of issuing an official statement explaining what these price increases are for. Stating that as long as the economic policy of the Ozal government remained in effect, the wage earners would always be the losers, Münir Ceylan continued: "In the collective bargaining agreements held this year, the gradual average wage increase is 35%. This means that against the current running rate 65% of the inflation, the real wages of the workers have already fallen behind by 30% in the first 11 months of 1987. On the other hand, there is a further loss of 6.5% in wages due to the increase of maximum premiums of the Social Security Council. Therefore, a minimum of 50% further pay rise is necessary within these days"

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## interview

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### Petrol-İş President Münir Ceylan: **THE FIGHT FOR THE HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY WILL BE CARRIED OUT HAND IN HAND**

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Shortly before his election to the post of President of Petrol-İş, Mr. Münir Ceylan gave a long interview to the ISHA Bulletin. Here is the full version of that interview.

**Question: Over the past year Petrol-İş organised over 60 strikes. What were the gains of the workers as a result of these strikes?**

**M. Ceylan:** The Confederation of Turkish Employers' Unions (TİSK) and various other employers' trade unions, set up by the government's incentives, have been trying to realise a whole round of collective bargainings. They were hoping that, having reached an agreement in group collective bargainings in the long run, they would be able to come to some kind of agreement at the national level. This viewpoint was endorsed by both the TİSK and the government. Having come to grips to its finest details of the whole affair in our sector, we believe that their insistence on the group collective bargainings under the prevailing conditions today stems from the following essential aims: We all know the acts of intimidation against the workers and their trade unions since 1980, by the employers who did not spare their efforts to show the trade unions as terror organisations. They were hoping that with this anti-propaganda they would be able to pull apart the workers from their trade unions, or at least would force them in to questioning **their membership**. Our most important task was to regain the workers back to their trade unions, and to reestablish the contact of the trade union with the workers at the base. What lies at the basis of group collective bargainings? The executive committee of the trade union will get together with representatives of the employers' trade union. The workers for whom these bargainings are made won't have the slightest idea as to how the questions are taken up during the meeting and the eventual developments. They will only be able to find out the outcome of these meetings from the press the following day. Our opposition to group collective bargainings stems from the mentality of the employers who strive to bend the laws in such a way that they can use these collective bargainings to their own advantage without any

effort. This is the reason why we went to strike, not just get few more liras. What did we achieve at the end? Even though all the other trade unions accepted group collective bargainings, since we rejected this system and the employers' threats, after three months of strike we have succeeded in holding the collective bargaining talks according to the workplace basis. We regard this as the greatest achievement of our strike. Needless to say, the collective bargainings brought new economic rights to the striking workers, most of these new rights are up to their expectations.

**Question: How was the solidarity of the public opinion in Turkey and the world labour movement?**

**M. Ceylan:** This is a very important question. We believe that in any given sector today, no trade union acting on its own can succeed in solving all the problems related to the labour world. When we list the obstacles in front of our trade union, we start from the Constitution and some of the relevant laws. I point out these because the mentality of the government is not a secret to anyone, nor the fact that some of the trade unions which share the government's views and employers' organisations are trying to join their forces. It should help to see the size of the obstacles. To claim that a trade union with 80.000 members can overcome all these obstacles with its actions and the strikes it wages would be wrong. I believe that we can overcome all the obstacles if the working class can join forces with the other democratic mass organisations on the basis of a broad democratic platform.

We received very warm messages of solidarity, for which we are very thankful. However, given the conditions prevailing in Turkey today, I believe that it was not sufficient. Solidarity has not yet developed to the required level. As for the international solidarity, due to some existing limitations we could not send our message everywhere we wished. We would have liked to convey the dimensions of our struggle, under which conditions it was waged, to every corner of the world. We did receive a number of encouraging messages from various countries, wishing success for the victory of our struggle.

**Münir Ceylan was born in Siirt in 1951. After graduation from the Institute of Chemical Technicians he took up work at the Batman Refinery of the Turkish Petroleum (TPAO). He was elected to the Central Executive Committee of PETROL-İŞ in 1978. He carried out the job of General Secretary from 1983, until he was elected President of PETROL-İŞ on 7th December 1987.**



One must keep close and steady contacts with the world labour movement to improve the existing level of international solidarity.

**Question: What are your thoughts about the trade-unionist unity of the working class?**

**M. Ceylan:** This is a very popular topic. And a very important one too. Under the existing conditions in Turkey today, where can we establish this unity? There is a big confederation, Türk-İş. I won't be able to call it strong. Because I believe that in order to be able to call it strong, it should be capable of using its forces and functions in proportion with its size. I don't want to measure its strength by its membership. Türk-İş has a large number of membership, but is incapable of mobilising its forces as it should. We have a number of criticisms in this respect. With all these shortcomings and the known inadequate work of Türk-İş, would there be any need to search for the unity of the working class under a different organisation, or a confederation? My personal belief is that, despite all its shortcomings what counts for Türk-İş is that it is a workers' confederation in essence. Although there may be different proposals and different names, we must concentrate all our efforts to establish the unity of the working class in an able-bodied Türk-İş. I don't believe that new division of forces would contribute in any possible way to establish the unity of the working class. In short, given the present conditions. I would like to reemphasise the necessity of establishing the urgent unity of the working class under the roof of Türk-İş.

**Question: What are your observations on the international labour movement?**

**M. Ceylan:** We have to start by looking at the conditions brought by the present epoch. When we study the trade union movement in those capitalist countries which have completed their industrial revolution and have become imperialist, we must also study the nature of the capital there. In these countries the national character of the capital is gone a long time ago. Today we are living in an epoch in which the multinational character of the capital is

predominant: American capital is in Europe, Africa, European capital is in Turkey, Middle-East, etc. In this process of internationalisation of capital, the ruling classes of all these countries have set up all kinds of ties of solidarity, support and exchange of useful experience. The trade unions in different countries should join forces too in order to face the international pacts of capital. As far as international solidarity is concerned, we must admit that the labour and trade union movement has not been as successful as the international capital. In the light of these facts, we should regard the national boundaries as irrelevant. The trade unions should increase their international solidarity to the highest possible level. These attempts should not be limited to a couple of meetings of solidarity or sending of messages of support.

**Question: Is there a message you would like to send to the international labour movement?**

**M. Ceylan:** I would like to add the following. Our trade union fully realises the necessity and importance of the international solidarity. We will strive to fulfill our duties within our possibilities. We have some sincere and warm expectations from the rest of the world too. However, I believe that even though international solidarity is of utmost importance, the key to the solution of all our country's problems is in the hands of the working class of Turkey. We have a very heavy responsibility. We will wage our struggle together with the working class and the toiling masses. The fight for the human rights and democracy will be carried out hand in hand; I would like to point out this fact, and that we regard ourselves as one of these forces.

*With 80.000 activemembers, Petrol-İş is the largest trade union in Petroleum, chemicals and rubber sector. Founded in 1950, Petrol-İş has 70% of the total work force in this sector. It is affiliated to the International Chemical, Energy and General Workers' Federation (ICEF).*

# The visit of a trade union SOLIDARITY



Sağlık,  
Bakanlığı,  
Sınır,  
işleri,  
Bakanlığı,  
Türkiye

and

Çalışma, Sosyal Güvenlik,  
Bakanlığı,  
Ankara,  
Türkiye

12 October 1987

Dear Sir,

During a recent visit to Turkey, I was shocked at the state of health of workers. In particular, the prevalence of tuberculosis, long undiagnosed from Ireland, is little short of disgraceful. For example, 20% of the membership of IDATU suffer from this disease.

In view of the desire of the Turkish government to enter the European Community and because it is necessary in its own right, I appeal to you to take urgent steps to improve the health situation in your country.

Yours sincerely,

General Secretary,

JPM/DO

The General Secretary of the Irish Distributive and Administrative Trade Union (IDATU), Mr. John Mitchell, visited Turkey between 2nd and 6th October. His brief but fruitful visit coincided with a period of intense labour activity in Turkey. The long and arduous strike of the leather workers had ended only recently, the MIGROS strike and the strike of the transport workers were going on in full steam.

IDATU and TezKoop-İş are both affiliated to FIET (International Federation of Commercial, Clerical, Professional and Technical Employees). Mr. Mitchell had a meeting with the Executive Committee Members of the Istanbul 3rd Regional Branch of TezKoop-İş and expressed his trade union's solidarity with the

striking MIGROS workers. He then visited the transport workers' union Tümtis's Headquarters and was informed by the Central Executive Committee members about the evolution of the recently started strike of the transport workers. Mr. Mitchell expressed his solidarity with the striking transport workers and promised to inform the Irish public opinion in general and





*During his visit, Mr. Mitchell visited the picket line of the striking MIGROS workers, met with the executive committee members of the leather and transport workers' unions.*

the trade union movement in particular on his return. He added that he would bring up the matter of writing letters of protest to various ministries to complain about his observations, regarding the poor health and the bad working conditions of the working population.

Mr. Mitchell also visited the leather workers' union Deri-İş's Kazlıçeşme Branch and was informed about the recently ended strike of the leather workers, during which the Kazlıçeşme Branch was the hub of all the trade union activity.

Finally he met the Central Executive Committee members of petroleum and chemical workers' union (Petrol-İş) at its Headquarters.

During the meeting he was given full information about the 63 strikes that Petrol-İş organised in the course of 1987. Both sides expressed the wish to speed up the process of international cooperation, and being in frequent, regular contact. Mr. Mitchell answered in return questions on the Irish labour movement, its current problems and the general organisation of labour in Ireland.

Soon after his return to Ireland, John Mitchell wrote letters of protest to the Ministries of Social Security and Health as well as the Prime Minister Turgut Özal himself. Expressing his impressions on the living and working conditions of workers in Turkey, he urged the ministries concerned to improve these conditions.

# THE MİGROS STRIKE IS OVER

*After 133 days of tough negotiations and difficult striking conditions imposed on the MİGROS workers by the existing laws, the MİGROS strike is finally over. When the employers' and TEZ KOOP-İŞ (Cooperative and Office Workers' Union) representatives finally shook hands in the evening of 29 December, the strike had already become famous for being the longest since the military takeover in 12 September 1980.*

*The negotiations had previously been deadlocked due to a clause which the employer was determined to have, namely that the workers would accept some additional duties in addition to their main work. The issue was settled when the employer accepted the rule that the workers can take these additional duties only if they are told in advance, and also if the exact nature of the work involved is clearly stated beforehand. Another condition, which was demanded by TEZ KOOP-İŞ and led to tough negotiations between the employers and the union, that two workers who had been sacked should be reinstated, was also accepted by the employers.*

*According to the agreement signed by both sides, the workers got an 80% pay rise, effective from 1st May 1987, and on 1st May 1988 there will be an additional pay rise of 40%. Moreover they obtained an increase ranging from 100% to 300% for the social benefits they have been receiving.*

Shortly before the end of the MİGROS strike, the President of the 3rd Regional Branch of the TEZ KOOP-İŞ union, **Mrs. Aynur Karaaslan**, gave an interview to the ISHA Bulletin. Since she gives a general assessment of the strike and her impressions of its possible evolution, we believe that the interview has lost none of its value and what follows is a slightly shortened version of it.



AYNUR KARAASLAN

**Question: Could you give us some information concerning the causes and the eventual development of the MİGROS Strike:**

**A. Karaaslan:** MİGROS is an establishment affiliated to the Koç Holding. On 5 May 1987 we started negotiations with the management for the collective bargaining which would cover the newcoming period. Out of a total of 72 articles we could not come to an agreement on 18 of them during our collective bargainings. 7 of these articles of disagreement concerns administrative matters, and the other 11 are on social and wage demands. With these 18 articles, we are striving to offer the MİGROS workers a little bit more humane living under the unfavourable social economic conditions that we find ourselves in. On 20 August 1987 we commenced our strike. If we briefly summarise our economic-democratic demands which are the essence of the 18 articles of disagreement, they are:

- Job security,
- Safe and healthy working conditions replacing professional diseases and bad working conditions,
- Respect for the workers, who should have a say in the administration of their work,
- Increase in the wages and incomes of our members against the perpetually soaring prices due to the economic policy in conformity

with the interests of a handful of happy minority.

It would be very difficult to give a chronological development of the strike in a few lines. We consider the MIGROS strike as a manifesto of the trade-unionist struggle of the working class in the period following the 12th September (1980 military takeover).

MIGROS is the third most profitable affiliations of the Koç Holding; it has even been shown as a guarantee when Turkey demanded foreign credit from such international organisations as the IMF, World Bank, OECD, etc. There are no legal or constitutional guarantees for the employees of MIGROS. The trade-unionist struggle is confined to a conciliatory, etatist notion. In an environment where all sorts of anti-democratic treatments and harassments are in use, the struggle waged by the MIGROS workers to safeguard and improve their economic-democratic rights should be regarded as a struggle for democracy, which goes further than a mere strike.

**Question: What were the difficulties you faced since the beginning of the strike?**

**A. Karaaslan:** The limitations brought by the constitution and various laws are at the forefront. The right to strike, constitutionally recognised as a right, in practice, becomes almost impossible. Consequently we say that "We wage our strike not according to these laws, but despite them."

We are facing the attempts by the employer to break our strike on one side, unjust and illegal doings of the Regional Labour Directorate on the other. Finally with acts of intimidation by the police on the strikers, we are up against the devil's triangle.

**Question: Among the acts of solidarity you received from the public and other trade unions during the strike, which one was the most telling?**

**A. Karaaslan:** Our strike received support and solidarity from sister trade unions, democratic mass organisations, revolutionary youth and the people of Istanbul. This act of solidarity was a source of strength for us during the strike. Among many acts of solidarity the one that was most moving for us was the solidarity shown by the people in the area or neighbourhood where there is a branch of MIGROS. The entire food supply for our picketing workers is offered by these people. As a trade union we are not giving any additional food supply.

**Question: Did you receive any solidarity from the international trade union movement?**

**A. Karaaslan:** Our strike is being observed with interest and sympathy not only at home but in abroad as well. The immigrant workers who telephone to convey their message of solidarity also send the financial support that they have been collecting. Moreover, the International Federation of Commercial, Clerical, Professional and Technical Employees (FIET), to which our trade union is affiliated, has intervened at the MIGROS Headquarters in Switzerland and

exerted pressure for a satisfactory termination of the strike. It has also sent some financial support to the striking workers. On the other hand, the General Secretary of the Irish Distributive and Administrative Trade Union (IDATU), John Mitchell, has personally visited our strike, expressed his moral and financial support with the striking MIGROS workers. The Immigrant Workers Bureau in London has also displayed solidarity with our strike.

**Question: How do you foresee the likely developments of the strike in the near future?**

**A. Karaaslan:** Our strike has been a success, even at its present stage. The capitalist class, the Koç Holding in particular, will strive to prevent a successful conclusion of this strike, even at the expense of losing 40 billion Liras, so that it does not constitute an example to other workplaces. However, having reached this stage, I believe our strike will end in victory. I regard useful to point out the following: Our struggle is not only against the capital, but also the reconciliatory-etatist mentality of trade, unionism. We must therefore be more careful, and act more wisely. Our greatest support will be our conception of trade-unionism and the unity of the MIGROS workers.

**Question: What are your views on the trade-unionist unity of the working class?**

**A. Karaaslan:** From trade-unionist unity I understand struggle for the interests of the working class. Being inactive and simply getting together under a roof, this I cannot accept as unity. If it were, should we then thank the military rule of the 12 September (1980, military coup) which reduced 6 confederations, 1100 federations and trade unions to one confederation and 30 trade unions? I would naturally like to have a single, strong, centralised and nationwide confederation with strong, democratic trade unions organised in every labour branch affiliated to it. This, however, should be set up entirely with the free will of the working class, voluntarily, and as a result of the struggle of the workers. The single confederation and trade union which will be obtained amid legal and constitutional pressures is not trade-unionist unity. At most it is trade-unionism of nationalist type.

**Question: Is there a message you would like to send to the world labour movement?**

**A. Karaaslan:** I don't believe that a trade union movement which does not unite with the international working class solidarity could possibly succeed. The MIGROS strike is of course not a mere struggle for "bread" of the MIGROS workers. It should also be regarded as part of the struggle for democracy of the working class of Turkey, which is an element of the international labour movement. Because capitalism has long past over its national borders and has acquired a truly international character. The workers in Turkey, France or any other capitalist country are facing the oppression and exploitation of the same multinational companies.

## OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH OF THE WORKING CLASS

According to the recent statistical data given by the Social Security Council, in every workday an average of 500 occupational accidents are taking place, 4 workers die, and 9 workers are permanently disabled to take up any further work: the recurrence of occupational accidents, their total number and high percentage rate in Turkey have reached dramatic dimensions.

The following statistical data, provided by the Social Security Council on the occupational accidents suffered by the insured workers, gives sufficient information on the subject:

OCCUPATIONAL ACCIDENTS THROUGH YEARS

Years	Number of insured workers	Number of Occupational Accidents	Frequency %	Permanently Disabled	Death
1975	1.823.338	182.601	10.01	2.560	855
<b>1976</b>	2.017.875	196.341	9.73	<b>2.659</b>	<b>947</b>
1977	2.191.251	199.961	9.12	3.123	1.135
1978	2.206.056	193.998	8.79	2.841	975
1979	2.152.411	186.089	8.65	2.653	<b>1.050</b>
1980	2.204.807	159.600	7.24	2.406	1.014
1981	2.228.439	165.101	7.4	2.300	938
1982	2.264.788	147.118	6.5	1.881	<b>831</b>
1983	2.327.245	145.296	6.24	<b>2.592</b>	1.070
1984	2.439.016	152.650	<b>6.25</b>	<b>2.453</b>	884
<b>1985</b>	2.607.865	148.027	5.67	2.549	877
total	24.463.091	1.876.782		28.017	10576

Source: Social Security Council Yearbook

These data reflect only the recorded occupational accidents suffered by the workers who are under the social security scheme. The occupational accidents by nearly 5 million workers who are deprived of social security benefits are not shown in these statistics.

Moreover, among the workers who benefit from the social security, thousands are working in small factories or workplaces and the occupational accidents resulting from light injuries are not often reported to the health authorities. Such workers, after having suffered a light accident usually continue to work in order to avoid any question of being sent away for a while and never coming back. Indeed, as independent researches carried out by the Turkish Physicians' Union and the Petroleum, Chemical and Rubber Workers' Union (Petrol-iş) show, the actual number of occupational accidents suffered by the workers is far greater than the numbers given in the statistics.

Poor living conditions of workers who are forced to live in the slum areas of the big cities

grappling with the electricity, water, transportation and drainage problems are causing the workers to suffer from the occupational accidents during the early hours of the working day.

Year	1. iş saati	2. iş saati	3. iş saati	4. iş saati	5. iş saati	6. iş saati	7. iş saati	8. iş saati	9 iş saati	unknown hour	Total
1981	31.990	30.499	22.315	17.386	10.826	10.028	13.542	19.457	2.668	6.430	165.101
1982	29.365	27.660	19.075	16.756	9.392	9.905	12.089	13.794	2.254	6.828	147.118
1983	31.933	25.535	17.814	16.453	8.927	9.447	11.689	14.344	2.677	6.477	145.296
1984	32.471	26.805	21.542	16.134	9.011	9.263	12.063	17.760	2.440	8.161	152.650
1985	31.631	25.227	22.945	14.087	8.648	8.651	11.318	13.937	1.583	10.000	148.027

iş saati=workinghour

The deprivation of the workers from basic foodstuffs due to their low income is a serious obstacle in their physical and moral development. On the other hand, the use of old machines and technology, insufficiency of the physical environment are increasing the number of occupational accidents.

The distribution of the occupational accidents, even as far as they are represented in the statistics of the Social Security Council, are reaching dramatic proportions:

Year	Workdays lost through occupational accidents
1963	1.183.473
1964	1.207.689
1965	1.349.118
1966	2.256.791
1967	1.756.005
1968	1.960.636
1969	4.088.127
1970	2.068.150
1971	2.225.823
1972	2.269.400
1973	2.504.289
1974	2.620.139
1975	5.098.048
1976	2.787.219
1977	3.204.068
1978	3.091.218
1979	2.687.755
1980	2.369.182
1981	2.331.485
1982	2.148.944
1983	2.270.888
1984	2.380.420
1985	2.267.439

It should be noted that in all the official statistics it is the workers who are lucky enough to benefit from social security schemes that are studied as the sole population, whereas in Turkey today, there are over 15 million workers with 5 million of them in the industrial sector, most of whom have no social security benefit nor any insurance.

## NEW PRESIDENT FOR PETROL-İŞ

On 7th of December, the Central Executive Council of Petrol-İş convened and chose the General Secretary Münir Ceylan to the post of President of Petrol-İş. The Central Executive Committee was also restructured at the same meeting. This was due to the fact that Mr. Cevdet Selvi, who was the President of Petrol-İş until then, had been elected as Member of Parliament in the general elections

of 29 November. According to the law, an MP cannot assume the duties of an executive member of a trade union.

At the meeting Mr. Selvi said: "From now on my struggle will continue inside the Parliament. I am going to fight persistently for the rights of the working class."

The Central Executive Council elected the new Executive Committee, headed by the new President Mr. Münir Ceylan. The new Central Executive consists of the following members: Hüseyin Doğdu (General Secretary) Mustafa Çavdar (Administrative Secretary), Mehmet Çelik (Secretary Responsible for Organisation), Tekin Akın (Treasurer).

## THE GENERAL SECRETARY OF OTOMOBİL-İŞ IS RELEASED

The General Secretary of the independent trade union Otomobil-İş, Mr. Celal Özdoğan has been released after three weeks of detention. He was arrested on 14 December with four other people, one of them being the former general secretary of Otomobil-İş,

accused by the police of being a member of the Communist Party of Turkey.

Soon after his release, the President of Otomobil-İş, Mr. İlhan Dalkılıç, held a press conference. Emphasising the fact that detention of the general secretary of a trade union with 60.000 members in the middle of the night with no reason given is a problem that every democrat should urgently think about, Mr. Dalkılıç stated that: "Prime Minister clearly stated after the elections that he has no problems with the workers, but with the trade unionists, he indeed has. The reason why they opt for such methods of intimidation is to make the people of our country timid, scared and apolitical."

## LUNCH BOYCOTT AT THE İSTİNYE DOCKS

Over one thousand workers at the İstinye Dock Works in İstanbul staged a lunch boycott on 2 December, protesting the poor quality of the food. The workers, all members of Dok.Gemi-İş (the port, dock and shipping industry workers' union), said that with this boycott they also protested the recent price

risers brought by the government soon after the general elections. Despite the articles in the collective bargaining agreement, the workers said that the food had very poor calory value and that they were fed up with eating baked beans and macaroni.

## AN END IN SIGHT FOR THE STRIKING TRANSPORT WORKERS?

The only strike which is continuing from the last year shows some signs of hope for a settlement after nearly three months. The strike of the transport workers had started in 104 transport depots, followed by an immediate lock-out by the employers. Today, the number

of employers in these depots who have individually signed the collective bargaining has reached 68. The Deputy President of the Transport Workers' Union (Tümtis), Mr. Yurdal Şenol, stated that they expect the collective bargaining agreements will soon be signed in most of the depots which are still on strike. He added: "Many different means have been tried to break up the effectiveness of the strike. When the employers realised that none of them would work, a complete crumble of their front followed. The number of employers who realise that the only correct and legal way is through signing the collective bargaining agreement is rising every day."

# QUESTIONNAIRE FOR ISHA BULLETIN

Dear readers,

ISHA Bulletin is the only publication in English, printed in Turkey, which is concerned primarily with the labour and trade union movement there.

In order to offer you a more satisfactory service, we would like to know your expectations from such a bulletin; namely, what would you like to see most, the kind of information that interests you, and what might be boring!

We have therefore prepared a brief questionnaire. We would be grateful if you could duly fill it and send to our address without sparing any comments and/or suggestions you deem useful. Thank you in advance.

ISHA Bulletin



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ADDRESS .....

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1. What type of information about the labour and trade union movement in Turkey would be of particular interest to you? Tick as appropriate:

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- f) BACKGROUND ARTICLES ON INDIVIDUAL TRADE UNIONS IN TURKEY..
- g) PROFILES OF TRADE UNION LEADERS.....
- h) INTERVIEWS WITH LEADING FIGURES IN THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT IN TURKEY .....
- i) WOMEN AND TRADE UNIONS.....
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