

KURDISTAN

NEWS AND COMMENT

— issue no 9 — august 83 — 45pence —

Turkey launches military operation against Kurdish guerillas in Iraqi Kurdistan :

About 4000 troops from the Turkish special commandos crossed the border into Iraq on May 26, in an operation against the Kurdish guerillas in Iraqi Kurdistan.

Turkey is said to be rushing more troops to its eastern frontier with Iraq. A representative of the Turkish Red Crescent revealed to the BBC's correspondent in Ankara that a large number of doctors and medical staff has been rushed to the zone of the military operation.

Two elite Turkish army units, a commando brigade based in Bolu, north-western Turkey and an airborne brigade from the central town of Kayseri were reliably reported to have taken part in this operation against Iraqi Kurds. According to reports reaching West-Germany (Tagesspiegel 28.5) the Turkish troops numbered around 10.000 men from the elite "Blue Berets" and entered Iraqi Kurdistan to a depth of about 20Km, reached the town of Duhok.

The bases of the Kurdish liberation movement near Zakho are said to be destroyed (Le Monde 31.5). However it is not known yet which of the Kurdish movements has been involved in fighting with the Turkish army. While the Kurdistan Democratic Party of Iraq admitted some clashes, it seems more likely that Kurdish organisations from Tu-

rkey, who had established their bases in Iraqi Kurdistan, just over the border, were the target of this operation. It is known that the P.K.K. (Kurdish Workers Party) and the KAWA organisation, both from Turkey-Kurdistan, had bases in this region over which the Iraqi army had lost control. The Press Spokesman of the Foreign Ministry in Ankara claimed (on June 2) that this operation was also against Armenians. This statement was confirmed in a report of the Armenian Reporter (US) where ASALA admitted to have lost 22 members in this operation.

The official reason given by Ankara for this 'invasion' was that 3 Turkish soldiers were killed and 3 others wounded some 2 weeks earlier, along the Turkish-Iraqi Border. Iraqi officials in Ankara confirmed that Turkey had made use of an informal agreement with Iraq which allows troops to enter each other's territory while pursuing Kurdish separatists.

The Iraqi Gov't describes the agreement as recent and unwritten, but other sources say it may have existed since 1978 (Guardian 31.5).

An intriguing aspect of this major military operation is that it

(Continued page 3)

editorial

As a British member of the Kurdistan solidarity, it is very noticeable lately that the splits within the Kurdish movement in the homelands are being reflected with the same sectarian in this country.

This failure to find a basis for uniting the movements in Kurdistan, tragically as it is, can be understood by the division of Kurdistan by its occupier countries, leaving the Kurdish movements in each occupied zone to seek assistance from their oppressor countries. Iran, Iraq Syria and Turkey have all assisted a Kurdish movement in its struggle for freedom, at one time or the other.

However, it is quite another thing in the relative tranquility of Britain for Kurds, exiles and socialists to reproduce in mirror image the sectarian division that exist in Kurdistan. Where is the self-criticism of the movements, each party has the same differences of analysis preceding events as they did after the event, in other words the allegiance to a group, whether it be the KDP-Iran or the Komala, the KDP of Iraq, the PUK, the KSPI or any of the many parties in Turkey-Kurdistan, is more important than the preparation for a minimum programme of unity.

When a Turkish soldier kills a Kurd its a terrible act, but it raises the combativity of the Kurdish people. When a Kurd kills a Kurd then the capacity of the Kurdish people to win back their freedom is diminished beyond all proportions and makes victory a cast iron impossibility.

ISSUE No.8

A LETTER OF REPLY FROM THE SUPPORTERS OF "KOMALA" ABROAD

In the last issue of KNaC, an interview with Comrade Y. Ardalan was published. The introductory comments to which needs the following corrections:

1) Komala is not the 2nd largest organisation in Kurdish Revolutionary movement in fact far from it, Komala is one of the two main forces within the movement.

2) The news published -from KDP office in Paris:

-first of all this news has got no relevance to the interview;

-secondly the news itself shows nothing but, the writer either didn't know anything about the real situation in Iranian Kurdistan or is obviously only echoing the views of KDP-I.

3) Komala in its last Congress agreed on a joint program -program of Communist party of Iran- with Unity of Communist Militants (UCM) and not with Unity of Communist of Iran.
(Supporters of Komala Abroad)

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Subscriptions:

Due to higher printing costs and postal charges we had to increase the price of our Bulletin to 45 pence.

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was carried out while a NATO exercise was taking place just north of the same region, by the armies of Belgium, West-Germany, Italy, Britain and the United States who used its Rapid Deployment Force for the first time in Turkey. Bases for the EDF are planned in Mus, Batman and Erzurum. Already three quarters of the 600,000 strong Turkish army is based in Turkey Kurdistan (which represents 1/3 of the surface of Turkey).

In order to supervise the NATO exercises in 'Eastern-Turkey (Kurdistan), the commander in Chief of the US forces, General John W. Vessey was in Turkey since May 26.

These manoeuvres were code named "Adventure Express 83" and were held in order to demonstrate NATO's "determination to defend its strategic south-eastern flank while the operation carried out by the Turkish army into Iraq was "to guarantee the peace and the security of the region." It is not known if the incursion of the Turkish army into Iraq was a part of the Adventure-Express 83 manoeuvres...

American imperialism penetrated Turkey in 1948, under the Marshall plan. In exchange for the American aid, Turkey sent thousands of

soldiers to fight in Korea and joined NATO in 1952, turning itself into the advance post of imperialism and authorized the US to set up bases and listening posts against the Soviet Union, throughout the country, Kurdistan included.

In 1955 the Menderes regime signed the anti-communist and anti-Kurdish Baghdad Pact with Iraq, Iran and Pakistan. The new agreement replaced the old Seababad Pact signed by the same partners and for the same motives in 1937, after a series of Kurdish uprisings.

In 1955 Britain joined the Pact. Although the US participated in all the Pact's activities and were in control of all its military decisions, they were not members of the Pact. Following the revolution in Iraq in 1958 and that country's withdrawal from the Pact, it adopted the name CEMTO and was explicitly geared to provide "mutual military assistance in the event of Soviet aggression or internal revolts liable to threaten common security".

The first concrete application was the repression of the Dijwanroji Kurdish uprising in Iran in 1956. Both Israeli and Iranian troops participated in the repression.

The CEMTO Pact is dead today but

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we can see again the bloody regimes of Iraq, Turkey and Iran uniting in order to break the Kurdish people's resistance and their right for self-determination. While the Turkish commandos carry out their operations against the Iraqi Kurds, the Government of Tehran has launched its biggest ever onslaught against the Kurdish people's resistance in Iran. Over 100,000 soldiers and Islamic Guards participate in this assault, bringing the total of soldiers and guards fighting in Iranian Kurdistan to more than 200,000, a much larger force than the one they are using against Iraq on any front.

It was reported that Turkey and Iran have now revived their "Observation Committee", originally set up in 1954 to keep a permanent watch on the Kurdish tribes. The committee has not met since 1979, which enabled the Kurds to move across the border without hindrance. Last month Turkey ordered more than 1000 Iranian Kurdish refugees out of its territory as a gesture of goodwill towards Tehran. Turkey refused also entry to the Kurdish Darri tribe from Iran earlier this year, enabling Iranian forces to break up the tribe's armed groups and kill their chief (Sunday Times 29/5).

So even without a military pact between them, and even a war going on between Iran and Iraq, the 3 countries are united in the repression against the Kurdish nation.

Reports that the "Turkish army had taken a few thousand Kurdish

guerillas by surprise and captured 6000 of them, seems exaggerated. Kurdish freedom fighters usually don't gather in such a big number. It seems more certain that the Turkish army had trapped a large number of civilians and taken them as prisoners.

After the operation the Iraqi ambassador in Ankara "expressed the gratitude of the Bagdad government to the Turkish armed forces." (Interview in Gunes 30.5).

Turkish Foreign Minister Ilter Turkmen flew to Bagdad on 29.5 with a message from General Evren to President Saddam Hussein. Its contents were not disclosed (Guardian 31/5). General Evren himself toured the region during 3 days. He went to Mardin, Siirt and Hakkari. His message to the Kurdish population was: "Don't cooperate with those traitors, they are smugglers. They try to divide us, saying we are of different races. But we are all of one religion and one origin, we are real Turks. Be aware of people who stand for separatism. Don't vote for them".

On July 6, that is more than a month after this military operation, a few journalists were finally allowed into the border region. They were taken for a tour by helicopter. A military commander told a journalist (Cumhuriyet July 6) that "the Turkish troops were only withdrawing now from Iraq." This statement seemed to be confirmed by the fact that the units involved in this operation had not returned to their barracks yet.

MASS TRIAL IN DIARBEKIR CONCLUDES

A mass trial started in april 1981 in Diarbekir (Turkey Kurdistan) against hundreds of Kurdish nationalists concluded with 35 death sentences (10 of them reduced to 24 years, as those convicted were teenagers) and 333 other prison sentences ranging from 3 to 36 years, as well as 178 acquittals.

The militants convicted in Diarbekir belonged to the Kurdish Workers Party (P.K.K.), a Kurdish organisation from Turkey Kurdistan struggling to set up an independent socialist Kurdish state.

Angela Neustatter on a doctor's view of fighting in Kurdistan

War for health and freedom

WHEN Dr Bruce Dick went to assess the medical needs of the Kurdish refugees who have been fighting a war for independence on the borders of Iraq and Iran since 1968, he had little idea what to expect. "Like most people I have virtually nothing about the Kurds or their predicament," he says. "Kurdistan is an ignored area, the war is not publicised; there is practically no media coverage of what is happening to the people. I went there because I had heard there was a religious problem and a health hazard and I felt somebody should have a look."

He spent five weeks in Kurdistan, visiting villages and rural districts, talking with the people and talking with the F.R.C. voluntary agency Aids Medicae Internationalis, the only foreign organisation there providing help.

He found the situation severe enough to immediately submit a report asking for aid to Oxfam, Christian Aid, and other British organisations. "This is an abnormal war," he says. "The Kurds are fighting to maintain their culture and to have a free Kurdistan state. It is a guerrilla warfare effort. It does not have the nightmare drama of say, Beirut where I was before. But the effects have been severe and the health of the whole country is at risk because of this war."

To help who works for the Refugee Health Group at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine was requested to visit Kurdistan by the London based British Medical Medical Aid Committee and by Broadside a British production company making a documentary film on the Kurdish war which had received information about the seriousness of the health problems there.

The Kurds live on terraces flanked by Iraq, Iraq, Syria, Russia and Turkey and they are the third largest ethnic group in Iran, making up sixteen per cent of the population. There has been some talk that there have been demands that independence be granted. After the fall of the Shah the Kurds were hopeful they would get independence, but this did not happen and they have been fighting with Iran since attempting to protect their territory. At present the Kurdish Democratic Party of Iraq, the main political party in Iranian Kurdistan, and supported by some eighty per cent of the people, controls 4,000 of the 7,000 villages in rural areas.

It is the fact that the Kurds are fighting with Iran which has had the most particularly severe. Dr Dick explains the health services in Iranian Kurdistan are provided largely by the Iranian

government and at present they function only in the towns controlled by the Kurds. In fact, which of course means that the Kurds in rural areas fighting cannot expect to get treatment. Primary care preventive care which was being provided in the clinics had ceased since the fighting began, while laboratory and medicine reaching the remotest districts.

At the same time the inadequate medical facilities provided by the KDPI have diminished because their resources are being used in the other three hospitals only one remain in function, the other two were forced to close. The hospital in Erbil, which is entirely by Aids Medicae Internationalis, has been there for two years. They are medical staff in the area and cope with the war wounded and emergencies.

They attempt, too, to provide some general health care and vaccinations, but this work has been made difficult because of the amount of attention and resources required for the war injured. AMI has also done some informal "teaching" of nurses to work in the hospital and in other districts.

While the relief work carried out by AMI is essential, Dr Dick says that life in Kurdistan is a constant emergency. "War leads to food problems and the dramatic but it is not just food shortages which cause health problems. "About 30,000 people have been forced to flee from areas of military activity and some of them went with just the clothes they were wearing and perhaps a blanket and no money they left the areas they have gone to are cold and unsuitable for being water and there is little or no opportunity for work."

His report to the aid agencies which Oxfam and Christian Aid back, says they are now considering recommending a new or expanded health service which believes could be set up for the Kurds and which would immediately get them the help they need. It would be to the displaced people to help them to get their accommodation and obtain food, fuel, and transport.

To help AMI in its fighting with the war which he believes will have a significant impact on the health of the population, "whatever the outcome of the present political conflict."

THE MEDICAL BENEVOLE INTERNATIONAL



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Dear Mr. Neustatter,

Thank you very much for your letter of March 10, 1980 and the cheque for \$200 donated by Kurds in the U.K. What a wonderful feeling to receive such a generous boost to our finances! Please rest assured that we will do our utmost to use this money for the best. Already it has permitted us to buy 1000 packets of salicin which we needed urgently for our hospital in Kurdistan. You can be sure that we will let the people in Kurdistan know that this purchase was due to your solidarity of their brothers who are living in England.

Should you also like the trouble to pass along our personal thanks for your acts of support. I'm enclosing a brief summary of our groups activities in Kurdistan and elsewhere for 1980.

Thanking you again for giving us the means to carry on, I remain
Yours sincerely,

D. Michael Burtner,
A.M.I.



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STATEMENT BY THE POLITICAL BUREAU OF KURDISTAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF IRAN AND THE POLITICAL BUREAU OF THE REVOLUTIONARY ORGANISATION OF THE TOILERS OF KURDISTAN (KOMALA) :

On May 17, the gathering point of repressive forces of the Islamic republic in the town of Mahabad was successfully attacked by the Peshmarga forces of Kurdistan Democratic Party of Iran. In this operation 27 vehicles, tanks, and Katiusha rockets were destroyed and 120 of the regime's armed personal, including Mohamad Brajerdi the deputy commander of Hamzeh barracks, were killed. In retaliation Islamic republic regimes forces arrested hundreds of civilians, deported 70 families and on June 2, 59 people of the town of Mahabad were sent to firing squads.

Following this criminal act a joint statement was published by Kurdistan Democratic Party of Iran and the Revolutionary Organisation of the Toilers of Kurdistan (Komala). This statement is as follows:

Heroic people of Kurdistan!

On June 2, 1983 the criminal regime of Islamic republic added another black page to its history of crime and bloodshed. On this day the murderous missionaries of Khomeine executed 59 children of the Kurdish nation at the heroic town of Mahabad.

The bloodthirsty regime of Khomeini went as far as displaying the film of this horrific crime (in the same afternoon) on Mahabad T V with utmost shamelessness, with the aim of supposedly terrorizing the heroic people of Mahabad.

The execution of the defenceless youngsters of Mahabad was another sign of Islamic republic's misenycance whenever Khomeini's army is not able to stand up to the Peshmargas of Kurdistan it resorts to killing defenceless and unarmed civilians with the aim of eliminating the Kurdish nation. Undoubtedly this crime of Khomeini's regime like its other inhuman crimes not only will not bring the revolutionary

people of Kurdistan to their knees or lower their morals, it will strengthen the revolutionary mood of the oppressed Kurdish masses for achieving the autonomy of Kurdistan and establishing democracy in Iran. This will strengthen the determination of the Kurdish people for the continuation of the struggle until victory. We express our repugnance to this crime and from the bottom of our hearts offer our condolences to the revolutionary people of Mahabad particularly the families of our dear martyrs. In their memory we declare Tuesday June 7 the day of national mourning and request the people of all the towns of Kurdistan to close down all offices, schools, markets, shops, firms and workshops and express their sympathy with the people of Mahabad. We ask the people to turn this day to a day of struggle and protest against the reactionary and bloodthirsty regime of Khomeini. On this day, the inhabitants of all the towns of Kurdistan, by keeping off the streets will remain at their homes and mourn. We are certain that the people of Kurdistan will be united in expressing their hatred towards Khomeini's regime.

DOWN WITH THE CRIMINAL REGIME OF ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF KHOMEINI!

VICTORY TO THE REVOLUTIONARY STRUGGLE OF THE PEOPLE OF KURDISTAN!

JUNE 5, 1983

Kurdish culture (part 1) :



«We have an alphabet too...» an interview with M.E. BOZARSLAN

As announced in an earlier issue we are publishing an interview with the Kurdish writer M. Emin BOZARSLAN. He has been very active in Kurdish literature for the last two decades and published numerous books in Turkey and in Sweden since 1979.

As a cultural activist he suffered bans on his books as well as his own freedom.

We asked him about why he undertook his studies, what experiences he had in the publishing life and what his plans and hopes are for the future of Kurdish culture, language and unity.

This interview is going to be published in 2 parts and shall be completed by a speech on Kurdish culture (as part 3), given by Kurdish filmmaker Yilmaz GUNEY, at the occasion of the opening of the Kurdish Institute, a few months ago in Paris.

It should be noted that both M. Emin BOZARSLAN and Yilmaz GUNEY are actively involved in the development of the Kurdish Institut
Kurdistan News and Comment.

KNAC: Mr. Memmet Emin Bozarslan, you are well known in Turkey and abroad with your published works on Kurdish culture in the last two decades. Could you tell us how you started writing and researching on Kurdish language and culture? What were your motives as well as difficulties at the beginning of your career as a Kurdish writer?

M. E. Bozarslan: I started writing my first book in the 1960s. Yet, I could say that I already was aware of Kurdish politics as a young boy in the 1950's. By the 1960's we were discussing with ics as a young boy in the 1950's By the 60's we were discussing with Kurdish friends our experiences, views and ideas. One of the first problems we had to tackle intellectually was the controversy of aghass (in Kurdish axa, meaning chieftain of a tribe and/or lanlord) and shaikh's (in Kurdish ex, denoting saintly persons in Kurdistan, especially the heads of mystical orders, tarîqa's - KNAC) within the social system of Kurdistan. *At the time, it was not possible to talk about this issue as a Kurdish problem, so I tried to carry out an analysis of the relationship of shaikhs and aghass to the Kurdish people basically as a social problem. It was my first experiment with writing which continued until 1961. I was in Diyarbakir then and did not have the means to publish it as a book immediately. Finally, it was published in Ankara, in 1964, and called İslamiyet Açısından Şeyhlik ve Ağalık (Agha and Shaikh from the perspective of Islam).

In this book, I had a sociological perspective towards those institutions, but because 'Shaikh's are religious persons, I discussed it from an Islamic perspective as well. It had great repercussions in Kurdistan which I had been expecting somehow as people were exposed to a book on those questions for the first time. I kept on writing and my

second project was "The Problems of the East(Turkey)". As before, it could not have been presented as the Kurdish question. But, nevertheless I discussed the social, economic and political institutions pertaining to Turkish Kurdistan and even looked at the structure of health services there; basing the discussion more on my observations than on the written sources, except for the last section which includes a survey of newspaper articles dealing with the East. For the first time in the history of the Turkish Republic, lifting, the ban on Kurdish culture and language was demanded in print with this book.

It demanded freedom for writing, educating and publishing in Kurdish. It could be said that compared to the level of Kurdish people's struggles today, our demands were minimal but within the conditions of those days it was an important move. The book was read in many parts of Kurdistan and discussed among the people after being translated for those who could not read or understand Turkish. It was read widely but also led me to be exiled in Tekirdağ, Şarköy in 1966.



KNAC: You mentioned some reaction to your books. Was there not any official reaction, especially to your demands for lifting the ban on Kurdish language and culture?

M. E. B.: There was not a judicial reaction. I had merely suggested an idea through my books. There were no judicial proceedings or inquiries but the reactions came from the administrative and political quarters. I heard that within administrative circles people were shocked about how I dared say such things.

KNAC: Then could you tell us what the legal and administrative restrictions there are on writing and publishing in Kurdish? What does the law actually say about this matter?

MEB: There is no law which says that one cannot write in Kurdish. We all have been prosecuted under Law no 142 art. 3; according to which those who are engaged in 'propaganda' weakening the 'national feelings', from a (Turkish) racial perspective will be sentenced to prison from 1 to 3 years or longer if the 'propaganda' is in a written and printed form.

As you see this law does not mention the word Kurdish, but, the emphasis is placed on the weakening of (Turkish) 'national feeling' & 'racial perspective'. This law is extremely vulnerable to political manipulation. My books have all been prosecuted under this law, which is clearly anti-democratic. First of all, it is not clear where these 'feelings' begin or end or how one could assess the type and degree of 'national feelings'. Secondly, I did not claim that the Kurdish race is superior to the Turkish one or anything like that.

This would have been racism, and I am against it. But how could writing in Kurdish, which is a lively spoken language of the East (sticking to the official line), be considered and judged as racism? You can see that this is an evasive law which was used by some prosecutors and judges following the repressive political line at the time. Yet it was possible to fight a legal battle and I did so, for example in the case of my translation of Men û Zîn which in the end was acquitted from these legal charges.

Coming back to this anti-democratic law, it is not meant to be applied to the use of Kurdish in the mass media. This is only a de facto prohibition and I wanted this aspect to be realized. The 1961 constitution of the Turkish Republic, in article 12 recognizes that all people are equal in front of the law irrespective of language, race or religion. Thus, the 1961 constitution accepted the reality of different languages in Turkey. Following from this, if it is a right to publish in Turkish, so it also should be for Kurdish. But as

you know, the fascist coup of March 12th, 1971 changed many parts of this constitution and added clauses which increased the cultural repression. One of the added clauses was on the issue of violating the unity of the Turkish state. This meant that if you wrote in Kurdish you are threatening the unity of the nation. After the military coup in 1980 it became almost impossible to publish in Kurdish and not to be accused of separatism or treason. Yet I believe one of the most effective methods of fighting against these laws is to write and publish as much as one can, and that is what I have tried to do.

In autumn 1966 I was sent to Trakya, Tekirdağ where I stayed for two years and wrote the Kurdish ABC, the alphabet book. As an educated Kurd I felt that I should try my best to develop our rich culture, language and folklore. The language needs to be worked on and most important of all 'legalised' and freed from the bans of anti-democratic laws.

In 1968 the ABC and the translation of a famous Kurdish epic Mem û Zîn were published and I was arrested. The ABC books were confiscated by the police from the distributors but beforehand we had distributed some copies in Kurdistan. I heard in jail that Kurdish children who got hold of their alphabet were proudly showing it to their teachers saying: "we have a an alphabet as well".



MEM U ZIN

(* For a detailed study of this topic in English, see M. M. van Bruinessen : Agha, Shaikh and State (1978) Holland.

«We have an alphabet too...»

The repressive reactions of the authorities continued. 3000 copies of *Mem û Zîn* were destroyed at the printers where they were being bound. Those which were saved, suffered years of bans by the courts and appeals by myself until finally it was acquitted. The ABC book, however, is still banned in Turkey.

My works on Kurdish history include the translation of *Sharafname* from Arabic to Turkish. This translation was published in two volumes before the 1971 military coup immediately after which along with many Turkish and Kurdish democrats and intellectuals I was arrested and put into Diyarbakir prison. We were released in 1974 with general amnesty, so all together I was in prison for nearly 2½ years. I wrote two books about this period: prison observations and experiences. One is called *Igerdekiler, Digardakiler* (Insiders, outsiders) which now has been reprinted in Sweden. The second one is a satire called "Anaristler" (Anarchists", 1977). After that I did translations of *The History of Merwanid Kurds* and *The Kurdish Republic of Mahabad* into Turkish.



An interesting study that I had worked on then was Yusuf Ziyaeddin Pasa's Kurdish - Arabic dictionary which had been first published in 1894. I translated the Arabic explanations into Turkish; my aim was to prevent this historic work from being forgotten altogether.

My final publication in Turkey was *Mezro*, a collection of Kurdish stories which I first wrote in Kurdish and then translated into Turkish. I published them together as a book in 1979 shortly after I had left Turkey for Sweden.

I continued my work in Sweden and some of my earlier books have been reprinted there as well as a new series of Kurdish children's tales. The fourth book in the series of children



The fourth book in the series of children's tales is due to appear shortly. I think the most important work I have undertaken in Sweden so far is on the Kurdish journal *Jin* (life) which appeared in Istanbul during 1918-19 in both Kurdish and Turkish. The journal was started by some Kurdish intellectuals who formed the *Kurdistan Taali Cemiyeti* (Society for the Elevation of Kurdistan) in 1918.

The journal was like a semi-official publication of this organisation. It came out for 55 issues and then was banned. Few collections of this periodical still exist. I was lucky to get hold of a collection in the 1960's. I could not carry out serious research on this collection until coming abroad. At the moment, the transcription from Arabic letters to the Latin alphabet and the translation from Ottoman to modern Turkish are nearly completed. (*)

I hope that the first five issues as a volume will be published towards the end of this year and other five-issues volumes should come out in the future. The first volume will include an introductory analysis of the journal and the Kurdish movement of 1900 to the 1920's. ●●●

END OF PART I

(*) Under Mustafa Kemal Atatürk the Turkish language was modernised and the Latin alphabet introduced. It should be mentioned that in Turkey, the Kurdish language changed also to Latin characters under the influence of Emir Bedir Khan.

The Kurds of Iraq and Iran are using Arabic characters, while the Cyrillic characters are in use for the Kurds of the Autonomous Kurdish Region of the Soviet Union. (KNaC--)

Interview OMAR SHEIKHMOUS MEMBER OF THE LEADERSHIP- COMMITTEE OF P.U.K.

In Iraqi Kurdistan there are 3 liberation movements: the old Kurdistan Democratic Party (led by Barzani's sons), the more recent Socialist Party of Kurdistan and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan. Recently, a Kurdistan Peoples Democratic Party was also formed by an ex-leader of KDP, Abdul Rahman 'Sami', but this movement does'nt seem to have any real political base yet.

The Patriotic Union of Kurdistan is considered to be the major Kurdish liberation movement in Iraqi Kurdistan and controls a large liberated area along the border with Iran (north of the war zone, where Iraqi and Iranian troops are fighting each other). The P. U. K. is a front organisation.

The following is an interview with a member of the leadership-committee of PUK.

KNaC: What is the present situation in Iraqi Kurdistan?

Omar Sheikhmous: The present situation in Iraqi Kurdistan is characterised by a growing mood of revolutionary fervour, mass-resistance, and popular protest against the regime.

The armed resistance movement (by P. U. K. and other patriotic forces) has gained great momentum through the government's increasing military and economic weakness. Additional factors are loss of control in the cities and countryside, large number of deserters from the Iraqi army (48,000 Kurdish soldiers according to a speech by Saddam Hussein, 20/1/1983) who have joined the ranks of resistance, an increase in the level of partisan activities and mass uprisings throughout the cities and towns of Iraqi Kurdistan.

In general, the fascist government is continuing to retreat and to concede to popular demands. At the same time the revolutionary forces are making advances and increasing their control over more territory and people.

The government has been forced to withdraw a large section of it's army from Kurdistan. Most of the towns and cities of Iraqi Kurdistan are under the control of the partisans after 4p.m. All government officials and security forces dare not leave their barracks after that time. Our partisans conduct daily operations in all the cities. The masses

are no longer afraid of the security forces of the fascist regime. They continuously organise strikes and demonstrations. The mass uprising against the government has been going on since April 1982 throughout the cities of Iraqi Kurdistan. The people openly support the revolutionary movement. Our radio station (Voice of the Iraqi revolution) is listened to in all homes and cafes of Iraqi Kurdistan, in defiance of the regime.

Contrary to earlier periods our forces are now operating even in the plains of Iraqi Kurdistan e.g. the plains of Arbil, Koisanjaq, Kirkuk, Kifri and Kelar. We control most of the countryside. The government forces are obliged to move either in large military convoys or by helicopters.

What are your relations with other opposition forces in Iraqi Kurdistan, especially the KDP, the Iraqi Communist Party and the Kurdistan Socialist Party of Iraq, the KSPI?

O. Sh.: Our relations with KSPI and the ICP (Iraqi Communist Party) have been generally good and we have always aimed at improving our relations with them. Unfortunately, a number of incidents took place at times, that led to some armed clashes between our forces, but these were always local incidents. The leadership of all parties were working and pressing for closer cooperation and normalisation.

Our relations with the Iraqi KDP have always been strained because of their anti people character and their reliance on for eign powers, especially their mercenary role in fighting the people of Iranian Kurdistan and their continuous presence outside Iraqi Kurdistan (vamealy Iran), which is rather strange for an organisation that claims to be the "leaders" of the people of Iraqi Kurdistan. Furthermore, they consider it their task to fight, first and foremost, the forces of PUK rather than the main enemies of the Kurdish people.

NON-AGGRESSION PACT BETWEEN KURDISH PARTIES COLLAPSES.

But despite that, we agreed to sign a non-aggression pact with them, in order to foil the plans of our enemies that were aiming at the Kurdification of the war in in Kurdistan, provided they fulfilled the following conditions :

1. To leave Iranian Kurdistan and bring all their forces to Iraqi Kurdistan.
2. Stop fighting other patriotic Kurdish forces in Iran and Iraq.
3. Allow our forces to go to Badinan area (area along the Turkish frontier -KNaC) and we would allow their forces to come to Arbil, Ki-ruk and Suleimaniye provinces (that are under our control completely).

They eventually agreed, under pressure from other Iraqi patriotic forces, to sign such an agreement with us, in Aug. 1982. This agreement with KDP and other agreements in July 82 with the ICP and KSPI, set a good ground for the establishment of a wide national front, that was about to be declared in March 83, had it not been for the unexplained withdrawal of ICP and KDP from the final negotiations with seven other Iraqi opposition organisations.

After that these 3 organisations (KDP, ICP and KSPI) jointly planned to undermine the position of PUK (politically and militarily) and provoked a number of armed clashes with our forces in March and April 83.

These deliberate provocations, against us, unfortunately, led to larger clashes and we had to defend our positions. In result, they jointly suffered a crushing

defeat (which was their own doing). They are carrying now a very dirty campaign of mud-slinging at the PUK. But they will fail in that, too.

Still we are in favour of normalising our relations with these organisations and for closer cooperation in fighting the common enemy, i.e. the fascist regime of Saddam Hussein, instead of indulging in fratricidal clashes that can be utilised by the enemy and take advantage of such situations.

The Turkish invasion of parts of Iraqi territory is the best example for such a situation. We sincerely hope and shall work for closer ties between all the democratic and progressive forces of Iraq for the over throw of the fascist regime.

As a British member of the Kurdistan Solidarity, it is very noticeable lately that the splits within the Kurdish movement in the homelands are being reflected with the same sectarian

KNaC: What is the composition of the National Democratic and Patriotic Front (N. D. P. F.) of Iraq?

O. Sh.: N. D. P. F. was established on November 12th, 1980, by the following organisation:-(1) the Arab Socialist Movement, -(2) the Socialist Party of Iraq, -(3) the Left Baath Party, -(4) the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, -(5) the Iraqi Communist Party, -(6) the Kurdistan Socialist Party, -(7) Independent Democrats, -(8) the Peoples Army for the Liberation of Iraq, -(9) the Congress of Socialist Nationalists.

After a while, however, the membership of the Iraqi Communist Party and the Kurdistan Socialist Party was suspended from N. D. P. F. because they had established another front (National Democratic Front - N. D. F.) without knowledge and the approval of N. D. P. F.

Later on, N. D. P. F. was joined by two other organisations, namely: the Kurdistan Peoples Democratic Party (K. P. D. P.) and the Democratic Organisation of the Turkcoman people of Iraq.

There are attempts, now, at unifying both fronts, and the establishment of a wide front of nineteen opposition parties of Iraq was declared on 7th Feb., 1983.



Secretary-General of PUK, Jalal Talabani giving a lecture on guerilla warfare, at the school of cadres, in the liberated area of Iraqi Kurdistan.

KNaC: What is the role of the "other" Baathists inside this Front? And are you pro-syrian?

The role of the left Baath party inside NDFP does not differ from the role of all the other member organisations of the front.

I really don't understand by "pro-syrian". We are pro-syrian in the same degree as we are pro-progressive and anti imperialist forces all over the world. But if what is meant by that is that we are dominated by Syria and she decides our policies, we are not.

KNaC: Do you receive any help from Syria? Or is the Front getting any help?

O. Sh.: It is very natural for Syria, due to her conflicting relations with Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq, to be positively inclined towards the Iraqi opposition (both Arabic and Kurdish) and aid it. This situation has affected us, too.

KNaC: How do you see the war between Iran and Iraq?

O. Sh.: The war between Iran and Iraq is an unjust war, that was waged by Saddam's

regime against Iran. This war is essentially against the interests of both peoples. It has had catastrophic results on the economic and social development of both countries. The industries of both countries have been nearly destroyed. Hundreds of thousands of people have either been killed, wounded imprisoned or become homeless in the process. Tens of thousands of youngsters have deserted from the Iraqi army and sought refuge in the mountains of Kurdistan or in the neighbouring countries. The human tragedies are innumerable.

Our position is that this mad war should end and the peoples of both countries achieve their aims in establishing democratic regimes, improve their social and economical conditions and preserve their national independence.

Saddam's war of aggression has exposed the whole area to future imperialist re-domination.

As a result of this war, the fascist regime of Iraq is undergoing very serious crises at all levels, e.g. economic, military, political, administrative, security, and party political (within its own party).

The economic crisis is felt most, due to a \$46 billion debt to Saudi Arabia and Gulf States. Reduction of Iraq's reserves from \$28 billion to £6 billion. Reduction of oil production from 6 million barrels a day to 300,000 barrels a day. A rate of inflation that will exceed 50%. Stoppage of all industrial and development projects. Shortages of food supplies and other necessities of life. Reduction of 20% in the salaries of government employees and military officers.

And so long as Saddam Hussein and his clique remain in power, the war will go on.

QNA: You are controlling a liberated area. What are the social activities of your organisation in these liberated areas?

O. Sh.: From the very beginning of the resistance movement, even when we did not have liberated areas but were mobile guerilla bands, we aimed at aiding the peasantry and the people of Kurdistan. We were providing all sorts of services according to our means.

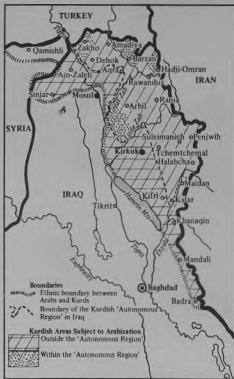
But now, with the control of large areas, we have opened schools, hospitals, courts, village councils, administrative regional units, farming and irrigation advice units, hygiene units, family-planning units and we provide the people of returning deportee peasants with financial and material aid to rebuild their old villages and farm their lands and fruit gardens.

We have periodic cadre courses for the maintenance and development of these social services.

QNA: What has happened to the deportees to the south of Iraq and in the strategic villages in Kurdistan?

O. Sh.: The majority of the people that were deported to the south of Iraq and strategic villages in Kurdistan (that amounted to 600,000 people) are still in their places. But after the war with Iran (in Sept., '80) and with the loss of control by the Iraqi government, many people have taken advantage of the situation and returned to their villages, with or without the approval of the government.

We are helping them to rebuild their homes and farms. The government does not have the resources to re-deport them.



Iraqi Kurdistan



QNA: What is the extent of women's involvement both within the Kurdish movement in Iraqi Kurdistan and within your organisation?

O. Sh.: It is very unfortunate that we still have not succeeded in increasing the level of women's involvement in the revolutionary movement and in the liberated areas to the standards that we have set for our work.

There are some women with some in the partisan units, but they are few. Most of the women that have joined the ranks of the partisan forces of P. U. K. are engaged in the following branches: hospital, radio station, the print shop, the schools, the family-planning and hygiene units, and the secretariat of the leadership committee of P. U. K. as well as the editorial staff of our Kurdish and Arabic newspaper and publications.

But the women are playing a very important role in our organisational work (especially in the cities and towns of Iraqi Kurdistan). They have had a very significant role in the uprising that has taken place in all the cities under government control. And a new revolutionary "Union of Women of Kurdistan" has been established by our members and sympathisers.

In this field, we are hampered by the dominant values of a traditional, under-developed and an Islamic society. But we are struggling against it and work very hard to improve the situation for our women. It still might take some time to achieve this aim, along with our other aims. It is unfortunate, but this is the real situation.

QNA: Could you recall for our readers how the PUK was formed, its short history and its present structure.

O. Sh.: The P. U. K. was established in June 1975, and initiated the current armed resistance movement in Iraqi Kurdistan, in June 1976. It was a coalition of three main ideological and political tendencies within Kurdish society (a Marxist, a socialist, and general mass patriotic line). It aimed at unifying the different patriotic organisations of the people of Iraqi Kurdistan for the achievement of the right of the Kurdish people to self-determination (in the form of genuine autonomy).

It also worked for the establishment of a wide national front, with all the democratic and patriotic opposition forces, for the overthrow of Saddam's despotic regime and the establishment of a national democratic coalition government in Iraq.

Between 1976 and 1979, the main burden of the armed struggle was born by the P. U. K. After 1979, other patriotic and democratic opposition forces joined our armed struggle against the regime. P. U. K. has continuously aimed at developing the struggle into a general revolution encompassing all parts of Iraq.

Our armed resistance movement has experienced three stages of struggle:

1- The first stage was characterised by organising small guerrilla bands, that were permanently mobile, in the most difficult mountainous areas, to resist deportation, prevent the regime from total control, maintain an armed resistance, organise the peasantry, and preservation of our existence against overwhelming strength.

2- The second stage was characterised by the establishment of liberated areas and permanent leadership bases, strengthening our underground organisations in the cities and the countryside. Establishment of a civil administration, village councils, health and other services.

3- The third stage is characterised by extension of the war into the cities and smaller towns, enlarging the liberated areas to include the plains of Iraqi Kurdistan, organising mass uprisings in the cities, and hitting the enemy in its own bases and fortifications.

After years of political and ideological work among the masses, P. U. K. came to be composed of two main tendencies, instead of three, because the socialists and the general patriotic line united to form the "Union of Kurdistan revolutionaries", so that today, the P. U. K. consists of:

- 1-The Kurdistan Toilers organisation.
- 2-The Union of Kurdistan Revolutionaries.

KURDISTAN-IRAQ

At 5am on the morning of 24.6.83, a large Iraqi Army force, supported by helicopter gunships, heavy artillery and armoured units, attacked the leadership base of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, PUK, in Shéné (Qala-Diza area), in an attempt to occupy the strategic summit of Mamende mountain (which overlooks the whole area).

But the partisans of PUK were able to repel the offensive, and after 2 hours of fighting, managed to annihilate the commando unit that had been landed by helicopter on the mountain top, and shot one of the helicopters down. The battle continued until 4pm when the Iraqi government forces were forced to retreat, in defeat, to their garrisons in Qala Diza, under the cover of very concentrated artillery fire. Our revolutionary forces inflicted heavy losses on the enemy : 70 soldiers killed and a large number were wounded. The Peshmergas of PUK gained a large amount of weapons and ammunition. (from PUK Press Release 25.6.83).

For more information and news of PUK's activities, please write to: PUK, Box 5576 London WCLN 3XX. 'SPARK' is the newsletter published by PUK.

KURDISTAN-IRAN

During April 83 there have been 4 attacks by the Islamic Republic in the areas of Oshnovieh, Somabrodoost and Baneh, which have ended in the massacre of Kurdish people. In all the Peshmergas of Komala have made the regime's forces to retreat.

The Islamic Regime attacked two villages of Ghanghaleh and Nasaj situated 15 kms east of Mahabad near the Mahabad-Oromieh road. As soon as the Peshmergas of Komala heard about this, they organised a counter attack and during an 8 hour battle forced the enemies to retreat. The forces of the regime had to flee the battlefield leaving 60 dead.

(From Paper of the Voice of Iranian Revolution, publication of Komala's radio). For more information on activities and events of Komala and Iranian Kurdistan : Komala supporters in Britain Box 99, 164-166 Corn Exchange Building, Hanging Ditch, Manchester.

KURDISTAN-IRAN

On May 17 and 18 the Peshmergas forces of KDPI penetrated into the town of Mahabad and launched a successful attack on the town's garrison.

In retaliation the Iranian regime's repressive forces arrested hundreds of defenceless civilians some of whom were kept in MAHABAD prison and the rest were transferred to Urumieh prison.

On the 2nd of June, 59 of these prisoners were executed.

In retaliation to the executions of those 59 defenceless civilians by the Khomeini regime, on June 13 the KDPI peshmergas, with a formerly planned attack, which lasted one and a half hours, took over the "GABAZALEH" base in GHARAMANAN area of Mahabad.

In this successful attack, 9 members of the Khomeini regime forces were killed, 1 wounded and 64 of them including the commander of the base were taken prisoner. In addition a substantial number of armaments and ammunition were captured.

The list of the names of the 59 civilians executed as well as other news of recent events in Iranian Kurdistan, can be obtained from : KDPI Britain, BM Kurdistan LONDON WCLN 3XX.