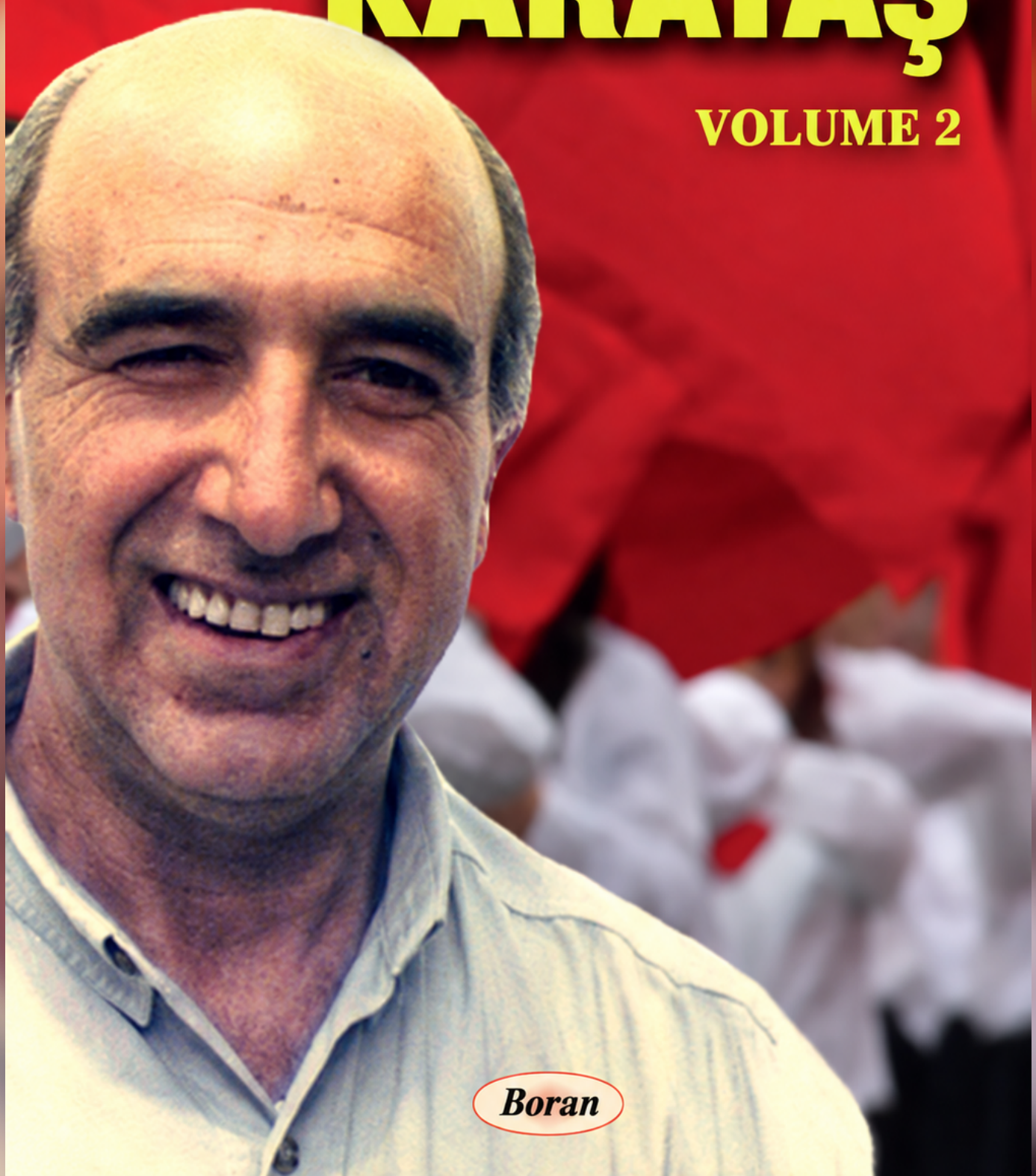
A REVOLUTIONARY DURSUN KARATAŞ

VOLUME 2



Boran

A REVOLUTIONARY

DURSUN KARATAŞ

Volume 2

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A REVOLUTIONARY DURSUN KARATAŞ Volume 2

PREFACE

A leader who left his mark on the revolutionary history of Turkey with his 38-year revolutionary life: Dursun Karataş.

In the words of his comrades, of those who knew him personally, there was only revolution in his life: the problems of the revolution, the interests of the revolution, the future of the revolution. A relentless, uncompromising struggle for revolution...

His 38-year revolutionary life was filled with these things.

We can see that this was so in the movement he created.

He identified so completely with the movement he created that his words, “Revolutionary Left is my mother, my teacher, my comrade... my everything,” are the clearest expression of this.

He jealously protected this beauty he had created from internal and external enemies.

> *“We need to be people who are dynamic, courageous, who do what they say, disciplined; people who, when they say ‘WE’, feel its meaning with their whole being; who regard the slightest attack directed at their comrades and their movement as if it were directed at themselves; who feel pride and excitement in carrying the identity of REVOLUTIONARY LEFT — and we need to raise such people. Cadres must act with the consciousness that they are a part of the movement; they must not regard the movement as something outside themselves. The movement is the sum total of all its people — its cadres, sympathisers and supporters — and of the values and traditions they have created...”*

With these words, he was pointing to the type of cadre that had to be created.

The revolutionary movement that extended from Revolutionary Left to the Party-Front, and from the Party-Front to the present day, remained loyal to revolutionary values and traditions while also becoming the creator of new values, new traditions and new firsts.

The 1990s were years in which the attacks of counter-revolution grew in scale in our country and throughout the world; years in which the imperialists became increasingly reckless in their attacks against the peoples, the socialist bloc collapsed, and imperialism imposed its new world order upon the peoples in our ‘unipolar’ world.

They were years in which organisations calling themselves revolutionary, socialist and patriotic entered into compromise with imperialism; laying down arms became fashionable; the hammer and sickle were removed from flags; and ideological deviations and uncertainty emerged...

While many once-renowned organisations came to an end and disappeared during the period that began with the fascist junta of 12 September 1980, in those dark years, under our leadership, WE RECREATED OURSELVES.

> *“... A party or an organisation, together with its leadership, all its fighters and cadres, may be taken prisoner and may suffer great defeats. These are the testing grounds of revolutionaries. Those who successfully pass these tests will have no difficulty reaching the people.” (Dursun Karataş)*

With this outlook of our leadership, we rose again even stronger in this arena.

What was fashionable was laying down arms and compromising with imperialism.

What was fashionable was removing the hammer and sickle from flags.

What was fashionable was first bowing before imperialism and then discovering ‘progressiveness’ in imperialism.

What was fashionable was to get through this period without losses and, for that purpose, to wait for more favourable conditions to arrive.

In this period, however, following the assessments made under Dayı’s leadership, the pamphlet Where Are We on the Road? rejected all these ‘fashionable’ conceptions and defined the tasks of revolutionaries as follows:[1]

> *“The task of Marxist-Leninists today must be, while preserving the belief that the revolutionary wave will rise again on a world scale and in individual countries, and that socialism will be rebuilt on a correct line upon the ruins of revisionism: above all, to work to develop the revolutions in their own countries; to defend the fundamental principles and ideas of Marxism against revisionism, reformism and every kind of deviation; to attach importance to relations of solidarity and support with the socialist forces and national liberation movements of the world; and to make revolutionary fraternity prevail on the basis of genuine internationalism. (...) The only force on which liberation movements and socialist forces can rely against imperialism must be the peoples and proletariat of the world. Socialists are now compelled, more than ever before, to rely on and trust in their own strength.”*

Our leader said: OFFENSIVE...

Under HIS leadership, we preserved and strengthened our ideological clarity.

In the years of ‘crisis’, our faith rose to its highest point.

Under siege, we kept our hammer-and-sickle flag flying.

We did not compromise; we would not compromise.

We did not surrender; we would not surrender.

With still greater conviction and daring, we surged forward in the OFFENSIVE.

As we fired our weapons of justice,
as we brought them down upon the heads of the enemies of the people,
as the barrels of our guns turned towards the imperialists,
as our hammer-and-sickle flag flew under siege,
as our revolutionary units became legendary;

1 Dayı: literally “maternal uncle” in Turkish; also an affectionate or respectful form of address. In this book it is the widely used name/title for Dursun Karataş.

our enemies — and even those we had considered friends — were astonished to the point of asking, ‘What is happening? Everywhere else these movements are coming to an end, yet with us the exact opposite is happening.’

The movement stretching from Revolutionary Left to the Party-Front became confidence for friends and fear for enemies.

> *“... Strong ideas, strong people and strong organisations are born from those who preserve their determination under difficult conditions without deviating from their path; from those who are not afraid to fall and rise again; from those who know how to create victory out of defeat... We fell, and when we fell we knew how to rise. Even in the darkest periods, saying that there is no such thing as absolute darkness, we searched for the light. We always turned back to ourselves. We confronted our own reality, and that is how we arrived at the present day. Our strength lies here. It lies in the history that has been lived. We wrote this history with our ideological steadfastness and with the epics of our martyrs who carried this ideology. And we demonstrated that this history cannot be changed, but that the road to victory can be travelled only by enriching it and surpassing it. Our Congress, the Party-Front and the dozens of decisions we have taken are the proof of this.” (Dursun Karataş)*

With HIM we grew and became stronger,

with HIM we marched towards revolution,

with HIM we overcame the obstacles placed before us by our internal and external enemies,

under HIS leadership we were an indestructible organisation that others could only envy and admire.

Whether we accept it or not, our Dayı is no longer physically among us.

But through the values and traditions he created, and through what he left us, he will always be beside us, within us and ahead of us. We will not feel his absence!

That is why we say: WITHOUT HIM, BUT WITH HIM.

In morality, culture, ideology, thought and practice; in our confidence in the people, in the revolution and in ourselves, we drew thick lines between revolution and counter-revolution.

This was the greatest power, the greatest weapon.

It was a power that no force in the world could defeat.

It was Marxism-Leninism.

WITHOUT HIM, BUT WITH HIM, we will carry our march for revolution through to victory.

This book contains the accounts of those who knew HIM.

This book contains the thoughts and feelings of those who fought under HIS leadership.

We leave it to the readers to decide how fully what has been written and said here can describe him... **WITH OUR RESPECT...**

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CHAPTER 6

AFTER OUR DAYI...

A Life Dedicated to the Revolution...

Those who knew him know very well that he never compromised in the face of shortcomings or anything to which no effort had been devoted. We know that we have paid a very heavy price for mistakes, shortcomings and things done wrongly.

He was patient and farsighted. Thanks to his foresight and his ability as a strategist, all the policies developed and put into practice up to today fell into place and proved their correctness to the world hundreds of times. He was one of the few wise people in the world. A leader like this is born once in a hundred years, and Dayı was one of them. We did not spend very much time together. Yet he was always beside me as my guide, showing me the way. How fortunate we are to have had such a leadership. Like many people, Dayı also passed through very difficult periods.

The martyrdom of his comrades and his wife, and the betrayal of comrades whom he had raised and developed with his own hands, were of course a great blow, first of all to him and to the movement. No one other than him could have shouldered such a difficult process. Even during that period, he demonstrated very clearly his great patience, his strategic ability, his command and his qualities as a teacher. One sentence of his from that period is very important: ‘I would burn this movement with my own hands and recreate it from its ashes.’ And that is what happened. After the putschists burned and scattered this movement, he recreated it from its dispersed ashes at the cost of blood and lives. With his steel-armoured discipline, drawing lessons from what had been experienced, he set out the contradiction between revolution and the system with great clarity and created the personality of the new human being. Another sentence of his is very important: ‘We must be a flower in the middle of a swamp.’ It may be a sentence of only three or four words, but the contradiction between revolution and the system is in constant conflict within our personalities. Dayı constantly tried to cleanse our personalities, to turn muddy water into clear water.

When Dayı is mentioned, what comes to mind are the firsts. Because he always embraced what was new. In the revolutionary history of our country, he was the creator of firsts. When Dayı is mentioned, what comes to mind is wisdom. Dayı was wise. Our people have an expression, ‘the eye of the heart is open’: to know and see beforehand what is going to happen, to determine the road ahead—this is something only a guide can do. Dayı was our guide. He thought and acted scientifically. What he created and what he put into practice will continue to be our guide.

He is the lifeblood of the revolution. The enemy knows this power of his very well. Until his last breath, they tried to slander him, kill him and destroy him. Because they are afraid of him, of what he created. Dayı is their nightmare, a force the enemy cannot destroy. When I heard of his martyrdom, the physical separation weighed heavily on me. I said, ‘It is too early; he should have lived.’

He left us a future filled with the experience he had lived through. Our task is to take up the flag he left behind and raise it higher. Even as he was taking his last breath, he was telling us: do not become emotional, do not let yourselves go, become steeled; always keep your faces turned forward; let your greatest goal be to present a new society to future generations. Tens of thousands of people came to

see him off at his funeral. This was the expression of the love and confidence he had given to the people.

It confirms the truth of what he once told someone from among the people: ‘Do not love people with the tip of your nose; love them with your heart.’ He truly loved his people with his heart. He built his entire life upon love for people. That is why the people could not accept his death. Guides never die. The people always keep them alive and see them as their liberators. To enter the hearts of the people is to begin building the future today. Our Dayı achieved this.

As always, he is in his place, his eyes upon us, fighting shoulder to shoulder with us in the front ranks.

★

An Epic Dedicated to Dursun Karataş

“We must run faster...”

From the politics of today’s world

A call of great consequence

From the old, crawling swamp

Penetrated by bureaucrats, Reeking

of reformism,

Amid dark predictions,

Where our country is placed on the table in a game of cards,

The counter-revolutionary outside

Will push, fall, crack, miss.

He tore apart the treacherous wagers,

Raising the red banner,

And there, standing upright,

He blocked the way of weary gazes:

The sun is rising for socialism!

The winds of change,

While unexpectedly tormenting our world,

Whose soul in counter-revolution

Was pale beyond humanity,

Pale as steel;

When betrayal was fashionable

And embracing

The fattest imperialist

Was highly profitable

(the filthy bastard was a fascist!)...

Then in Turkey the People's Liberation Movement

Wrote in blood upon the crumpled paper:

Dursun Karataş — our Comrade, a Marxist!

You are so important to us, to the world!

In nameless days, in sleepless nights,

The oligarchy searches for you,

The lovers of war still see you in their dreams

Bloodied and dead...

You are so necessary to our struggle —

Resistance: us or them;

Victory or death.

We chose freedom!

We were steeled in the struggle,

And multiplied in pain,

We swore ourselves to our people's longing,

We gave our word for justice,

And on the day before it — freedom!

Our movement — the will of the people.

We stand on the threshold of a formidable feat,

With our weapon held in our hands,

At the threshold of the liberation to come:

People's Liberation Party!

★

"Death Is Not Powerful Enough to Take You from Us"

I never knew him; I never saw his face; I do not know how he spoke. What he would say when he became angry, or what expression his face would take when he was happy...

I first heard his name during my student years. They spoke about his daily life in prison. It was not something familiar or ordinary. What we knew, what we had seen in life, was different. Teachers, for example, were always in one place and students in another. Formal respect and obedience were compulsory. Obedience to the district governor and the governor was compulsory. Obedience to directors, deputy directors and chiefs was compulsory. The subordinate had to obey the superior. And there was always a gulf between them. They did not sit together or do the same work. Yet the way they spoke of him was different. They called him 'Dayı'. He was the creator and leader of a movement. Some of my friends had known him. They had spent some time in the same prison. When they spoke of him, they did so with great respect, and their eyes shone with affection. He was a beloved and respected elder of the family, someone taken as an example...

I listened to and read about what had been created under the conditions of 12 September, when not even a leaf stirred. The essential thing was not to surrender and to resist under all conditions. Yet among my relatives people always said, 'Nothing can be done under these conditions.' In an atmosphere where hopelessness and pessimism were everywhere, the word 'Dayı' brought a smile to our faces. I never met him. I never saw his face. But I too was among those who set out for the sake of his ideals. His ideals had become my ideals. At that time I was freely walking the streets and avenues. Dayı and many of our comrades were prisoners. Under those conditions they were raising their voices. We were outside; as I walked towards an action with a banner in my bag and my heart beating as though it would leap from my chest, his silhouette would appear before my eyes. Together in the ward, they would read the news of the action from a newspaper page. We had to support them; we were like one great family, and I felt the joy of this to the marrow of my bones.

I never met Dayı after that either; I never saw his face. I was in one province and he was imprisoned in another. I made no special effort to meet him, nor were there conditions for doing so. Early one morning I left the house where I was staying with my comrades and went to the market. I slipped a newspaper into the bag with the breakfast food and came back. I put the newspaper on the table and quickly began preparing breakfast. Our comrade's eyes fixed on the newspaper. She

quickly opened it out. The news of his escape was the headline. We immediately ran, newspaper in hand, to our comrade who was sleeping in the room, and embraced one another.

'It's wonderful,' I kept saying; nothing else came to mind. I was alone in the house all day and could hardly contain myself. I paced quickly back and forth across the large, sparsely furnished room, unable to suppress my smile. From time to time I stopped and read the newspaper report again and again. In the evening my comrades returned with a box of sweets. They told jokes that 'the police are arresting everyone who smiles today'. That night we celebrated our Dayı's freedom together. We imagined meeting him. Given the province we were in, it did not seem very possible, but never mind —it was beautiful to dream. Although we were not dreamers, that day we placed no limits on our dreams.

After that day too, I never met Dayı, never saw his face. But in every difficulty we encountered, we felt him beside us. 'Courage,' he said; 'you can succeed,' he said, and he enlarged our goals. Gradually we began to recognise our own strength and experienced the happiness of becoming revolutionaries, of breaking out of our shells. It was the period of the Offensive, and its architect was our leader.

In those years, so many of our lives became carnations as part of this honourable history. My share was imprisonment. I learned of the putsch while in prison. That night we women prisoners gathered together and stared in disbelief at the comrade who was giving us information about it. I had never met Dayı; I knew him only from his photographs. But that night, confronted with the claims of the putschists, it was as though my heart were being cut to pieces and salt rubbed into the wounds. We knew that it was he who had brought us into political existence, helped us grow and shown us the goal. We were each a part of him; we were like flesh and nail. That night I watched the angry, tense faces of my comrades. I could not read the putschists' claims aloud from the papers in my hands; their faces were ugly. I put down the papers; there was a knot in my throat. It was better for everyone to read them for themselves.

With him in front and our comrades behind him, we crossed the barricades and reached the present day. The anger of those who did not love our Dayı was great. They expressed it under every circumstance. While newspapers and television competed with one another in fabricated, false and disgusting stories, his place in the hearts of his comrades and our peoples grew day by day.

An elderly mother who stayed in the same ward used to call us 'Karataş's soldiers'. We liked being called that very much. For us, it was a source of pride. But one morning, when we failed to wake up and were late for exercise, our mother came to our bedside and said, 'Karataş's soldiers are sleeping —get up quickly!' We were deeply ashamed. When she reminded us of our responsibilities with such barbed words, she struck us right in the heart.

Twenty years after first hearing his name, I heard his voice for the first time on television. It was footage from a court. He was demanding an account; it was as though he was not the one on trial, but the one putting others on trial. I did not want to believe the press announcement accompanied by various images. He was no longer physically among us, and I would not stand beside the body of our beloved Dayı draped in red, would not kiss his forehead and see him off. There was no longer any possibility of meeting him, of seeing his face.

He left us a great legacy. He will continue to live in our consciousness and in our hearts.

Who knows, perhaps one day I will break through these decaying walls and go to his resting place. ‘Dear Dayı,’ I will say. ‘You continue to be our guide. Your dreams are our dreams. Death is not powerful enough to take you from us...’

“You Left Behind a Family United as One Heart”

They were walking without going anywhere. Although their gaze touched everything around them, they saw neither the cotton-like clouds in the sky changing from one shape to another nor the cracks in the wall. They were neither bewildered nor detached from reality. They were simply preparing to set out on an inner journey in order to name what they were feeling at that moment. At a certain point in their steps, they would pass into another dimension and, by holding up a mirror to the broken, even faded frames of the past that were beginning to be forgotten, they would be able to see themselves and the bond between you and them more clearly.

As at times when they encountered something they had not yet been able to name, they found themselves strange. Your death had shaken them; they were inside a flood of emotion. There was pain and sorrow in that flood. Yet what they felt was not limited to these. There was pride too, longing and devotion. How all of them intertwined. The pain and sorrow that were most visible at that moment would ease with time, and other feelings would fill the space they left behind.

Although they are now your comrade, once they were a child. In childhood they had no dream of becoming a revolutionary. How could they? Their childhood coincided with days when not even a leaf stirred, days when revolutionism was condemned. But you existed. Without making your presence felt, you had entered their world. I do not mean that you were unaware: you knew that the light of the resistance continuing under your leadership would fall upon their life, or the life of someone else. Because you knew this, you said that resistance was necessary even if no one saw it, wrote about it or heard about it. They would come across the name of the organisation you had created in the pages of newspapers. What year it was, what the issue was, whether the article spoke well or badly of it—they could not remember.

Their own maternal uncle, whose face they had never seen, was in prison. Having an uncle who was a member of Revolutionary Left explained the selective attention that drew them to these things. As a little child moving among the adults, having their head stroked, broken sentences and isolated words reached their ears. The women whispering in the kitchen and the men holding forth in the sitting room over tea and cigarettes were talking about the same things, and what they heard was stored in their memory to be recalled one day: words such as prison and visit...

When they went to visit a relative staying at Samatya Hospital, they had bought lemon cologne. Dayı in prison, meanwhile, wanted a tracksuit without an emblem or writing on it, in a colour other than red, green, brown and several others. Yet at the time the child had a bright red tracksuit with writing all over it. In the child’s world, the effect of what was heard lasted only for that moment; soon they were absorbed again in play and lessons. They liked visiting people and wandering around the shops and markets. Unfortunately, because of the unpleasant duty of looking after a newborn sibling, their share was to remain at home. If I said they missed their uncle, they would first have had to know him in order to miss him.

For them, prison visits and things called court hearings meant seeing a new place and new people, yet new things about you and about all of you were being recorded in their memory. They too wanted to go and see these different places their sibling had visited. One day, after persistent requests and sulking had finally produced a result, they set off for Sultanahmet with their mother. For the first time they would be able to see their uncle in court. As they waited with their mother in front of that old building, time seemed not to pass. They put their failure to see their uncle down to bad luck. From what their mother learned after asking around, the hearing had not taken place. Because they had refused to wear the Uniform Clothing, they had come to the courtroom in their underwear, and the judge had cancelled the hearing. Thus their adventure with the prison and courtroom ended before it had even begun.

One day their sibling came home proudly. They had gone to see their uncle and had even asked him questions about the freedom action. In those days, news of the freedom action had exploded across television and the newspapers. Your enemies were astonished and your friends overjoyed. The children, meanwhile, were interested in which version of events was true. Although they were on the verge of leaving childhood behind, they were saddened not to have been in their sibling's place. They thought that if they had been able to go on the visit, they would have seen not only their uncle but you as well. Who knows—perhaps during an open visit, as they walked between mattresses spread out in the exercise yard and bubbling teapots, you might have stroked their head. That was how prison appeared in their imagination. They wanted to be in that one photograph in the album too.

Then one day the family stopped receiving news from their uncle. Notices were placed in newspapers. Their grandfather came from the village and, together with relatives who knew their way around the big city, went from door to door. As helplessness slowly turned into acceptance, the adults who knew the revolutionaries told stories about the uncle who had disappeared. His greatness and generosity were described through you. Apparently, through his hard work and modesty, he had attracted your attention among dozens of imprisoned comrades. You had spoken beautiful words about their uncle. Through these stories his courage was, as it were, confirmed again and again; for those left behind, your words were like balm spread over their wounds, easing their pain.

In the days when you were reorganising the Party and the Front, they became acquainted with Revolutionary Left again, this time in a different way, and began weighing whether the dreams they had held for the future up to that point could become reality. As their humane feelings collided with the reality of the system, their choice of revolution became clearer. Around this time they heard of the putsch within the revolutionary movement—how you had been taken prisoner, how you had condemned the putschists... The uncle they had forgotten for years came back to mind. As they wondered which side he had taken, they did not yet know the distance between their uncle and the filth of putschism, did not know that the two could never come together. When they learned the truth, they gained something beyond the pride they felt in their uncle: they gained you. You were now their Dayı too. Your existence gave strength.

Mahir, Che, Lenin, Marx... They came to know all of them after you, and felt fortunate because you existed. That was why a smile would settle on their face when, in rally grounds and at funerals, they raised their left fist and shouted slogans beginning with 'Long live...' It was as though you would live forever. In those days, the thought that you might die never crossed their mind. They imagined you together with the revolution. Like the other Front members, they shared dreams and wishes about you, about the revolution, about your return to the country; as they were told and retold, these dreams grew richer and more varied. They would welcome you as Lenin had been welcomed. Although they

did not know whether you made long speeches like Castro, they had heard somewhere that you spoke in long sentences. They wondered what you said. They read your writings in the magazine differently from everything else, trying to engrave every line into their memory. As a new year approached, they eagerly awaited the messages that would come from you, and then read them again and again. You placed new goals before them; you carried to them and to the others your confidence, excitement and enthusiasm. You gave them the feeling: we can do it.

The stories about you never ended. They would hear accounts they could never quite verify and did not think it right to ask about.

And then came that news... You know how difficult it is to receive such news behind walls. There was one consolation: you would not be alone on your final journey. You had left behind an immense family united as one heart. As they paced back and forth across the exercise yard, there was no longer any feeling left within them that they could not name. They had learned that, as a revolutionary who had grown up and become your comrade, this was not the time to let themselves go. You had taught them that. And through your practice and your theory, you would continue to teach.

Happy to have searched through the years and brought out their memories, feelings and longings connected with you, they went back inside. Once you had appeared in a dream: while constantly changing places, you suddenly began to sparkle, turned into a butterfly and disappeared. Now, far from rough hands, evil eyes and lying tongues, you were smiling broadly, one eye narrowed. From the depths of their heart they smiled back at you, and then, with complete seriousness, swore to keep everything you had created alive.

★

Shared Dreams

The first time I saw his photograph was on the cover of the book “A Cause, A Struggle and Victory”. I did not know who he was. The book had just been published, and I had only recently begun to know the revolutionaries. The friend who gave me the book said, “Look,” and showed me his photograph with a certain pride. I began to study it.

Dayı had a self-confident, defiant expression. On the court rostrums, under the conditions of 12 September, and on this road where we breathe and walk towards our goal, one had to know what one was doing and defend what one knew. I think of him. The more I think, the more the moments that left their mark on history come to mind. Dayı is our history, the most important part of our history. The court rostrums, the 1984 Death Fast, the putsch, the Party, his arrest in France, what we read about the first congress, and of course everything we thought and dreamed on the basis of these...

We used to share dreams of seeing him. We were in prison, but perhaps one day we too could attend the congress, or under other circumstances he would say, “Tell me,” and we would tell him everything we had, everything we did not have. Those would be the moments when we were most sincere and honest with ourselves... Perhaps many people thought about how Dayı would be protected. Perhaps I would become his bodyguard; perhaps I would throw myself in front of him as a shield.

After the revolution, Dayı would stand before enthusiastic, happy masses and make speeches. He would see those days... And every day that he drew breath, he too was thinking of us. It was 21 September. The sounds of bombs, the curses and shouts of those attacking, and the sound of

slogans reached our ward. We thought of our comrades and shouted slogans. At the same time, at the head of the barricade, our eyes fixed intently on the door as we waited for the attackers. Then one thought swept through all of us: “Dayı must be thinking of us!” As though it had been whispered from ear to ear and at the same time shouted with tremendous force, these words fell from all our lips and filled our ears. Perhaps it was Yasemin who first gave voice to what was in her heart. When they were arrested in the Aegean rural operation, in the face of the putschists’ irrelevant approaches, Dayı’s heart, thoughts and guidance were with us. None of us had seen him, yet we knew him, we recognised him. Cancer took him from among us. We could not see him. He did not see the days we dreamed of. But with a life devoted to the revolution, he charted our course. Through his guidance he taught us how to walk in the face of difficulties and obstacles, and what it meant to be ambitious and resolute. Dayı will always continue to live in our struggle, in the days we dream of...

★

The Stars Are Calling

It was a summer evening, one that “made our anger eternal”. No news had ever made me feel so unable to contain myself; with no slogan had I ever felt every vein in my body pulse so strongly. Because it was our leader whom we had to send off. Was it not he who gave life to these veins and made them flow with such enthusiasm?

August was the month when the stars were most numerous and brightest. Although the sky was enclosed by square walls, it still lit the exercise yard. We, the Free Prisoners, were sending the same salute together with thousands. Looking at the stars through the window, I kept saying to myself, “It is too soon,” because for me he meant revolution. And whenever I dreamed of the revolution, he was there on the rostrum, saluting the people among red flags and telling us that we still had much work to do.

The leaders of world revolution passed through my mind one by one: Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin, Mao, Fidel, Che... All the peoples of the world are brothers and sisters. The lines “Not language, culture or colour, but labour is supreme” seemed to beat out a rhythm in my heart. I imagined Lenin’s gesture embracing all the peoples of the world.

Had Che’s struggle in the mountains of Bolivia after the Sierra Maestra not shown the greatness of the star on his beret? I continued to watch the sky. How many stars illuminated the darkness of the night. Who knows, perhaps they too were standing in salute to the leader who, after so long, would finally satisfy his longing for his homeland. They seemed to say, “We want to adorn him with stars.”

It was my dreams that carried me to that moment, to the ceremony ground... When I bent down to kiss his forehead, a star appeared on that face. And then four red carnations smiled. Do not say carnations cannot smile. Everything beautiful smiles. Those who have lost their lives also smile through what they have given to humanity, through what they have created. Once again it was he who gave beauty to dreams and strength to reality. At every step on the road towards becoming the new human being, I could see his trace. He had seen the traps on this road and shown us how we had to equip ourselves in order to overcome these obstacles. He was the name of ideological steadfastness and confidence in the people. That was why we shouted his name together with thousands. To be illuminated by the light of the star that appeared on his face, to walk on the road he showed us, was an honour for us. Once again, I bow with respect before his memory.

I Heard Your Voice from Cassettes...

One day my elder brother brought a cassette home and put it into the stereo. As the cassette played, my brother began to cry. He was not simply shedding a few tears; he was sobbing like a defenceless little child. As he cried he kept saying, “They are beautiful people.” Yes, they were very beautiful people. The cassette contained a recording of the Sabos’ resistance at Çiftehavuzlar. As long as that cassette remained in the house, I put on the headphones and listened to it. In his final moments, Sabo was sending his greetings to Dayı. I was deeply impressed.

So I came to know him through my elder brother, who sympathised with a different organisation. My love for Dayı developed before I even came to know our comrades. Later I too listened to various accounts about Dayı and read his writings in books. But what truly filled me with enthusiasm were his speeches and images on videotape. By then I was part of the organised struggle. My comrade brought to the place where I was staying some tapes containing images and speeches of him. I pressed my ear against the speaker of the rather old television, which did not carry sound very well, and began to listen. How beautifully he spoke; he explained things at length. Perhaps because I was alone in the house, I became completely absorbed. I noticed my comrades entering at the same moment that I saw the smiles in their eyes. I smiled too, but a few days later I asked a question that had been on my mind: “... Do you think Dayı knows me?” My comrade smiled at me; I suppose it was not the first time they had heard that question. I had the chance to hear from that comrade some stories about Dayı. I knew and could see that everyone loved him. I thought the reason he was loved so much was his devotion.

So many things come to mind. The feelings I experienced with the New Year message that arrived as we entered the year 2000. The message was from Dayı. I remember that day very clearly. The text was read out in the place where we were carrying out our work. Our comrade spoke as though speaking in his voice. I saw their face light up even more. The wording may not be exactly the same, but a few of Dayı’s words have remained in my mind to this day: “Being a revolutionary means being aware of yourself and of the world we live in; whoever does not trust themselves trusts the enemy.”

At times I also wrote letters to him in my mind. Some long, some short, during and after our Great Resistance... There were times, when I was settling accounts with myself, that he would appear before my eyes. When I heard the news, sadness filled me. “Why?” I said. “It was much too soon.” But when I freed myself from those feelings, what remained were lasting feelings and thoughts. Dayı is on my mind now more than ever. He continues to walk without giving up. He says: Do not forget, being a revolutionary means being aware of yourself and of the world we live in.

We Are With Him!...

We are with him again... Once again we are together with Him, with Them, with our carnations. We place our hands over our hearts and say this with great happiness and devotion. The pain of physically losing our Dayı is great, but our honour, and our responsibility to make an immense legacy even greater, are greater still...

He left us that great legacy, that great struggle of ours; everything he had learned from history, from the peoples, from the revolutions of the world, enlarging it, teaching it, creating new values and

new firsts. There was a part of all of us in him. He was the expression of the will, devotion and faith of all of us... And in every one of us there is certainly a part of Him. He became so deeply internalised within us that, just as before his death we looked together with Him at the past and present of our world, our country and ourselves, understood, comprehended and learned together with Him, and walked with firmer steps on our road to the future, from today into tomorrow we will again walk in the same way with Him... Just as in our most difficult and painful days we resisted with Him and overcame difficulties - the most recent example being the pain of his physical departure from among us, which he made us overcome with the instruction, “Do not cry” - so too, if we rejoiced together in our greatest joys and shared the happiness of victories together in the halays, it is so today and it will be so tomorrow...[2]

We did not need to know him personally in order to say that we are with Him... Of course we would have wanted to know him. But what matters is to feel, to live... To say we are with Him is to know that He is our life... He is the name of the finest qualities of all of us and of the peoples of Anatolia... Everything he said and explained is the simplest expression of the reality of our lives and our history... His words, “There is no weapon stronger than the human will that has defeated death,” are the simplest definition of our will, our labour and our consciousness of power embodied in His personality... We learned from Him that revolutionary will knows no limits. From his life we learned the boundlessness of the will of a person who, under every condition and circumstance, is conscious of being right... From Him we learned that the will of a person with a goal is a tremendous force... As we walked without deviating even a millimetre from our claim to revolution, our consciousness of power and our road, we saw our will turn into “self-sacrifice” in the prisons, the mountains and the cities. He showed us, and we saw, that as we walked with Him, sacrifice would become the mass will of the peoples and carry us to that great day. And we also understood that, as our consciousness and will advance towards our goal, our break with the system accelerates in every moment of life. Our will and our claim are reflected in everything from the way we dress to the way we speak and write, and they permeate every particle of our being. In the end, the boundless happiness of becoming still more united with Him is revealed... Our HOPE has grown through our faith and will to leave behind our own I and transform our whole being into a drop in the sea of WE... This is how our history was written... When he said, “This history is, above all, the history of our martyrs written in blood...”, he was also teaching us how the history of HOPE was written, how hope was created, and how we must look at our history from the Bedreddins to the present day... In today’s world, while the history of the peoples is denied, while the consciousness of millions is numbed and the history of the rulers is imposed and taught as the dominant history, our Dayı is the one who modestly taught us, his students, how to look at history and the future...

Without deviating from his strategic objective, when he expressed with the words “Knowledge is power” what and how we must learn and understand from the experiences and histories of the peoples of our country and the world, he taught us not to lean our backs on this or that power, but to keep our feet on the soil of our own country and sit on our own Marxist-Leninist chair... Now once again we look at yesterday and tomorrow with Him... We follow developments with Him... Whether in the Caucasus or elsewhere in the world, once again with him we give a name to the conflicts among the imperialists themselves... Against the imperialists’ efforts to build armies, develop immense technologies and prolong their own lives in order to force the peoples of the world into submission, together we create the united organisations and policies of the peoples... As the imperialists expand

2 Halay: a communal Anatolian folk dance, usually performed in a line or circle with participants linked by the hands or shoulders.

their oppression and exploitation, their fear of revolution grows in parallel... Their fear drives them to enlarge every kind of siege they build around our hope... “After all, they no longer have a Dayı,” they think... But the reality of life will prove them wrong. Just as it did before... The peoples of this country who created our Dayı, and our claim, mean that Dayı is here once again. Facts are powerful and revolutionary.

We will continue to speak with His voice, to shout the truth, and we will walk into the future with Him...

★

A Legacy Was Left!

Once, like a dry log, we were being tossed here and there in a sea of darkness, struggling not to sink while wasting ourselves on empty dreams, when the Adalılar took us by the hand... The Adalılar, the finest of people, courageous adventurers of hopeful adventures. As we began to learn that becoming human and living humanly, instead of drifting like a dry log, was true happiness, those great-hearted Adalılar said, “We are Dayı’s students.” In a system that is the enemy of humanity and of the finest values created by humankind, we first learned that saying WE instead of I means love, devotion and labour. And now our Dayı and WE were one great family... From the very first day, the strength and confidence of becoming WE, the warmth of stepping into a new life, of dreaming hopeful dreams and, most importantly, of running after hopeful dreams and happy tomorrows, filled us. And that warmth grew and spread in proportion to the labour we gave, the price we paid, and our love for our people and our homeland...[3]

And from the very first day we understood and saw that to say, “We are a great family,” meant Dayı... We saw how the eyes of the Adalılar shone when they spoke of Dayı; we saw the love, respect and confidence felt for Him. The more we learned, the more we trusted, loved and became bound to him... We saw and learned the principles, rules, traditions and morality of our great family by living them ourselves. And we became infinitely, boundlessly devoted to our Dayı who created this family, and to our carnations who gave life to the hope of our family, to the hope of all of us.

Once, while dreaming empty dreams at the bottom of the wells of “I”, we would say: if only some great inheritance were left to us by an unknown Dayı in distant lands, then perhaps we would be saved... But when the great-hearted Adalılar took us by the hand and pulled us out of those wells of “I”, we saw and understood that salvation lay in becoming WE and walking on the road shown by Dayı. Most of us first came to know Dayı with that index finger raised, putting fascism on trial and shouting, “We Are Right, We Will Win.” We knew that when he said “we are right”, he said it with the strength and conviction of the history of all the oppressed and working people, of the prices they had paid, and of the scientific laws of nature and social development; and when he said “we will win”, he said it with the claim of being hope, of being daring, of wresting the future from their hands whatever the cost. Our history, epic after epic, has been proof of this faith and this claim... That is why, as the love and confidence of our people and the peoples of the world in our Dayı and our great family grew, so too did the hatred and fear of the exploiters and enemies of the people.

Yes, we had a Dayı. Our Dayı was a strong, indestructible fortress against which we rested our backs, a guide whom we would follow without hesitation... We had our Dayı, and for us there was no

3 Adalılar: Islanders. Referring Mahir Çayan's poem with the same name. Here it means revolutionaries.

problem that could not be solved, no obstacle that could not be overcome. Through his own example, he taught us the power of human will, how to walk without straying from one's path under the most difficult conditions, how to devote everything to hope.

Our Dayı too was rich, but his wealth was not wealth in property, possessions or money. Our Dayı was rich in knowledge, and in this sense he was wise... The answers to the questions and the solutions to the problems concerning the present and future of the struggle that opened the road for our great family and for humanity were found in our wise one. Our Dayı was rich in knowledge and experience. Because he was the most hard-working and daring student of Marx, Lenin, Stalin and Mao. He was the one who understood Mahir, Deniz and İbo most correctly. And when he said, "Our Road Is the Road of the Çayans," there was in his consciousness the strength and richness of having determined the road to our victory...

Our Dayı was rich in resistance. The entire history of resistance of the oppressed was embodied in Him. That is why, when he pointed his finger at the oppressors, imperialism and its collaborators, in order to put them and their system of oppression on trial, he said: "Facing you are the Spartacuses, the Bedreddins, the Pir Sultans, the Paris Communards, the Ches and the Mahirs." Neither the oppression of the juntas, nor hunger, nor torture and repression, nor betrayal, nor even the gravest illnesses could exhaust his resistance. Our Dayı was rich in daring. To walk on the road of the Mahirs is itself an act of daring, and Dayı's daring was as great as his faith in revolution and his devotion to the Mahirs...

It is that great daring which for thirty-eight years has been the most fundamental reason behind every step we have taken, the epics we have created, the confidence that makes hearts tremble when Hope is mentioned, and the fear of the oppressors... Our Dayı was rich in the daring that said, "We will shake the world once again from Turkey"; that answered the oppressors in the language they understand; that challenged the junta, the USA and those who said the world had changed and socialism was dead; and that created a great army of hope marching under the slogan "Victory or Death"... Yes, Dayı was very rich, and that wealth created the strength of his will. Until his final moment he showed us the will of a person who believed, and he carried out his final duty in a manner worthy of Dayı.

With that great revolutionary will which has never bowed or bent before the oppressors, we wrote a history filled with epics, created countless firsts and became Hope. To be Hope meant to be a great family equipped with that great will, and the children of Hope, the students of Dayı, showed by writing epics of sacrifice that we possess the will of "Victory or Death".

A legacy was left to us by Dayı... The most magnificent form of loving the people and the homeland; the passion for winning victory and the future that spread in waves with the words "We Are Right, We Will Win"; the will to walk upright on difficult roads, through storms, in the darkest oppression and in the face of death; the determination of Victory or Death - these were left to us as Dayı's legacy...

A legacy was left to us by Dayı. A great honour that brought new values to humanity... The pride of a family that, from yesterday into tomorrow, created epic after epic, countless firsts, revolutionary values and traditions. A legacy was left to us by Dayı... A devotion that knows no separation, a great army that says: if I exist, then Hope exists too...

It is our legacy, our promise and our honour... Our Dayı is our flag that will live forever.

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In Our Hearts!

Every death is too early, but your departure was the most painful, the one that cannot be grown accustomed to or accepted. Your final journey was the first and last appointment you gave me; I could not come, I could not make it in time.

As you were returning to your homeland, for which your longing had multiplied many times over - perhaps while you were in the skies above Istanbul, the city of seven hills - I was at the court rostrum... Just as we learned from you, in the direction you showed, our finger and our eyes were fixed defiantly on the owners of oppression. Yes, on that very day we were in court. Until then I had never once wanted to hear the word “release”. But it did not happen; I could not come, I could not make it to the final appointment you gave me. Of the fifteen thousand friendly and comradely shoulders, none was mine, proudly bearing the weight beneath your sacred body. What fell to us was to fulfil this honourable duty with comradely hearts and to stand upright before the cell walls that searched our condition for the slightest hesitation... Now, as I load a deep, dark sorrow onto the clouds flowing towards you, here in this narrow cell I am striving to carry with honour the values you created.

You believed, you worked, you gave immense labour and created a vast hope, for the love of beautiful days. When my horizon was no wider than the diameter of a grain of barley, you took me by the hand and made me a flame in the blazing fire that burns for humanity. Even when I did not trust myself, you trusted me, just as you trusted the millions burdened with pain and hope. With that trust you gave me, gave us, strength and courage. To win your trust is so precious, and to be worthy of that trust is just as heavy a responsibility. Carrying it demands strength, most of all heart. “You have this heart,” you say now, smiling with every sunrise. You trusted us, and at the same time you always watched over us so that we could shoulder heavier burdens. With mastery you showed us the small steps we took. Just as a father watches his child’s first steps - both fearing that the child may fall and encouraging them to take firmer and bigger ones - so too did you watch us. As we enlarged our steps, you made us the most “hope-filled hearts” of the human family.

Now the cell is narrow, the walls are high. There is door behind door. The doors are locked one on top of another. Those who built these places have not received even the smallest share of humanity. The comrade is far away, with a wall between us... Isolation reaches into the marrow. But who could feel loneliness when now, together with our martyrs, we are in the most infinite crowds; we are all together. It is our sublime love, growing day by day, that makes even these narrow cells and so many unbearable things bearable. No, we did not send you away. You did not separate from us, you did not go anywhere. We took you and placed you in our hearts, in the air we breathe, in the laughter we let out, in the tears we shed, in our dreams, in our consciousness, in the slogan we shout, in the cell that melts away, in the rising sun...

We obeyed your testament. There are neither tears in our eyes nor the slightest hesitation. “With you but without you”, our great struggle will certainly reach its conclusion. With the legacy you left, many revolutionaries worthy of your trust will be raised, and they will bring you the most precious gift: the revolution.

To Those Whose Lives Are Eternal

Turning his forehead
towards the light shining from Kızıldere,
a young heart
fell like a drop into that sacred river...

A drop
that held an ocean of humanity in its essence...

He plunged into life like a clenched fist,
walked towards tomorrow with unshakeable steps.

Steps that were
daring that made the oppressor tremble;
daring that was an invitation to struggle.

Struggle was
to mingle with the waters of Kızıldere,
to flow by cleaving the breast of steep mountains,
to mix the mortar of tomorrows.

Struggle was
to fall in love,
to surge with you, hungry and thirsty,
to speak drop by drop,
to walk vein by vein,
to grow hope by hope.

Hope was
springing from his footsteps.
Ab-ı Hayat was the spirit of sacrifice of hope:
[4]the first spark in the darkness,
the first drop in a life turned to desert,
the first voice in the midst of silence,
the first fist in a struggle said to be finished,
and labour and patience and faith,
and the great love - these were His life.

That life,
immortal through the carnations;
carnations that are epics,
epics that are tomorrows,
tomorrows that are our Dayı,
our Dayı, who is our honour...

4 Ab-ı Hayat: an Ottoman Turkish expression meaning “Water of Life”, the legendary water or elixir associated with immortality.

October 2008
Kırıklar No. 1 F-Type Prison
Free Prisoners

What Kind of Pain Is This?

Words are of little use; definitions only narrow things down. We can measure his greatness only by the void he left behind. “Dayı has arrived,” they had said. A storm of excitement swept through my whole being. How that excitement strained the limits of my heart.

I remember it as if it were yesterday. I had not even asked where he might be. I knew, because my feet would draw me towards him. He was a centre of attraction. I went. In the back garden of a coffeehouse, people were gathered around a table. They were debating. Or rather, comrade Haydar Başbağ was criticising some people who were among the ideologues of the “Halkın Sesi” newspaper at the time.

With an extraordinary style, he continuously quoted from the Marxist classics. Those on the other side seemed bewildered by what had hit them. They could not form even a single sentence in reply. I recognised Dayı. He was wearing a jumper, and over it a black garment like an overcoat or trench coat. Our eyes met. His gaze caught mine and he smiled. I thought to myself, “Ah, if only Dayı would speak a little too, if I could hear his voice, observe him debating.” Dayı was only listening to the discussion at the table. Eventually, after a while, the ideologues of Halkın Sesi withdrew from the debate.

Dayı said, “This is what they call opportunism. You see the situation opportunists fall into, comrades.” And he began to assess the conditions of the day. Each sentence of Dayı seemed to chart a path. It opened the way forward. The more I listened, the more my admiration grew. I had seen him, drawn close to him, been influenced by him. For me, he was now the expression of taking hold and wrenching free. The expression of solidarity, taking responsibility and gaining strength.

I thought Dayı was the most radical gain of these lands, whose uncompromising difference was discussed all day long at home, in the street, in the marketplace. My dreams grew richer with him. I encountered my Dayı once again. It was after a clash. During the clash, I had seen that a comrade was trapped by a police cordon in a narrow street and had run to bring word.

Dayı was crouching down, right in the middle of the square. He had a thin stick in his hand. He was drawing things in the earth and explaining something. “Let us wait until the situation becomes clear; we will get him out of there,” he was saying. As far as I understood, he was talking about raiding the police station. He was assigning duties to his comrades. I felt as though I were in a dream world. A leader of a people, right in the middle of a clash, amid uninterrupted gunfire and the whistling of bullets, was writing a note into the golden pages of history: “Let us wait until the situation becomes clear; we will get him out of there.”

I was proud. I had witnessed that Dayı possessed a supremacy of will that gave surrender no chance even under the most adverse conditions. Those few sentences he uttered explained everything - absolutely everything - more than enough. After knowing him, who would not take a step forward? After knowing him, I had abolished the distance between struggle and myself. He was joy taking root within us. With his departure, my voice is in the claws of abandonment. Do not be angry

with me, do not take offence. I was caught unprepared - what good does it do? Can death be so stark, so untimely? Who can I call Dayı now? Tell me. Who can we call Dayı now? What kind of pain is this?

The World Stopped!

We received the news of our Leader just as we were about to finish the new issue of our magazine Umut*. And at that moment... the world stopped... Words hung in the air. Eyes stared without moving. Breathing became difficult. Feet locked in place. There was nowhere to put our hands. The world stopped... Colours disappeared. Sounds vanished. Heartbeats changed. The blood flowing through our veins stood still. The heart swelled and swelled, unable to fit within itself. The lungs refused oxygen, resisted. Minutes passed, hours passed. The weight grew heavier. But time did not move forward; it stood still. Then the voice of the Sage echoed: “Come on, lift your heads, lift them and continue on your path with the same faith. We still have much work to do!”

His eyes shone brightly. He looked with the confidence that said, “My mind is at ease; I will not be looking back.” He pointed out the road to be walked. The world began to turn again...

History spoke. It told of the Sage. It shared how sieges are broken, how rings of fire are crossed, where the strength to lead comes from. It told the secret of thinking like the Sage, perceiving like the Sage, feeling like the Sage; of looking far ahead, always towards the horizon, and from today trying to see the victory that will be lived there. As history told its story, the colours came alive and the sounds multiplied. Until today there had been the ease of expecting everything from him, of saying, “He will solve it, he will show the way.” But from now on it will be the time to say: if he were here, how would he think, how would he act? How would he behave, which road and method would he choose, how would he reach the result?... It will be the time to think, to understand, to try to comprehend, to put it into practice. We will live the privilege of thinking of the answer he would give without being able to ask him, of drawing from his source.

We know this: his eyes will always be upon us. We have no doubt that his voice will always be in our ears. And we promise that he will continue to be our guide on the road we walk. We will become his voice and proclaim him. We endured everything with our Sage. We will learn to endure separation with our Sage as well. And we will never let him down.

You streaked across the sky like a star, and our hearts remained with you. You rose in our consciousness as thousands of stars, and your light remained with us. We will continue “to walk without him but with him”. We will not let his absence be felt; we will never betray the trust he placed in us, the Free Prisoners. We bow respectfully before his memory and swear that we will make real the dream of a free and independent Turkey to which he devoted his life. Our Sage lives, and will continue to live.

Stay with UMUT.

Tekirdağ No. 2 F-Type Prison
Free Prisoners

*Umut: the name of the magazine published by the Free Prisoners in Tekirdağ No. 2 F-Type Prison.

Hope Stands Upright: With Our Dayı

Is our Dayı gone now? Yes, perhaps we will never again hear his voice, never again see his eyes, sometimes flashing like sparks and sometimes smiling with love. Perhaps we will never embrace again, never wrap our arms around his body... But is he really gone? No. Of course not. He stands upright like a rock, like a monument, again at the very front. Again he shows the way... Our Dayı exists through his life and what he taught us... He lives through his life, his teachings and his thoughts, and continues to show the way. What kind of life was his? What did we learn from him? Can the answers to these questions ever end? They cannot... What did we learn? We think the answer would not fit into books. But let us nevertheless begin with one of the first things we learned, one of the things he taught as the foundation of being a revolutionary. Let us tell it as far as our minds can grasp and our words can express.

Perhaps first of all we learned from him not to surrender. Not for a while, not for a period, not for a moment; we learned not to surrender throughout an entire life, to defend revolution and revolutionary thought under all conditions and to fulfil what they require.

We learned that no excuse, no condition could ever be a justification for surrendering to the system, and that such surrender could never be accepted. In other words: being a revolutionary for a lifetime, under all conditions...

At a very young age he confronted the attacks and repression of the 12 March fascism against the leaders and the people with his revolutionary faith; he embraced and defended the ideology of THKP-C. He did not allow the “Old Abis”, renegades and the weary to distort the ideology of THKP-C; he resisted liquidationism and did not surrender. Despite his very young age, he struggled militantly, stubbornly and persistently against distorted interpretations of THKP-C. When necessary, he did not hesitate to part ways with those who said they followed Mahir’s road but had strayed from that road.

When the 12 September fascist junta came, as the leader of a still very young movement, Revolutionary Left, his first words were: “The Fascist Junta Cannot Force 45 Million People into Submission.” He resisted fascist terror and the attempt to destroy revolutionary identity in the prisons; he did not surrender. When the time came, he resisted at the very front against the TTE - the Single-Type Uniform, the blue shroud that would turn revolutionaries into political corpses - lying down to face death as a Death Fast resister; he did not surrender. He did not accept captivity. He never abandoned his passion for freedom. He never accepted being imprisoned between four walls. The day came when he broke through the walls and passed beyond them. He did not surrender to wire fences or iron bars; he smashed his way through.

The enemy tried to destroy us with massacre operations, to stop the march of the revolution. One after another, he lost many leading and cadre comrades, including members of the Central Committee, and he lost his wife. He did not surrender. He did not stop for a moment; his voice did not tremble. He stood upright and continued walking.

He endured exile. Thousands of kilometres from his homeland and his people, yet always in his country and among his people; sometimes alone, by himself, but always together with his people and his comrades. He did not surrender to the conditions of exile, of being “far away” and “alone”. He lived for his people and his homeland, filled with love for the people and the homeland.

He witnessed betrayals; he was stabbed in the back. He did not collapse, he did not surrender. “If necessary, I will break this movement down to its atoms and recreate it,” he said. He left those who betrayed to face one another with their betrayals. He continued to show the way at the very front of the revolutionary march.

He did not bow to impossibilities or deprivation; he did not surrender. He did not say, “It cannot be done.” He also taught us not to say “it cannot be done”. He recreated. They say creation “belongs to God alone”, but when the time came he recreated even the human being! New and very young people, under his leadership and instruction, took on new duties and responsibilities and learned what leadership meant.

Under siege, amid fear, betrayal, selfishness and deprivation, he did not surrender. He became courage; through his devoted life he became the one who broke through the sieges. At the beginning of his revolutionary life he did not say, “I am young, I am new,” in the face of the historical responsibility he had to shoulder; nor, later, on battlefields where he had become experienced and mature and where his contemporaries had long since withdrawn, did he say, “I am old.” And then the day came when he encountered a merciless, treacherous illness - a calamity that made one say, “Perhaps this was the only thing that had not yet happened to him.”

He did not surrender. He resisted this relentless illness before which medicine itself was helpless. For ten years this illness did not, could not, become an obstacle to his duties and responsibilities. At times he may have writhed in indescribable pain, but not once was his back brought to the ground. And he continued his duties until the last six days of his life... Until the last four days he was not confined to bed. He stood upright, in that same guiding posture we knew from the courts of fascism... Until his final day he never lost consciousness. This was the will embodied in a life kneaded with courage and labour for an entire lifetime... Throughout a lifetime that will was never broken, never bent, never yielded. It was like steel. Our Dayı’s life is us, from Revolutionary Left to the Party-Front... The history of the Party-Front is the life of our Dayı. His life is the history of our Movement. The two are one whole and cannot be separated.

Whatever our Dayı lived, our movement lived. Whatever our movement lived, our Dayı lived as well... In short: Hope stands upright; it lives with our Dayı.

★

He Was Like the Mountain We Leaned Our Backs Against...

Did Marx die? Did Engels, Lenin and Stalin die? Did Che Guevara die? Or could Fidel die, for example?

Did those who fell like İshak not rise and walk like Bedreddin? Is it not Pir Sultan who rose from Hallaj-i Mansur’s gallows? Do the Şahinbeys and Karayılans who fought and fell for the independence of Anatolia not live? Which of the Suphis has died?

Do those who fell at Kızıldere not still carry life into our soil? From the Mahirs to the Kevsers, are ours not the ones who truly live? What bullet could kill Niyazi, Sabo and the Sinans? Who says they are dead?

No! The peoples have taken away from them the right to die.

In lives born anew, they are now destined to walk towards tomorrow. As long as there are those who walk the road they created, they will look through their eyes, grip the gun with their hands, and question history with their fists. As long as we exist, they will live. He was like the mountain we leaned our backs against. And a mountain does not simply disappear from the face of the earth. He still stands there upright. When we stumble he will take us by the hand, when we tire he will give us strength, when we succeed he will smile, and when we fail his brows will furrow.

We will always feel his hand on our shoulder, because it is there. He was like a tree rarely found on earth, sheltering us in its shade and feeding us with its fruit. We will continue to shelter in his shade and feed on what he produced. We preserve the smiles frozen on our lips, so that one day we may laugh together. And we will preserve them until we stand shoulder to shoulder in that magnificent halay. We preserve the spark of anger in our eyes. And we will preserve it so that one day we may introduce the palaces to that spark. And that day will come.

Before us is a life like an epic that will warm our hearts every time we look at it. To do everything we can to be worthy of him is a debt upon us. And of course, that debt is paid most beautifully with revolution. We will present the revolution to him...

★

Victory Oath

We are in mourning
Our mourning is not silence
We are in mourning
Our mourning is not lamentation
Our mourning is rebellion
Our mourning
and our wound are of the mountains

With the fire
and the sorrow of death
of all the leaders of rebellion
who come tearing out of history

Our mourning
is an indescribable ache
Our mourning
is pure love
Our mourning
is rage from head to toe
Our mourning
is devotion unto death

An honourable flag
waving upon our breast
Its direction victory, always victory

Our lips locked together
we shout your voice

swallowing
the fist knotted in our throat
in our larynx

An unbowed legacy
combative, brave
uncompromising - your life, your name
immortal

You are our Leader
In the heart
there is more of you than pain
Where you are
there is more Hope than sorrow
You are our oath to victory

13 August 2008
İ. G.

★

Helal Olsun!...[5]

The poor peoples of our Anatolia, whatever their nation, nationality or belief, possess certain common values born of living together for thousands of years. These values have a character that draws them closer, unites them and makes them brothers and sisters. One of these, at funeral ceremonies, is “asking for helallik”, one of the final duties towards loved ones who are no longer physically among them and whom they are sending into immortality. So that the person being sent to eternity will suffer no pain in the grave, the relatives who remain alive affirm that no debt, claim or unsettled right remains between them and the deceased. When the Imam or Dede asks, “Do you give your blessing and forgive any claim you may have?”, those present answer loudly enough to be heard, repeating three times: “Helal Olsun!”[67]

At every funeral ceremony, before going to the cemetery, in the mosque or cemevi and again in front of the home of the deceased, asking those present at the funeral prayer for “helallik” is one of the basic rules of these two beliefs... Likewise, among the neighbours belonging to the ancient Christian Orthodox or Gregorian faiths present on the lands of Anatolia, it has become a tradition at such moments to join, with complete sincerity and heartfelt feeling and in a voice that can be heard, in granting helallik to the person before whose home it is being asked, even if they are not of the same faith.[8]

On the lands of Anatolia, where people of different beliefs live side by side, intertwined and in peace, this behaviour is regarded as an entirely natural, humane and necessary duty. The opposite behaviour is regarded as strange and shameful. And this is sincerely practised for all people, without

5 Helal Olsun: in this funeral context, an expression of forgiveness and release from any personal claim or debt against the deceased; roughly, “I give my blessing / I hold nothing against them.”

6 Dede: literally “grandfather”; in the Alevi tradition, a hereditary religious and spiritual elder or leader.

7 Helallik: the practice of asking for and granting forgiveness, blessing and release from personal claims or debts, especially before a funeral or final departure.

8 Cemevi: an Alevi house of worship and communal gathering; literally “house of cem”.

exception. Of course, this is not so for the Kanal 7 reporter who, acting as the voice of “Moderate Islam” and the mouthpiece of American-collaborationist governments, serves those who trade in religion on the lands of Anatolia, exploiting the pure and sincere beliefs and feelings of our people to accumulate fortunes, fill their coffers and swell their bellies. For revolutionaries who have sworn to disrupt their order and their savage machinery of exploitation, to destroy this system sustained through inhuman lies and massacres, and who have devoted their lives to humanity and this honourable ideal, they break this rule, demand that it be broken and trample on traditions. Because for them religious faith, worship, rules and traditions take shape, exist or disappear according to their material interests.

It seems that Kanal 7, the merchant of religion and “Moderate Islamist” channel, could not stomach the fact that “helallik” was asked from the thousands of people attending the funeral of the Leader and Commander-in-Chief of the People’s Liberation War, the creator of the Hope of the peoples of Anatolia, and that thousands answered in a loud voice: “HELAL OLSUN!”

The Kanal 7 reporters made what they called a news report, saying: “...At the funeral prayer held in the mosque for DHKP-C leader Dursun Karataş, who gave the order for 221 people to be killed, helallik was requested...”

In such situations our people express their reproach by saying, “There is no place for you to lie down,” and at such moments they condemn and shame those who display such immoral behaviour, outside all propriety and faith, and sometimes punish them in various ways as well... What else could be expected from a TV channel established with money stolen from the mouths of the people of Istanbul, founded through trickery by seizing assets belonging to the Istanbul Municipality, and operated with illicit money? Even if a person has no faith, when making such a report they should at least have a conscience, a sense of justice. What difference is there between you and the counter-guerrillas and psychopaths who desecrate graves and smash gravestones? Truly, there is no place for you to lie down!

Whose death did DHKP-C leader Dursun Karataş order?

The torturers; the generals who disappeared and massacred people, who forced Kurdish peasants to crawl naked over snow and ice in winter and made them eat excrement; police chiefs who oppressed the people and labourers; killers; mafia men; the coup-makers of 12 March and 12 September; the enemy-of-the-people Prime Ministers whose torture, gendarme beatings and prison oppression made our people say, “May you waste away slowly”; the monopoly bourgeoisie who exploited the people of Anatolia until they were in need of a single slice of bread; prosecutors and judges who denied justice to the people; counter-guerrilla lawyers; the dogs, the MİT... In other words, Dursun Karataş gave death orders against the whole collection of ill-gotten, enemy-of-the-people forces whose hands never leave our throats, who deny the people bread, justice and freedom. May he rest in light - what a fine thing he did! For our Sage of Anatolia, our Dayı, who throughout the years he lived and led the liberation struggle of the peoples of Anatolia strove for the people’s justice to be realised and in this way brought relief to the hearts of the people, three times is not enough: thousands of times, HELAL OLSUN!

And let Kanal 7’s heartlessness, fraud and collaborationism hang around their necks like a placard!...

Once again for our Dayı: Helal Olsun... Helal Olsun... Helal Olsun...

Şahmaran[9]

Şahmaran
lives underground
until it finds
a new road for itself,

That great teacher
the intellectual of his people
Aydın

When he was a forestry engineer
when he planted pine saplings
in the soil
the Forest would grow
would grow
Hope
forest upon forest
together with the Forest,

Şahmaran
lives underground
until it finds
a new road for itself,
the aim is not to protect oneself
but to be able to protect the people

In front of the tanks,
beneath tank tracks
as the saplings are broken
new saplings
sprout
forest upon forest

Years later, as footsteps
grow
while the Şahmarans
take to the roads
while finding
new roads
one by one,

9 Şahmaran: a legendary serpent-woman or serpent queen in Anatolian, Kurdish, Persian and Mesopotamian folklore, associated with wisdom, healing and sacrifice.

While the tyrants
spread terror
in the streets
in the homes
the Şahmarans
find a new road
Immortal
Invincible

23 May 2008
M. A.

★

A Life Dedicated to the Revolution...

A life devoted to revolution, and only to revolution. An understanding that shaped all his thoughts, feelings and actions according to the needs and interests of the revolution. In accordance with this understanding, he approached with love everyone, every idea and every event that strengthened and nourished the revolution. The awakening and organisation of the masses, the creation of an institution, the revolution gaining a new position, the organisation of one person, every blow struck against the enemy - all of these made him happy. Against the enemy, against its ideology and against those who sought to carry that ideology into the revolutionary ranks, he attacked with anger. He was uncompromising towards every weakness that harmed or slowed the revolution.

The definition of being a revolutionary for an entire lifetime took concrete form in him. Every moment of his life was spent advancing the revolution, right up to his final moment... To such an extent that he organised and planned even his death and what would come after it...

There is an account about Lenin. The Menshevik leader Plekhanov was curious about Lenin and asked Axelrod, who knew him more closely: “What kind of person is Lenin? How does he influence people, how does he convince them?” Axelrod replied: “Picture in your mind a person who thinks about the revolution twenty-four hours a day, including the hours when he sleeps, because Lenin sees the revolution even in his dreams.”

Could a revolution have been made in any other way? Lenin was the leader of the Soviet peoples; he was the leader of the peoples of Turkey. There is nothing in the lives of revolutionary leaders other than revolution. And this too must be stated clearly: in this life, every moment of which was lived for the revolution and which was filled with great sacrifices, there was not once a request for himself.

His organisational ability, his insistence on supervising and following up work, and his determination to achieve results are well known. For a task to be disrupted, neglected or delayed is for the revolution itself to be delayed. With this consciousness, he was never tolerant of such failings; he became angry and furious. And if what had been neglected was a detail concerning the safety or health of a comrade, his anger grew even greater. Everything would be turned upside down. There are many examples: one of our prisoners being left without money, one of our fighters being left without a weapon, one of our illegal comrades being left without a home, and so on. He would become angry, he would rage. In such situations there was only one exception: himself. Yes, if what

was needed was a house, an identity document or something similar for his own security, he found it difficult even to mention it.

Of course everyone knew that he had no private life; these needs were not private needs either, but the needs of the Movement. Not one of our people would think otherwise, it would not even cross their mind. Yet he was extremely sensitive about this, even shy.

The decision for him to go abroad after 12 July was made only as a result of the cadres' great insistence and pressure. Was such sensitivity necessary? Perhaps someone might say, "No, it was unnecessary." But those who have internalised being a revolutionary for a lifetime, those who know the culture of the Party-Front, understand this attitude. This style is the style and culture of leadership. There was no "I" in his life. There never was. It was such a style that, just as he planned every moment of his life, he also planned his death and even then made no personal request: he did not say, "Let the funeral be held here, let there be a great ceremony," and so on. The only thing he wanted was to be among, and within, the people he loved so much and to whom he had devoted his life. Because for him only one thing mattered: fulfilling the promise of revolution he had given to his comrades and his people.

"We will shake the world once again, this time from Turkey," you said. We believed you. Your word is our word. We are on your path. Like you, we will not deviate from this path until our final moment. And on that great day of victory when we shake the world, we will be together with you and all our immortal heroic martyrs.

★

Master of History

Listen, O human being,
a young man is speaking.
Mahir in struggle,
Mahir in thought,
Mahir in making the enemy suffer,
Mahir too in giving confidence to friends.
That young man you see,
yes, the one who reads day and night,
who researches, asks and questions -
that young man, yes, that is the one I mean.
The one who organises, who thinks,
who learns and teaches
with the worker, the peasant, the student -
that young man, yes, that is the one I mean.

Yes, the one with fire burning in his left palm,
yes, the one gripping a gun in his right hand,
yes, the one putting his head out from the mud-brick house,
yes, yes, that brave young man...
Yes, the one who defied the American dogs -
that young man, yes, that is the one I mean!

The one who said,
“We came here not to return,
but to die,”
and, dipping his brush
into the redness of Kızıldere,
created history’s most beautiful painting -
yes, that young man is the one I mean.

Our young people are running,
running to write history,
to change the course of history,
to make Kızıldere roar louder.

And there!
From the poor neighbourhoods of Elazığ
a young man bursts forth.
Where is he?
He is everywhere...
The one you see at that barricade - that is him.
He is preparing the Molotov,
and his comrades as well.
Do not be deceived by his youth;
the heart within him is enough for everyone.

Is there an occupation of a school?
Look carefully inside -
he is certainly there.
Do you see him at the door,
strengthening the barricade?
Yes, now at the end of the corridor
he is strengthening hearts,
and now, at the secret entrance,
he is preparing the people’s justice.
He is everywhere...

The one you see at that rostrum - that is him.
This barricade is different:
opportunism is attacking from the other side.
The one who brings it down is the same - him...
Are you surprised?
Do not be deceived by his youth.
History has come into his hands
like clay ready to be shaped.
As he kneads it, he gives it form;
he gives form to himself,
he gives form to his organisation,
and he strikes his brush upon history.
The debate is over, yes!

Everyone to their own road, yes!
And the ship set sail towards new horizons...

He is everywhere...
Do you see that carcass lying on the ground?
Do not be deceived by its human form.
The fat on its belly
is the stolen share of the orphan who has not yet grown a hair.
Those are not clothes upon it;
they are the screams uttered under torture
and the lives that were lost.
“Justice,” he said,
and laid it on the ground.
And dozens more, hundreds more...

The pus in the hearts
of the oppressed,
of mothers whose tear ducts had dried,
of the poor and the hungry,
was drained.
The wound began to heal.
“Long live, son,” said the hearts,
and his name became:
“Justice, come to our aid.”
He is the one who goes in front...

Love is not wine maturing in the heart.
It must give
strength to the knees,
light to the eyes,
excitement to the hearts...
It must, so that
steep, thorny, impassable roads
are brought to their knees,
crossed in a single stride,
so that the uncrossable sea is split open.
Though, to drown this love,
the sea waits on the right
and the sea waits on the left,
go with peace in your heart -
he is the one who goes in front...

He is the one on the torture bench...
The one tortured in the prison corridor and in the cell.
Who knows what he was thinking?
Was it a secret he was searching for,
or a treasure whose secret he had already discovered?
Bloodied under torture,

with the whip across his back,
the bastinado on his feet,
walking his cell,
giving strength to hearts -
what gave him strength?
What made him happy?
What made him look
as though he were not hanging from the torture rack
but standing on the lookout mast of a ship,
about to cry, “Land!”?
What made him believe that he would rewrite history?
What, if not love of the people?
What, if not a heart of fire?
What, if not historical consciousness?
Rather than bowing before oppression,
it made him gaze upon the land
from the “lookout mast”...

He is the one on the Death Fast...
Desert!
Your name alone is enough to dry the lips,
to make hearts tremble -
your name alone!
You are the burning sun,
and thirst as well,
and hunger too.
Your name alone
is enough to make hearts tremble!

Humanity will also be tempered in sandstorms.
Oppression is like a scorpion among the sands.
Desert!
Your name alone...
Yet you too will kneel,
together with your scorpions.
Your heat is only a test.
Though bodies are crushed
beneath thirst and hunger,
the brave do not turn back from their road...

Do not struggle, desert!
This is humanity’s march.
Come, accept it.
Come, do not make the road harder.
Come, do not become a companion to Yazid.
Desert, O desert!
You did not know humanity’s march.

You did not know the brave man walking at its head.
Rather than submit
to you and to the scorpions you hide in your breast,
he takes your burning fire into his heart,
waters your thirst with his blood,
feeds your hunger with his body,
and a human being dies -
a true human being...

See and know now,
O desert!
See the immortal one who has fallen upon you,
and the army of immortals coming behind him.
With your sands
the funeral ablutions are performed...
Accept it, O desert!
You were defeated by the Nile as well...
and by Kızıldere flowing into the Nile...

And there -
books poured angrily into the Nile
before dawn,
a pair of blue-grey eyes looking at the books,
a small-built man,
a huge mind,
a mind that says:
History must flow in another channel;
everything, everywhere,
except the cheek of the beloved,
must belong to all of us together.
And in the blaze of that morning,
on the banks of the Nile,
he is not alone...

On the banks of the Nile
he sees -
he sees the Communalists...
their figs sweetened by common ownership,
their wheat yielding a thousandfold in rebellion against the lord,
and their grapes, cherries and strawberries
sweetened with the sherbet of brotherhood.
The Ahi craftsmen work into the tiles
the radiance on the small-built man’s face -
that radiance was brotherhood and sharing.
He sees the Sisters of Truth.
He sees the unbowed Börklüce Mustafa
and Torlak Kemal.

He sees the one hanging from the gallows
in the marketplace of Serres.

The road that leads to the future
does not pass merely through seeing.
It passes through stamping
the worn-out seal
upon one’s own death warrant,
like Bedreddin...
It passes through turning the death warrant
into a decree of life,
like Bedreddin...
like Dayı...

With the decree of life in his hand
he sees centuries ahead,
the painful march of humanity.
Is it easy for a human being to be born?
To grow?
To take destiny into one’s own hands?
And what of the whole vast humanity?
It is that immense,
that painful,
that difficult -
and just as honourable,
just as hopeful,
just as powerful.
And the leader Marx paints it...

The philosopher must mount a horse
and gird on a sword,
descend into the depths of history
and hear the sigh of the oppressed.
Like a bee flying from flower to flower,
the mind must gather
the pains, the joys,
the griefs, the hopes,
the wars, the destruction,
the beauty that was created,
progress and retreat,
the long, long march of humanity;
it must gather them like a vast cauldron,
take them inside,
knead them, give them form,
and from the alembic of struggle
distil the water of life.

It must find its voice:
- “Awake, world of the enslaved!”
- “Only our own struggle will save us!”
- “This struggle is now our final struggle!”
And:
- “We Are Right, We Will Win!”

The air is the air of struggle,
the air is the air of victory.
The bud has come into flower,
nature has come into spring.
The steel is at the right temper, ready to take water.
The water is on the verge of breaking its dam.
The Prometheus of the poor,
with the fire he stole from the gods,
dipped his brush
and struck it upon the canvas of history...

And only a few years later
that Fire
was calling out to the workers,
to the peasants and the soldiers:
“To the Winter Palace!”
“To the ministries!”
“To the railways!”
And finally:
“All Power to the Soviets!”

And there - the fortress of oppression fell,
the fortress that had not fallen for a thousand years
and was thought impossible to bring down.
“Comrades,” said the Leader,
“there is a message for us from Lenin:
every fortress exists to be torn down.
And when the weapons rise,
both sultans and tsars are overthrown.
Let us walk to the very end!”

O Spartacus, O!
With fifty thousand people deemed less than human,
with fifty thousand true human beings,
you wrestled the tyrants like a tiger -
Spartacus, O!
For ten years you have been on the cross of cancer.
We know which one you are.
Oppression does not know; we know.
We know you well,

and we keep you well.
You are in our warmest, safest place.

As the enemy drove
its double-tempered spear into your chest,
we were the ones watching your back.
So that we would not lose our road,
we followed the pebbles you scattered,
looking at them,
crying “Ya Umut!”,
growing, multiplying,
coming behind you.
And now we are with you.

Rather than live for tyrants,
how fortunate that we too,
with you,
will watch the future
from the “lookout mast”.
And here is our blood.
You are its master.
Strike your brush -
let history watch.
We will walk to the very end.

October 2008

A Heart That Grasped and Directed Life

We lost a master teacher. A teacher, a master who taught the human being and humanity from the very first encounter... The love of humanity shining in his eyes spread into a person’s mind at first sight. It filled the heart. It surrounded the whole body.

Someone who had not known Dayı before, on seeing him, would in the very first moments be struck by the thought: yes, there is something different here; and their heart would fill with excitement and self-confidence... A person who did not know who he was would understand in the first moments of conversation that they were face to face with a sage who was the embodiment of humility. Compassion, clarity, determination and faith flowed from his lips. He was one of you. He stood where you stood. He was neither ahead of you nor above you... He made you feel that he was like you.

Suddenly you would realise that you had become him. You, who a moment earlier had not understood the problem and perhaps thought it had no solution, would naturally become aware that you now understood the problem and had begun to take steps. Where you had been standing still, you had begun to walk; where you had been slow, you had begun to speed up. And he was there close to you. He did not appear one step ahead, nor anything else. It was as though he were simply walking along, talking with you... Doors opened quietly, one after another.

The obstacles seemed no longer to exist. In fact, you were overcoming them one by one. And all this happened in a short time. A little later you would be alone with yourself and think... And then you would see the distance you had covered in that short time. You too would be astonished. Yet only a moment earlier you had looked at things differently. He did not believe in magic; he never did. Labour is nature's great magic. That was the only magic he believed in. And by then you were no longer the same person. His labour had passed into you. With the mastery of an Ahi tile craftsman, he had worked that great magic of nature into your being. Exactly on time - neither early nor late... Exactly in the right measure - neither too much nor too little... Exactly at the right temperature - neither cold nor hot. The road before you was open now. What had to be done was clear. He had shown you that you had the strength to do it. Who could hold you back now?

A person sees a precious jewel, a beauty of the world, and does not know how to describe it, does not know where to begin. That is the feeling he awakened. You wanted to absorb and digest every one of his qualities by seeing, living, feeling and hearing them. Dayı absolutely made a person experience such a feeling... And then the respect felt by friend and enemy alike becomes much easier to understand.

Wherever he was, he invariably left a mark and was remembered. There was almost no subject in life that he did not know or had not seen. Yet at the same time he had the curiosity and desire of someone who had only just begun to learn. He was a person who knew life extremely well and had mastered learning and teaching to an extraordinary degree. He would ask such questions that he both learned and encouraged others to learn. He knew very well where the system's logic that blinds people was hidden. He would ask such questions that a person would set out on an exploration inside their own mind and clearly see that remnant of the system. "Either we are not looking for the answer to the question we ask in the right place, or we are not asking the right question."

His assessment was clear. He focused on the problem. And we would truly see that we had not asked the right question. Once the question was asked correctly, the problem was solved. Dayı was a master of asking, and making others ask, the right question. Because he was a master of life. He was a person who had grasped and absorbed life through his questions. As a master of Marxism, he was an example of the principle that to understand is to change.

He transformed the human being by understanding the human being. He led the organisation by understanding the organisation. He changed life by understanding life. Often it was impossible to distinguish whether he was inside or outside the thing he was trying to understand and transform. He united with it and moved forward together with it.

He was simple. In his speech, his walk, his clothing - in everything... In every action he was an example of simplicity. He did not concern himself with symbols. The policies he produced and the analyses he made were his symbols. He regarded matters of form as ordinary. Yet he accepted ordinariness in no field. Just as he penetrated deeply into the human being, he penetrated deeply into politics and life. He would take that depth and simplify it. The most complex, seemingly incomprehensible questions would suddenly become simple, as though they were an everyday task. What remained was labour and perseverance. The result was certain.

In a short time he taught many things. He left deep marks. After that there was no separating yourself from him. A person always felt the eyes of the master of renewal and self-recreation upon them... You carried him in your heart and your mind. For years... A person would constantly find

themselves thinking: “Would he approve of what I am doing now?”, “How would he assess this if he were here?” And you felt that you were personally known and cared for.

Even years later, despite all the time that had passed, being remembered as though you had never been apart and seeing that everything was known in detail created enormous confidence and relief. That is why the thought “he is watching us” always remained alive. And I am certain that he is watching us now as well. He will watch us to the very end. There is a promise we made to him within ourselves. We made this promise without telling him. But it is an agreed secrecy, because he knows what is inside us.

Yes, we will be like him. We will build an independent, democratic and socialist country. Our children, the generations to come, will be like him. Because the New Human Being is Dayı. We will make his revolutionism, his ideological, political and cultural understanding flourish in every corner of Anatolia. We will make your beautiful smile wave in every corner of the country, Dayı!..

★

From Prisoners' Letters

We must go,
looking towards the dawning horizon,
always with young hearts,
to bring life to life,
to be able to become light
even while dying.
And to be able to die - that is the real matter -
without dragging one's feet,
in the name of all that is beautiful,
for a world lived
with broad smiles.

Hello Dear Friends,

We embrace you all with the warmth of our great family. We are in pain, we are angry. Our pain and our anger are as great as our loss. We are in indescribable emotions, as though our hearts and our consciousness have been torn out. Let them not rejoice in vain or put on henna in celebration because we are in pain, because we are wounded...

Not every death is an end; sometimes it is a new beginning... We learned from him to draw strength from our pain and to enlarge our claim to revolution from our anger. For this reason we will enlarge the hopes of our friends and the fears of our enemies. We will not let his absence be felt.

We had a Dayı; we still do. His index finger pointing forward, belief from head to toe, self-sacrifice from head to toe, ... daring and determination. From head to toe he gives us life and shows us the way, and with his light we will reach the final victory. With these feelings and thoughts, I share the pain of all of you.

My condolences to us all. My condolences to our great family. We will guard the unique legacy left by our Dayı, the irreplaceable member of our family, more carefully than our own eyes.

D. K.

They who were
the world's last hope,
a breed that never died out,
each one a falcon...

Hello comrades,

I embrace and kiss you tightly with the warmth of our light of hope. I hope you are well. Each of us was shaken deeply by our painful loss, whose heat we still feel... It was very difficult for every one of us to believe the reality of such news... Our pain is great. And as great as that pain are the values he left us, values he created stitch by stitch through a thousand and one sacrifices...

Today we also experience a particular pride in living these values through our identity as Free Prisoners. Because being a Free Prisoner also carries within it the greatest values of a history woven stitch by stitch... You can imagine how much we wanted to be outside and shoulder the coffin... But we were granted the honour of bidding farewell to our light of hope with our identity as Free Prisoners... Physically we could not stand shoulder to shoulder with you, but our hearts were with you every minute...

My condolences to all of us. With the honour and pride of always carrying the values left to us further forward. Stay well. I embrace each of you with love. May the warmth of Hope never leave our hearts.

E. S.

Hello,

With the warmth of our hearts, we kiss you from the heart. Until today we have shared many things in these lines. We shared longing, love, and everything concerning the struggle with you. But we never thought that one day what we would share would be the news of that great separation which would turn our hearts into a place of fire. We had not thought of it, because we believed there was no place for such a sentence in our language.

It was as though this were a sentence still unknown, never before spoken! Yet here we are sharing it too, like all the pains and joys we have shared. Of course, this pain is not merely pain.

There is honour in it, dignity in it and, most importantly, light within the pride of this pain that keeps our heads held high. My condolences to all the soldiers of the revolution and to the peoples of the world who will physically feel the absence of this light and yet will never renounce his presence. My condolences to you and to all of us. With the reality that we will walk without him but with his voice, with my love.

G.

Hello,

Bidding farewell to our most precious one into immortality found us inside the cells. Our pain is indescribable. But was he not the one who taught us to overcome everything, the one who showed us the way? Once again, thanks to him, we are overcoming this. And in our hardest days he will always be beside us. We too will carry him in every moment of our lives. We will defend the values he left us. We will carry his legacy to the highest heights, and with him we will reach that Great Day.

I embrace you with the warmth of our Great Family. Once again I say that we will remain faithful to his memory. My condolences to you and to all of us.

With love,

M.

Hello,

With the warmth of our Hope...

My condolences to us, to the peoples of Turkey and to the peoples of the world. Words are not enough to describe our pain. Our pride and honour are indescribable too. Our guide continues to illuminate our road. I bow with respect before his memory.

With love.

M. Y.

Hello,

I embrace and kiss you tightly with the warmth of our leader. We will carry, with honour and pride and at any cost, the values kept alive by our guide and master teacher, in his light. Once again, my condolences to all of us. I bow with respect before his memory.

With love.

E.

Hello,

I embrace and kiss all of you with the warmth of our Dayı. My condolences to all of us. My condolences to all the poor and oppressed of our country.

Our Dayı devoted his life to the independence of our country and to the liberation of all the oppressed and poor. Until his very last moment. Passing successfully through every rough and winding road, he showed the way, cast light upon it and created Hope.

Together, all of us will make sure his absence is not felt on that road until liberation. I bow with respect before his memory. That is why today, at the same time, we are proud and our heads are held high.

We will win.

H. Ö.

★

Hello,

I embrace you with the warmth of our Dayı and send my greetings and love. The values our Dayı left us, and the pride of walking on the road he pointed out without allowing his absence to be felt, ease our pain, if only a little. Even in his absence he will always be with us, always with US. By embracing his ideals he will live together with us and will always be the one who shows the way. Whenever we are in difficulty, we will find our refuge right beside us...

It is a great loss... but, on the other hand, the values he left are greater still. For this reason, when we say 'loss', it will be only and solely a physical 'loss'. On the other hand, we will walk without Him, but with His voice, His wisdom and His guidance...

My condolences to our people and to the peoples of the world... Once again I bow with respect before his memory.

With love and devotion.

H. K.

★

Hello,

I embrace you all with the warmth of our Hope. Although we are apart, we know that our hearts beat as one. We all feel the same ache: the ache of having lost our guide, our Dayı. Without doubt, this is a great loss for us. But even in his absence He will always be with us. My condolences to us and to the peoples of Turkey. I bow with respect before his memory.

With love,

İ. A.

★

Hello,

I embrace you with the warmth of our struggle. The Turkish revolution has lost one of its most precious and courageous leaders. As members of this family that he brought to life, we continue walking within our Dayı and under his guidance, carrying our pain in our hearts.

The justified pride and honour of being his comrades are with us... The road he pointed to is the road to freedom for our people... We will continue walking. My condolences to our people and to the peoples of the world.

With love,

H. T.

★

Hello,

I embrace you tightly with longing and Hope. (...) We were asking what else the days might bring when, behind these blind walls, we experienced the greatest pain we could ever experience... It is difficult to describe what we lived through, and you lived through the same feelings. The days that passed were filled with hardship and indescribable pain... Our people bid farewell into immortality to one of their children... a strong child whose place can never be filled... During his thirty-eight years of struggle, he experienced everything that could be experienced... In his final moment as in every moment of his life. With the legacy he left us, he continues to cast light upon our road and guide us. I bow with respect before his memory. My condolences to the peoples of Turkey, to our great family and to all of us.

With love.

A. K.

★

Hello,

We have bid farewell into immortality to a great person of the people of Turkey. Being his comrades gives us great strength. We too will be worthy of our Dayı. We will continue walking on the road he taught us. We will defend the legacy he left us. We will present the Great Day to our carnations; from now on we will work even harder. Throughout thirty-eight years of revolutionary struggle he was our teacher. From now on too, we will continue walking on the road he showed. My condolences to all our people; I bow with respect before his memory.

With love,

C. Ş.

★

Hello,

With love, Hope and longing, I embrace all of you sincerely and tightly. Our people have lost a great person. We have bid him farewell into immortality; our pain is great. The place of our great Dayı in our hearts can never be filled. Our Dayı, the most beautiful carnation growing from the love planted in our hearts, will be the love of our hearts and the light of our eyes.

With love,

F. E.

★

Hello,

It has been about ten days since we received the news of our Dayı's martyrdom. And of course our pain and sorrow are still fresh. It is truly difficult to express what we feel. The bonds that bind him to us and us to him are so strong. Of course this bond goes far beyond his physical presence, and yet it is still difficult to bear. We had always imagined him together with the revolution, and the revolution together with him. More than anyone, he deserved to see that day. Now we will walk with him towards that Great Day. And to win is a debt of honour upon us. The year 2008 truly became a year of great losses and pain for the peoples of the world and revolutionary movements: George Habash, Raul Reyes, M. Marulanda Velez... And Dayı... The peoples of the world will defend the legacy of their leaders and will undoubtedly crown their struggles against imperialism with victories. And we will carry forward the Free Prisoner tradition, of which our Dayı himself was the creator. What he asks of us, his comrades, is clear: we will be strong-willed, hardworking and daring. His memory is with us, his Hope is with us...

Once again I bow with respect and devotion.

With love.

The Red Riders

“The water flowed,
showing the willow trees in its mirror.
The weeping willows washed their hair in the water!
Clashing their blazing bare swords against the willows,
the red riders galloped towards where the sun was setting!” (1)

They were the Red Riders racing towards the sun. Conscious of racing towards the sun, they crossed the most impassable roads. Everywhere they passed, they learned something new, but they never stopped learning. At every obstacle they encountered, they gained great experience, but they never stopped renewing their experience. Passing through rings of fire, they became masters of the struggle. Knowing that they would pass through still greater rings, they engraved upon their hearts the necessity of becoming masters of the struggle. It was not for nothing that they were called the Red Riders, that they carried Hope like a flag. As they passed breathlessly along difficult and winding roads, they did not stop to rest. Despite heavy losses, they galloped at full speed towards the goal they wanted to reach. Binding their wounds as they went, without singing laments or shedding tears for those who had fallen, they simply kept running.

“Suddenly,
like a bird,
as though struck
in the wing,
a wounded rider tumbled from his horse!
He did not cry out,
he did not call back those who were leaving,
he only looked, with tear-filled eyes,
at the shining hooves of the riders disappearing into the distance!” (2)

They were conscious of the importance of time in a struggle fought breathlessly. They had witnessed that every second prolonged was pregnant with greater pain. In an age when some struggled merely to live longer, pretending not to see, not to hear and not to speak, they threw themselves to the very front, knowing that heavy prices would be paid. They considered it an honour to meet death smiling in order to give life. To reach that place they longed for, the sun, they were racing against themselves. They were travellers on the same road. They drank the same water, breathed the same air and burned in the midst of the same fire. Their pains and their joys were one. Only when death came knocking at the door did each say, “Me first, no matter what.” They displayed the purest example of throwing oneself forward selflessly. Bidding farewell to the one who goes ahead is difficult, it is heavy. More than being unable to bear that weight, what is experienced is the purest form of the instinct to protect and watch over them. To stare after them, to shout with your clenched fist raised, and while doing so to know that you are the one still breathing — that is difficult.

“Tell those who go to the sun on their red horses to come,
tell them to come, let me come too.
Make way, children of fire,
take me onto your horses too.” (3)

Their aim was neither to be remembered as heroes, nor had they set out on this road for adventure, as the bird-brained pontificators claimed. Those who did not want to understand the display of such great self-sacrifice in a world where individualism and selfishness had spread even into our homes could not understand the strength, the secret, of melting away day by day, cell by cell, yet moving forward breathlessly despite immense suffering. Yet what they were looking for and failing to see was very simple. What made them invincible, what added strength to their strength, was their faith and the values they defended. Here too lay the secret of continuing on the road without ever stopping. Because they knew that a journey without risk was no journey at all, and that the goal could not be reached without accepting the price, they continued straight ahead without veering to the right or left. Nor was it without reason that those who lacked the courage to set out on this road, who refused to take risks and avoided paying the price, attacked them with poisoned arrows. They reached the point where they could no longer even calculate what their poisoned arrows served, or how they made the already heavy price still heavier. As the Red Riders continued on their road, as they voiced the truths at full gallop, the intentions of those who were not sincere were exposed one by one.

“Let them not set out with us:
those who carry the tears of those crying at home
like a heavy chain around their necks!
Let those who live inside
the shell of their own hearts leave us alone!

Look:
in this fire from the sun,
millions of red hearts are burning!
You too, take your heart from the cage of your chest;
throw it into the fire fallen from the sun;
throw your heart beside our hearts.” (4)

At moments when hearts had to stand beside hearts, history was full of examples of walking alone. That is why the epic resistance of the Red Riders was written on the most honourable pages of that history. Nor is it a coincidence that, of the many riders who set out with the goal of racing towards the sun, only the Red Riders remained.

“The sound of hooves fades, layer by layer,
the riders disappear where the sun is setting!
Riders, riders, red riders,
their horses are wind-winged!
Their horses wind-winged...
Their horses wind...
Riders...
Horse...
Life passed like riders on wind-winged horses!” (5)

At times they were called Red Carnations, at times the Boran Storm. In the long race as the years toppled one by one, they were the children of fire. And on their Red Horses they continued, without ever stopping, to race towards the sun...

At the very front was the Commander-in-Chief.

“Leaning my brow against the rebellious wind of the mountains,
let me take to the roads too.
Even if I never return again, what does it matter?
Take me onto your horses too.” (6)

★

We Do Not Say Goodbye to You

We do not say goodbye to you,
vanguard of Hope.
We know you are travelling into the future,
saying, “The Goal Is Socialism!”

We do not say goodbye to you,
dream of the future of our children,
a song of brotherhood
whose melody is justice and freedom.

We do not say goodbye to you,
Spartacus of ages past,
the sage of Anatolia,
the brave one of Bedreddin.

We do not say goodbye to you,
the light upon our brow,
the star upon our flag,
the vanguard of our road.

Uşak Prison

Free Women Prisoners

(1), (2), (4), (5) Nâzım Hikmet; (3), (6) Kahraman Altun

★

An Untimely Farewell

When we lift our heads from a gecekondu home, from the pages of a book, or from the places where streets intersect with avenues and look around us at the world, there may be things we admire. From developments in science to the success of a struggle waged by a people. Yet there is also something that makes us consider ourselves fortunate; because of it, we believe that sooner or later we too will attain everything we admire, and we look at the world with pride.[10]

As though saying, “Wait for us, we are on our way. We too will come, discover your unknowns and push your limits,” this source of pride and belief, which first appears as a vague feeling, gradually takes flesh and bone and we give it a name: Leadership.

We feel His presence in the breaking of encirclements, in overcoming obstacles, in our ideological clarity that does not sway to the right or left, in the flag raised in the midst of silence. We know and believe that a bridge of victory will be built from where we stand to our goal; that we will not be left halfway; that the bitter experiences of other peoples will not be repeated. What moves us forward is not an empty belief. It is martyrdom turning into confidence, confidence turning into faith; and faith is the mortar of victory.

It is the people, the struggle of the people, that creates a leader. That is why the two are like flesh and nail; they cannot be separated from one another. But the rulers want to break this historic unity. Lies become their greatest weapon. Newspapers and television become rostrums for lies. We, however, are strong to the extent that we arm ourselves with the power of truth and science. That is why we approach the sentences uttered from the rostrums of lies with caution.

Time and again, speculation directed at our organisation and our leadership is presented as though it were fact, and our names are placed alongside impossible things. There have been countless reports claiming that Dayı had lost his life. When we heard such a report again on 12 August, we did not abandon our caution. When our comrade who had watched the midday news told us what the report said, we again thought it was a piece of psychological-warfare news. Of course, leaders too are not exempt from the workings of nature. We knew this; the laws of nature that apply to every living being also applied to our Dayı. But we thought it was still too early for this to be true. We talked about his age; he must have been around fifty-five or sixty. Even when we thought of the years spent in the dungeons of 12 September, on Death Fasts and in exile, we could not place him side by side with death, and our conversation turned to other subjects.

Our daily programme continued. In the afternoon we read Yürüyüş together. At the same time, we were making handicrafts for the exhibition of those who resist by producing. Then the evening news began. At first what we watched was a report similar to the ones in the past; but when we saw his

10 Gecekondu: literally “built overnight”; a term for informally or rapidly self-built housing and, by extension, the working-class neighbourhoods formed from such housing.

lawyer and his family on the screen and heard it from their own mouths, this time we learned that the news was true.[11]

From that hour on, we were almost glued to the screen. We moved from report to report, channel to channel, trying to catch more details. With a momentary movement of the camera, we saw those of us outside. In their eyes we read our own feelings. The news was clear. Even in such a situation there were those who hoped to gain something by lining up lies. The truth is that, at that moment, what concerned us was the real dimension of the news: our Dayı, whose name we shouted with our left fists raised and whose very existence made us feel fortunate, was no longer physically among us...

He had taken his last breath far from his homeland. But his labour, what he created, his ideals are with us and everywhere. With this belief, in the darkness of the night we proclaimed his immortality to the world and declared that everything touched by his labour lived on. We began the next day with "We Are Right, We Will Win." It was his words that had become song and slogan on our lips: "We Are the People, We Are Right, We Will Win!"

We began preparations in the morning. From notebooks and books we selected poems, and from our memories marches that proclaimed that the march would continue under his guidance. The preparations went on in a quiet rush. Storms were breaking in our hearts, and again and again we asked ourselves whether the news we had heard was really true. Yes, it was true, however difficult it was to accept. Death and life were intertwined, and we knew this better than anyone. Nature has an internal process, and because you too are a part of nature, you carry that process within your body. The question is to understand nature and learn to live with it without rejecting its laws. That every living being is born, grows and dies, that death and life are intertwined, is a law of nature.

In that day's newspapers we read that 11 August was the final point of a ten-year battle, and learned that a process governed by conscious will had been at work, that our leader had remained at his post until his final days. In the afternoon, our commemoration programme began with a minute's silence and continued with our marches and poems. We wondered where the funeral would take place, whether they would create problems when his body entered the country, and we trusted that everything would be worthy of him. "He planned everything, including his death," the statement said. It was obvious that every possibility had been considered, yet we still could not stop ourselves from wondering. That day too we proclaimed his immortality, and we would continue to proclaim it until the day he was laid to rest.

In Thursday's newspapers we read that his body would arrive by plane. Then the funeral could not be far away, and before long we learned that he would be buried on Friday. We decided to hold a ceremony here at the same time. We invited our friends. There was another difficulty in choosing the poem we would read, the march we would sing, and in writing a text. There were emotional and heartfelt poems, there were stirring marches, but they were not enough to express what we felt at that moment. This new situation demanded new songs, new poems, new marches. We would not have to wait long for "those songs", "those poems". The memorial ceremony abroad, the reception at the airport, the funeral vehicle travelling towards Gazi Mahallesi, the welcome in Gazi, the vigil at the cemevi... It was as though we were there at every moment. At last our leader was reunited with his homeland; he was now among the people for whom he had struggled for years. Yet we had dreamed of it differently: we would welcome him in the square of revolution, and he would address us. Once

11 Yürüyüş: Turkish for "March"; here the title of a magazine/publication.

again we promise: “We will bring that day.” For the ceremony we would hold in the exercise yard, we first arrange the surroundings, remove everything unnecessary from the yard and place a table among the flowers.

On the table is a charcoal drawing of Him, and immediately beside it, of the same size, a portrait of Mahir; beneath them is a photograph of our leader taken with Sabo. It is still early in the morning. The dark-pink flowers of the vine are still fresh, and we decorate the area around the photographs with those flowers. The wind is blowing, as though trying to displace everything we put down, but we are more stubborn; we have seen many winds and storms. By eleven o’clock our preparations are complete. We call out to our friends; they too are ready. One of our comrades calls us to a minute’s silence. We are standing, fists clenched. We will carry his memory into the revolution.

Then the text is read: “And we know what a precious treasure we possess. With these feelings, we promise that by following the road he opened, moving in the direction he pointed out, and taking his struggles as our guide, we will overcome every difficulty and carry our revolutionary march to victory!” As these sentences are spoken, the processes that made him a leader come alive before our eyes.

The founding of Revolutionary Left, the ideological struggle, 12 September, the Death Fasts, the years of the Offensive, the internal enemy, the founding of the Party-Front and the Great Resistance. Thirty-eight years spent for the revolution, with details we know and details we do not. The words being read give voice to our feelings: “He continues to be our source of honour and pride, our guide, our vanguard.” That is why we do not sing laments or shed tears. “Because a great legacy remains to us from him. We have a resistant and hopeful people who create leaders... We have our Party-Front... We have our daring and our claim, we have our comrades who will carry our revolutionary march to victory... And of course, we have our leader, our Dayı, whom we will always feel beside us...” The text ends and the marches begin one after another. We say “Reber”, we say “Salute”. From the neighbouring exercise yard a poem rises:[12]

“There is a charge, a charge,
a charge towards the sun.
We shall seize the sun;
the seizure of the sun is near.”

From another yard Kurdish melodies spread; although we do not know the meaning of the words “ey şehid”, the melody makes us tremble inside. Such a song could only come from the language of a people who have suffered.[13]

As the time approaches for the funeral ceremony to begin in Gazi, we finish our ceremony in the exercise yard. We look with pride at the streets of Gazi where red flags are waving, at our people and comrades who have come to the funeral from Istanbul’s gecekondu districts and from different provinces of Anatolia. We look with pride at our TAYAD mothers and fathers who are beside the coffin at every moment. There are people there, young and old, women and men, workers and civil servants, unemployed people and housewives; they are bidding their leader farewell into immortality.[14]

12 Reber: Kurdish for “leader” or “guide”.

13 Ey şehid: Kurdish expression meaning “O martyr”.

14 TAYAD: the commonly used acronym/name of a prisoners’ families solidarity association in Turkey.

Leaders do not emerge easily, and we know what a precious treasure we possess. We promise that, following the road he opened, moving in the direction he pointed out and taking his struggle as our guide, we will overcome every difficulty and carry our march to victory.

★

Hello,

Today carnations are raining from the stars... Today the sky is the blue of freedom... Today Anatolia, with its fertile soil, stands in salute before the architect of Hope. And we salute you with our promise to be worthy of the architect of our Hope and of our Hope itself!

“Salute to those who strike like lightning and set the darkness ablaze!” Our sorrow, our pain is great. But we know that our pain is not separation, because we were never without him. Nor will we ever be without him. Now this place of fire in our hearts comes precisely from our love steeped in longing. Perhaps we could not keep our vigil at his side with our hearts at their most alert, could not bow respectfully and kiss his brow, could not join the Kızılderes flowing through the streets and carry him on our shoulders, but we were there, armed with everything that is ours.

We were there with our devotion to our Hope and to Reber, with our hearts beating with Him. Condolences to our people! Because the existence of the people is the existence of Hope and its architect. Our people embraced their valiant vanguard. They bid him farewell in a manner worthy of him. The pain of all of us is great, but this is not a pain that burns and destroys. It is Hope itself, blazing with our burning hearts. In other words, we are exactly as the architect of our Hope would want us to be. With our fists clenched tight, our hearts rearing up, even though we are behind concrete walls, we are with him. His image that demands an accounting, that shows the way, that points to the target, is once again before us. We will reach that target with the consciousness of Hope with which He armed us. We will never be without him. With this strength, this enthusiasm, this longing, and with the pride and honour of being His soldiers, we embrace you tightly.

We know that, like a clenched fist, everywhere, at all times, we are always together.

Salute to the architect of our Hope!... Salute to our Hope!...

A thousand salutes!... A thousand salutes!... A thousand salutes!...

Elbistan Prison

Free Prisoners

★

There Comes a Day

The day ends, the sun sets
A pitch-black, cold darkness
A faint, powerless weariness
Envelops all of life
Some days the moon sets too
All the stars are erased
And from yesterday to tomorrow
People search for a guide...

There comes a day when storms break
Fierce waves
Wild winds, raging floods
Take life captive...

And there comes a day when a person emerges
Becomes the sun, becomes the moon, becomes a star
Becomes light, becomes fire, becomes resistance
He is the one who illuminates life, who warms the human heart
He walks, becomes the vanguard, the leader, the guide...

There comes a day when a person becomes hope
Becomes love, becomes struggle
Becomes longing, becomes reunion
His steps become an epic...

He was a man with Mahir's heart
Love, the endless source of faith
The highest of labours, the war of liberation
The most justified rage against the oppressors
Faith was the secret of invincibility...

There came a day when he too stopped...
He was a human being of the finest kind...
He neither vanished nor disappeared
In every heart beating with hope
In every step taken towards the future
In the most honourable lives
He became eternal...

28 December 2008

a revolutionary

★

Now His Breath Will Be Heard

At the sharpest turning point of history
They step forward with their hearts in their hands
With the sound of gunpowder, with their fiery breath
They blaze and thunder as they flow towards tomorrow
Fires overflow from their chests
They are the immortal children of fire
And whoever takes up sacrifice from their hands
Becomes a traveller of an endless history
The blacksmith now tempers his iron with them
Shepherd fires are reflected in their pupils
They show the way through darkness, light upon light
Where they say history has ended, they begin it.

He was the loftiest of those born of fire
And wherever the fire of rebellion burns
In the flame of the struggle that sets hearts alight
His breath will now be heard

17.8.2008 - İ. G.

Tekirdağ No. 2 F-Type Prison - Free Prisoners

“But far from all fears,
To live like this is a love...”
(Ahmed Arif)

Mahir of life had stolen the fire and brought it down to earth. What followed is known. That fire would either go out or become a torch in the hands of the people. And this could only be achieved through labour, heart, strength and consciousness. And you began to create the torch called Hope. You plunged into the turbulent whirlpool of life. A thousand salutes to you for setting out, even at the risk of drowning, with the aim of reaching the Island...

And with your innocent, oppressed and proud fists you began to shape time. With every step, it was the future that was now taking shape. A thousand salutes to you for shaking that decrepit age with young fists...

“...In the midst of the ‘dark sea’, which is a mixture of sell-out, treachery, hypocrisy, baseness, every kind of degradation and every kind of alienation...”*

A thousand salutes to you for teaching us to become Islanders and to remain Islanders...

The fire could never be allowed to go out. Otherwise the people’s immense longing would drown in filthy swamps. If necessary one had to burn like Kerem, rise from the ashes like the Phoenix, but the fire had always to be kept blazing. A thousand salutes to you for achieving this...

A thousand salutes to you for making us partners in that magnificent dream of tomorrow, and for guiding us without pause, without tiring, without holding back, in how that dream would be turned into reality... We see now the state of so many old rifles whose hearts have grown cold and whose flints no longer spark. And a thousand salutes to you for giving us, against the insidious liquidationism of those times, the days that would keep Hope forever young, our hearts always aflame and our eyes always fearless...

The people have strength, power, justice and longing. It lies within them, deep within them. And the people do not open their hearts to those they do not love. After all, love is a mutual relationship. And the people call “Dayı” the one who carries the fire of their love from his heart to his fist. We called you that too. A thousand salutes to you for being the one and only Dayı of all those who have no one...

When the children of imperialism descended like black smoke over life, the people and the truth, a thousand salutes to you for the daring and honour with which, in the most Mahir-like form of self-confidence, you declared that the people could not be forced into submission and did what that required...

When the second hand of history settles upon velvet-skinned times, to be Dayı is to stand at the very front in defending the honour of life and disgracing death. A thousand salutes...

To be the Dayı of the beaten, battered, cursed and abandoned is, of course, to say “Offensive” in order to organise the fist of the people. A thousand salutes to you for creating an example of shaking the palaces raised upon accumulated injustices and making us live its enthusiasm...

At a time when despair, pessimism and retreat were the currency of the day, a thousand salutes to you for showing that what had to be done to reach tomorrow was to “run faster”...

The children of the bourgeoisie bawl that “history has ended” with the universal shamelessness of baseness. They want all peoples to remain victims in love with their executioners. They want this bloody order to continue. With all the arrogance of this vile intention, they hammer into people’s heads that “history has ended”. And there are those who become dazed and are swept away. Yet the essence, the summary, of history is class struggle. A thousand salutes to the master who teaches the children of the people how history is written and with what...

What power does the fire accumulated in the hearts of the oppressed condemned to hell become in their fists? This is a question already answered. A thousand salutes to you for giving vital answers to the questions of life...

“Socialism is dead,” say the bootlicking mouths and the learned mouths of capitalism. They use every trick of their hired tongues for this clamour. They want the working people, who live their nights hungry and their days in poverty, not to know, recognise or learn the alternative to capitalism. Yet behind that black assault our fortune was illuminated by the determination of Marxism-Leninism. A thousand salutes...

“...The facts show that throughout human history no ideology has brought people and peoples together, regardless of religion, language, race, nationality, colour or sex, and released their creative powers as much as Marxism; no mode of production has done so as much as socialism...” A thousand salutes!

A thousand salutes to you for becoming the measure, with your uncompromising stance on the longing and power of the people, against currents drenched in “peace” that began with “Farewell to the Proletariat” and ended with “Farewell to Arms”...

While lies were being vomited into the midst of the age that imperialism was now “democratic” and a “friend of the peoples”, you kept history clean through the uninterrupted Mahir-like stance of being anti-imperialist. In the light of Marxism and Leninism, you carried the truths you put forward straight into the people. You held the fire of truth to the age and the lies melted away. A thousand salutes to you for striking down the changing clamour of the unchanging imperialists...

A thousand salutes to you for proclaiming with voice, heart and fist that the road to the tomorrows we long for passes through insisting on independence, for which we are drenched in red blood against imperialism...

A thousand salutes to you for overcoming so many ordeals, crushing the ugly ambitions of dirty hands, and realising our dream in a way that made us say of all the prices paid: “It was worth everything”...

A thousand salutes to you for instilling self-confidence, daring and faith in the struggle for bread and the future into those who were provoked by the words “nothing will ever come of these people”...

A thousand salutes to you for teaching us to walk upright and with a clear conscience on this rugged road, for taking our hands and lifting us when we fell, and for letting us experience the happiness of trusting and being trustworthy...

A thousand salutes to you for placing, against capitalism’s indifferent, alienated, individualist and parasitic Old Human Being, the effort and enthusiasm to become the New Human Being, who exists by being created at every moment on every front of the revolution...

A thousand salutes to you for instilling love of the people, for giving us the skill of writing history, for giving us the desire to conquer life with the belief that “We will shake the world once more from Turkey”, and for making our Hope permanent through all this...

A thousand salutes to you for showing the way to defend the honour of life and the Hope of the people by creating and bequeathing Free Prisonership, the name of defeating captivity through the consciousness, labour and daring of freedom...

A thousand salutes to you for guiding that hopeful will which rejects impossibility and creates the possible, enabling it to rise upon daring and labour...

A thousand salutes to you for breathing life into our identity with the Water of Life that has flowed through the ancient wisdom and valour of this land, from Baba İshak to Bedreddin, from Köroğlu to the Karayılans...

A thousand salutes to you for guiding the transformation of the conduct, principles and virtues inherited from Mahir and his comrades into traditions that light the road to the future...

A thousand salutes to you for ensuring that the truth that the invincibility of the people passes through heroism made ordinary was inscribed upon life in the most beautiful forms...

A thousand salutes to you for keeping diseases contrary to the essence of our ideals - pragmatism, possessiveness, lack of principle and methods that harm the people - out of our ranks, and thus enabling us to keep our foreheads clean and our heads held high...

A thousand salutes to you for bringing internationalism and the brotherhood of peoples to life in every moment and sphere, allowing us to live our socialist tomorrows within our family today...

Of course, a right life cannot be lived through wrong choices. A thousand salutes to you for setting before us the name, the rules and the essence of that right life, and teaching us to be labourers in the creation of a free life...

A thousand salutes to you for being our unbowed neck, our star-crowned brow, our sharp consciousness, our wrathful fist, our fiery heart, the strength in our knees, our deserved smile, our shared joy, our strength to endure pain, our multitude in utter loneliness, our unshakable faith, our master who paints beauties upon history, the compass of our great love...

A thousand salutes to you for granting us, in today’s world, through your life and what you created, the privilege of having such a Dayı. And now we will always live the privilege of keeping you alive... In

your consciousness, your will, your Hope, we saw and loved the revolution. As always, from now on too, we will see you in every state of the revolution. Every step of our long march is now love for you, respect for you, a salute to you. A thousand salutes... A thousand salutes... A thousand salutes...

* From Mahir Çayan's poem "The Dream of the Islander in the Cell".

★

We Walk in Our Dayı's Footsteps!

"There is no other way, my heart
We will come through these pains alive
Because despair is forbidden
And so are songs of defeat
Because the army of Hope is marching
Putting despair before the firing squad..."
(M. Demirtaş)

As we walked in the street, on the exercise-yard circuit, on the path, they formed the sentence "He is no longer here" with a filthy joy. We heard it, and as though one could hear such a thing and stand still, we took another step. Along the uninterrupted road of the hopeful existence of the one they said was "no longer here". And as we stepped forward, crushing all the meanings loaded into that sentence, we sent our voice into the street: There Is No Death for Us! We sent our voice to the summits: He Is Immortal! We sent our voice around the exercise-yard circuit: Dayı lives!

You always longed to utter this sentence, did you not? And now, with what vulgar lust you say "he is no longer here". But once again you are mistaken. Yours is an inevitable error suited to your nature. Hundreds of years ago, when our name was Babek, for example, we shouted in your faces: "And the tyrant ruler who kills me does not understand that with death the fighter for freedom does not disappear altogether."

Yours is helplessness. After all, whenever you tried to rejoice in the tune of "he is no longer here", that filthy desire always stuck in your throat. For example, you had Nesimi flayed and killed; what happened? Nesimi, taking his flayed skin upon his back, went out through the twelve gates of Aleppo and merged with truth and the people. Surely this legend, carried down to today, has a meaning. It is this: those who live for the people live within the people...

Look, Pir Sultan is still asking: "How many times have I died?" Yes, how many times have we died? This is not even a question, and its answer is not in your hands. For to be able to say "How many times have we died?" is itself a state of immortality.

Those songs that say "Pir Sultan dies and rises again" are in fact this truth being struck against your heads...

Your saying "...he is no longer here" is of course nothing new. You said the same sentence after Che. And you received your answer first from Fidel and then from the peoples of the world. Fidel said at the time: "...For this reason, comrades, we must look to the future with hope. We must always look to Che's example for inspiration: for inspiration in struggle, for inspiration in endurance, for inspiration in uncompromising opposition to the enemy, for inspiration in internationalist feelings..."

We walk on the exercise-yard circuit, in the street, on the path. We reach that mud-brick village house. As Mahir of life shouts, we hear his unwavering voice: “We came here not to return, but to die.” What followed is known. How you rejoiced. After all, you thought you had eliminated the danger directed at the foundations of your palaces. What a historic mistake! Yet it was now Dayı who carried that hopeful voice. And he walked, and we are walking, on the path, in the street, around the exercise yard...

You can continue rejoicing that “he is no longer here”. And yet, look at what the one and only Dayı of all those who have no one says straight to your faces: “We will be in the war to win freedom.” Look how that river waves, red upon red. Look how the people, in their most hopeful form, walk along that great avenue of history. On their shoulders is Hope, the future of history...

In the hand of a small child a sea larger than his body is waving. A young man shouts, “the name of Hope...” A mother raises her fist now, loading it with a thousand salutes. Here a worker, there an unemployed person, there a student, a civil servant, an artist, white-collar workers, tradespeople and housewives... We walk in the wake of an icebreaker. We walk like waves around the exercise yard, on the path, in the street...

The words written by that student after Che come to mind: “To destroy Comrade Che, they would have to destroy us, all of us poor people, and that is impossible...” And to destroy their Dayı they would have to destroy all those who have no one, the oppressed, the working people, the wronged and downtrodden; that too is of course impossible. I take another step now, on the path, around the exercise yard, in the street...

The words come to mind: “Death is a natural event; in such a world what matters is knowing how to die without bowing your head.” And the poet who said, “...far from all fears / To live like this is a love,” was right. His great love is our legacy, his memory our Hope. For that reason, the oligarchy may continue to tremble, because Dayı is coming like a roaring torrent. And we walk in the street, on the path, around the exercise yard. We walk in our Dayı’s footsteps...

“How many times have I died...”
(Pir Sultan Abdal)

Hello!

“Some people never die,” Fidel said while speaking after Che. And he added: “...their presence is so strong, powerful and intense that it is impossible to think that they have died, that they have ceased to exist...”

Fidel is right. Those people always live as the vanguards of our adventure stretching from every moment of life into the future. Because their existence is not confined to a single body. Their lives are as endless as every moment in which shared Hope realises itself... And Dayı lives wherever injustice is not swallowed. He walks straight at the imperialist brigands. He throws obstacles aside and disrupts the order of the status quo, the discipline of the system. He always points forward, towards what is beautiful, what is right, what ought to be. And the people walk towards the future with their most hopeful steps...

Here we are together again in another volta (*prison exercise yard walk*). Once again there are various subjects and guests in volta. But at the heart of them all is our Hope for life. And our Dayı's memory is our Hope... Then once again, we embrace you with the everlasting warmth of our Hope.

See you again...

"Beneath the skin of the cherry is the cherry
Inside the pomegranate, the pomegranate
Within my heart, stretching its full length,
Is my homeland
It has worked its way into my very life and liver
Into my very life, my very liver...

The apple does not fall far from the branch
Whichever way I go, it is no use
The state of my homeland never leaves my eyes
I am bound from a thousand and one places
My mind cannot reach beyond this..."
(Bedri Rahmi Eyüboğlu)

Condolences to our people...

We died!
Once again...
This time in Istanbul-Güngören.
We were killed.
We were three-year-old baby Aleyna and sixty-year-old Abdullah Güler.
And we were that mother who died with her child in her womb, and that child playing on the balcony of his home.

We are the people...

We are working people who are the people themselves. We were the unknown soldiers of the struggle for bread, working and striving throughout our lives. We were working people struggling with hardship, angered by constant price rises, furious at unemployment running rampant, objecting to the high cost of living and carrying the hope of better days. Once again we were massacred because of conditions, plans and projects hostile to the people. Let the crocodiles shedding tears now, the comfortable and all the vultures, stay away from our pain.

We are the people...

And condolences to our people...

Bolu F-Type Prison

Free Prisoners

Our Master Who Saw and Showed Us These Days

The year is 1989, the month February. The bombardment of lies and slanders produced by imperialist propaganda centres about Ceaușescu, who was taken prisoner in a counter-revolutionary conspiracy organised by the CIA and shot by firing squad together with his wife, is so intense that one can hardly see through it. In the face of this wind of lies, which swept the “Left” of our country and the world along before it, only the “Revolutionary Left Forces” were able to stand upright and, without the slightest hesitation, defend Ceaușescu — who challenged the counter-revolutionaries even as he was being shot — with the slogan “an honourable socialist despite his mistakes”...

Years passed... In recent days, the special commission established by the Romanian Parliament concluded its two-year investigation and found that Ceaușescu had not transferred money abroad, as imperialist anti-propaganda had claimed, and that he had no bank accounts abroad. And in the vote held in parliament, Ceaușescu was exonerated. A thousand salutes to our leader, who with his foresight and the unfailing truths of Marxism-Leninism saw these days and showed them to us.

His light will always illuminate our path!

Salute to the Leader, Continue the Struggle

If we are travellers on the road
pointed out by that finger of yours
that demands an accounting,
and if we are your students,
we
- and we are -
then of course
we will know how to cope
with this indescribable pain
that has settled like a stone
upon our hearts.

Even if sorrow
from now on
becomes an inseparable part of us,
with every breath we take,
with every step we make,
you will still be there.

We will be your students.
We will be worthy of you
from now on too.

Our voice stronger,
our heads held higher,
our fists clenched tighter,

our blows harder.

We will never get used
to your absence,
but believe us,
we will not let it show
in the struggle either!

Free Prisoners of Sincan

Dear Diary

You know, every loss is heavy, every pain burns a person. In captivity this is felt even more painfully. Captivity is always unbearable; at moments like these it becomes even more unbearable. You hear them, do you not — the pain-laden, sorrow-filled voices rising from comrades, friends and acquaintances in the cells?

You see those who come to share our pain, do you not? Alongside the pain of losing Him, in some voices there is the sorrow of never having had the chance to know Him; in others, of never again being able to speak with Him or embrace Him; and in others, the sorrow of not being physically present in Gazi, of not being able to stand vigil over Him, shoulder His body and see His face one last time, even lifeless. Beside all this, however, there is the determination and belief to shoulder His legacy. With this — with our hearts, our whole being and our consciousness — we too were in Gazi...

However great our pain, we will know how to endure this as well. As He willed, we will continue to carry out our duties; we will not cry after Him or mourn. Because, as an old march says, “those who fight do not mourn the dead”.

Hello

Our pain is great, so great that it is impossible to describe. But we are not without hope. We are always hopeful and always with Him. With what we learned from Him, we will continue to walk even faster. Our separation is only a physical separation. He will still always be with us, continuing to watch us and show us the way, and now we will multiply and grow stronger all the more. Because only in this way can we fulfil His legacy and carry it into the future. Our enemy will rejoice in vain because we have lost Him. We will make their joy come to nothing. Because He is always with us. Our enemy knows this too, and we will show it to those who do not. No longer one, but a thousand...

Yes, a person fills and overflows. Sometimes you do not know how to put your feelings into words. Here too, we are putting into writing our feelings and thoughts about Dayı, what we want to say about Him. We are trying to tell of Him and share our feelings and thoughts by drawing what can be expressed in lines and writing what can be expressed in words. Our effort is to create something worthy of Dayı.

It was truly hard to be physically separated from Him. I confess that it was the hardest moment of my life in prison. Receiving this news under such conditions of captivity sharpens one’s anger even more. The moment I heard, I wanted to break through the walls and run towards Him. When we saw

that coffin in the funeral vehicle on television, in the middle of a sea of red flags, we sighed and said, “If only we could have been there.” A person longs so much to see Him just once, to touch Him. A person wants to live every moment of His being bid farewell into immortality. In short, the prison, already narrow, became even narrower for us at that moment. And afterwards a vast window opened through which He would see us. We know that His eyes will always be upon us. We will not let His labour go to waste, and we will build that great day of which we dreamed. Of course, in our dream we had imagined living that day with Dayı. But on that day too, as always, Dayı and our heroes and all of us will be together. Naturally, we are experiencing intense emotions. At the same time, we continue with our work.

★

To Our Dayı

“...death is a natural event. In such a world, what matters is knowing how to die without bowing your head...” (Dursun Karataş)

We are prisoners, we are in isolation... Locks have been put all around us. Colours are forbidden; songs, marches and slogans are forbidden — they are dangerous to them, they are afraid! A comrade’s face, a friend’s conversation, sharing pain and joy, being human: forbidden. The enemy is intolerant and unable to stomach it. They cannot tolerate the victory we won under your leadership with our 122 carnations. Our captivity is no obstacle either to our freedom or to our struggle in the ranks of independence, democracy and socialism. In the isolation cells we are trying to expand the tradition you taught us, the legacy created by the resistances of ’84, ’96 and 2000–2007: the tradition of not surrendering, of producing under all conditions, resisting, fighting, being revolutionary, being filled with Hope and living with Hope. You are with us; the name of the Hope whose architect you were is with us; and thus we are with our people...

We begin the day by saluting our Hope, with enthusiasm. And so it was again on one such day: 11 August 2008... The news of your immortality appears as the first item in the news bulletins... The day is turning towards noon, the August heat above us. We do not leave the television; this is our only source of news... And we have no trust at all in the television channels that are the voice of the bourgeoisie and the oligarchy. We do not believe it, cannot believe it, do not want to believe it. We say it is a false report. It is hardly something they have never done... How many times had we watched, heard and read the same report? We said that fascism, in the psychological war it had intensified recently with counter-guerrilla reports, smears, mud-slinging and attacks, had once again produced such a “news” item. But there was a difference... Even the tone of the newsreader’s voice was different. Some were grinning from ear to ear, while others seemed sad, almost respectful...

They were telling of you. Of how you did not surrender to fascism; how in the darkness of 12 September, in defiance of those who had lost heart and said socialism was dead, you armed yourself with socialism and Marxism-Leninism and marched in the manner of Mahir; how you demanded an accounting from the oligarchy; how you put fascism itself on trial in the courts of fascism; how you defeated the treacherous and vilely organised coup; how Hope was born. They were telling of you. They were telling of the WE that you raised and developed. Even if they were unaware of it, what they were recounting were pages of the revolutionary march to which the Hope, vanguard and leader of the people had devoted his life — pages to be read with honour and pride. What they told went far beyond the story of a single brave man, a single hero.

This time, we said, it was different; but until we heard a more reliable statement, we still did not believe it. Then, with the statement from your lawyers, we were shaken and pulled ourselves together. Our Dayı, our Leader, had physically departed from among us... There were three of us in the cell. A brief silence fell between us... “Our condolences,” one of us said... We called out to our comrades in the other cells... The feelings and thoughts were the same. And what we had to do was clear.

Red is forbidden, but we put on our reddest clothes. Our red banner in our hands, we are three people among the thousands saluting you — that is, we are thousands. We shout our slogans to salute you, and raise our clenched left fists for you and once more for our people, as promises already given. “There Is No Death for Us,” we say in our strongest voice... You taught us to die with our heads held high. Now, through your practice, you gave your final lesson on this too. Once again you showed the power of will. To fight every kind of enemy... To fight the enemy in our bodies, in our souls, in our minds, and not surrender... And so you taught us that illness too can be an enemy; that against it too one must act with will, fight and refuse to surrender, and when the time comes, know how to die with one’s head held high.

Friend and enemy alike saw the longing of the soil of the homeland and of our peoples for you, and for the revolution. That sea of red that bid you farewell, those thousands of workers, civil servants, labourers, unemployed people, young and old — our people — are your legacy. Let our promise be to multiply that legacy into millions and salute you once again on the square of victory on the day of liberation. We are your students. You will always be our strength, our confidence, the one who shows us the way, the one who goes in front.

And we will be worthy of the trust you placed in us. Endless love to you! Salute to you! A thousand salutes.

We Learned From You

August was heavy and hot. It knocked on our door with painful news. At first we hesitated: was this once again one of the dirty bullets of psychological warfare? We rushed to the televisions. Our voices could not cross the walls and reach our comrades. We could ask no one... Our eyes and our hearts were locked onto the news bulletins. Before long we understood that it was true. Even though we felt the pain in the depths of our hearts, our necks did not bend and our tears remained hidden in their springs. It would not have suited either you or us to sing laments. Because we knew that no lament should be sung after a life devoted to struggle. We knew that death could not kill those who lead the struggle for the liberation of their people. We knew the helplessness of Azrael before those who know how to live for their people... You will live for centuries in the love, consciousness, dreams, struggle and Hope of your people and your comrades.

Our Leader... Our Commander... Our Dayı... From you we learned not to lose heart in the face of difficulties, not to collapse in the face of betrayal but to rise stronger, to knead the pain of the comrades we lost with anger and sharpen our wrath. From you we learned faith in revolution and never to give up; the meaning and strength of being of the Front. We learned all this from you, and we will teach it to future generations.

We too now have “even more reasons to fight.” We will fight more, and once again you will be before us, showing us the way. Together we will embrace victory and change the name of our country!

Palaces and reigns collapse,
one day the blood will cease,
oppression will end.
Violets too will bloom above us,
lilacs too will smile.
Of these days, what will remain
are those who go towards tomorrow,
and those who resist in the name of tomorrow...

(Adnan Yücel)

★

O Child of the People!

The peoples of Anatolia and of the world have bid farewell into eternity to another honourable child, another fighter. Yours was a life devoted to revolution. How many times did your wounds bleed, how many times was your humanity tested? How many betrayals, how many sacrifices you witnessed. You lived fully and paid heavy prices. Until your final moment, you continued to teach, faithful to your beliefs and values.

O child of the people! How can I describe what is passing through me; what words could express our pain? Here, between four walls, on 11 August, the news fell upon our hearts like fire. At first we could not believe it. How many times had the tyrants issued such reports? They had hoped to gain from them. Yet do they not know our slogans carried down through the centuries: “one of us goes, a thousand return” and “There Is No Death for Us”? They know, but still they hope. Yet this time, what can be done:

Do not rejoice, O tyrants,
at his death.
The valiant do not die easily;
you have not died.

The lines caught in my throat. This time my tears rebelled against flowing inward. Who could know better than us the deepest of pains — the pain of losing a child, the pain of losing a comrade? On the long and difficult road of revolution, rugged yet equally magnificent, you entered that gate “with your head held high, your face turned towards your friends, your people and the sun”. Many did not want to enter through that gate. Their will was not enough. Some acted as though they were entering but abandoned the road halfway. Others never dared at all. Yes, our pain is great, but our honour is greater.

Now you are in your homeland. You have returned. You are in the land for which you went to and returned from death. Your pains have ceased; what remained was our longing, our yearning. We pressed you to our hearts... Like a seed you fell into the fertile field of revolution, like black earth, to sprout and put forth shoots. Rest easy; do not let your eyes remain behind. What you entrusted is in

safe hands. Your eyes are upon us, your heart beside us. Your belief is our belief, your struggle our struggle, your love our longing.

I offer my gratitude. A thousand salutes to you, precious human being, beloved Comrade. Condolences to our people. Guide of our hopeful march, I salute you with respect.

Amid so much injustice, immorality, dishonour and degeneration, thank you for the hand you extended, for the future you showed, for the branch you gave us to hold on to, for enabling us to have Hope... As we walk towards that magnificent day when children will join the halay, you were our guide. With you, learning from you, we continue. By walking as you trusted us to walk, as you expected and wanted us to be, we will strive to keep the promise we gave to you and to all our carnations. Yesterday, today and tomorrow: you are always with us!

With Hope, with devotion...

★

We Will Pay Our Debt to You by Fighting

11 August... This time it is not the scorching heat of summer but the pain of losing you that burns our hearts. We hesitate; there is always a question in our minds. Time proves the truth of the news.

Then we bury our pain in our hearts and shoulder resistance. We hold even tighter than ever to our great love, clench our fists with greater wrath, and with our whole being salute our leader, our commander. Time has proved it: those who live and die for their people are never erased from the people's memory. People embrace their child. Anatolia waits with its heart open. The gecekondu neighbourhoods now live the honour of saluting him. Young women and men renew their oaths in his presence. Our mothers, whose hearts have become calloused by pain, feel the sorrowful pride of seeing off yet another of their children. And we cross the bars, cross them and come into your presence, standing vigil beside you with belief and wrath.

Iron doors and stone walls cannot prevent us from reaching you. Our Dayı, our leader, our guide... Our pain is great, but not as great as our faith. We are as you taught us to be: steadfast and calm. We swear, we vow that your goal is our goal and we will reach the destination. We will reach it fighting; we will reach it by emerging from every difficulty more resistant, like you, as you taught us. And when that great day comes, your shoulder will be beside ours. Until that day, we will walk on your path with determination and devotion. Do not let your eyes remain behind.

What you did is our legacy; what you wanted to do is our debt. We will pay our debt by fighting. And "now we have even more reasons to fight."

★

The Eyes of Hope

Let them not think
that the guiding gleams
in your star-laden eyes
have gone out.
With thousands of new eyes
opening onto our ancient world,

Hope is once again scattered into hearts.

Behind your gaze, the glad tidings:
your eyes carried the sparks
of all the rebels of ancient times.
The most beautiful song of the future
that you brought down from the stars
to our world...

What we shoulder now
is not merely
the steel breath of struggle...
To the eyes left staring after you,
here now
and in the future,
indeed everywhere,
to be able to say to pure faces:
He stole the fire a second time —
this is now our duty.

On the journey called life,
with science packed in his bundle,
he dreamed the loftiest dreams.
How could he be compared
with mystical heroes of legend?
With flesh, bone and consciousness
he built dreams and realities
in the name of humanity’s finest side...

Our self-sacrificing and skilful mothers
who ferment the future —
and you know
we have mothers
who light the nights
like torchlight processions;
who, in the name of life’s honour,
become immortal for their children,
who even at their final moment
smile at pain.
You are the resistant gleam
in our mothers’ eyes,
the one that will never go out
on moonless nights...

Maker of the unbreakable spear
we will drive into Goliath’s* eye,

eternal master of those
who swear to bring down the windmills,
you will keep walking with us
on the strong feet of young bodies,
over the paving stones
of the city of Istanbul...

The eyes of Taksim,
the fishermen of Galata,
the pavements of Gültepe,
the ridges of Sarıyer,
the back streets of Beyoğlu
salute this unforgettable day
with a deeper sorrow,
with longing and Hope.
Yet through the shining eyes
of tomorrow's children
they too will see
that great and earth-shaking day...

Cemo is singing his song again,
burning and multiplying,
in the stubbornly green oak forests.
Still, he says, in anger,
I will make my Mauser speak
like a cry of rebellion
against the heads of the tyrants
who are the cause
of pain and oppression...

Tell me, O sage,
what can a heart endure?
Or what can it contain?
Until its final beat,
yours, it turns out,
was forged of brazier iron,
never to rust.
Otherwise, shattered a thousand times,
how could it be reborn
all thousand times?
In defiance of those
who struck the Phoenix again and again,
you taught us
to rise once more
from our own ashes...

You gladdened Rıza of Dersim,
valiant child of the unconquerable homeland
within four mountains,
who would not bow his head.
Your name will live forever
on the scorched rocks of Dersim,
where 'Dursun' stands like a fortress.
Our hawks will keep watch
on its misty summits...

Do you see the land smelling of gunpowder?
Burying its pain in its breast,
the war halay of the purple mountains
has already begun...

From now on we have burned the ships.
Let it be known:
there is no turning back.
We have taken to the oars
with bare hearts...

With the consciousness you gave us
we run towards our goal
moment by moment.
You —
a red mark on our prow,
guide to our people,
gift to our homeland,
rising proudly within us,
an icebreaker that will never sink...

We know that despite everything
tomorrow our world will keep turning,
the shooting stars of the night
will continue to shine.
We will shout your name
to seven climates and four seasons.
Look and do not forget, we will say
to those we love most:
the brightest star there
was the one buried
in our aching hearts
on 11 August...

To our Borans and our hawks,
who went early,

who paved the road of revolution
with their blood,
who fly freely
over the gecekondu neighbourhoods and mountains;
to our best ones,
whom we know wherever we are
from their hearts, their voices,
their salutes;
to the first links in our chain —
give them our greetings, will you?...

You know that one day,
at a point in history,
after the red dawn
embraces our homeland
in all its splendour,
napalm and cluster bombs
will no longer explode
on the apple cheeks
of rose-like babies.
On every smiling life
to whom faithful lips
plant a kiss,
you will live...

Perhaps the cars of that age
will travel at the speed of light.
Engines driven into the blue
will no longer cause needless deaths.
In the hands gripping their steering wheels,
you too will exist...

The doctor who stays awake
through the night in the laboratory
to put an end to incurable suffering
will never forget — be sure of it —
will never forget those
who paid immeasurable prices
with scientific honour.
And then
you will come to mind.
Perhaps the doctor will sigh
for those who fell
for the sake of beautiful days...

Buildings will be raised solidly,

buildings that do not kill those inside.
The loving hands that rebuild life,
no longer alienated from humanity,
will be yours...

In the pause of tired bodies,
you will be there
in the first sip
of strong tea...

You will be the one
who reloads every magazine
we empty again and again
at enemies and exploiters...

At our final breath,
it will be your name
and your honourable legacy
that we invoke.

We swear,
we vow:
you will see through the eyes
of honourable people
the greatest squares of our homeland
painted in the yellow and red
of our Hope.

To tell of you is a duty.
To those who never lift their heads
from the struggle to make ends meet
and fall into helplessness,
to be able to say:
the remedy is with us.
To millions bewildered and deceived...

To turn the owners
of calloused hands that produce and create,
of tired shoulders,
into ranks upon ranks
of armies of rebellion
is not for every brave man.
We know this.
It has to be our task.

Otherwise these pains,

these betrayals,
the reign of lies
will continue.
Even if our road is long,
we know it will always be walked
with honour...

With every breath we take,
in the halay, in the bar,[15]
in the horon, in the zeybek,[16][17]
at birth, at weddings, at death,
in the very middle of life,
you will be the red handkerchief
we wave...

Our pains are our provisions for the road;
your legacy is our Hope.
You, who are the sum of them all,
we love you deeply,
our sage with the eyes of Hope,
who carries Hope into the future...

August 2008

Kırıklar No. 1 F-Type Prison

Free Prisoners

* Goliath: A warrior believed to have lived in the 11th century BC, known for the duel he fought and lost against David, the future ruler of Israel.

★

The Valiant Leader of Our Hope

For the past week, we have probably all been living with the same feelings. The pain of losing our leader is in our hearts. But because this loss is only a physical loss, he continues to be constantly with us in our hearts and consciousness. The magnitude of our loss is beyond dispute, but so too is the magnitude of the Hope he left us. From now on, our task is to take one more step forward, enlarge our goal and our Hope, and dedicate victory to our leader, our people and all our carnations. Today every member of our great family must raise the goal they have set before themselves and shoulder greater responsibility, and that is what will happen. When we received the news of our loss, these were the things we thought about and discussed.

Life goes on, the struggle goes on, and we too will continue to live this life in a way worthy of him and to enlarge Hope.

15 Bar: here, not the English word; a traditional group folk dance associated especially with eastern Anatolia.
16 Zeybek: a western Anatolian folk dance and cultural tradition associated historically with zeybeks/efes.
17 Horon: a fast traditional folk dance associated especially with Turkey's Black Sea region.

O Valiant Leader of our Hope,
fashioned by the hands of Mahir,
kneaded at Kızıldere with the blood of the Ten;
endless beacon in the darkness of oppression,
rank-and-file soldier of self-sacrifice for the revolution,
master guide of difficult and mist-covered roads,
captain of our icebreaker,
unyielding, tireless vanguard
of the Adalılar crossing steep mountains,
the name of freedom in captivity,
of daring in struggle...

O name of faith, of resistance,
of joy in children's eyes,
of the dove in mothers' hearts,
of the happiness in our hearts...

Salute to you;
our great teacher,
who created epics with his life
and storms with his immortality.

This is our promise to you and to all our carnations:

We created Hope with you.
We will win victory with you.

With love, respect and devotion

Kırıklar No. 1 F-Type Prison

Free Prisoners

You Will Always Be With Us

You taught us so many things that they cannot be expressed merely by writing or telling. But I would say that all of them stand on the side of honour, dignity and justice. You showed us so many things; all of them stand on the side of what is right, beautiful and hopeful. I would say that you taught us how to live: to live with our heads held high, our foreheads clear, with love for Anatolia and the people in our hearts.

With you we were purified; through your patience, your labour and your boundless efforts, we became attached to a clean and honourable life. You carried strength into our hearts and consciousness; we overcame what we had thought impossible, put an end to our hesitations and anxieties, and fortified our backs with the strength of these lands. I say, we say, that walking with you in the struggle was so beautiful. We know that whatever we write about you from now on will never be enough; whatever we say about you will never fully express it. Whatever value there is in life and struggle, you carried it throughout your lifetime. Not even a speck of dust fell upon any of them; you

never allowed it. And against those who always sought to stain them, you remained uncompromising in both your ideas and your practice of life...

From your life we saw that there is no obstacle that cannot be overcome, no problem that cannot be solved, no difficulty that cannot be defeated or surmounted. At times, like digging a well with a needle, at times working without stopping until there was no breath left, but whatever happened, in the end solving it and continuing on our road — we saw this in you, we learned it from you.

We saw loyalty in you; we learned it from you. We saw how you loved your comrades, your peoples. We saw you defend and embrace them without hesitation, offering your whole life and standing at the very front... Through you we came to know Anatolia. You made us love these lands even more. If our feet stood firmly on this soil, it was thanks to you. You were in love with these lands. You taught from these lands, you showed us through these lands. With love for these lands, every difficulty was overcome. Even pain became bearable. With you, we made it a principle in politics to be pure and open: “To do what we said. To defend what we did.” And we always defended it.

With you we saw that to value someone means to give them labour. This was the sign of love. We fell; you were the first to extend your hand, the one beside us. We grew tired; you became strength in our bodies. At times we could find no way out of certain things; you showed us the way out, the solution, how to remove the obstacles and make the roads passable — and so many, many more things. With you, with your presence and your thoughts, we overcame each one.

We saw plainness and simplicity in you. You always lived as things ought to be, as you believed they should be. Not for a single moment did you move away from them, from those principles. Yours was a life in which you added your nights to your days and your whole lifetime to the struggle. Not once did you ask for anything for yourself; whatever you had, you offered to our road. You offered it to Anatolia. You offered a pure heart, sacrifice upon sacrifice. You offered a lifetime, lifetime upon lifetime. From you we learned what love means and what love ought to be. From your life we saw how love grows still greater through struggle, how it becomes unbreakable, how it creates value and beauty... And what is written here, what will be written, does not end here. What we have to say about the one we loved most will never end. And we will always continue to tell of Him.

And we will always commemorate Him. With what He taught us and showed us, we will walk with Hope towards those beautiful days, towards our tomorrows.

Do not let your eyes remain behind!

★

Hello

These are days that make us feel so many things in our hearts and consciousness. Our pain is shared, but as you said, the strength we draw from Him is another side of it. Yes, a person feels so many different emotions; so many things pass before one’s eyes. But where the one we loved most is, there is Hope. He was an ocean of wisdom in himself, boundless and without end. As you say, wherever he reached, he carried strength. Of course there will be dozens of things to think about and experience; I think this too is one aspect of our love and devotion. But, as you said, what is difficult at such a time is being here. What can we say? This too is one part of our life. Once again, our condolences...

We learned the news from television, from the news bulletins. Clearly, because we had heard such things before, I did not believe it. Afterwards, things began to become a little more concrete; but even though such a thing is one reality, one part of life, I still said it could not be as they were saying. And of course, when we became certain that it was true, many things passed through my mind. Our earlier periods in prison, our court proceedings. Because those were times when we could speak face to face, ask questions and learn. He would explain tirelessly, without ever becoming weary... And in fact even that stance of his expressed so much, especially when he began to speak during those hearings — everyone would fall silent. And that finger of his never came down.

Another side of it was the devotion they had to one another. For example, we had heard that Niyazi Aydın had been captured; of course at that time we did not yet know him properly. Dayı was staying behind the exercise yard where we were. A message came to us: if he came to that yard, let them know immediately. It did not matter whether it was night or day, because there was a way of communicating. In fact there always was. Anyway, after a while Niyazi Abi arrived. You can imagine the traffic of messages. But let me say this: when we went out into the exercise yard, Dayı would go to the front of Niyazi Abi's ward and talk with him. Niyazi Abi stayed on the lowest floor — Metris Prison had three floors. And when Niyazi Abi spoke, Dayı's eyes would smile. He always emphasised how valuable he was to us... And it was not only him; during that period we heard the same thing from many of our older comrades. Such a beautiful and profound devotion. Of course, it drew its strength from love, devotion and trust. There was loyalty there...[18]

Let me mention one more thing that, for me, will never be forgotten. It was during the last period when I was released; I had received his heartfelt, full greetings. And he had sent me a gift with great moral meaning, a pen — along with, of course, the things he had said and conveyed. He was so thoughtful. Earlier too, after the '96 period, I had health problems following the resistance. Once again I received news from him, and it motivated me even more. That is how it was. But I know that many comrades like me experienced or witnessed such behaviour in one way or another. Because each and every one of us was valuable to him. That is why he never withheld his efforts.

Even if conditions sometimes prevented this from happening directly, in other ways — morally, spiritually and so on — it was always there. Our comrades who stayed with him always stressed how simple his life was. He lived like everyone else, had no privileges of any kind, and would never accept any. But when it came to people other than himself — to us — he thought of everything. From health problems to many other matters. If, for example, there had been even a slight delay in something, he would immediately set things in motion so that what had to be done was done, and would particularly emphasise that the same mistake must not happen again. One of the things he stressed most was that the important thing was the human being; other matters could perhaps be solved in one way or another, if not today then tomorrow. But all this required understanding people, knowing every aspect of their lives, and never postponing matters that required attention.

★

Hello

Yesterday I received that news. Unfortunately, the reports I heard on the radio were true. Our condolences. Our pain is great, of course. Right now I would have liked to be among our people.

18 Abi: Turkish for "elder brother"; commonly used as an affectionate or respectful form of address for an older male, including an older comrade.

There comes a day when words are sometimes inadequate. No words can be found. Today is such a day for me... I looked around me for someone to embrace. Now I have received the painful news, but there is no one beside me with whom to share it... Once again, our condolences.

★

You Walk!

He took on the wisdom of Anatolia,
He took on Anatolia's refusal to bow,
He took on
the resistance of those among us who say
"to the end, forever, to the last one of us"
for Hope.

Take on
whatever belongs to the longed-for future.
Take it on;
come, stretch out your hands,
stretch them out so that we can join our hands,
set out on the road to freedom,
set out;
and let us walk without stopping.

Let us walk with the light of Hope,
let us walk with the unerring compass of our Hope,
let us walk
and reach the free days we long for,
our radiant future!

And
to walk until your final breath
is to walk, overcoming obstacles one by one,
defeating every difficulty,
without tiring, without growing weary.

And whatever happens,
to walk without paying heed to anything,
and to be filled with Hope
is what befits a human being.
Because Hope makes longings real,
because Hope carries strength into hearts,
because Hope shines brightly,
illuminates consciousness
and the roads.

And
with the invincible power of Hope,

darkness is defeated,
and bright and beautiful days are reached.

And
the soil becomes spring
and opens its most beautiful flowers in its breast...!

And you walk,
everything around you is transformed,
becomes Hope,
becomes love,
the Homeland shines brilliantly...!

You, be the blood that flows through the sea,
you, an honest hand that creates and shapes with mastery,
you, an eye that shows what is right, the truths,
you, grow Hope, become consciousness,
you, become the word,
be the word that tells the truths,
that makes the truths understood.

You, become a heart,
the heart of Anatolia, of our homeland,
beating Hope, Hope,
never stopping and never falling silent,
living for justice and truth,
a pure and honourable heart.

You, become a step,
freedom’s unceasing,
freedom’s untamed, tireless step.

You who walk,
and behind you the roads themselves walk,
you walk
and people walk together with you,
and Anatolia walks, step by step.

And you
walk without deceit,
walk beyond time,
walk without breath,
walk without pause or halt.

You walk until you reach your destination,
you walk, Anatolia, Anatolia,

you walk, you walk, Homeland, Homeland,
you walk, tomorrow, tomorrow,
you walk, future, future,
you walk, saying:

“I have a promise,
I have a promise for you,
my promise will surely become reality.”

And you, become knowledge.

★

Hello

We are all the same, we are all living through the same feelings... We have lost our one and only Dayı, our mother and father, our dear comrade. Our pain is great, difficult to describe!

In our good days and our bad days, in every situation and under every condition, our Dayı was as close to us as our jugular vein. Already our longing is unbearable.

I do not know how to explain it; this is not the place for grand words either. Dayı always had a special place in our hearts. He had taken his seat upon the throne of our hearts; he was the sovereign of our hearts. That is why our hearts are like a place of fire. This feeling can only be lived in the heart; it cannot be contained in words!..

As I said, we are living it now: already our longing is as vast as mountains, too immense to fit into any horizon... Both our pain and our longing. It is a great and absolutely irreplaceable loss for the peoples of the world and of Anatolia. Condolences to the peoples of the world and the peoples of Anatolia!

Condolences to all of us. Condolences to our great family. Condolences to our peoples of every nationality — Kurdish, Turkish, Laz, Circassian and Arab — and of every faith, Alevi and Sunni. For they have lost a valiant child...

He is a seed that will die once and be born millions of times, fallen into the soil of Anatolia!... The splendour and greatness of the legacy he left us surpass our pain and longing a thousand times, a million times over. His thoughts and ideals will always be our guide... We will always walk in his manner... We love him very much; this love, this devotion will never disappear! He will always be on our left side, as close as our jugular vein... We will miss him very, very, very much...

★

Hello

We learned clearly of our Dayı’s death from the evening news on 12 August. You can imagine our feelings and thoughts at that moment, because you must have lived through the same, perhaps even more... We followed the funeral ceremony on television and in the newspapers. Everything was magnificent and worthy of Dayı...

Of course we will do even better on that beautiful day... How much we wanted to be there and touch him, to breathe in his scent just once... How much we wanted to shoulder his coffin, his body... But we were already there! With our hearts, with our whole being, with our feelings and thoughts... And we will always be with Him, forever!

With Love and Devotion

N. E.

★

Hello

Anatolia, where epics are written and heroism is created, has taken another of its valiant sons into its breast. We bid farewell to our Dayı into the fertile breast of Anatolia. Our pain, our anger and our pride are all great. Condolences to the peoples of the whole world and of Turkey, to our comrades, to all of us. He is the one who shows us the way. Our icebreaker. Our revolutionary march will continue under His leadership, with His will, labour and daring. With what we learned from Him, we will walk more determinedly, more enthusiastically, more stubbornly, growing our Hope still further.

And He will always be beside us, in our hearts and in our consciousness. The pulse of life and of our struggle will continue to beat with Him.

We have a promise to Him and to our heroic martyrs. We will grow the legacy He left us and make our red flags wave throughout Anatolia. We embrace you with the love of and devotion to our Dayı. We bow with respect before our Dayı.

His Memory Is Our Moment!

Gebze Prison

Free Prisoners

★

Hello

With Hope, with the burning heat of 11 August...

There are moments that suddenly knock on your door. You always say you are ready, yet you are never ready for the darkest news. It is always a possibility, but you take refuge in believing it impossible... Such a moment... I keep wishing that television, radio and newspapers were lying again... It would hardly be the first time. Yet even in their voices there is something different. Perhaps they too are shocked by this “impossible” moment and cannot deliver the news grinning from ear to ear; there is a hidden respect in their voices...

Revolutionaries die, revolutionary leaders too... The road of revolution is walked by adding one life to another, one lifetime to other lifetimes... Yes, leaders die too, but leadership is not confined to a single lifetime... The people do not forget their leaders, and on the road opened by them the travellers multiply one by one, ten by ten, hundred by hundred, until they become millions; the people walk with their leader, tearing down fortresses and planting the flag of victory upon the bastions of exploitation...

To what should a person devote a lifetime? A lifetime in the hardest of times, when death and oppression surround everything, when even the birds are afraid to chirp, when fascism has drawn its black tent over the sun and all the stars. He becomes the Prometheus of his time, bringing what the people need most. He is the one who makes Hope grow. In defiance of those who say the stars have gone out and the struggle is over, he chooses Kızıldere as his star on the road through the darkness of fascism. He is the one who finds the road, who follows the trail. With him the sapling of Hope grows and puts down roots. But for his enemies he is fear, a nightmare. With him Hope becomes Boran and is fanned towards our Island; with Him Hope becomes a carnation and adorns Anatolia from one end to the other...

The stars multiply in the sky and in the midst of darkness... Hope is tested in passages of fire. Under bullets, in dungeons, in torture chambers, and tested by the poison of the snake nesting in its bosom. But he is revolution from head to toe, he is revolutionary, he is a leader — that is, he is Hope. And this is how one lifetime multiplies: learning, teaching, showing the way. He is Hope. Hope is the people, and no history book writes that the people have been defeated and disappeared.

They force themselves to smear him, to cast even a single drop of shadow upon the love felt for Him, and they list his “crimes” one by one... What they describe are pages of the people’s justice. What they describe is nothing other than a hero who came from within a people and devoted his life to the independence of the homeland, the liberation of the people and socialism. Thousands say this with one voice.

Did the crows rejoice, the vultures, packs of jackals, hungry predators, bloodsuckers?... They surely did... But Hope is not a delicate sapling. From many storms came Borans. Its pain is great, but its head is held high with pride. Hope has taken root in Anatolia, and without Him but with Him, like Him, the march will continue...

I count the hours,
five, four, three, two,
and then the minutes.
My heart beats fast.
I do not recognise this beating
because before now
it has never beaten like this.

Lines from the epic of Sibel Yalçın
fall from my tongue:
“Salute to you, comrade, salute,
continue, continue the struggle.”

I stretch out my hands — barbed wire.
I stretch out my hands — wall,
bars,
and above me a handful of sky.

No, I say, no, today
you will not imprison me.

And the hour arrives.
In our red bundle, nineteen years of longing.
A mother’s lament rings in my ears,
her head held high with pride:

“My son, my son, sacrifice to your road,
my son, my son, sacrifice to your longing,
welcome, my brave one,
my honour, my light,
my strength, my remedy,
my squares,
my streets,
the fighter and light of my mountains.”

The wall collapses.
One by one I break the bars.
Here is my clenched fist.
Here is the red banner in my hand.
My voice echoes in Gazi.

And I hear
the white-haired,
white-scarved,
red-banded mothers.

It is an evening hour.
The air is hot.
The clouds are heavy.
My eyes are on a handful of blue.
I do not lower my left fist.

With my own eyes I saw,
there, in that sea of red,
the direction shown by your pointing finger
and the fire in your eyes.

My eyes fill.
I cannot hold back the torrent inside me.
Forgive me.
It is from longing for you.

And in my rain,
in the smell of earth,
salute to you,
salute to you,

salute to you,
a thousand salutes.

14 August 2008

Sincan Women's Prison

Free Prisoners

★

Hello

On 11 August a fire fell into our breast; we lived through the greatest of pains. Yet the life filled with struggle that the master of the struggle, our teacher, left to thousands also brings with it honour and pride.

How fortunate that until today we walked on his road. How fortunate that from now on too, with the values he left, he will continue to be our guide. We remember the master of the struggle, our teacher, with love and bow with respect before his precious memory. We send our condolences to all our people.

With Hope and Devotion.

Kürkçüler Prison

Free Prisoners

★

Hello

We were there with everything that belongs to us, fully armed with all that we are. We were there with our devotion to our Hope and to Reber, with our hearts beating for Him. Condolences to our people! Because the existence of the people is the existence of Hope and of the architect of Hope. Our people embraced their valiant vanguard. They received Him in a manner worthy of Him.

The pain of all of us is great, but this is not a pain that burns and destroys. It is Hope itself, blazing in our burning hearts. In other words, we are exactly as the architect of Hope would want us to be.

With our fists clenched tight and our hearts surging, even though we are behind concrete walls, we are with Him. His image that demands an accounting and shows the way, pointing out the target, is once again before us. We will reach that target with the consciousness of Hope with which He armed us. We will never be without Him. With this strength, this enthusiasm, this longing, and with the pride and honour of being His fighters: Salute to the architect of our Hope!

Salute to our Hope! A thousand salutes! A thousand salutes! A thousand salutes!

Elbistan Prison

Free Prisoners

My Dear Friends

Now I do not know what I should write. Sometimes pain makes a person tongue-tied, sometimes the fist clenches with anger, and sometimes tears grow tired of flowing inward and pour out. Please do not be angry if I say that I understand you very well... I would have liked to be beside you and embrace each of you one by one. I curse isolation and its disgusting vultures. Even the chance simply to touch your hand would have been enough. My dear ones, your pain is our pain. More than that, this is a great loss and pain for Turkey's revolutionary communist movement. We share your pain and anger from the heart; even though we are far away, we are right beside you. Friends, we love you. Condolences to you, condolences to us.

Your Friend

Great loves
begin with journeys.
And adventurers
set out on the roads.
They are
the world's last hope,
hawks whose line never dies out.

Hello

Our great love and our journey began with Him. And it will end with Him. Under His guidance, with His command, with His compassion, devotion, foresight and assessments...

On the road He opened and with Him, we walked, walked, walked...

And without Him but with Him, we will continue to walk.

He will show us the way, broaden our horizon, and by applying what He taught us again and again, without straying from the road He showed, we will reach that great day. You are always beside us. You are within us, in our minds, in our hearts, in our whole being. You always will be. ALWAYS... CERTAINLY...

Condolences to our great family, our comrades, our people and the peoples of the world. With respect.

Tekirdağ No. 2 F-Type Prison

Free Prisoners

Hello

Our loss and our pain are great. Our hearts are a place of fire, and we are certain that all of us are living through the same things. Yes, only we and we alone live the same feelings. Our people, all the

peoples of the world, all the oppressed have lost one of their precious ones. He is the light of the peoples, their guide, their moral value.

He is the one who gave Hope flesh and bone, who transformed it into a material force... That is why his place in the hearts of the peoples is unlike any other.

Those who rejoice and celebrate because “he is no longer here” are mistaken. Throughout his life, with the patience of digging a well with a needle, with his inexhaustible labour and effort, with his steel determination, he was our Hope made real. He lives in the name of Hope and will continue to live. He is Hope. Hope is Him.

He will continue to be beside us always, at every moment. He will live in the hearts, consciousness and ideals of the peoples. We will keep our promise to Him and to all our carnations by walking towards the future He pointed to, towards the horizon He indicated, on the road He showed.

Condolences to all of us, to all our people. We bow with respect and devotion before His memory and the values He created.

★

Hello

We have added our Dayı to the eternity of our Hope. It is very difficult to express in words the magnitude of the pain we are living through. It is equally difficult to contain our anger within these four walls. Only the knowledge that, through his revolutionary legacy, he will continue to live and show the way gives us strength. We will keep him alive...

To keep him alive means to remain loyal to his values.

To keep him alive means to carry his ideals forward.

To keep him alive means to take on his daring.

Dayı lives and will always live...

Because, as we learned from him, even in the hardest times we will make no concessions from Marxist-Leninist principles, we will trust the people and grow Hope.

His Memory Is Our Oath!

Kandıra F-Type Prison

Free Prisoners

★

Hello

We are well. We are well, but it is difficult to describe, to put into words, the sorrow and feelings we have lived through for the past month. The pain of bidding farewell to our Dayı towards the sun has settled upon our hearts. Condolences to our peoples, the peoples of the world, to all of us.

We will carefully embrace the values he created and the legacy he left, and continue our march with Him. If we are this hopeful about tomorrow, if we are this certain that we will win, it is thanks to Him. It is thanks to the pure, clean and firm tradition He passed on to us. On days like these, captivity weighs heavily upon a person. I bow with devotion and respect before His memory.

★

My Dear Ones, Comrades

The leaders of the struggle for Independence, Democracy and Socialism are like the sun; they cannot fit into the earth. Every morning they rise again and again. From the horizon of immortality they show the way to our lives, warming our faith, our consciousness and our struggle...

We have lost the contemporary leader of the struggle for Independence, Democracy and Socialism, our leader. The loss, the pain are indescribable... But our honour and pride are just as great... Condolences to all of us, to our great family, our people and the peoples of the world. Hope has lost its symbol, its vanguard leader... It has lost its child.

We swear to Him that we will carry the flag he took over from Mahir with honour to the summit worthy of Him, with still greater honour and pride... Without allowing the slightest hesitation or indecision in defeat, without becoming intoxicated by victory in success, he left to us, his students, as a legacy the ability to rise again, renew ourselves, and at the point where they say “it is over, they are finished, they will never stand upright again”, recreate ourselves and the Movement stronger still from the ashes, leaving the joy of those who rejoiced stuck in their throats, and emerge victorious from the deepest pains and the sharpest daggers of betrayal. We swear to Him, upon His head, that we will grow this legacy he left us with great honour and continue to walk with Him, striking lightning into the darkness.

He wanted us to realise Independence, Democracy and Socialism in Anatolia, to embrace and grow the Party-Front, and to make it the faith and Hope of the peoples of the world in Independence, Democracy and Socialism, the sun of freedom. We swear to Him, upon His head, that this testament will be our slogan of success and victory. We will fulfil his testament with honour. Until victory, we will continue to speak with his voice...

Let our friends not grieve, let our enemies not rejoice. As students of the great leader, we will not allow his absence to be felt; we will continue to walk with him in the struggle until victory and continue to speak with his voice. The banner of Marxism-Leninism will continue to wave. We will crown his testament with victory.

★

Hello

Today I received the most painful, the saddest news of my life. I am overwhelmed by the sorrow of losing our Dayı. Even though I know and believe that he will always live in our hearts and consciousness and continue to show us the way, I am still filled with great sorrow and pain.

Dayı should have seen the revolution. He deserved that more than anyone. Because he gave more labour than anyone to the revolutionary struggle...

It can be said that Mahir showed the road; Dayı taught us how to walk on the road Mahir showed. He taught so much; I learned so much from Dayı... How can I ever repay him? I must work several times harder. Today I was frozen by the thought that perhaps he might have seen the revolution. I may not be able to make up for the past, but I promise that for the rest of my life I will work to be worthy of him. For me he was a source of courage, a guide, a source of Hope and enthusiasm. He will remain so from now on as well. I bow with respect before his memory.

Condolences to us. Condolences to our people. Condolences to the peoples of the world. For now, I end here.

With Love and Respect

H. D.

Hello

The fire of August fell into our hearts — how could it not? We said: it is August, and August means Sabo's girls, standing there carnation after carnation. A month scented with carnations. The darkness of each of their eyes had fallen into August. Our road too fell into August... And here is the point where I come to a halt... Perhaps I should say where we come to a halt. Our Dayı, our beloved Dayı... Our Reber... Our Comrade... Our Commander-in-Chief.

It was a cursed day. I will not love August! It was August, but what we lived was the dead of winter. We were cold. If anyone asks whether one can feel cold in August, yes — let them lose their leader and they will know how cold one can become... Winter fell once into our pupils, and what followed was a flood brought by rain. Our very lives were shaken from the heart. Our arms dropped to our sides and hung there. We struck the walls. The blind walls held us. What followed is known: the Master stretched out his finger; his shadow appeared immediately beside us. He gripped our shoulder. I saw his eyes were pitch black. I saw his eyes were aflame with Hope. I saw his breath was life. I saw his smile was a red carnation leaf. He was in front. We crossed the walls. They remained behind. In Dersim we reached among the oak trees. His voice touched the leaves. His voice reached Munzur. It multiplied like Munzur. The heart of everyone who heard that voice fluttered in its place. His voice remained there. His voice remained in the forests, on the paths. His voice remained. "We heard Dayı's voice," someone said. The eyes of the one who said it were under a downpour of enthusiasm.

A red day had fallen to our share. Yellow-red carnations... Redness... We hurried to stand vigil at his side. We were breathless. We filled our left fists with all our wrath so it would not flow away but remain there. Our hearts became volcanoes, burning wherever they touched. They still burn and burn.

That day we drew the air even deeper into our lungs, thinking Dayı's breath had touched it. It smelled of longing. It was pure longing. Wherever we stretched out our hands we saw his hand; wherever we looked we saw his eyes. For the first time we paced the exercise yard so quickly, to reach Him. We paced so fast that our heads never spun, our feet never tired; our faces were as if struck by frost. Cold, still, ice.

Since that day, the sentences will not remain in place, the words flutter, the letters run about. Into which sea of feeling am I to cast them? Into sorrow — it is not enough. Into pain — not enough. Into sadness — not nearly enough. I thought I would cast them into pride, but no, that too is not enough. Honour said, no, I cannot stand alone. What am I to do now? Which of our hearts am I to carry here? If I say we are as if stricken senseless, would that alone tell our trouble? It would not. If I say autumn seized us, that we were left in deepest winter, would that tell it? If I say we were orphaned, our necks bent? It is still not enough. Because those are what stand on one side. What about what stands on the other? If, for example, I say our hearts have touched the freshness of the struggle anew, if I say we are restless as though first seized by struggle, if I say our hearts have fallen even more deeply in love with the redness of dawn... Because what dawned that day was a red dawn. Wherever its redness reached, there became red. It reached inside us. Dawn rose within us.

While pacing the exercise yard, we noticed that the sparrows who every day hurried after us with their little steps, timidly asking for bread, did not come near us that day.

They watched us silently from the wall. The clouds released raindrops upon us; what fell from them was August's abundance. And now, while our insides are burning like this, with his shadow over us, we keep looking around anxiously. In the darkness of night his eyes become immense. They touch the eyes of my longing and the longing grows still greater. This longing will not end until that day.

Victory...

Yes, it is victory that will end our longing. We used to say that on the days of victory we would descend from Dersim, from the paths, with our weapons in our hands, to the nearest cities. There is a square in Elazığ. Right there, Dayı would speak. We would stand around him, our weapons on our shoulders, and listen to Him. If only you knew what excitement that created! Even the leaves of the oak would join our excitement and tremble. Our laughter would walk the paths. Our hearts would take refuge in the summits. It was Dayı speaking at that moment. It was Dayı looking into our eyes. It was Dayı touching our hearts. And the commander pointing forward with his finger was Him! We say: salute to you, my commander.

Now our hearts are in pain, our hearts are bitter, our hearts have become pride and honour!

Salute to you, my commander!

Salute to you!

Salute to the Revolution!

Our word is our word: it is a word upon victory!

I know it is not enough, it was not enough. It was not enough to tell of me, of us, of our feelings. But everyone who is WE knows this ache. Wherever I try to hold it, it slips from my hand. I cannot gather my feelings into my palm; some always remain between my fingers. Then I found it: I open my palm to the redness of the day, to the stars in the blackness of night — to the stars, as an oath to the dawn!

Your letter came today. I opened it with such excitement, thinking there might be something shared about Him. There was not. I felt hurt. In fact nothing has come from anyone yet. Can you imagine what hungry curiosity there is? Please do not take it as mere curiosity.

Whatever belongs to Him, our concern is to make it sustenance for our Hope... Our road fell onto the paths, our road fell into the blackness of night, but inevitably our road fell to Dayı... To say we are well... I do not know... Let me say our consciousness is firm. Let me say our hearts are aflame. Now is the time to run with quick steps towards the days of victory. Dayı said so. When? When longing for Him burns our lives. Our feelings remain in corners and edges. They cannot be told; they are lived.

With love...

Güler Zere

★

Hello

We send our greetings and love and embrace you tightly with longing. In August a fire fell into our breast. We bid farewell into eternity to the architect of our struggle, our teacher. Our pain is great, but how fortunate that until today we walked in His footsteps; how fortunate that from now on too He will continue to be in our consciousness and hearts and continue showing us the way.

We remember the architect of our struggle, our teacher, with love and bow with respect before His precious memory. Condolences to all our people.

Kürkçüler Prison

Free Prisoners

★

To Our Dayı, To Our Great Family

“Captivity is the honourable suffering on our brow,” said Fatma Koyupınar, the final martyr of our Great Resistance. This must be one of the most concise expressions of what captivity means to us.

What could be more honourable than rebelling against this parasitic order in which dishonour is taught as the greatest virtue, in which peoples throughout the world are vilely massacred for profit, abandoned to hunger, poverty and death, and human beings are exploited with a savagery that would put slave traders to shame; what could be more honourable than fighting for socialism, the only road to liberation for the oppressed peoples!

For us, it is an even greater honour to be cadres and fighters of an organisation that has taken on this honour, armed itself with the light of Marxism-Leninism, has no power other than its people and believes in no other power. That is why, whatever the price of this struggle, we meet it smiling. If captivity is one of those prices, we simply call it “the honourable suffering on our brow” and carry on. We carry Free Captivity with honour in the cells of oppression. Neither the pressures upon us, nor the stone walls and razor wire surrounding us, nor bans and torture can restrain us. Through our thoughts, our production and the discipline of our lives, we are in the very midst of the struggle, wherever the pulse of life beats. We are in the struggle shoulder to shoulder with our comrades and our people.

Free Captivity is precisely such a state of mind: overflowing its confines, passionate, believing, keeping Hope alive at all times and refusing every chain.

We are the Ferhats of freedom. We pierce through dungeons and mountains alike, turning four walls into a road. In other words, we are Free Prisoners whose hearts burn with the passion for freedom.

We lay ourselves down for death, many times in different moments of history, for deaths that melted us cell by cell. We washed the prison walls with our blood in Buca and Ümraniye. In Ulucanlar we shed blood instead of sweat in the bathhouses. With eyes shining brightly, we ran towards sacrifice, one after another... In short, we are betrothed to death; however and wherever it comes, we accept it. Once we have said, “Let it come, it is welcome,” that is that. Because the honour and pride of resisting and living with one’s head held high cannot be exchanged for anything.

We do not bow to the dungeons. And while we live through all this, emotions too are experienced more intensely in the cells. Just as pain and anger are experienced more intensely... And every pain is in fact a test, an examination in which will and belief are tested. At the same time, the identity of the Free Prisoner takes flesh and blood by emerging from these tests with head held high and forehead clear.

We are living through one of the greatest of these tests. We are in pain at losing the Commander-in-Chief of our Movement, the one who recreated the THKP-C from its ashes and whose name today is “Hope” on the tongues of the peoples and in our hearts: our Leader, our Dayı. None of us had ever thought we would live through such pain. We said such a thing could not, should not happen. But one day... While August scorched earth and sky with its heat, we did not know it would scorch our hearts too. Our breath stopped, our breathing failed. Our hearts began beating madly. They overflowed into the streets of poor Gazi. We too were there; we put our shoulders beneath Dayı as he embraced the soil of the homeland, we gave our hands. Our eyes met the painful yet hopeful eyes of thousands.

Our hearts caught fire with the aching yet wildly surging hearts of thousands. And still none of it was enough. Our hearts pulled the trigger together with thousands, with accounts yet to be settled, for every life the enemy took from US...

We know that “death” is a reality of life, but we could not bring ourselves to associate it with Dayı. Dayı had always been there. He will always be there. What we understand by death is only a physical separation. Revolutionaries essentially continue to live in the consciousness and hearts of the peoples through their ideas and their contribution to the struggle. Just like Mahir, Cevahir, Niyazi, Sabo and Sinan... Each of them is a banner, and the ideals for which they sacrificed their lives are a great legacy.

The legacy Dayı left us is immense. Dayı left us the goal of carrying out the revolution in Turkey.

He gave us the task of growing our organisation wherever we are.

He gave us the task of renewing, strengthening and making our revolutionism continuous.

He gave us the task of becoming revolutionaries who understand and grasp the process, who think, can produce policies and can put the organisation’s policies into practice under all conditions.

He gave us the task of growing the identity of Free Captivity, increasing our production and frustrating all the enemy’s policies.

He gave us the task of breaking every bond with the system in our lives and in our minds, and of being more determined, more enthusiastic and more hardworking than ever.

He gave us the task of being people of will. He himself remained a person of will until his final moment and defeated death with a great act of will. Because without accomplishing these things, one cannot walk the rugged, winding and steep roads of revolution.

Dayı taught us all this throughout his life and even as he walked towards death. He will continue to teach us from now on as well. As his students, we believe that we will pass this test successfully too. He now continues to watch us through the eyes of the people he loved so deeply. The honour of this cannot be measured by anything. Throughout our lives, we will be worthy of this honour. With our belief and devotion.

Free Prisoners

We Swear an Oath

Our Leader
Our Commander-in-Chief
We,
your imprisoned comrades,
in the struggle
for independence against imperialism,
for democracy against fascism,
for socialism against exploitation,
at the side of our peoples,
for a free homeland,
until the last bullet
of our weapons,
until the last drop
of our blood,
we swear once again
in your presence
that we will fight.

We swear,
we swear,
we swear.

Our Leader
Our Commander-in-Chief,
we swear that
in every inch
of Anatolia
your voice will continue
to echo.
Your dream,

the pulse of our struggle,
will continue to beat
with you.
The hearts of us,
your comrades,
will continue to beat
with you.

Our Leader
Our Commander-in-Chief
Our Teacher
Our precious comrade,
we bid you farewell
to the side of our heroic martyrs
with our hammer-and-sickle flags
whose colour comes
from the blood of our martyrs.

We swear that
to our heroic martyrs,
to you,
we will present the Revolution.

Our Leader
Our Commander-in-Chief,
we swear that
for this cause
our lives,
our blood,
may be sacrificed
to you,
to our Party-Front,
to the peoples of Turkey.

Let them be sacrificed,
let them be sacrificed,
let them be sacrificed.

What We Felt at First

When we learned on 11 August that our Leader had been martyred, we could not believe it; we did not want to believe it. We had not expected it, we were not ready. He had been engraved so deeply into our minds and hearts with that dignified stance of his at the courtroom lectern that he always lived, and would always live, in that form. Suddenly death knocked on our door once again. It made our hearts bleed, hurt and ache. We became angry, saddened, we rebelled. And yet we swore, again and again: to present the revolution as a gift.

As always, our leader made us think and experience many things. When we received the news behind four walls, we reached for our pens to express our feelings. We wanted to pour what was inside us into the notebook we had opened for our Leader! We know that words can tell what is inside us only up to a point, but even so, we said we must write. And here is what poured from our hearts in those first moments...

Hello

At this moment when we are bidding you farewell, it is very difficult for us to express our feelings. You are in the earth. Everything happened as you wanted. The peace and confidence this gives us is something else entirely. And from now on too, everything will again be as you wanted. Once again I promise that my foremost effort will be to be worthy of our Party and our people. I always thought we would meet somewhere in the struggle, or perhaps I simply wanted it that way. Yet from the moment I was born into this family, we were together. In difficult periods, in our victories, in our rises and falls, I always felt your labour and your strength. Our pain is great. But stronger still is the honour of never letting our flag disappear from our chests or from any corner of the country.

(…)

As you taught us, we will know how to learn from everything.

Our slogan will always be: Forward!

Salute to those who became heroes beneath our flag, to our leader.

Salute to the Leader, Continue the Struggle! With Love and Greetings.

My Leader, My Dear Comrade

Since we heard the news, we have been filled with you. Even though your absence is only physical, accepting it is so difficult. I neither want to accept it nor get used to it. Why should we get used to such an early death! Why? No, this is something else. You are the one who transformed our feelings. Because you are everything to us. You are the elder of our family, you are our ancestor, you are our future. You are our strength to fight and resist. You are our one and only Dayı. I have always been proud to be your comrade. I have been honoured to be a part of this family. And I have always admired my Party. To fight under your command, to be a part of this honourable struggle under the leadership of our Party...

This is an immense source of strength and confidence. It is a deeply reassuring feeling. Our Party is so embracing and transformative that it wins, succeeds and advances step by step towards its goal. Those who think this advance will stop without you are mistaken. No, you are the Icebreaker; I know you will continue to show the way. I do not have the slightest hesitation or doubt. (…) You are the one who taught us to carry our own heads upon our own shoulders. You are the one who taught us to look so openly, clearly and plainly. History proved everything you said to be true. That is why you are on the brightest, most beautiful page of history. Is there any other name for being in the bosom of your people, being carried on their shoulders and buried in their embrace?

My Leader, My Dear Comrade!

The pulse of life and of our struggle will continue to beat with you. Together with our heroic martyrs, your eyes will watch us. Our responsibility is great. Now it is greater still. This movement, created by your hands and your labour and to which you devoted your life, will carry out the revolution. We had promised our heroic martyrs the revolution. Once again, in your presence, we give this promise to you.

WE WILL SUCCEED!

I embrace you tightly with all my love, respect and devotion. I bow before you with respect.

Mahir, Hüseyin, Ulaş — Fight Until Liberation!

Salute to the Leader! Continue the Struggle!

★

Hello

It is very difficult to describe what is passing through my mind right now. So many feelings are intertwined: pain, anger, honour, pride... You made us experience them all.

Together with tens of thousands, on the shoulders of our comrades, we bid you farewell into the bosom of our people, into our soil watered hundreds of times with the blood of our martyrs. And we know that the hearts of tens of thousands more beat with you and burned with the longing to see you for the first and last time, to kiss you on the forehead. Everything happened as you wanted; we are filled with the peace this brings. And I want you to know that from now on too it will be so. Everything will be as you wanted and dreamed. Because you taught us how to dream and, most importantly, how to bring our dreams to life. There is still so much more for us to learn.

We have so much from your life devoted to the revolution and to your people, from your self-sacrifice, from your labour. Even though we are physically separated, you will continue to teach. As you were being bid farewell on your final journey there, on the shoulders of our comrades and among our people, I said to myself: this is how we will walk towards the revolution too. With such honour, such daring, such anger and enthusiasm. With our flags... As one body, one heart... Watching you pass upon shoulders, I saw the anger of millions, their march towards revolution with determined and believing steps. This strength is your work. There is much more I want to say to you, but doing so is both difficult and unnecessary. Unnecessary, because we will show it through our practice.

We will grow the legacy you left us and carry it into tomorrow.

Let this be our oath: we will crown with victory the struggle for which you sacrificed everything. Let this be our promise to our hundreds of martyrs and to you: we will make our flags wave throughout our country.

And I too am ready to sacrifice my entire being for this cause. From now on, with my life, my practice and my thoughts, I will strive to be worthy of you, of all of you. I will learn labour, patience and self-sacrifice, and I will walk with faster steps.

I want you to convey our endless love and respect to all our martyrs. We will not keep you waiting; we will come to you with our foreheads clear and our heads held high. I would so much have liked to see you once, for the first and last time, to kiss your forehead, to touch you...

Now we will meet in eternity, on our Island.

Until that day, the fire inside me will not go out.

I salute you all with respect and longing.

Salute to you, to our leader, our teacher, our commander-in-chief!

Salute to our valiant, self-sacrificing, heroic martyrs!

Salute to our Party-Front that will win victory!

With belief and devotion.

My Leader, My Vanguard, My Guide

We have also bid you farewell to the side of our heroes. But this was not easy at all. I do not know whether one can ever become accustomed to your absence. What I know is that our separation is only a physical separation. Even so, it is very difficult to become accustomed to your absence, to believe it. The thought that you are not somewhere out there now is deeply painful.

Our pain is immense, a pain without description. Yet our feelings are not made up only of pain. I am experiencing so many emotions intertwined... I do not know which one to describe or how. Whatever I write here to express what I feel will not be enough. There are no words to describe these feelings. Only one who is WE understands my feelings without words. WE live the most meaningful form of every feeling. This pride is OURS. And because I am a member of such a family, I am happy, proud and at peace. For this I thank you, my comrades and my Party thousands of times. I will continue to develop what you taught and to keep learning.

I promise that from now on I will take more steps, and faster ones, than I have taken until today. Our revolutionary march, our Party and our heroes expect this of me. And in your presence I promise that I will fulfil what is expected of me. I draw this strength from my leader, my Party and our martyrs. At every moment of my life you will continue to be strength, to be Hope. Even though you are no longer physically among us, you will always be with us and continue to illuminate our road.

In our revolutionary march we will carry your voice and with every passing day we will make that voice greater. I am honoured to be your student, your comrade, to walk on your path. I will not let your labour go to waste.

We will bring to the soil of this country that great day of victory to which you and our heroes devoted your lives.

With all my belief and enthusiasm, I salute my leader and my Party. I bow with respect before you and our heroes.

Salute to the Leader, Continue the Struggle!

Death...

Pain, sorrow, rebellion...

They are all lived intertwined. Storms break inside you. You are always angry at those untimely deaths. Death finds you treacherously. Because you do not expect it, even though you know: one day, inevitably! That relentless, painful death that comes with illness. You simply do not expect it. And that is what weighs so heavily. Today I do not know how to tell it, how to write it. It is very difficult to express in words. Like the cry of tens of thousands of people with one voice:

“Our Leader Dursun Karataş Is Immortal!”

“Salute to the Leader, Continue the Struggle!”

“Long Live the Revolutionary People’s Liberation Party-Front!”

“There Is No Death for Us!”

Our clenched fist and every one of our slogans are our consciousness, our devotion to you, to our heroic martyrs and to our Party. The promise we gave is our oath. The revolution will come with Hope, with us... With the name of Hope that has become you within us...

Our Teacher, our Leader, our Commander-in-Chief; from you we learned to fight our internal and external enemies. We succeeded in emerging from defeats with victories. We came into being again; your strength, the strength of our Party-Front, brought us into being. We learned to hold tightly to Hope. We learned determination, daring and self-sacrifice. Through your life you became our teacher, the one who taught us. With our Party-Front, our heroic martyrs and your strength, we came to these days. You will continue to be our vanguard, our commander-in-chief. We still have much to learn. You will always be our guide. We will continue our struggle with what you and our heroic martyrs taught us.

Our slogan, “Fight Until Liberation”, will never leave our lips. In this war, each of us is a bullet loaded into the barrel. Do not let your eyes remain behind. Rest easy. One day we will plant our hammer-and-sickle flag upon the bastions of the oligarchy. Victory will be ours.

With Love, Respect and Devotion...

Hello

I wish I could put exactly what I feel onto paper right now, and form beautiful, long sentences worthy of you, but when everything is this intense it is difficult to put it down on paper. At the same time, a person cannot find words to say because everything is so open and clear.

Whenever I think of you, the word “teacher” appears in my mind. Our teacher, the one who taught us everything about life...

When we learned that you had been martyred, for a long time I could not believe it. I had never thought such a thing would happen. You had become so deeply woven into life that, for as long as I

have known myself, you were there and you will always be there. And so it will be. The hardest feelings to describe were those we felt when we saw your coffin raised on shoulders amid red flags and carnations. Pain, anger, sorrow... All together. You, our Dayı, our leader, our teacher, will no longer be physically present... It hurts inside to think of this.

The words of Müjdat (Yanat) Abi keep coming to my mind: “True separation begins where longings end. We will never be separated.” I think these words sum up everything. I know you will always continue to exist. With Endless Respect...

★

They Call You a “Terrorist”

But no seventy-year-old woman kisses the coffin of a “terrorist” and sheds tears. A Mother, oppressed, humiliated and intimidated throughout her life but never broken, walks behind your coffin; anyone who sees this does not see the one who calls you a “terrorist”. No one loves their homeland as you did. No one can create the “human being” as you did. We have lost our father...

The body that will be joined with the earth today in the funeral ceremony belongs to our leader. There is no need for us to establish a blood tie between us. We had already forged our bond in the most unbreakable way. When I met you one summer day, I could not have known that my life would gain so much meaning. You taught us, taught me, what it means to be human.

As long as there are Revolutionary Leftists in this country, no one is without value. Because they value every living being in Anatolia. They think about their future. As long as there are Party-Front members in this country, no beauty, no goodness will lose any of its value. You taught us these things. You are the definition of a human being. You are our leader, our immortal one. With Endless Respect.

★

Salute to You, My Leader, My Commander-in-Chief

Salute to you, our honour who enlarged our Hope. First of all I must say that I will be worthy, we will be worthy, of the great legacy you left us. Since the day I became part of our great family, I have always lived with honour and happiness. Because I always drew this strength and virtue from you, from our Party-Front, from our martyrs. The pain in our hearts is too great to describe.

Once again, with you, I see, think about and live our history. All our comrades and our people stood in salute as though going into battle and we bid you farewell into immortality. You were at the very front, giving the command. It was oppression that once again wept, feared and hid around the corners. You left a legacy even in your death.

The road to the liberation of our people will pass through here.

Once again, with respect and devotion, I say: I will be worthy of you and of our great family!

With Love and Devotion.

The Soil of This Country Is More Fertile Now...

Bidding you farewell into eternity saddened us beyond description. But we did not say ah or lament... Because you were one of those who taught that the death of every revolutionary brings thousands of births. Now, in the capital of the struggle, you are beneath the same sky as your comrades. We are at peace... The tens of thousands of people who bid you farewell on their shoulders, with thousands of red flags, carnations and slogans, made their promise once again: to you and to all the heroic martyrs, they will present the revolution for which you gave your lives.

With my endless love...

Hello

My Leader, My Commander-in-Chief,

We received the news of your martyrdom in prison. Our pain is great, and our anger just as great...

If only I had died; if only I had died in your place. This was the first feeling that passed through my mind when we received the news. We are immersed in intense emotion. On the one hand we do what we have to do, while on the other we are in conversation with you. Today you are not physically here. But today, just as yesterday, we advance under your guidance. We will not make our enemy rejoice; we will walk on the road you opened until victory.

You are still with us...

To have a leader like you is an honour and a source of pride...

We will act with this consciousness, and I will be martyred for this cause. We too were among those who bid you farewell. There was an entire people there. From the prisons we sent our slogans and marches to Gazi... Hundreds of labouring people from those poor gecekondu neighbourhoods were among those who bid you farewell. Because you were the people.

And once again, in the presence of your martyrdom, I say that I will be worthy of you and of our heroic martyrs within our family.

With Love and Devotion.

“As the fighters of this glorious history, with our mistakes and merits, our positive and negative sides, first and foremost we will never let fall from our hands, as torches that always give us confidence and give momentum to our revolutionary march, our martyrs who are the true owners of this history, and our comrades who were tortured, suffered, were wounded and taken prisoner for this cause. They will be our most precious beings in our cause.” (Dursun Karataş)

Now You Are with Our Mahir on Our Island

Our Leader, our Commander-in-Chief;

To possess an organisation capable of fighting under all conditions, and a leadership capable of showing the courage to fight under all conditions... To be a people's movement; to take root in the consciousness and hearts of the peoples of Turkey so deeply that it cannot be torn out, through its values and the traditions it has created... To breathe in the bosom of the peoples, to breathe with them... To be aware of their demands and longings, and to be able to give practical expression to those demands and longings. To pay a price, but also to make the enemy pay a price; to be struck, but also to strike; to die, but also to kill... To be a revolutionary movement that does what it says, defends what it does, fights and makes others fight... This must be the most concise meaning of the DHKP-C becoming Hope for the peoples of Turkey, of the DHKP-C becoming "THE NAME OF HOPE"...

Our history is filled with thousands of martyrs, tens of thousands of prisoners, pain, betrayal, victory and heroism. This history is the history of freedom, of the liberation movement. This history stretches from thousands of years ago to the present day. The voice rising from Şeyh Bedreddin, Pir Sultan, Baba İshak and Demirci Kawa echoes through Mahir, Deniz and Kaypakkaya. Tens of thousands throughout Anatolia listen to this voice. The voice has become a cry, the cry has become a volcano. And as long as the world turns, no one will be able to extinguish this fire that we have stoked in the mountains, in the cities and in the streets with the heat of our struggle, with the prices paid, with our heroic martyrs.

You are the one who shaped the destiny of the peoples of Turkey; who, despite pain, treachery and the attacks of the enemy, protected and watched over our organisation like a child; the creator of our Party, whose name is embroidered on the walls with the blood of our fighters and whose name in the heart of our people is HOPE; our Leader, our Commander-in-Chief, our Teacher, our Comrade. Your labour, patience and self-sacrifice are present in every period of this history.

The legacy taken over from Mahir and his comrades was carried to the present day under your leadership. The road walked step by step from 1978 to today, with belief, enthusiasm, daring and sacrifice, is your work. With you we organised, learned the struggle and grew. With you we opened our eyes. At difficult turning points you were our guide, in darkness our light, and in our struggle our commander.

Your leadership was tested in passages of fire, in the years of the junta, in captivity, in the Death Fasts, in ambushes, within circles of betrayal, in defeats and in victories. From every test you emerged with belief and self-sacrifice, growing and causing others to grow. That is why you are the leader of our life and our struggle.

Now you are with our Mahir on our Island. Our pain and sorrow are great. But let the enemy not rejoice and let our friends not grieve; today our anger is greater still. Those who rejoice at your absence, those who shout cries of victory, will see how great our anger is. And those who look for weariness in us will never see it, neither today nor tomorrow.

Our Leader, our Commander-in-Chief, our Comrade;

May our lives and our blood be sacrificed for your cause!

And let the tradition you created be our oath: we will continue with belief, enthusiasm and daring the struggle for which you gave your life. With our hatred for the enemy, we will continue to shake the

fortresses of oppression! We will crown with victory the liberation struggle of our peoples who groan under the oppression of imperialism and the governments that collaborate with it!

Until that day, our slogans will not leave our tongues, nor our flags and weapons our hands! Our Party-Front will continue to be the Hope of our people and the fear of the enemy!

Our war is a war of freedom and liberation. Our war is a war for rights, justice, dignity and honour. And the road to victory is the road of the Revolutionary People's Liberation Party-Front.

We swear to our Leader and to our martyrs: our hammer-and-sickle flag will wave throughout Anatolia.

We will win the victory!

The peoples of Turkey will win the victory!

Our Leader Dursun Karataş Is Immortal!

Salute to the Leader! Continue the Struggle!

History Written in Blood Cannot Be Erased!

We Know Him Too

If knowing Him is a privilege - and it is - then we too possess this privilege. We know Him. In every aspect. As a leader, commander, teacher, Free Prisoner... We know Him as a comrade. Because we are of the Front.

Every Party-Front member knows their Dayı. And knows him very closely. Party-Front members are militants, fighters. They are fearless. They are prepared to pay every price for their people and their homeland. They learned militancy from their Dayı, who commanded dozens of resistances such as Kocamustafapaşa, and from their İbrahim Abis. They know that Dayı took over the revolutionary line from Mahir, and the Party-Front members took it over from Dayı.

History is consciousness; it is never merely a period of time that has passed. For those who are its students, it is the greatest school. Its education is uninterrupted. The education of history continues even tens, even thousands of years later. Because the history of the oppressed of the world is open and clear. This is the Party-Front members' understanding of history. And within the historical period of which they are a part, every Party-Front member learns this from Dayı. Just as Dayı did not treat past experience as a ready-made prescription, but applied it to the realities of life and of the lands in which he lived, so too did the Party-Front members learn to approach history in this way. Because every Party-Front member carries their own head on their own shoulders. And with confidence.

They are not influenced from the right or the left, they do not waver. They are not carried away by whichever wind is blowing, nor do they lose themselves in the seductive life offered by capitalism. In their minds and hearts they carry the good news of a new, completely new life. And their hearts beat with the belief that one day they will build that new world. They believe this. They say what they believe and they do what they say. Even unto death. That is why Party-Front members are ready to die and to kill.

In struggle, blows are not counted. They enter the fight with such abandon. There has never been a field of struggle in which Party-Front members did not shed their blood. If the flag of liberation is to be planted on the bastions of the oligarchy, if the name of Hope is to be written into history, they know that this history will be written in blood. They know this and they shed their blood without hesitation. They throw themselves without reserve into the midst of the fiercest clashes. And that glorious history is written in blood in the Turkey of the world. Wherever a slap strikes the face of the oppressed, every Party-Front member feels its pain deeply. Their heart burns and is scorched for the Iraqi, the Palestinian, the Indonesian... For peoples of every nationality, language and religion, they take their heart into their hands and hurl it without hesitation against the fortresses of oppression.

A Party-Front member's anger and hatred cannot be restrained. Party-Front members are a nightmare to their enemy, comrades and brothers and sisters to the oppressed peoples. That is why Party-Front members are uncompromising. However enormous the enemy's weapons, armies and technology may be, Party-Front members do not bow before them. Their heads are always held high. It is Dayı - who became immortal as an uncompromising revolutionary until his final breath - who made the Party-Front members uncompromising, who gave them the honour of walking among their peoples with heads held high.

And that is why Party-Front members do not surrender. When they come face to face with their enemies, the words "We did not come here to turn back, we came here to die" have been their guide from Mahir and his comrades to the present day. Under siege, beneath a rain of bullets, Party-Front members write the name of Hope on the wall with their blood. For them, resistance has no fixed place, time or form. At their bases, under torture, in prisons, in the streets...

Party-Front members turn their bodies into weapons; they melt cell by cell, they become balls of flame. They greet death with tililis and slogans; they turn silence into resistance. Party-Front members learned this determination, this will, this faith from their Dayı. And Party-Front members fall to the earth. Every comrade they place in the soil becomes a seed and is reborn in every Party-Front member. Party-Front members keep their martyrs alive until victory. This is their duty. They know that those who become immortal are their strength and the guarantee of the future. But a Party-Front member has another duty as well: to demand an accounting. That is why they leave no account unsettled. And those who go do not leave with their eyes behind them. They close their eyes in peace and tranquillity. Every fallen Party-Front member knows that their blood will not remain unavenged.[19]

In this struggle there is martyrdom, there is being wounded, and there is captivity. Party-Front members know the price of war. They are taken prisoner. The struggle continues; only the place changes. Four walls and barbed wire become one front of the war. The beliefs and political identities of Party-Front members are meant to be ground down like grain in a mill. Captivity is intended to make them repent, to make them bow before worthless collaborators. That is why they tried many times, and many times they were mistaken. Party-Front members defeated the enemy many times and confounded them many times, but they did not disappoint their people, nor their Dayı. Because from their Dayı and from the Apolar they had learned how to be free while captive. That is why captive Party-Front members were called Free Prisoners.

19 Tilili: an ululating, trilling cry used in celebration, mourning or defiance; the source retains the term as a cultural expression.

Free Captivity was the name of an identity forged from their beliefs, their thoughts, their honour, and even from the blood they shed and the cells in which they melted. They had won this identity by being tested in fire. It was the honourable suffering on their brow.

Once a flood finds its bed, it flows on. Even if a barrier is placed before it, even if a dam is built, none of them can stop that flow. It sweeps away whatever stands in its path.

If revolution is an overturning - and it is - then Party-Front members possess the claim and the daring of that overturning. This means working like Dayı with determination, tireless strength, energy and enthusiasm in the face of every difficulty, incurable pain and the heaviest prices. It means never falling into hopelessness under any conditions. Even amid the most raging waves, it means being able, like Dayı, to keep the banner of socialism flying at the highest point. Party-Front members take from Dayı the ability to be like this, this claim and this power to impose their will.

Dayı's claim to revolution, his determination and belief in taking power, are an example to Party-Front members. Since Dayı says, "To be a revolutionary is to live the revolution, the country and the liberation of the people in one's mind at every moment," then every Party-Front member will approach revolutionism in this way: they will raise the bar, and Dayı will be their measure. A Party-Front member has such ambitious goals. A Party-Front member recognises no limits in revolutionism, in labour, or in dreams.

A Party-Front member does not lose direction. Dayı is their compass. A Party-Front member does not stray from the course; the Icebreaker is their captain. And just as Dayı loved his people and his homeland, so does a Party-Front member love their people and homeland. Just as Dayı devoted his life to his people and homeland, so does a Party-Front member devote their life to their people and homeland. And just as Dayı painted beauty onto the world, so does a Party-Front member continue to paint beauty.

And now to the point...

If we leave the Party-Front members to our thinking minds, to our tongues that speak to our hearts, and even to our pens that write, that pen will write an epic. Because an epic is being written in Anatolia. Those writing it are the Party-Front members. And the one who made it possible to write is our DAYI.

And if Dayı shaped the writers of that epic, if in these lands the first people who come to mind when one says "revolutionary" are the Party-Front members, and if they carry in their breast both what we can put into words and what our tongues cannot manage to express, then this is Dayı's work. Therefore all Party-Front members know their Dayı. Who can claim that a person cannot be known without seeing or meeting them! But must knowing someone necessarily mean being face to face? All Party-Front members know their Dayı, every one of them. This is how they know him, become bound to him and love him. This is a great strength. It is enthusiasm and morale. It is a force that turns deaths into determination and resolve to fight, that steels a person and fills them with passion. That is why being a Party-Front member is a privilege.

Then let our pen emphasise one more characteristic of Party-Front members.

Party-Front members say that to know is also to bear witness to history. And to bear witness is to assume responsibility. We shoulder the responsibility of knowing our Dayı. The responsibility is to

keep Him alive. To keep Him alive is to fulfil our debt and our promise to Mahir and his comrades, who set out “to make revolution in the Turkey of the world”, to our Dayı, who said “We will shake the world once again, this time from Turkey”, to our heroic martyrs, to our people and our homeland for whom we gladly give our lives. It is to present the revolution to them. And beyond that, there is nothing more.

If there is still something more to say, then let us say it: we are honoured, because we know our Dayı. We are proud, because we have such a great family. We are fortunate, because we are Party-Front members.

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You Are With Us

Each of us set out on this march saying: my breath too must be part of this march, my fist too must be part of this struggle, my weapon too must be part of this war. On this road there are torture, detention, massacres, martyrdom and imprisonment. Once our decision in the face of the dishonour of the system we live under was rebellion, the price would of course be heavy. To remain faithful to this decision means giving up the blessings (!) bestowed by the system. It means overcoming countless obstacles and difficulties and making our march uninterrupted. And of course it means defying the torture, imprisonment and death we will encounter during this march. It means being ready for all of these. But there are moments when, even though you think you are ready, what you live through weighs heavily upon you. And there are moments when you wish time would stop. Let time stop, let it not flow. What we lived through was one of those moments.

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The First News

Tuesday, 12 August 2008

After roll call and exercise, when we came inside from the exercise yard, the first news we heard from the television was: “Dursun Karataş has died.” The report continued: “The organisation denied a similar report that appeared six months ago.” As we make our comments, we continue scanning the channels. There had been an attack they were carrying out against us together with Ergenekon. We think this too is a continuation of it. We carry out the educational work included in the morning programme. The morning report remains in a corner of our minds. Although we cannot bring ourselves to accept it, we know that one day in the struggle such news will find us. Because we continue and grow the struggle through martyrdoms. In captivity, just as many of our possibilities are restricted, so too is our ability to receive news. Yet despite these restrictions and obstacles, one thing they cannot prevent is the bond between us. However much they try to sever us from one another, both our martyrdoms and our captivity bring us closer together. In the afternoon our friends called out to us. They told us of a report they had heard on Özgür Radyo concerning the martyrdom of our leader. Our waiting becomes even harder. All the reports being given have the same content.

On one of the channels we are able to watch the statement from our lawyers. Our lawyers and our leader’s family explain that our leader was martyred at around 05.00 on Monday, 11 August; that procedures had been started abroad to bring the body to Turkey; and that a member of the family had gone to the Netherlands to bring him back. Our tears do not flow. We do not let them flow. Everything, all our feelings, becomes mixed together. Inside, outside, pain, anger... “Comrades, our leader has been martyred. Condolences to all of us, to our peoples.”

The weight of that statement is so great. Ah, these doors... these walls... our captivity is heavier now. If only time would stop... A miracle... If only something could happen and we could reach your side. Thoughts fly through our minds. One moment we are here, the next we are outside, beside our comrades, beside our leader. At that moment we were all focused on the same thought. What would we not give to welcome you. To be able to touch you, to kiss your forehead for the first and last time. With your martyrdom our anger grew a thousandfold.

Our First Commemoration...

We are going to shout slogans. We are at the windows of the upper and lower floors. First, a minute's silence. Before our eyes comes alive that image of you, a symbol of standing against oppression. You are at the rostrum, demanding an accounting from oppression. You are a leader who never holds back. Whatever it requires to be the leader of an organisation that fights and resists, that is what you are. You walk, the wind walks. Our anger grows through pain. Betrayal emerges from its hiding place and is smashed to the ground. Lies and deceit fall from their throne. Those who once fought for this cause, those of old, those who were defeated - everyone's breath joins together in the news of your immortality. The light that illuminated dark times shines from the past into the present. We sow dreams in the forest of Hope. A bright North Star sets our course. Our road leads to a free homeland. Woven from blood and death, from goodness and beauty, sacrifice and honour, devotion, loyalty, daring and anger, it quietly winks at us. With all our strength we shout our slogan into the darkness of night: "Our Leader Dursun Karataş Is Immortal!" In our voices is anger; in our voices our longing for you, our endless love and devotion. Every one of our martyrs, everyone we have seen off, those we knew and those we did not, burned our hearts; but your departure burned us even more deeply.

We try to remain calm. Our pain is immense, but we try not to show it. After shouting our slogans, we gather around a table. Our farewell must be worthy of you in every respect. We discuss what must be done for this. We are steadfast, but that cannot hide the sorrow in our voices. We are strong, but that cannot stop our voices from trembling. We are so full of emotion.

- Let us hold a military march in the mornings.
- "The Siege", "I Became a Dervish"...
- Let us sing "The Adventurers" too, comrades.
- Let us have a notebook in which to write our feelings and thoughts.
- We can shout slogans at certain hours.
- We should have badges too, with the Front star.
- A catafalque, an honour guard...
- Our banner, our display board...

Everyone thinks about what can be done and voices it. Yes, everything must be appropriate to you. And it will be. We divide the tasks. Writing the text... those who will prepare the banners and the display board... marches, slogans, the military march. Everyone has a task, and we disperse to carry out our duties.

Wednesday, 13 August 2008

Our flags are hanging on the wall of the exercise yard. All of us have our badges pinned to our clothes. We are in neat formation, ready for roll call. We stamp our steps on the ground to salute your martyrdom.

Rap rap rap!
Our Leader Dursun Karataş Is Immortal!
Rap rap rap!
Salute to the Leader, Continue the Struggle!
Rap rap rap!
Long Live the Revolutionary People's Liberation Party-Front!
Rap rap rap!
Mahir! Hüseyin! Ulaş! Fight Until Liberation!
Rap rap rap!
Our Leader, You Are Our Strength to Resist and Fight!
Rap rap rap!

And our marches begin with the Revolutionary Halay.

"My Mahir, my Hüseyin, my Ulaş,
comrade who says revolution is the only road,
fight until liberation..."
Rap rap rap!

There is anger in our slogans and marches, pain in our slogans, resistance in our slogans. We make the prison resound with the march "We Are Right, We Will Win".

Rap rap rap!

When our march is over, we go inside. Our badges never leave our collars. We are in front of the television. The comrade on night watch tells us that no different news was given during the night either. Our people will make a statement today. We wait. What a difficult stretch of time. But we do not let ourselves go. The difficulty of what we are living through, the intensity of our feelings, comes from our love and devotion to you.

Every hour we shout our slogans. Today we will hold our first commemoration, and we are preparing for it. We are all filled to overflowing.

We know that if we let ourselves go even once, we will not be able to stop. So we hold ourselves tighter and tighter. Even so, we cannot prevent the tears that slip from our eyes. On one side a banner is being made; on the other, our display board is being prepared. Everything will be worthy of you. That is what our effort is for. We learn that the next day you will be brought to Istanbul. We wait with our breath held. So many things pass through our minds; our ears are alert because there may be news at any moment.

Our commemoration will begin shortly. We will hold it together with our friends. Our preparations are complete. We hang our banner. After the slogans, your voice rings out from the rostrum:

"...In this history there are our pains, our joys, our martyrs, betrayals and heroism. Without ideological firmness - the firmness that keeps a revolutionary movement alive, keeps it standing even in the hardest conditions, knows how to rise when it falls, and does not sway right or left whatever the circumstances..."

The programme flows on accompanied by your voice. With your voice in our ears, we call out to you: Our Leader. Our Commander-in-Chief.

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Thursday, 14 August 2008

In the morning we again shout our slogans and sing our marches. Today you will be brought to the soil of the homeland. The news says: "He is expected to be in Istanbul around midday." Our TAYAD families and our lawyers will welcome you. We too will stand in salute from here. How difficult this is for us. How it burns us to receive your immortality while in captivity. It hurts us deeply. But we must be many times stronger than ever before. We are conscious of this. We know that this is what you want, what our family wants, what our struggle expects from us. The lump in our throats grows larger and hardens into stone. We learn that tomorrow you will be buried either in Gazi Mahallesi or Karacaahmet. We imagine your being brought to Kadıköy, we think of your being brought to Gazi. We are full to overflowing. In your immortality you are coming to our homeland for which you longed for so many years. Our people and comrades will ease the longing of years. Our soil will offer you the longing of years.

The enemy is surely rejoicing - let them rejoice! They will see that their joy is in vain. Yes, our pain may be great, we may be living through indescribable feelings; but the members of this family have always known how to stand upright in the face of hardship and pain. We learned this first and foremost from our leader, our Commander-in-Chief, from our family. From now on we will be stronger than yesterday. The struggle requires this. Our promise of revolution to our martyrs commands it. This promise, this love, this devotion, this belief gives us some relief.

When we bid farewell to our heroes, our heads never bowed. We wanted to die in place of those we sent off, to burn in their place, to melt in hunger in their place, to be shot in their place. But we learned that truly filling their place means growing the struggle, shouldering the burden of the revolution and carrying the struggle one step further every day. We received this consciousness from you, from those we bid farewell to, from our family.

And we know that we still have much to learn and a long road to walk. As yesterday, from now on too you will be the light illuminating our path. In the evening we are in front of the television for the main news bulletin. We do not want to miss a single moment. On television there are images of our families going to receive the body. Our families are arguing. Arguing fiercely. They are angry, all of them with tears in their eyes. The enemy is the same enemy as always.

Our families have received you. You are on their shoulders. Now you are being brought to Gazi. You are in the breast of our people, for whom we have given lives, endured imprisonment and given up our own lives. Our people embrace you. Our red flags wave for you.

The streets of Gazi, the Sabos, Niyazis, İbilis, Semras, Fidans, Sevgis, İbrahims... All those we have bid farewell to are waiting for you. They salute you. And we are with you with our whole being. We are with our comrades carrying you on their shoulders. We know each of them will kiss your

forehead for us too. They will place carnations on your soil for us too. They will embrace our flag for us too.

You are in the streets of Gazi. One of our mothers runs after you and kisses the coffin. This image, this moment, makes us live through indescribable feelings. There you are, in the breast of our people for whom we have given lives. All this, all these beauties, are your work.

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Friday, 15 August 2008

Our leader who sowed Hope in the soil of this country, today we will bid you farewell. Those outside and we inside are one whole. There are no distances between us. We are making the same preparations: you outside, we inside. Our preparations continue. In one part of the commemoration programme, each of us will express what we feel for you and do what we wish to do. We prepared a catafalque in the exercise yard. Upon it are our flags and your photograph with Sabo. Our banners read: “Our Leader Dursun Karataş Is Immortal!”

We are in military formation. The command is given and our march begins. We pass by saluting our flag and you. Our marches and slogans are on our tongues. Honour and pride dominate our whole being. Our anger at the enemy is so great that we feel as if we could smash through the walls and come out. Our march ends in front of the catafalque. One by one we come before it, fists clenched, and softly whisper what we want to say to you. Then we kiss our flags and return to our places. We will take an oath.

“Our Leader / Our Leader
Our Commander-in-Chief / Our Commander-in-Chief
We / We
As your imprisoned comrades / As your imprisoned comrades
Independence against imperialism / Independence against imperialism
The pulse / The pulse
Of life and our struggle / Of life and our struggle
Will continue to beat with you / Will continue to beat with you
The hearts of us, your comrades / The hearts of us, your comrades
Will continue to beat with you / Will continue to beat with you
Will continue / Will continue...”

After our marches, we sit in a semicircle in one corner of the exercise yard. Our faces are turned towards you and our heroic martyrs. We are in the corner where our Selma was martyred. Our Selma and our Fatma have joined us in bidding you farewell. Some of us read poems we wrote for you; some sang marches and songs. What we felt was part of our love and devotion to you. It was what broke from our hearts and came to our tongues.

Once again we made promises. While our hearts burned for you and storms raged inside us, we did not let our enemy feel our pain.

The honour of walking with you on this road, which we set out upon with the dream of a free country without hunger or injustice, is immense. This honour wraps itself around us. From now on too, we will not be deprived of this honour. With your warmth, your teaching, your daring and your love, you are beside us. You will always be beside us.

Two Leaders, Two Comrades

Mahir Çayan, Dursun Karataş. Two leaders, two comrades. Writers of history in different times and places. Under their leadership, the future of the revolution in Turkey was charted and the revolutionary struggle was carried forward to the present day. With the traditions and values they created, the peoples of Anatolia are marching towards revolution.

Even before they were physically gone, they knew this reality. With this foresight and sense of responsibility, with ideological consciousness, they led our peoples. When Mahir was surrounded in Kızıldere, he knew that he would be physically annihilated. But he also knew that surrendering in Kızıldere would mean political annihilation. The struggle could be enlarged only by confronting difficulties, deprivation and impossibilities, and by acting without compromise towards those who distorted revolutionary theory.

Mahir had no hesitation. That is why our leader Mahir Çayan said: “The road of revolution is rugged, winding and steep. The flag of liberation will be planted on the bastion of the oligarchy as it is passed from one guerrilla to another climbing this road. The body of every guerrilla who falls at each obstacle creates a revolutionary storm. Those who fall do not remain behind. They live on in the heart, spirit and consciousness of the labouring people as the leading and driving symbols of revolution. They wrote the slogan ‘Fight Until Liberation’ on the road of revolution with their blood. Our road is the road of those who fell on this road.”

They fought with this consciousness. When they were surrounded in Kızıldere, with the confidence that came from knowing all this, they answered the calls to “Surrender” with: “We did not come here to turn back; we came here to die.” This slogan of Mahir and his comrades would echo through future generations. What made Mahir unbreakable in such difficult times was not merely his knowledge of the difficulties of the struggle. Of course, knowing those difficulties also had an effect, but the fundamental reason was that Mahir was armed with Marxist-Leninist ideology, analysed the conditions of the country and determined a correct strategy, and possessed the determination to struggle without deviating from that strategy and its tactics.

Mahir regarded Marxism-Leninism not merely as theoretical knowledge, but as a guide for evaluating the situation in the country and determining the road of revolution. Mahir’s words, “We read and learned theory in order to make revolution. But this should not be interpreted as meaning that we became scholars. We are students of socialism. And this studentship will continue throughout our lives,” express how he understood Marxism-Leninism. With this ideological firmness and equipment, Mahir charted the road of the revolution in Turkey. While on the one hand evaluating the conditions of the country and clarifying what kind of revolutionary road should be followed, on the other hand he struggled against opportunism and revisionism, which distorted Marxism-Leninism and searched for easy roads to revolution. Mahir did all this during the days of 12 March, at a time when the winds of the coup were blowing. In other words, Mahir struggled under very difficult conditions and charted the road of revolution. The following words sum up this situation:

“This movement sprouted, developed and grew stronger in an environment in which revisionism had been influential for many years. For that reason, no matter how tightly matters are handled, at the beginning it will inevitably carry, to one degree or another, traces of that environment. To think

otherwise is idealism. These remnants will be cast off in the course of struggle, by fighting and fighting."

The struggle enlarged by Mahir and his comrades against every kind of ideological and physical attack continues with the same determination and belief. Those who inherited the legacy of Kızıldere have continued the struggle under every condition, without wavering and without hesitation. Our leader Dursun Karataş also enlarged the struggle he inherited from Mahir and his comrades, and, like Mahir, preserved with a firm ideology the powerful potential created by the Kızıldere Resistance. Our leader expanded the struggle he inherited from Mahir without imprisoning it within the status quo or fixed moulds, adding new links to the chain.

He walked on Mahir's road, but continued the struggle through policies determined according to changing conditions. Taking into account the situation and needs of the country, he produced new policies. He gave those policies life. Because defending Mahir did not mean imitating him. Defending Mahir meant possessing courage and daring. It meant producing bold policies that met the needs of the struggle, enlarged the revolution, and giving those policies life.

Along this line, Dayı continued the struggle of Mahir and his comrades without interruption, in a unity of theory and practice, without allowing it to become imprisoned in fixed moulds.

He did not take Marxist-Leninist theory as a template, but evaluated it according to the conditions of the struggle. That is how a genuine Marxist-Leninist acts. Both Mahir and Dayı took Marxism-Leninism as a guide to action. The revolutions of other countries were, for them, experiences from which examples and lessons should be drawn. The revolutions of other countries were not something to be taken as a template and mechanically applied. They were going to make revolution in Turkey.

The way our leaders understood Marxism-Leninism, the firm ideology they possessed, their claim to revolution that was never shaken under any circumstances, and their perspective of taking power made them able to exist under every condition. These enabled them to create deep-rooted traditions and determine correct policies. With their firm ideology and strategic objectives, they were able to stand upright under the conditions of 12 March and 12 September. Although the blows suffered and the betrayals experienced physically weakened the struggle, they could not affect it ideologically. Because neither Mahir nor Dayı imprisoned the struggle within the status quo. They never lost their claim to power. Even under the most difficult conditions, without losing the confidence they carried and without moving away from their goals, they led the struggle. The history written from THKP-C to Revolutionary Left, and from Revolutionary Left to DHKP-C, is full of examples of this. In their understanding of leadership there is no sitting behind a desk and pontificating. Leadership means fighting in the foremost ranks, being principled and disciplined, and being able to take historic decisions with daring.

Our leader Dursun Karataş also raised the struggle by adding new links to the values created by Mahir. By drawing lessons from history, producing policies corresponding to the conditions of the day, and walking without ever moving away from the goal, the struggle was brought to the present under Dayı's leadership. It is a leadership that created the 12 July and 16–17 April Resistances and the Death Fasts.

History continues to be written by drawing lessons from the past. When Mahir and his comrades escaped from Maltepe Prison, no one came to pick them up. Because Münir Ramazan Aktolga and

Yusuf Küpeli, who were supposed to meet Mahir and his comrades at the exit, were organising liquidationism outside rather than organising the struggle. For that reason, they did not collect Mahir and his comrades at the tunnel exit. After the escape, Mahir persistently tried to explain to the liquidationists that there was no ideological reason for them to abandon the struggle and that the conditions of struggle remained the same. But they did not want to leave the swamp into which they had sunk. Mahir separated his road from the liquidationists without hesitation. What Mahir and his comrades experienced is not something confined to the past. Even after many years, fugitives and coup-plotting traitors emerge within the revolutionary struggle. But this time too they are doomed to defeat. They will never achieve their calculations. Because facing them are not people making petty calculations or acting emotionally, but Mahir's comrades, armed with a firm ideology and politics and taking Marxism-Leninism as their guide; facing them is our Dayı. In his understanding there is no surrender, no softness towards the internal enemy, no compromise. We see this determination in his words: "Rather than legitimise coup-plotting in this movement, I would break it down to its atoms and build a new movement from among the ashes."

To be a leader is to possess these qualities. It is to maintain one's ideological and political line under every circumstance and condition. It is to overcome the obstacles one encounters with labour and patience. They are our leaders because they achieved this and more. It would be wrong to confine history to a particular period of time. Because history continues to be written without interruption. Our continuity lives in the values we create, in the tradition we keep alive, and in the accounts we settle.

Our Dayı knows that victory cannot be reached without demanding an accounting from the enemy and without waging armed struggle. With this consciousness, our weapons demand an accounting from enemies of the people. Nihat Erim was one of those enemies of the people. Nihat Erim was the prime minister of the 12 March junta. He always displayed his hostility towards Mahir and his comrades and attacked them with all his strength. They thought that what they had done would go unanswered, that they would finish Mahir and his comrades and, in their person, the revolutionary struggle. But they were mistaken. The struggle continued and no account remained unsettled.

Revolutionary Left fighters would leave no crime committed against the people unpunished. An accounting would be demanded from Nihat Erim and other enemies of the people like him. And on 19 July 1980, Nihat Erim was punished by Revolutionary Left fighters. This was their mistake: at the point where they said they had finished us, they found the people's justice before them. Our longing for justice will never end; the power of repression and oppression will never be enough to extinguish it. Our stance against the coups of 12 March and 12 September, our answer to the calls to "Surrender", our writing the name of Hope with our blood... the firsts we created are examples of how we defeated the enemy's "power".

All these new values and traditions that were created are the result of our correctly embracing the legacy of Mahir and his comrades. They are the result of Dayı's correct leadership, policies and ideological firmness. Our struggle grew as a result of our correctly applying Mahir's political line and Marxism-Leninism. The vanguards of this struggle are our leaders Mahir Çayan and Dursun Karataş. Their physical absence will subtract nothing from our claim. Our enemies will not be able to rejoice. We will not give them that joy.

Because we have our Dayı, who enabled us to frustrate fascism's torture, cells, repression, bans and attempts to strip us of our beliefs; who taught us and enabled us to hold tightly to our ideals,

Marxist-Leninist thought, our Homeland and our people. Because we have our Dayı, who rejected surrender, was uncompromising towards internal and external enemies, never accepted captivity, lived with an endless passion for freedom, embodied courage and daring, and made concrete the power of will. Because we have our leader and our Hope, who from Mahir and his comrades to the present day carried on the struggle without interruption, without hesitation and under every condition.

For all these reasons, Mahir and our Dayı are alive today as well. Through their ideas, the values and traditions they created, they continue to show the way in our revolutionary struggle. We swear that we will keep them alive forever.

About You

These are the moments when captivity, when four walls, feel most confining. This time the prison walls narrowed even further.

I felt that if I took a deep breath I could fly beyond the walls. I want these decrepit walls to shatter with our slogans. I want everyone to hear our voice, for our powerful voice to come in waves and touch your face. And I know that our voice reached you from behind the walls. If only we could have reached you physically as well. But it was from you that we learned Free Captivity. So although we were not there physically, our thoughts were free, and on your final journey we were together with you. No power can separate you from us. You will always be with us. Our enemy does not have the strength to separate you from us.

In recent days the bourgeois press, television and the Ergenekon news had been carrying smear stories against you and our Party. How many attempts they have made up to now: to brand you a “terrorist” in the eyes of the people and revolutionaries, to destroy trust in you. None of their methods could prevent you from being the leader of revolutionaries and of all our people.

On the morning of 12 August, television reported that you had “died”. When I saw the report, I thought once again that it was psychological warfare. That evening we learned that the news was true. We were affected; our feelings filled and overflowed, but this was not the effect the bourgeoisie had aimed for. What we lived were feelings filled entirely with you. Perhaps sentences will not be enough to tell what I lived through. The pain we are living cannot be described. I do not know how much what I write can reflect what is inside me, but I must write what I feel. However incomplete and inadequate my words may remain, I must write.

13 August 2008

When you think about it, you cannot believe your absence; you do not want to believe it. I know this is only a physical separation, but still a person cannot command their heart. It is so difficult, so painful... I rebel. My rebellion is against the laws of nature, against the illness that came and found you... I am full of anger at the enemy. Because I know that it is the principal culprit behind your illness. So much torture, oppression, pressure, captivity... And then an illness that followed. How they must have rejoiced at your “death”. But let them not rejoice in vain. As our people say, their joy will stick in their throats. Because you did not “die”. Now we are even angrier; your pain has sharpened us. From now on let our enemy fear us even more. Fear, enemy, fear - no longer one Dursun Karataş, but thousands will stand before you!

It hurts so much inside me. When I look at your photograph I see you beside me. Those smiling eyes, scattering Hope, give a person strength and morale.

I think of what I have lived through, of what you enabled us to live through. And I think of my other comrades too. Those outside, those abroad, those in other prisons, those in the countryside, in the cities - all my comrades. How did they hear this painful news, what did they do, what did they feel?...

I know that wherever we are, the intensity of the feelings we are living through resembles one another. My emotions are so intense that I hold myself tight so that my tears do not turn from drops into a flood. No matter how much I restrain myself, I cannot command my tears. We know that this is not what you want from us. We cannot, we must not, be people who ease our pain by shedding tears.

What will ease our pain even a little is to walk faster on the road you drew. Giving life to what we learned from you, living without forgetting our goal, will prevent our pain from becoming ordinary. Our pain will lessen as we share and produce. And the more we produce, the closer we will come to you. Then our tears too will become more meaningful.

I know that we do not beat our knees and weep after those who have gone from us. Because neither our lives nor our departures are ordinary. You taught us this, our teacher.

14 August 2008

16.30

Waiting behind the walls... Waiting for a voice, for some news... What is happening outside now, I wonder? Have you been able to reach the soil of the homeland for which you sacrificed your life, your entire lifetime? What will we live through today and tomorrow with your arrival?

How will our comrades, our people and our enemy receive you? How will the longing for the homeland of so many years be eased?

How will you set out on your final journey? It is so difficult to live through these feelings from behind the walls. What would I not give to be beyond the walls now? More accurately, what would I not give for you to live...

Without the slightest hesitation, without thinking even for a moment, I would say: let me go in your place. A little emotional, a little metaphysical - whatever we may call it - if only it had been possible to add my lifetime to yours...

21.30... We watched brief images on television. We filled and overflowed beyond ourselves. At times our tears flowed silently; at times they became a knot lodged in our throats. They became anger, they became rebellion. To be here at a time like this... I sigh from somewhere very deep inside. I do not know what could extinguish this fire. It is not a fire that will go out. I will carry this fire until I die...

We saw your coffin on television. Not being able to touch it even once is so difficult. What is harder still, in truth, is knowing that you are inside that coffin. I do not want to accept it. It is not something a person can accept easily. You know that this is very difficult for US. How much I would have liked to be at your side now, carrying out my final duty to you. I know that we must multiply our duties.

My leader, my comrade, my teacher, you are everything to us. Be sure that from now on we will grow even more, and we will grow our Hope. We will take greater and faster steps than those we have taken until today. You, our heroes and our Party expect this from us. Have no doubt that we will fulfil all our duties as they should be fulfilled. We know the trust that you and our Party place in us. We will not let that trust go to waste. If today we live with honour, this is your work. A thousand thanks for handing down such a legacy to us. The legacy you left will be carried into the future, growing all the while. This song that has stuck on my tongue gives voice to my feelings about you:

“You became a scream inside me
I never told you to give up, my child
My heart burns and scorches with pain
I will not show my tears to the enemy”

The enemy will not see our tears. We let our tears flow inward. Our tears are not an expression of weakness; they are the expression of the fire inside us, our pain, our love for you.

May our tears, our blood and our lives be sacrificed for you.

Our History Is Our Strength

At every stage of history there have been pressures and smear campaigns against revolutionaries and leaders. The attack is enormous, but the response to it is greater still and more daring. We, the revolutionaries of today, draw our courage, daring and determination from our history and from our leader who guided the writing of that history.

The history written at Kızıldere on 30 March 1972 at the cost of Mahir and his comrades’ blood and lives continues to be written with new links added to it. Mahir and his comrades, who answered the enemy’s call to “Surrender” from the house in which they were surrounded with “We did not come here to turn back, we came here to die!”, sowed the seeds of war in the soil of Anatolia. The seed planted at Kızıldere sprouted and grew as Revolutionary Left in ’78 and as the DHKP-C in ’94, becoming a force of the revolution in Turkey. The tradition we inherited from Mahir and his comrades emerged from the hardest conditions and the fiercest attacks by growing stronger. We resisted internal and external enemies even at the risk of annihilation. This history was written with honour, with blood, with life and with labour, under the leadership and guidance of our Leader Dursun Karataş.

From every attack after which the enemy said “It is over”, “They are finished”, our organisation emerged even stronger. The greatest architects of this are our martyrs, our ideology and our Leader Dursun Karataş. In the face of every attack, our Leader produced the correct policies, overcame the obstacles standing before our organisation, and created an organisation with the claim to lead the revolution in Turkey.

From Mahir and his comrades to the present day, our history is full of heroism and resistance. This glorious history stretching from the THKP-C to Revolutionary Left, and from Revolutionary Left to the DHKP-C, was written above all with the blood of our martyrs. But it was our Leader Dursun Karataş who gave hundreds of heroes the strength to fight, who always brought our movement through difficult turning points with its head held high, and who turned it into the Hope of the peoples. On every page of this history there is His guidance, His labour and His self-sacrifice.

If today we are a movement capable of standing on its own feet; if we trust our ideology, ourselves and the people, and possess the ability to analyse the people's problems correctly and produce solutions; if, without falling into schematism or applying theory mechanically, we produce policies according to the process and its needs, and if we possess the understanding that "every problem has a solution" and that "the solution to the problems of socialism lies in socialism"; if we have the strength to wage an uncompromising struggle against degeneration, betrayal, inconsistency and opportunist-revisionist deviations; if we can make democratic centralism function under all conditions and ensure that decisions taken are brought to consciousness by everyone from cadres to sympathisers; if we have internalised embracing the martyrs of the revolution and the prisoners as a culture; if loyalty to the Party and relations of comradeship stand above everything else; if, in periods when we were left alone, even under conditions in which everyone from the enemy to the opportunist-revisionist bloc formed a front against us, we still possessed the strength to uphold and proclaim the truth; if the culture of self-sacrifice from the age of seventeen to fifty has become widespread and ordinary; if we carry the banner of socialism with honour; if we have become the name of Hope on the lips of the people - we owe all of this to our Dayı. This history, this epic, is His work. And today, as Free Prisoners, we draw strength from this history.

It is with this strength that we succeed in emerging even greater from the enemy's attacks. That is why no power can tear our Leader away from us and our people. No power can stop our revolutionary march. We have a promise of revolution to our martyrs and to our Leader.

We will fulfil this promise and present the revolution to them.

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You Are Us, and We Will Become You

How many people must have shared their troubles with you. Some at length, some briefly, but everyone surely did. While the "dark dwarfs, crones and scoundrels" lie in wait, perhaps you are in a warm conversation that gives heart to a hawk standing on a mountain summit with a Mauser in hand — who knows. Perhaps you are in a calm conversation within the daring of a fighter walking the dark streets of the cities with steps full of light. While young people decorate the walls in defiance of so many plans of degeneration and alienation, while they cry out "You cannot silence this voice" despite being treacherously shot in the back, perhaps you are in a lively, exuberant conversation with them. You share respectful, loving, sincere, compassionate conversations with mothers who bear in their breasts, with the fortitude of a thousand years, the most incurable pain this old world can give them: the pain of losing a child. In every joyful, sorrowful, happy, unhappy and hopeful moment of our people of every age, you are an inseparable part of life.

And how many people dreamed of meeting you. They even imagined the moment of meeting you, the conversation they would have with you, what you would say, what would anger you, what would make you happy, the things you would say one by one... And how many people, at the same moment, united you in their imagination with the same image: your index finger forward, in that defiant, dignified stance...

While the hearings were continuing in that courtroom, we were still moving around this family with all our inexperience but also with our sincerity, with the enthusiasm of our youth. We did not know, we were unaware that a school had opened in that courtroom. We did not know that people of every age were flocking there, waiting for the hour of this school's lesson, filled with the excitement of becoming

your students. When we learned, we said, “If only...” At the time, we did not yet know that there was no place for “if only” in this struggle. As I said, we were still inexperienced. Although we stood on the side of the oppressed in this struggle between oppressor and oppressed, we were not yet aware of its mercilessness. But we would learn. And without doubt, the best way to learn was to plunge into the very middle of it. We would learn war within war.

When, on its twentieth anniversary, you summed up in your message the history created on the fields of struggle by saying, “We have a DEV-GENÇ,” we were walking door to door in a remote city of Anatolia, leaflets celebrating Dev-Genç’s twentieth year in our hands and the enthusiasm of that history in our hearts. Perhaps we were the newest members of Dev-Genç, having only just come to know it.[20]

I had met Dev-Genç that summer. We were five or six people around a table in a tea garden. One of them was İsmet Erdoğan. We were all young, all full of desire to do something. I was the youngest. We had tried to establish an association, and through a police manoeuvre an association had been set up by fascists using our constitution. We had organised a food boycott and had been suspended from school through investigations. We had gone on hunger strike because both our attempt to establish an association and our right to education had been blocked. That is how we finished the year. But who were we? It was summer and we were in the tea garden. For me, that day was a historic one, because I was about to take the first step towards meeting our family. One of those around the table said, “We must have a name now.” Everyone agreed. So did I. One after another, those around the table said, “Dev-Genç.” And I asked, with the shyness and embarrassment of not knowing, “What is Dev-Genç?” They explained and recommended a book: “Youth in the Struggle for Independence, Democracy and Socialism.” I read it, all at once, without even pausing for breath. At that moment everything fell into place. At the table in that tea garden I had agreed because I was influenced by the others; after reading that unique, militant, bright history, I understood how right the decision I had made was. At the time when you were “The Ferhat of Freedom”, I was still an inexperienced Dev-Genç member. In other words, I was organised. Although in those days we could not yet fully fill out what that meant, we experienced the happiness of being organised, and especially of being in Dev-Genç.

Everywhere there were the “old ones”. Everywhere, with their know-it-all attitudes and weariness, they sat where they were and delivered pronouncements. They tried to condemn us for our theoretical ignorance and inadequacy. We became angry. We argued, but our mouths did not produce as many words as theirs. Let our knowledge at that moment have been inadequate; knowledge can be acquired, it can be learned, provided one wants to learn. But what is decisive is purity and cleanliness. Once the mind is polluted, nothing remains of revolutionism. At least this is what we saw and learned from the “old ones”. In fact, these were the misty years in which the stones of “clever leftism” were being laid. People were shouting that socialism was finished, that it had collapsed. But we had our Dev-Genç. While some lost their direction in that misty atmosphere, our way was open and we moved forward. This was where our admiration for this movement, and for you, emerged. I will never forget the banner of the action defending the Ceaușescus on the cover of Çözüm magazine. The clarity of those evaluations, the decisiveness in standing by those who defended socialism despite their mistakes...[21]

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20 Dev-Genç: abbreviation of Devrimci Gençlik (“Revolutionary Youth”), the historic revolutionary youth organisation in Turkey.

21 Çözüm: Turkish for “Solution”; here the title of a magazine.

Why did we love you? Why did we become bound to you? Of course, this was not a love that appeared all at once. That kind of thing belongs to the culture and morality of imperialism. Every kind of love is consumed in that way. There is no labour in that love. No shared destiny, no shared cultural formation. In the life offered by imperialism, both love and devotion are objects of consumption.

Our love begins with labour; it is kneaded with devotion, with a shared ideal and purpose. That is how our love for you began. We were very young, lively, inexperienced, but with the road ahead open before us. We became your children. Especially after hearing you proudly say that you had always remained a Dev-Genç member, how fully we would declare that we were Dev-Genç members too. It is still the same, you know? We still say with full voices that we are Dev-Genç members. Because the question is not biological ageing; it is whether one can carry the dynamic, militant, enthusiastic, energetic and daring spirit of Dev-Genç. Our excitement has not changed, but there are places where the bourgeoisie has found cracks and openings and entered. This is our promise: we know that life does not tolerate empty spaces; these regressing aspects of ours will change.

We loved you, but history wanted to test our love. Father History wanted to see whether in hard times, on blurred, misty and fog-covered roads, we could still say “to the end”. If master hands were to write it, history wanted to be sure whether we could bind ourselves tightly to those master hands. We know that you too were going through the hardest of tests. The Hope to which you gave your blood and life, which you grew with your labour, was being stabbed.

Our Hope. In this merciless struggle, whatever comes from our enemy, we accept it. We know there are two sides: them and us. The oppressed and the oppressors. There is nothing beyond this. But what if snakes and centipedes have grown in our own bosom, what if they stab us in the back, fire a bullet into our Hope? What a pain it must have been, torn from you slowly and cruelly. And yet, if you endured such pain, if you remained standing upright, if you repelled this damned attack, if you did not fall into the vile ambush laid for you, it was because of the strength of the armour you wore. Your armour was Marxism-Leninism.

While we were surrounded from within and without, while the fate of the peoples of the world was being scattered by the “winds of change”, you walked without stopping, armoured, against the snakes, the centipedes and the guards of oppression, as if to say: I will create new Phoenixes. Once history delivers its judgement, that judgement can no longer be changed. It will be tried, tested, and it will be seen that this judgement is a seal pressed into the breast of oppression and treachery. And no force can break that judgement any longer. History continues to be written by master hands. That is all!

I take the newspaper I am supposed to collect that day and glance through it. There is another report. Once again, I think, they are attacking and smearing us without tiring or growing weary. I enter the street safely. Gülnihal (Yılmaz) is coming from the opposite direction. We walk away, talking. I mention the report I read in the newspaper. “How did you interpret it?” Gülnihal asks. I explain that it was done to smear us. Then Gülnihal tells me what she knows. My heart tightens as I listen. I cannot believe such treachery; I become angry, furious. “What would you do if you were in his place?” she asks. There is not the slightest question mark, not a moment’s hesitation: Dayı is everything to this Movement. That is all!

Why did so many people bind their fate to you? Why did we unite our destiny with yours? Why did the long-suffering, loyal, grief-stricken, weary, oppressed, humiliated and poor people of Anatolia -

our people - entrust their fate into your hands? What is there in your hands? Why are you the unchanging, most sacred being of our dream? Why does thinking of you give us such great happiness?

We are taken prisoner. Even if we have had no previous experience, it is no problem. There is a tradition there, an established, deeply rooted tradition. Resistance is in its very essence. A tradition that has grown through many resistances and become a way of life. And behind the walls, beneath the barbed wire, a fortress and a school built out of resistance. We are among the school's newest students. We try to understand, to learn. We struggle with some things. But there is no giving up. We will learn, we will educate ourselves.

We have broken the siege, turned the ship's course towards the target, and we are moving forward. The character of our work changes. Discussions, conversations... As I said, we are in a school. At the centre of our school is educating the human being, changing and transforming them.

"Comrades, news!" At a call that turns into a shout, we find ourselves in the television room. Mehmet Topaç has been punished. When one is a prisoner, how much joy news can bring, especially news of an action, news that a murderer has been punished. We watch the news with complete attention. We try not to miss a single detail. And we do not. Every one of us is grinning from ear to ear. Well done to our comrades. It brings relief to our hearts. But there is another sign within the action as well. Good news. A dream has become reality. We are filled with pride, with feelings impossible to describe. We shout our slogans towards Ankara Castle with all our grandeur. The Castle joins our joy. So do the ordinary prisoners. They come over and share our happiness, even though they do not understand what has happened. Embraces, folk songs and tears of joy mingle together. When things calm down a little, the ordinary prisoners ask, "Where is your Party's building? Give us the address so we can go and become members." We laugh loudly. We explain. Of course our Party has an address. It is in the hearts of thousands, on the road to winning the hearts of millions.

We all live through very different feelings. We are talking. Alongside the joy there is sadness too. Strange! Some of us say, "I feel as though I have lost Revolutionary Left." I am one of them. It is a strange feeling. We know that we have travelled a difficult road. We walked that road in blood. We reached our Party through the labour, sweat, blood and lives of those we loved most. They did not live to see the dream become reality. But they knew, they believed. And they deserved it most of all. Perhaps it is this feeling that leaves a trace of sorrow.

We are living through the enthusiasm of making our dream real. We are cheerful, enthusiastic. It is almost as though we are at a festival. This is our festival. A festival that will strengthen our steps. We are also aware of our responsibility. Our steps must grow, must quicken; we must run faster. But we must also pace our breath well. There is no getting stuck halfway. Despite pains and resistance, we are taking the steps of renewal. Your words, "To be a Party member means a higher consciousness of power, a more advanced war," become our guide. This is why we loved you so deeply. You are the dynamic of change and development. When we came to this family we did not know of your existence; once we learned, we became bound to you from the heart.

We saw our future in you. A father's compassion, the strength of embracing and protecting. We entrusted ourselves to those master hands. We changed. How far our change answered the expectations of you and of our struggle can be debated. But we loved you, became bound to you, and

you became our one and only DAYI. Our people too trusted, loved and believed in their valiant son. They entrusted their future into his hands.

In you we saw Hope. We learned that one cannot live without faith and purpose. You made us fighters of a sacred cause.

We see how rapidly this system soils everything, how it tramples over whatever has value. We are grateful to you for not leaving us in the rottenness of the system, for giving us value, for enabling us to live the virtue of being human.

We buried many whom we loved in our hearts. We lived their pain and their pride. Deep in our hearts, we felt the rightful honour of having known some of them, of having shared the beauties and difficulties of our struggle. But every head lost from beside our shoulders as we walked this road together, every step that disappeared from beside us, burned and scorched us.

We lost some in ambushes; some were made unrecognisable in executions; some were sunk in boats, in sky-blue waters; some were carried in rubbish trucks; while we could not bear to harm even a strand of their hair, some of their lifeless bodies were tortured; our hearts were branded; some melted cell by cell. While reading and learning history from books, we became part of, and witnesses to, that magnificent resistance.

Some sacrificed themselves as if running towards the sun, as if embracing the sky, becoming a shield for us.

Some were shot at a very young age, the brain that carried the beauties of our struggle and of their hearts flowing into our hands; we lost some beneath a rain of bullets and bombs. And for every one of them, we cut a notch into the white page of history. It never crossed our minds that one day we would cut a notch for you too.

Of course you were not superhuman. But you were DAYI. You were our teacher, our commander. You were the Dayı of our people who changed the destiny of these lands. You were our strength, our morale, our enthusiasm; you were our Hope. You were US. That is why we found in you everything we were looking for.

Our people, crushed by years of oppression and disappointed hopes, saw and felt Hope in you. Our elderly who had never seen a good day, our mothers and fathers crushed beneath anxiety for their children’s future, young men, young women, children, babies... Everyone placed their Hope into your hands. In you they found, and we found, the glad tidings of a completely new life beginning to sprout. You are the unchanging, most sacred being of our dream. Hundreds of thousands of us take great happiness in thinking of you, in entering into long or short pleasant conversations with you in our own hearts, in dreaming that one day we would meet you, in imagining the moment of revolution and playfully arguing over who would be responsible for your security so that no harm would come to you while you stood at the rostrum. Because you are pure love, you are the future, you are Hope. You are DAYI.

That is why everything stops when Dayı is mentioned. That is why, when Dayı is mentioned, the thunder of our hearts can be heard kilometres away. Dayı is a nightmare for our enemy and a guarantee for our friends.

He is a plane tree, a great centuries-old plane tree. In his trunk is the thousand-year history of the peoples, a plane tree to lean against, to shelter beneath its shade. Your shade has been withdrawn from over us, Dayı. Yet how accustomed we had become to your shade surrounding us, protecting us, watching over us, wrapping us in its embrace.

I will not lie: we could not remain faithful to your word. Of course we did not let ourselves collapse, but we could not stop our tears. We tried to restrain ourselves, very hard. We struggled to carry out what you wanted.

Do not wag your pointing finger at us, our beloved Dayı. We are bidding you farewell only once. Only once. But we cannot be beside you.

We cannot touch you. We cannot see you. We cannot stand a vigil of respect. We cannot shoulder your coffin. Our captivity is the honourable suffering on our brow. So be it. But come and explain that to our hearts. You know and understand how difficult, how painful it is to learn the news of you, to learn of your farewell, from that false world of deceit and lies, from television. My dear comrade, we could not even live our pain to the full. They did not let us. We could not be beside you. You know too that we did not let ourselves go. Your words are in our minds: pain is an ordinary feeling, and becoming accustomed to pain also decays a person. We will not become accustomed, we will not become ordinary. We will live your pain, and we will also live the pride and honour of being your students, your children, your comrades. In our tears and in our pain there is also our fury. And in our oath, there is you.

You are US, and WE will become you.

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Everything Will Be As You Want It

We bid you farewell from prison. The pain of bidding you farewell into immortality is immense. To be bidding you farewell from prison burned our hearts in another way too.

When we received the news of your immortality, at first we did not believe it. We said this news was once again a game of the enemy. We said, you will not be able to rejoice. But when the news began to be repeated one after another, we entered a period of waiting.

With the statement made by our families and our lawyers, it became clear. That moment was one of the hardest moments for us. We have bid farewell to many of our martyrs from prison; while in captivity, we received news of those of ours who were martyred outside.

We welcomed our victory. In every case we removed the walls between us. With your martyrdom too, we tore the prison walls down and reached your side. In our hearts and minds we were at your bedside, beside our comrades. What would we not have given to make this happen physically as well? We were all filled and overflowing with these feelings and thoughts. Yes, we overflowed; we tried to restrain ourselves so that what welled from our eyes would not fall, but we could not.

What we lived through was indescribable. There are no words for our love for you, no words for what we felt in your immortality. Until now I have always felt your presence and your strength. It will be the same from now on too. I have always been proud of our history and of you. I drew strength from our values, from the heroism you created and from those of ours who walk with this heroism.

What we have to learn from you is not finished. Just as you taught with your life, you continue to teach with your immortality. We have a leader who, even in his final moment, organised life, wove the struggle and thought of his comrades. The pride and confidence of this are something else entirely. However we look at you, at your life and your immortality, we see our shared history, our struggle and our strength. In your life filled with will: how is labour given to the people, how is a person loved, what is love, what is comradeship? What is the purpose of life? All questions find their answer in your life and in your legacy.

Yes, legacy. Your life is a legacy to us. A great legacy that, on our journey stretching towards tomorrow, will never be erased from our memory and will never be torn from our hearts. The road of this legacy passes through struggle, through revolution, through labour. And to make these dreams of ours real, we will not shrink from making any sacrifice. What falls to us is to be students of all these beauties. Never to let you leave our consciousness, to carry you everywhere together with US. I am conscious that keeping you alive in every field and at every moment of our struggle is an enormous blow against the enemy.

Your place in me is not only that you are the commander of our war, our leader. Together with all this, you are trust, devotion, loyalty and love - the totality of the values that make a human being human. We are an organisation of war, and within this war you are the one who gives us the strength and consciousness to be ready for everything and to carry every burden. How is war waged even under the hardest conditions; what strength, what kind of will keeps us standing upright? The answer to all of it is in you. You are the one who taught us to be free, to be human, to be honourable.

Your eyes will always be upon me. You will look at life through me too. I will carry you into life with my belief, my heart and my consciousness. And I think that to learn from you, from our Party, from our people and from life, and to make this continuous, is to keep you alive.

With my endless love and devotion...

★

Our Oath Is Our Promise of Revolution to Our People

We are walking through Gazi. All our hearts beat in Gazi. We walk our road quickly. Decayed walls, rusted iron, barbed wire and captivity cannot stop our steps. From the moment we learned that we would bid farewell to our Leader into immortality in Gazi, rap... rap... the footsteps of Hope have made the enemy tremble. Our pain turns into anger. We make no concession from our enthusiasm or our determination.

We are walking through Gazi... These poor working-class streets, houses, avenues and people know us. We are the Hope and the future of our poor working people. We are the longing for justice, equality and independence. By filling the streets with thousands, taking our heroic martyrs upon our shoulders, we showed and continue to show that the road of revolution is walked with blood and life. Every 12 March we turned our hatred into a fist and demanded an accounting from the murderers for our martyrs; we still do. We will fan the Newroz fires on Muharrem Hill and, becoming Cengiz, grow our rebellion against oppression.[22]

22 Newroz: the Kurdish form of Nowruz, the spring/new-year festival celebrated around 21 March and carrying strong cultural and political significance in Kurdish society.

We are walking through Gazi... The streets take us on a journey through our history. The slogans “Down with Fascism” and “Murderer State” tear apart the darkness of the night. The slogans direct the people towards the correct target. Before the cry of our pain has even faded, Gazi’s poor streets fill and overflow with thousands of people.

Fourteen years later, the slogan “We Will Drown Fascism in the Blood It Has Spilled” comes alive in our cries of “Leader Comrade Dursun Karataş” and “Salute to the Leader, Continue the Struggle”. Our determination proclaims that our war against imperialism and the oligarchy will continue until victory. At the very front are our mothers with red headbands and white headscarves. Without shedding a single tear, they stand upright and composed. Without leaving their Leader’s side for even a minute, they ease the longing of years and grow the dream of free days. The red banners are carried by the descendants of Bedreddin, the valiant ones of Pir Sultan, the Efes of Çakırcalı. With the belief and enthusiasm of our 122 heroes who became carnations in our Great Resistance, and with our devotion to our Leader, we enter the middle of the red sea.

Gazi opens its arms to those arriving in streams from every corner of Anatolia. All the working-class neighbourhoods of Istanbul put their shoulders behind Gazi and give the enemy no passage. The people of Gazi, growing their trust and belief in the Party-Front members they have known for decades, carry the virtue of walking under the guidance of our Leader. Our poor people know Hope, recognise it, believe in it. Fourteen years ago it was this same strength that brought our people to their feet. The name of Hope is told once again by Ali Haydar, commander of the uprising, and by Sezgin, Fadime and Hasan who fought at the very front of the barricades.

We are walking through Gazi... We build barricades and stand vigil beside our Leader, growing our belief in socialism. The fire of rebellion we lit at the barricades of Gazi and at Newroz once again leaves deep and frightening marks in the mind of oppression. From then until today, our march says that the people’s resistance has not ended. The fire of rebellion burning at the barricades warms every corner of Anatolia. On that great day when we bid farewell to our Leader into immortality, the fires blaze still higher. Once again we swear that we will never allow this fire to be extinguished.

We are walking through Gazi... “Our steps shake earth and sky, our revolution is growing...” We never want this moment to end. The massacres are once again forced to take refuge in their lairs and hide. They do not dare raise their heads and look. The words “Even our dead frighten you” are not said in vain. The photograph of our Leader judging them makes their fear grow even more. They are afraid... They are afraid of our Leader who leads our march. They are afraid of our steps. They are afraid of the people’s justice, of our Party-Front.

We are walking through Gazi... In the person of our Leader, the homeland once again becomes Gazi. We walk through Gazi Cemetery amid a sea of red. The gravestones of our comrades stand before us like monuments to our thirst for justice. Nail, Muharrem, Mustafa, Ali Haydar, Ali Özbakır... Our heroes martyred in the Gazi Resistance salute our Leader. Without distinction of woman or man, young or old, child or adult, we grow and multiply, becoming thousands. Kurdish, Turkish, Laz, Circassian, Georgian, Alevi, Sunni... our people of every nationality and faith put their shoulders beneath their Leader. Thousands say with one voice: “You created our future, our Leader. We too will keep you alive. Sleep peacefully; do not let your eyes remain behind.”

Our Leader, our Commander-in-Chief...

We swear upon our red flags waving, upon our Hope, that no account with imperialism and the oligarchy will remain unsettled.

Our oath is our promise of revolution to our people.

Our people who bid farewell to our Leader into immortality: we know your pain is great and your hearts are full of anger. We say that on this honourable road we will win the victory. In the light of our Leader, with His will and daring, with His consciousness, we will create with our teeth and nails an independent, free country without poverty or exploitation. With the spirit of self-sacrifice we feel for our homeland, we will remain loyal to our long-suffering people and to our martyrs.

In the person of our Leader, once again we say: the final victory will be ours!

★

My Leader, My Dear Comrade, Our One and Only Dayı

★

Hello,

It has been two weeks since we bid you farewell into immortality. Our feelings are still as fresh as on the first day. Our pain, meanwhile, is very great. This pain will be a force that lashes us throughout our lives, sharpens our anger, grows our belief and steels our will.

It is very difficult to describe the intensity of the feelings we are living through. Pain, anger, honour, pride... You made us live through everything human. Once again we felt honoured to be a member of this great human family and your comrade. This honour at the same time places a great responsibility upon us.

Of course we were conscious of our responsibilities before this too. But your physical separation has made our responsibilities even greater. I know that you believe in us and trust us in this matter. And it was with this trust, at peace within yourself, that you set out on your final journey. We will not let your trust go to waste. Believe that no one will be able to rejoice at your absence, while our people will not feel your absence.

In every field of life, at every moment of our struggle, we will keep you alive. From now on your heart will continue to beat within us. We always say, “Martyrdom is multiplying.” Now, with you, we will multiply by the thousands, the tens of thousands. You will continue to live in the minds of millions with the same freshness. We will carry all the beauties you brought into life to every corner of our country.

To be able to do this, we are conscious that we must grow our revolutionism even more than yesterday. And again, we will achieve this with what you taught us. We will continue to learn from your will, your foresight, your belief, your disciplined and principled life, your endless love and devotion to our organisation and our people. You will continue to be our guide, our Leader and our commander. In the mountains, in the cities, in schools, in factories, in every field of life, the fire of revolution that is lit will be fanned by your anger. Under your guidance we will continue to walk without deviating from our road even by a millimetre. Newborn children will grow up with you. They will take their first steps into life with you. And all the beauties of life will continue to grow with you.

As our Party says, we will walk to revolution without you but with you. These days we are filled with these feelings. Our hearts and minds are full of you, full of what you taught us. We share our

thoughts, our dreams and our feelings about you. You are always there in the letters sent by our comrades in the F-Types, in the conversations of our families who come to visit. All our thoughts and feelings are shared. And in these sharings we once again saw what a great family we are and how strong we are. That is why we are an invincible family. Your physical separation has strengthened these bonds even more.

Those who do not know what labour, love and self-sacrifice are cannot understand this. Some may think that in your absence we will become weaker. Perhaps the enemy will even intensify its attacks against us for this reason. We do not care about any of it! Just as yesterday, today too we will frustrate all their calculations. Once again you shook us, and from the deepest point. You shook us awake and reminded us once again of our responsibilities. Be sure that everyone, from our cadres to our supporters and sympathisers, is living through the same feelings.

This is our strength. Friend and enemy alike will see this strength once again. At our final victory the whole world will once again witness our strength and our will. With this belief, we will shrink from no sacrifice in order to bring to victory the revolutionary struggle you left us as a legacy. Once again, just as in our dreams, you will be the one who heralds victory. The values you taught us are our oath: we will present to our people the revolution for which you sacrificed your whole being. The face of our people smiled with you and will continue to smile with you. Our road was illuminated with you and will continue to be illuminated with you. To realise your ideals is our debt of honour to you and to our organisation. We will not allow our honour to be stained.

Our Leader, our commander, our dear comrade: there is still so much I want to say about you, but both expressing it is difficult and it is unnecessary. Unnecessary, because I know that you understand us and can feel our thoughts. And unnecessary because above all we will show all our thoughts through our practice. That is why I do not say farewell to you; I know we will meet again.

On our Island we will be bound to one another forever. Until that day, I want you to embrace all our martyrs tightly and convey our endless love and respect to them. I love you all very much.

I love you, our Leader, the one and only Dayı of our people and our comrades, our Dayı, very much. But despite everything, there will always be something unfinished in one corner of our hearts. I do not know whether one can ever become accustomed to this pain. What I do know is that you will always be a lump in our throats that we cannot swallow.

These days the “Free Prisoner” march is always on my lips. For some reason I have identified this march with you. Perhaps because of your special devotion to our prisoners. We always felt this love; now we feel it even more strongly.

Our beloved Dayı: for everything you taught us until today, for opening our eyes and showing us the road to the liberation of humanity, for always trusting us, for growing us with patience, labour and self-sacrifice, I thank you very much.

Sleep peacefully where you lie. You are in the soil of the homeland, in the breast of our people. Everything happened as you wanted and from now on it will continue to be so.

We will not keep you and our heroic martyrs waiting; we will come to your side with the inner peace of having fulfilled our duty.

Sleep peacefully where you lie, Dayı. The organisation you grew with labour and the people you loved so much are entrusted to us. No one will touch what has been entrusted to us. Whenever the enemy tries, they will burn in our anger.

Until we meet again, I embrace you tightly with my love and devotion and bow respectfully before you. With respect.

Salute to the Leader, Continue the Struggle!

★

You Are Our Teacher

We lost our teacher
We are in a hot season
The sun burns and the wind blows
Yet neither is enough to lift this burden from me
I know both are stronger than I am
But neither the heat of the sun
can melt my pain
that surrounds me like a block of ice
nor can the coolness of the wind
cool my pain
that burns me like fire

Far away somewhere
in the first hours of 11 August,
while He
was living the final moment of his pain,
there are no words
for this pain of mine

I ask!
Which road can bear so many twists and turns?
Which voice can reach so many places?
Which water can flow so clear?

If life is a road
filtered through pain,
this pain will change
the direction of the road

I have also had pains
that I met with tears
and I know that shedding tears is hard
I used to say life cannot move on without tears
But this pain
is the one that names

the crossroads and twists
on the road

This pain
is the moment
a people is torn
from its soil

This pain
is the moment
Hope is placed
on the course of a life

For years and years, for an entire lifetime,
you offered yourself to your people
You did not say
I am young,
I am inexperienced,
I am old,
I am ill

When youthful winds were blowing
at the head of the university students
when snakes and centipedes were scattering
at prison gates
you struggled
to be a light to the future with Hope

With Niyazi Dayı,
with whom you locked arms
and stood shoulder to shoulder,
on that wall where you met in Elazığ,
you wrote the future

If honour is bound in chain after chain,
it is broken hands that break the chain
A fist of a heart inside the ribcage
will beat in the name of Hope

On the soil of the homeland
covered by nightmare,
you broke
the first link
of the nightmare in prison

Freedom is not

behind the wall,
under the ground,
above the barbed wire
Freedom is in the heart,
in the mind

Love for the sun
belongs to those who know
that one day
they too will burn with it

One day they will become the sun,
only those who drink the sun
And one day they will become the sun,
only those who sing
“The Song of Those Who Drink the Sun”

To be Hope for those who run towards the sun
is the oath
of those who sing
“The Song of Those Who Drink the Sun”

Going smiling towards death in the prisons
is the will that destroys the enemy
that you taught us

While you were the first
to lie down for death,
at the very front,
with your hunger
you were the one who set the table of the poor

Bound to the future with your red headband,
you are the one who defeats oppression
with your breath

What can separate
comrades bound tightly together
so that they could tear you
from your comrades!

The chain of Hope
has now been forged from steel
link by link,
body by body,
breath by breath,

cell by cell

Bullets cannot pierce this steel
This steel will run to revolution

Victory
will be the breaths
that tear apart the blue shrouds

Is it only patience
that takes shape in the hands
of the one who creates tomorrow?
No,
patience only gives him strength

Bleeding wounds will not stop when one falls silent
and silence is the weapon of the righteous
While the silent see the truth
charlatans continue to darken the future

With this silence wrists grow stronger
The veins that will burst
are in clenched fists
With this retreat
the arrows have flown from their bow

The prisoner will say
“One day, surely”
and will be free
Running from the dungeon to Hope
will become the course of every prisoner

And after those days
Borans will multiply
in the skies of our country
It will be proved thousands of times
that Hope cannot be imprisoned

You,
you are the one who says
“Freedom is in our hands”

And Istanbul will now awaken
to completely new mornings

A rose cannot grow in a swamp

There will be those who create the rose
What filters drop by drop from every heart
will gather on the branch of the Rose

Everything will be created with anger
Walking step by step is no longer the remedy
We will run
We will run, faster still
We will run

Those who fire the bullets
are the people's justice
Those who ignite that bullet
will learn
anger,
daring,
war
from you

Those bullets will teach the people war
Students will learn
from their teacher
to trust the people

In the scorching days of July
when everywhere was surrounded
by the American boot,
we awoke to mornings
with the dream of beautiful days

The sun that shines at dawn
is the reddening blood
of those who said
"Comrades, Surpass Us"

They
left us an anger
that will be tested
again and again

And you
carry a burden in your heart
And now
the meaning of pain will change
with 16–17 April

On mornings scented with carnations
it is belief in socialism that is cried out

In Sabo’s
coal-black locks
there is the smell of gunpowder

That day, with the hammer and sickle of her burning heart,
she struck the demons of oppression
and hurled her slogans into the sky

And we know that
Sabo’s salute is an oath to Dayı
Dayı’s oath is Sabo

One September day
from those you knew beside your shoulder
came the dagger
into your back

Yet you had leaned your back
against your people

They are enemies
of what you created with your labour,
of what you built drop by drop
with the sweat of your brow

They are enemies
of Hope,
of which you would create a new one
from every atom

They are enemies
of the beloved
whom you wrapped in your breast,
whom you pulled from beneath bullets and saved,
whom you did not forget for even a single day

They are enemies
of our victory
for which you worked day and night,
which you protected from dirt and mud,
which you defended saying
we will certainly win

Now there is Hope in our country
Those who said
“We Will Shake the World Once Again, This Time from Turkey”
heralded 30 March ’94

I ask!
At the end of which road
is there always Hope?
Which force
scatters, disperses and smashes
the treacherous wind at the crossroads?
Which smile
can add so much colour to life?
Which force
can give us
the boundless laughter of babies?

I ask!
Which person
can carry the name of Hope
with such pride
for a whole lifetime?
Which person
can unite every pain
so completely with Hope?
Which person
can be steeled by pain
and become a balm for the pains of the people?

You!

You who shine in the light of crystal glass
and gleam in the clarity of a crystal drop

In the poor gecekondu neighbourhoods of Gazi
you grew with the black earth
and were warmed by the table of the poor

You are our Hope
that grows each morning, step by step,
with the breath of those
who run for bread drenched in blood and sweat

You smile at the mountains with your soil
and adorn the flowers with your breath

As water finds its course,
your name
is the name of the road
that leads the people to struggle

And we were born with this name
We grew with this name
We laughed with this name
We cried
With this name we burned,
we were scorched

We will live for this name
We will die for this name

Our heart, in which we buried your name,
will repeat its oath with every breath
will spend every breath for you,
will run to you with every breath
and one day, when it becomes earth, will reach you

And as we always say:
“We Will Win Victory With Our Martyrs”

“... Perhaps our martyrs are not physically among us today, but they are here with their thoughts, their struggle, their way of life, their dreams of fighting as Party members. They are together with us. We are stronger with their thoughts and their struggle. With the qualities with which they never bowed before the enemy even under the hardest conditions, dying but never being defeated, their eyes are always upon us, testing us at every moment. Continuing their legacy depends on our passing these tests successfully.” (Congress Documents-1 / Dursun KARATAŞ)

★

We Had Become Thousands of Hearts

“... I cannot get used to death, I cannot get used to it,
death is contrary to humanity, I cannot get used to it.
silence is contrary to humanity, I cannot remain silent,
I resist death with my nails, with my teeth
but I cannot get used to death...”

Death; I can neither get used to it nor stay silent
I want to cry out
to cry out loud enough to destroy the walls...

Let my voice reach the mountains
from the cell walls
and echo in the mountains

My comrades, hear me
My voice has become a scream, shouting anger
shouting belief, consciousness and Hope...

Mountains, take me
Valiant ones whose hearts have fallen in love
take me

The treachery of death is in my heart
the anger of loss
My anger is great and hard to describe

There is the weight of loss in the day,
the incurable pain of death...

After the news we had only heard, a day passed filled with “how are they?”, without knowing where, how or when... We had no news. We could only get information from television. When we heard it in the morning we had not believed it. “No, there is no such thing, it cannot be,” we said. “They are lying again, deceiving our people,” we said. “This too is part of psychological warfare...” The reports on television multiplied, but still we did not believe them. On the one hand we continued with our work. But our ears were on the news. A female staff member who came to the door asked:

- Is the news true?

- No. How could there be such a thing?

If there really had been such a thing, would we be standing like this? We would not. We did not... A few of us from the cell went to the visit.

At the same time we did not miss the television news. Although nothing was clear, the fact that the report was being repeated so often made us think. Until we heard the statements made by TAYAD and our lawyers... We could not believe it. We tried to remain calm. Our tears did not flow; we did not show them. It was as though we were hiding our tears from one another.

We had to be strong.

At night we sent our voice to you with slogans. We had become thousands of hearts as one. All the walls had collapsed. From the prisons to the gecekondu districts, from the mountains to the cities... we had joined our voices together. My voice trembles, but now it comes out more strongly. I clench my fist more tightly. Inside the cell we can do nothing, as if our hands and arms are tied. Our minds are always with you, with all of you. We wonder about outside. Has there been any problem? Has he reached the soil of the homeland? We must be ready for any possible attack. If those who embrace our Dayı, if our people are attacked, they will receive an answer from us too, that is certain. We talk about what we can do.

In our morning study we had discussed “the unity of opposites”: the contradiction between death and life. By evening, while we were trying to watch the news, Selma was crying and resisting sleep. “Perhaps this is the contradiction between life and death,” I say to myself... In her tiny state, not understanding a thing, she looks at us, and we look at death in all its treacherous form...

We learned so much from you. To be strong, will, struggle, resistance. Because you are the strength of our Party-Front. You were always beside us in the hardest times; we were side by side. From you we also learned that there is nothing that cannot be overcome, no problem that cannot be solved. Sometimes we walked the road quickly, sometimes we slowed, sometimes we fell back. And with your strength we succeeded in coming out of defeats with victories. You are the one who taught sacrifice, daring and determination. Our Party-Front, our Hope, is your work. We will be worthy of you, of our heroic martyrs, our comrades and our people.

As tens of thousands of people walk the resistant streets of Gazi while we bid you farewell into the breast of Anatolia, our minds are at ease. We are at peace. Because we know that everything happened as you wanted, and we live with the confidence of this. Our hammer-and-sickle flag that covered your body passes among tens of thousands of people. Red flags adorn all the streets. Our mothers, our sisters, our elder brothers, our siblings and our comrades all cry out the name of Hope with one voice.

We were tens of thousands in Gazi.

This is who we are. We are the people.

We are wherever the people are.

★

He Is Now a Torch of Revolution Lighting Our Way

Up to today the oligarchy has carried out countless attacks against the people and revolutionaries: massacres, executions, torture, detentions, arrests... The psychological war waged by the oligarchy is another dimension of these attacks. This war waged against the people and revolutionaries is an attack on our values. The aim of these attacks, which have continued for years, is to strip revolutionaries of belief, frighten and intimidate them, and create distrust towards the leadership. At the same time, they aim to make the people lose their trust in revolutionaries, to weaken belief in revolution and the bond with revolutionaries. In essence, the imperialists and their collaborators want to destroy those who run counter to their interests and who are an alternative to this system. Through attacks on our leadership, they aim to make revolutionaries lose their devotion to and belief in the leadership. On 11 August 2008, as the oligarchy and its media reported “Dursun Karataş is dead”, they were shouting with joy. Because they had been waiting for this news for years. They thought that an organisation without Dursun Karataş could be neutralised more quickly. They were burning for this. But once again the oligarchy was mistaken.

We draw our strength from our Dayı. During the ’84 Death Fast, the enemy tried to break the resistance by isolating Dayı and leaving him alone. In every period the enemy continued without pause its physical and psychological attacks against our Leader. But it succeeded in none of them. Because Dayı is the name of becoming revolutionary and of trust among the people and his comrades.

Up to today they have produced many false stories about our Leader: that our Leader “lived in luxury, had houses and cars, while we lived in misery”... There is no limit to their lies. Because they recognise no limit in immorality and falsehood. And no sooner had they received the news of his death than they began their demagogy that “a leadership struggle has begun within the organisation”.

They are so helpless that they take refuge in lies and slander. Our Leader and revolutionaries have always been the target of imperialism's collaborators. Our answer to all these attacks against our Leader was the red sea of flags in Gazi. Tens of thousands of people bid farewell to our Leader on his final journey. Every flag and every banner in that Red Sea was an embrace of the revolution. It was a symbol of the people's devotion to and trust in our Leader and our Party. In this embrace there was the belief, will and strength that stood before the enemy. Because leadership means consciousness. Today our Leader is not physically among us, but it must not be forgotten: he is now a torch of revolution lighting our way. We will continue on our road drawing strength from the legacy he left, from the decades of history written with resistance and heroism, from what he taught us and from his policies. As his students, by embracing his legacy, we will keep Him alive.

We will try to think like Him, to live like Him. His martyrdom will make us stronger and cause us to grow. The struggle for independence, democracy and socialism in this country will continue without his physical presence but under his leadership. History has shown that our martyrs who became immortal in the revolutionary struggle continued to teach us through the legacy they left in the struggle and through their exemplary revolutionary lives.

Years ago, when the oligarchy massacred Mahir and his comrades at Kızıldere, it too rejoiced that it had physically destroyed the Ten; but the manifesto written that day at Kızıldere entered history as the name of refusing to bow to oppression. The seeds of resistance left by Mahir and his comrades produced thousands of shoots. Today too, with the martyrdom of our Leader, another seed that devoted its years to revolution has fallen into this fertile soil. Without doubt it too will produce thousands of shoots. We know that martyrdom is multiplying. With every martyrdom we are born again.

And death, when its time comes, is an ordinary duty for us. The pain and sorrow we feel at the death of our Leader will not be pain and sorrow that makes the enemy rejoice. Because we also know how to turn our pain into anger. Our hatred for the enemy is greater now. The bourgeoisie, shouting cries of joy and saying "He is no longer here", is once again mistaken. Hope is always here. We are here. From now on we will be stronger still. We will reach our destination faster. And by growing the struggle, we will continue on our road to revolution. We have our Mahir-hearted ones who show us our road and chart our course, we have our Dayı; just as our teacher taught us, we will emerge upright from the hardest periods.

Now is the time to be stronger. We possess the will to frustrate these attacks of the enemy and shoulder still harder periods. We have frustrated every tactic the enemy has applied, and we will continue to do so. Because Dayı continues to live and to threaten the imperialists and their collaborators. Because Dayı continues to live in the consciousness and hearts of us, his comrades, and of the peoples of Turkey, with the belief of Mahir and his comrades who set out to make revolution in the Turkey of the world, and with the claim "We Will Shake the World Once Again, This Time from Turkey".

★

Our Dayı, Our Leader, Our Commander-in-Chief

There are moments when both believing and accepting are difficult. You want it to be a dream when you open and close your eyes.

There are moments when you avoid looking your comrades in the eye. You listen only to your own voice. Your mind works like an engine... At such moments you do not feel like speaking or asking questions. You feel alone, but you are not. The moment you hear the words “Our Leader has become immortal”... Believe me, at that moment you are not alone. Storms break inside your heart. All your dreams of the past and the future become a flood and flow into rivers and seas. Tears gather in your eyes, becoming a barricade to stop your anger from flowing out.

It is not the first time that death and life have confronted us. Mother earth has opened her arms to so many of our valiant ones. Woman, man, mother, father, spouse, sibling, young, old - without distinction, we bid them farewell into immortality. It is this consciousness that gives strength to my heart, glowing with pain...

I think of the history you created. That unique history that made you immortal... Dev-Genç, the 12 September Junta, our ’84 Death Fast Resistance that illuminated the darkness, our martyrs... Your cry from the oligarchy’s court rostrums, where you were not the one being judged but the one judging; your action for freedom that became legend on the lips of our people; the many days when we grew our people’s Hope with our revolutionary justice... I say to myself: the most beautiful name of immortality is hidden in the white pages of our history.

At times I dreamed of the days when our final victory would come. Our people embrace you. In a square filled with millions, we listen to you with full attention. We protect you against counter-revolutionary forces. After these dreams I draw a deep breath... But I do not give up growing my hopes through my dreams. New dreams come alive in my mind. I am in a village surrounded by high mountains and dusty roads. Barefoot children who long for sugar are shouting “Long Live Our Leader Dursun Karataş” everywhere. Both joy and sadness fill me.

What days we lived through, the kind we spoke about so often. Does someone make a promise but fail to do their work, become lazy? Our answer would immediately be, “Do not let Dayı hear, he will be angry; he does not like revolutionaries like that.” When we said these things we became like mischievous, happy children. Is a comrade’s family standing in the way of their struggle? The fear of a mother or father who heard “We will tell Dayı about you” always turned into endless respect and love. At such moments endless happiness and peace filled us. Our eyes shone with Hope and pride. We held tightly to our Dayı and our Party-Front and once again leaned our backs against an unbreakable wall...

All of us are thinking of the moment when you will be bid farewell into immortality in Gazi. The same thoughts pass through all our minds... At times like these we live the burning pain of being in prison.

Our hands and arms are not tied; as always, our hearts beat as Free Prisoners, but still we become prisoners of our thoughts. If only we could be outside now... If only we could bid you farewell into immortality by kissing your forehead and the flag of our Hope. We watch that moment on television, missing not a single frame, not a single detail.

Our Dayı, our Leader, our Commander-in-Chief! We are like soldiers ready for commands. Now, with the pain of bidding you farewell into immortality, we are becoming even more steeled. We cry out our slogans, our marches and our anger at the enemy even more loudly. The prisons breathe with the voice of the Free Prisoners. With the consciousness that we are face to face with the enemy, we give

direction to our lives and to ourselves. The enemy is aware of this too. Every time the hatch opens, some staff look into our eyes sadly, some silently, some respectfully, some curiously, and some as if they know nothing. We live through moments when we cannot find a single word to say. Preserving our composure, we try to overcome our great pain.

There were moments when I became angry with myself because I could not stop my tears; but know that in every drop that flowed from my eyes there was anger and honour. As the poet says, “Honour too weeps.”

Our Commander-in-Chief, our Leader!

In your presence, once again we promised to live in a manner worthy of the identity of Free Prisoners. We swore an oath of revolution. Now we will remain loyal to and worthy of this oath. On 11 August 2008, history once again recorded with your name that the struggle for socialism in our country would not disappear. Our people, among whom you were born and grew, and who made you immortal, bid farewell to their Leader with endless devotion and love, without letting you fall from their shoulders. We embraced one another even more tightly. Our joys, our pains and our losses that grew our Hope became one whole with your martyrdom.

All of us will carry our devotion to you and our love for you in the most beautiful, most honourable place in our hearts until our victory.

It Will Never Be Without You

How can one describe you? What can one say? What words are enough to tell of you... Nor... Yes, nor...

No, no, there is no exaggeration in what we will say. I do not know how to tell it, what to say. We receive the news that our Leader has been martyred and we cannot associate death with Him. We do not want to believe in such an unexpected, such an early death. It was He who gave us the consciousness that “We Will Win Victory With Our Martyrs!” And now our Leader continues to teach us through his martyrdom as well. Our pain is great, but our anger is greater still. With the martyrdom of our Leader, we know that the seeds of struggle sown decades ago will now grow more rapidly.

Our Leader was always the target of the enemy’s physical and psychological attacks. Our Leader was within the tradition of resistance we created in the prisons and outside. He was a teacher, a fighter. There came a day when he turned his body into a weapon against the enemy’s attacks... There came a day when he fought with a weapon in his hand. The oligarchy offers revolutionaries two choices: “Either you will surrender, or you will die.” The real question lies in the answer we give to these attacks: We will die!

And our history... The epics of heroism we created with our martyrs... From Kızıldere to 12 July, from 16–17 April to the summits of the mountains... And the Death Fasts that we brought to victory. The resistance we began in 1984 against the Uniform Dress... You too were part of that resistance. We won victory with four martyrs.

There were many waiting for you. Those you left behind and those you went to join. Yes, we are watching you on television now. We hear the slogans “Leader Comrade Dursun Karataş”, “Salute to

the Leader, Continue the Struggle", accompanied by tililis. The tililis express both our pain and our joy; after all, do we not go to death as though going to a wedding? Is martyrdom not being born again from deaths? From behind the iron bars, we too cried out the news of your martyrdom with all our strength. Our voices echoed in the darkness of the night... Our slogans, shouted as though tearing open the sky, passed beyond the exercise yard. Then we took our oath: you will live with us, with your Hope, your courage and your confidence. You will be carried with us into the future.

For days we have been unable to take our eyes from the television screen. Our looks are different from usual, more attentive than ever... We want to see everything at once. We want everything, absolutely everything, to happen at once. We throw ourselves onto the mountain tops, into the streets and avenues of the city...

We are in the streets of Gazi. If someone asked which is warmer, the sun or our hopes, no one could deny the warmth of the sun, but neither could they deny the warmth of our hopes. The sun warms and illuminates our world; our Hope warms and illuminates our inner selves and our dream. The sun is the axis of the world; our Hope is the axis of the liberation of the peoples of Turkey.

We are the hope of liberation of the peoples — Kurdish, Turkish, Arab, Laz and Circassian.

The flag of our Hope is draped over you. We look for a long time at our Leader, our Commander-in-Chief. The haste of those standing in line at the catafalque, of those wanting to see you one last time... As they say, from seven to seventy: women, men, children, old and young... A people is bidding you farewell on your final journey, an entire people. The people of the gecekondus, workers, civil servants, students... shopkeepers, writers, poets, engineers, young people, old people, children... Those who knew you and those who did not, those who had seen you and those who had not — everyone has come. Once the news is heard, how could anyone remain where they were in Anatolia? "They must be setting out from every corner of the country now," we say. No one could remain still on a day like this. We wonder what is happening. We are not physically there, but our minds and hearts are there. We are in Gazi. We are bidding you farewell among Gazi's poor gecekondus. At this moment all of us are with you.

What we learned from the books we read, what we learned from you. An immense history. You are a great plane tree. You passed through so many difficult periods, so many difficult roads. You were left alone. You did not give up, you did not lose Hope; you became Hope for the people, in periods when not even a leaf moved... The '80s, '84, the '90s — you, for an entire lifetime. Devoting every moment to revolution... A lifetime of revolutionism...

All of us are inside that intensity of feeling. We too want to see you, to be beside you on your final journey. We do not let our morale fall even for a moment. This is the strength we receive from you. We lose nothing of our enthusiasm even for a moment. Such is the intensity of feeling... Passages from the books I have read, from our history, come to my mind.

A leader, a cadre, a fighter...

Our teacher, our Commander-in-Chief: on the road you showed us, with what you taught us and under your leadership, we will continue to grow our Hope. Our road is long, our road is difficult, but it will never be without you. We swear to you and to all our heroic martyrs: we will present the revolution to our people and to you!

Your Eyes Are Always Upon Us

Our people,
Comrades,
When the calendars showed 11 August
a voice echoed in our country
Burning with love for homeland and people,
in defiance of a life spent in exile
and of so many ordeals,
Anatolia was to take to its breast
a life
with 38 years devoted to revolution

And years later
when, borne on shoulders from exile,
he was reunited with Mother Earth,
his longing was eased

With that mind and heart
he was on the soil of the homeland

Now his voice echoes
across the fertile soil of our country
that yields a thousandfold

“We defended what we did,
and did what we defended”

This was His voice
This was the voice of belief in the cause,
of devotion to his people and comrades
The voice of daring
and will
and determination

The avenues, the streets
echoed with His voice
Anatolia echoed with His voice

The capital of our struggle
greeted the day with Him

Now, in the skies above our capital,
with his smiling face
He looks at us

With us under every condition,
one of us
beside our shoulder on stormy nights

A leader
A commander
A fighter
A teacher
who lights our way

Under every condition,
against enemy attacks,
in the foremost trench,
shoulder to shoulder,
side by side,
together we cried out our anger

Together with Him we defeated oppression
Together with Him we overcame
the decayed walls

Together with Him
we made our bodies shields at the barricades

In the embrace of hunger,
with our bodies reduced to skin and bone,
we were together with Him

As we crossed difficult and rugged roads
together with Him we faced
the attacks of the enemy

When the blood-drinking executioners
wanted us to surrender,
with what He taught us we cried out:
“We will die, but we will not surrender”

A sea of flags
flows wave after wave
from Anatolia to Gazi,
from the Mediterranean, from the Black Sea,
from the Aegean, from Kurdistan

Working people march,
locked arm in arm, crying out:
“Do not rejoice in vain...”

The tens of thousands now walking
are a single body

With their red flags
a flood of people flows to Gazi

On 15 August
15,000 hearts bid Him farewell
to the side of our heroic martyrs

Our martyrs are waiting for Him
They meet in Gazi

Gazi is pregnant with many heroics
A history lies in Gazi
A great plane tree

From every corner of the country
mothers come

Our mothers want to see their children
one final time
and bid them farewell on their final journey

Young women, valiant young men
want to see Him
They make promises at his bedside
as they respectfully kiss his forehead

The peace on his face
comes from his trust
in his comrades
and his poor people...

His finger,
which points forward
and judged the enemy
from the court rostrums,
shows the way

Under His guidance
we advance along our road

Always knowing
He is beside us,

feeling his warmth

And now
His smiling face
lights our road

And His eyes
are upon us
we know,
we see,
we walk

Our people, our friends
do not leave Him alone
even on his final journey

We bid Him farewell
in the heat of August

He goes in peace,
without looking back

He knows that from that harbour
we will reach the sea
and from that sea
we will reach the ocean

When our hammer-and-sickle flag
is draped over Him,
with the happiness
of having found peace,
He looks one final time
and slips into sleep
never to awaken again

He is not physically here
but He is always with us
our guide

We advance along our road
We are with Him

Iron bars
cannot prevent us from reaching Him
because He is in the very centre of our heart,
where it beats for Hope

Our hearts are full of respect and love
We salute
from behind the bars

We take our oath
We cry out our Hope
We split the stone walls
and carry our voice to Him

And His voice is always within us

And we swear
with tooth and nail,
always with Hope,
we will walk towards tomorrow

We will weave the future with our own hands
and walk, knowing the weight of it

"No comrade can neglect ideological grounding and ideological struggle at any moment of life. Neglect means allowing the bourgeoisie into our minds. It means leaving the door open. Ideological development means knowing what one wants; resistance and organisation are a revolutionary's way of life." (Dursun KARATAŞ)

★

To Tell of Him!

We lost our Leader, our teacher. When I learned this news from the press, I was caught between believing and not believing. The enemy always publishes stories in order to smear Him. But this news is true. Our Leader has drawn his final breath. This is not one of the enemy's usual attacks.

At first, it was very difficult for me to think that He was no longer alive. I could not accept it. It causes a person great pain to think that our teacher who showed us the road, taught us the struggle and opened the way before us is no longer alive. There is no one within this family for whom He did not labour. So many feelings and thoughts pass through my mind. I think about the funeral, I think about the programme we will hold. Once again we will show how much we love Him and that we are prepared to risk everything. That will not be good at all from the enemy's point of view.

We will place our most precious comrade in the earth, and in this situation the enemy will test our anger. The only thing we can do is make the enemy regret this thousands of times over. Those who know this know it; those who do not will see and learn.

How difficult it is to tell of Him. To tell what He brought to a human being, what He brought to humanity. Above all, there is so much we still have to learn from Him; He continues to teach through his martyrdom as well. We will certainly feel the gap He leaves, but we will not fall into a void. Who in this world can devote all twenty-four hours of the day so carefully to the homeland? Who can shoulder so much pain, such a price? Of course there are many revolutionary leaders in the world; we learned

from them. But it is we who will ease the poverty and pain of our country. The importance of our Leader is beyond dispute.

I have so many reasons to draw strength from Him. There are so many aspects of Him that I will take as an example until my final moment. The revolutionary personality shaped in Him, and his qualities of acting with the mission of leadership, are in fact a definition of our country's road to revolution. There are so many matters in which we act by saying, "Our Dayı did this in such a situation", "Our Dayı said this on this issue." In overcoming the hardest days, He left us a great treasure. For example, even while fighting cancer, He never neglected his duties for a single day.

When we look at our history: his stance during 12 July, 16–17 April, against the coup plotters... All of it is a guide. But from now on He will no longer be physically with us. We will live through such an absence. For example, during the Great Resistance we lived through such difficult days, days full of pain, and we had troubled moments, but always by trusting in our Hope and our Leader. We drew strength from them. When we lost our comrades as martyrs, we wrapped that pain in our Hope and met it in this way. Knowing that our Leader was at our head gave us strength. A message from Him, an article by Him, made us happy.

Now, from now on, days await us that will pass with Him, yet without Him. We will test within ourselves once again many things that were defined through Him: revolutionism, being a person of the cause, being a rank-and-file fighter. We had a promise to our martyrs. From now on, our promise to our Leader has been added to it. We will shape our lives accordingly. We will begin every new day in this way.

We will keep the promise we gave Him.

★

This Journey Will Not Separate You from Us

"They were the world's last hope,
hawks whose line would never die out..."

In the newspaper we opened every day, beside that courtroom photograph of you engraved in the minds of everyone who knew you, there were these lines. How beautifully they describe you and so many of our heroes like you whom we bid farewell into immortality.

Your enemies produced so many baseless stories about you, especially as the struggle under your leadership began to gain greater momentum with every passing day. We became angry; our anger at the enemy grew as we read these stories. But in the end we also laughed and said, "This is the enemy's helplessness." Once again, all the channels began carrying the news "Dursun Karataş is dead". We did not believe it; we did not want to believe it. But channel after channel insistently repeated the same report. At that moment what I felt was: "What if it is true!" Doubt had entered our minds. We were searching for a reliable source we could believe, one that would convince us. Our conditions were limited... This is one of the hardest aspects of captivity: an impossibility capable of driving a person mad...

Our eyes and ears were fixed on the news channels. Finally TAYAD and the lawyers made a statement. The news that had been carried on television channels all day was true. Our families making the statement were sad; it showed on their faces, but they were composed too... And us? For

a while I avoided looking my comrades in the eye. My throat was tied in knots... We had all gathered together, and none of us could speak. And then that moment... “Comrades, our Leader has become immortal.” After this statement, everything I knew about you rushed into my mind. “Dayı” — yes, that was how I first knew you when I had only just taken my first step into this great family. Those who knew you, when I asked, would speak about what they knew of you and what they felt for you at length, their eyes shining.

And I would read your writings more than once, carefully, with curiosity... Like all your students, I surely had the thought in my mind: “I wonder whether one day we will meet Dayı?”

Now we were going to bid our Dayı farewell into eternity. My anger was great: with so many enemies of the people still alive, why you! My throat again tied itself in knots. Tears flowed from our eyes. But not in a way that would make you angry... We knew, because you were our teacher, that now was not the time to cry and lose morale; the enemy would now fix its eyes upon us even more. Our voice had to rise still louder. And the slogans shouted for you crossed the iron bars and reached our comrades, our friends, our enemies — everyone, all of Anatolia — that night: “Our Leader Dursun Karataş Is Immortal!”

On your final journey, we too wanted to be among the tens of thousands in Gazi. We wanted to cry out our anger, our Hope, our love and devotion to you together with tens of thousands... We could not be there physically, but we know that our voice crossed kilometres, stone walls and iron bars and reached you. And we too were present in the eyes that looked at you one final time.

This journey could not separate you from us. In every folk song we sing, every slogan we shout and every prison walk we take, you will be beside us, like all our heroes whom we bid farewell into eternity. No one could shout cries of joy behind you; under your leadership, with our belief in the future, we cry out Hope even more powerfully.

“Before all our labouring peoples, our working class, our poor peasants, patriots, intellectuals and all the peoples of the world, we repeat once again that even if not a single country, not a single organisation remains on earth defending the freedom and liberation of the peoples, we will continue to carry the flag of liberation.” (Dursun KARATAŞ)

★

We Bid a History Farewell into Immortality

“Every death is premature”, but without doubt this death was the one that reminded us of this most strongly. When we first received the news from television, none of us could believe it. On everyone’s face was an expression of sadness and uncertainty... “Could it be true?” Everyone was thinking, “Let it not be true.” Inside us was the ache of imprisonment. Ah! If only we were outside. To wait with our hands and arms tied, especially at a moment like this, hurts so deeply.

On the evening news, the television channels began reporting that we had lost our Dayı. The enemy is vile. It begins to shout with joy, but it will not take long for it to understand that it rejoiced in vain. The news is certain now. From behind the bars, with all the breath in our lungs and all the strength in our voices, we cry out: “Our Leader Dursun Karataş Is Immortal!” Something knots in our throats. Pain, anger, sorrow... all together. It is hard to describe, but each of us recognises the pain of the others.

We wait eagerly for the news that will follow. We cannot leave the television. Television and newspapers are our only means of receiving news. The feelings we are living through are very intense. In prison we are accustomed to waiting eagerly before the television, but this time is very different. All of us sit fixed to the screen. Even if only through television, we want to see our Dayı being bid farewell into eternity.

And there you are, passing through the poor gecekondus of Gazi. Just as the working people of Gazi put their shoulders to the struggle for liberation, they put their shoulders beneath you. They carry you on their shoulders. Thousands pass through the streets of Gazi: children and adults, young and old, women and men... Thousands have come to bid you farewell into immortality. The marches and slogans are stronger than ever. For a moment we leave the television screen and, in a single breath, we are in Gazi. We add our voice to the voices of the thousands...

You are the one who teaches, who gives strength, who becomes breath; and you teach through your immortality as well. You teach how death is defeated, how it is rendered helpless. You are a great plane tree, a great plane tree that stood against every hard storm. You are love, labour, the name of overcoming difficulties, of succeeding, of victory. In everyone within this great family there is a part of you, some labour of yours. You are the one who kept the values alive, who gave labour to this beautiful family, who kneaded and shaped it. You are the torch that lights our road; with your foresight and, when necessary, by putting your body forward as a shield, you are the name of trust and of setting an example. You became immortal leaving a great legacy to our peoples.

Of course the pain of losing you physically is great, but we are not collapsing in grief. Because we know that this is not disappearance; on the contrary, it is multiplication.

Do Not Rejoice in Vain!

You always dreamed of it. You always wanted Him to die. When He did not die, you killed Him in your imagination and had your paid pens publish the news of His death again and again. Because He was a nightmare for you. Such a nightmare that you had glass palaces built. That was not enough; you had fortresses constructed. You began living in ghettos. Your fear grew. Because we entered even your most inaccessible fortresses. You knew that He was the one who made this possible. That is why you produced absurd theories and tried different forms of attack.

Finally, on 11 August, your bourgeois pens wrote more joyfully, your faces smiled differently as you said “Dursun Karataş is dead”. Because this was the news you had wanted to publish for years. You always hoped to gain something from those false reports. But nothing happened as you hoped. Nor will it from now on. Before you, you will never find people who believe your lies or surrender to your attacks.

Did you ever see or hear our Dayı bow before your physical and psychological attacks? You cannot have. Because He is the one who confronted your most relentless attacks with daring. You tortured Him and imprisoned Him; in prison you left Him longing for a human face.

During the Death Fasts, on top of the oppression of hunger, you added more oppression, but still you could not force Him to surrender. At every opportunity you also wanted to destroy Him with your weapons; where your weapons could not reach, you attacked through your media. On 12 July and

16–17 April, you rejoiced at the possibility that you might have “killed” Dayı too. You massacred dozens of our cadres, and when that was still not enough, you attacked with your false reports.

About our Dayı and the revolutionaries you massacred, you wrote: “They live in luxury, there was caviar in the cupboard, Dursun Karataş informed on them...” This is how helpless and pathetic you are. Ah, if only you could see this helplessness, this wretchedness. But no, you cannot see it; you do not want to see it. Carry on. Continue living in the ghettos you have built, in your imaginary world. Continue, so that your end may come sooner, so that we may bring it sooner. Because this world of lies and deceit is condemned to collapse.

But do not forget: until we take power, and while we build socialism, our Dayı too will be beside us at every moment, always. Dayı, the fearful dream from whom you think you have escaped, will continue to live. Because He is the hopeful dream of the oppressed peoples.

None of your attacks discouraged our Dayı or the organisation of which He was the vanguard; none drove them to hopelessness. We did not become hopeless, because we were Hope. We did not become hopeless because we had our Dayı showing us our road. We still do. You may rejoice, saying, “He is dead; nothing will ever be as before.” But do not rejoice in vain, because our Dayı lives. Life is not merely physical existence. People truly live through what they create and through the ideas they defend. Our Dayı too lives through the traditions He created and the ideas He defended. We will protect the values He left and walk without deviating from the road He drew.

That is why, before you, you will find not one Dursun Karataş, but thousands. On these lands, as long as exploitation exists; as long as our babies die of hunger; as long as workers who shed their sweat are valued no more than sandbags; as long as the money stolen from our people flows into the coffers of the monopolies; as long as the soil of our country is watered with the tears of our mothers; as long as there is torture and massacre in the prisons; as long as rights, law and justice serve the immoral and the swindler; as long as there are American bases in our country; as long as our country remains a country ruled by imperialism, before you there will be not one Dursun Karataş, but thousands.

Do not rejoice in vain. Because now our Dayı lives in thousands of Party-Front members. We know that in our determination in the struggle, our belief, our approach to problems, our courage and our daring, our Dayı will always live. From now on, with this consciousness, we will walk on the road He drew. And now we have even more reasons to struggle. Now is the time to fulfil our promise to our Dayı and our martyrs.

Our promise is the promise of an independent, democratic country. Our promise is the promise of revolution.

For all these reasons, do not rejoice in vain. We will not make you happy. And sooner or later, together with your rotten, putrid system, we will send you to the dustbin of history.

“Party-Front revolutionism is not a revolutionism that abandons its cause and changes its ideas in storms and coups. This has been proven. All Party-Front members carry the honour of this. Now, with this honour and with the Party-Front spirit, we must succeed in organising the masses more extensively and expand the struggle. To embrace the martyrs, to respect the martyrs, to follow their path, is to accomplish this task.” (Dursun KARATAŞ)

From Prisoners' Letters

Hello!

WITHOUT HIM BUT ALWAYS WITH HIM...

WITH HOPE, WITH OUR LIVES, TOWARDS TOMORROW...

Greetings! A thousand greetings!..

Bolu F-Type / Free Prisoners

The midday sun had caught both corners of the exercise yard. A piece of news echoed through here. The news struck the concrete walls and from there reached our hearts. The architect of Hope... The master of the struggle... Dayı... What was this? What kind of news was this that had fallen upon us here? We pressed our fists against our hearts and collapsed at the foot of the wall. We were going to say, “Hold on, my heart.” We did not. Let it not hold on at this moment. Let its cry rise to the sky. Let our very beings be shaken. We were in the sunny corners of the exercise yard. But it was as though the dead of winter had attacked the heat of August, and we shivered. Embers fell onto our eyelids, then turned into drops of water and ran down our faces. The tracks those drops left on our faces were like little paths. Along one of those paths walked pain; along another walked sorrow. Pride walked along another. Its stride was upright.

The day was so heavy... August was such a curse... And one side of us was so orphaned... From that moment on, no, we were no longer here! Each of us, breathless and clutching our heart, was running to every place where He had been...

In one run I reach Elazığ. Gökalp, Ovacık, Çatal, Çimen... I visit every street. Wherever I look, there you are. I look at the ground; though years have passed, I find your footprints over the canal. I try to touch with my eyes every place I think you might have looked at. At the bridgeheads, there are those who keep watch until morning wearing red armbands. You are there... We were children then.

We were growing up with your memories. Whatever share of your memories fell to us, we tried to preserve it in our childish minds. It was around that time that I first heard someone say “Dayı”. An elderly woman was saying, “May Dayı’s troubles and misfortunes fall upon me.” Who was she calling Dayı? With my child’s mind, I could not find the answer that day, but later I found you everywhere.

“Of course, Dayı... Who else?”

“Dayı is very cheerful. But when he gets angry?”

“Dayı” ...

Somewhere in life, always “Dayı”. Whichever house it may have been in Fevzi Çakmak Neighbourhood, Yıldız Bağları or Esentepe, there were eyes there that had seen you... Such curiosity settles inside me... If only I had not been a child! If only I too had walked those streets with you...

I walk through Fevzi Çakmak Neighbourhood. I see children playing marbles on a mound. I know their tiny hearts will come to know you. I see you in the eyes of the elderly sitting outside their doors. I

enter the coffee houses facing one another. One is packed. I find myself in the middle of a heated discussion. Your voice reaches my ears. Your eyes flash. Such a firm, such a confident stance. A longing gathers in Fevzi Çakmak Neighbourhood.

One side of your longing falls upon Esentepe. One side upon Yıldız Bağları. And I do not know whether you ever drank water in Komdere. I drink it, thinking that you drank it. I cup it in my hands. What I drink is Hope. As I said, back then, in my childhood, I did not know you. But we were growing up with your memories. Then, when this heart of mine fell in love with Hope, I came to know you. From then on you were my Dayı too. And I understood that Dayı was Hope itself...

In every street I visit in Fevzi Çakmak Neighbourhood, I leave a longing tear behind. From there I run to Dersim. Again I am breathless. I go there to find your voice; on every path I walk, I find you.

I am in the forest of Norşin. Oaks surround every side.

- What happened, why are you so excited?

- Dayı's... We heard Dayı's voice...

Dayı's voice, the voice of Hope... It was here that your voice had echoed, Dayı. And because of some mishap, I had not been able to hear your voice. How I envied the comrades whom your voice had reached. When they told me about it with shining eyes, I stood before them with my head bowed. Such was your voice. That day in Dersim, in that forest, it had touched and set alight the Hope in the eyes of all the comrades there, leaving a smile on their faces that would never be erased.

Dayı's... Dayı's voice... That day I saw how restless, excited and alive the oaks were. Then our dreams would touch the oaks. That day will come! It will come, and we will descend from Dersim to Elazığ. Right there, in the empty land by the petrol station, you will give a speech; we will listen to you with weapons on our shoulders and berets on our foreheads, as your fighters. That moment is the moment of revolution. It is Ko...'s speech about de.... The oaks would share our laughter, our excited expectation. Now, however, the oaks are trembling and timid, their heads bowed. But Hope is there. Like Akyıldız, you are there, Dayı. You are right here! On the left side of my chest.

August is hot. The heart has turned to ice. Winter has seeped into August. We are at the foot of the wall, beneath the shadow of a finger pointing beyond. That beyond, whose name is apparent. And the fire that has fallen inside us. It is struggle. It blazes in every season. But this struggle is now in its first flame. Its yellow-red flames keep licking our hearts. We have embraced one another so tightly, so bound together, looking into the black of your eyes. We have collapsed at the foot of the wall and locked our cry inside our hearts. We have been left longing for you, Dayı.

We have made promises to the future. We have taken an oath, sworn a vow. And we have said: our road is the road of your legacy...

★

Without You But With You

Without you but with you
We always walk
Step by step, never stopping
Surging like rivers

We follow after you

It lives in the heart
In us, with us
Painting beauty
Onto history
Again

Without you but with you
We sing folk songs
Rising without ever falling silent
With red flags
Spreading wave after wave
It is your Mahir voice

It lives in the heart
In us, with us
Painting beauty
Onto history
Again

Without you but with you
Of course we are together
From history towards tomorrow
That great love
beating in our breast
is our love for Hope...

It lives in the heart
In us, with us
Painting beauty
Onto history
Again

★

Hello,

I embrace you tightly with the warmth of our Dayı... Since that day, in notes, letters and conversations inside the cell, we have shared our feelings and thoughts about Him and that moment. But we had not had a collective conversation like this. So we said: let us also talk together in this way, about what He made us think and what He made us feel...

When we first learned the news, I did not want to believe it. More precisely, from the statement and the expressions it was unfortunately clear that it was true. But a person begins to think: if only it turns out to be wrong, if only it is one of those fabricated reports from before.

At that moment a great weight falls upon a person. We had received news of martyrdom many times before. At the first moment the news is heard, pain and heaviness form in the heart. This time it was far greater. Is it easy? We had bid farewell to our Leader, our Dayı!

With the weight of that first moment, a person feels like doing nothing except following the news on television and radio, trying to learn something new and thinking of Him. When notes began arriving from the neighbouring cells and from one another, we immediately reached for our pens. We told the neighbours about Him. We shared our feelings with one another.

The thought came to my mind: how would He want us to be? Once I thought of that, our hands went to the pen with greater enthusiasm and fervour. The weight slowly began to lessen. Of course there were moments when we became lost in thought, our eyes fixed on the wall and our minds stuck on Him.

But thoughts such as “what will happen now?” or “what will WE do without Dayı?” never came into my mind. Beyond knowing that He would always be beside us through what He taught and created, I felt it. At that very moment He was beside us too, as though speaking to us. It was as if He were saying: you must not mourn; you must not stop; you must throw yourselves forward even more; there is so much we have to do. I felt that, with the strength He would give us by always being beside us, we would disappoint those who hoped to benefit from His absence.

I had only been able to see Him in photographs in magazines and books. But memories were told of His greatness: of His tremendous will during the ’84 Death Fast, of His principled stance, determination and daring in the courts of the fascist junta; of how He was a true Dayı who cared about and attended to every trouble of His comrades... Of how even the enemy respected Him in the face of His greatness, of His mastery in politics, His genius, how His foresight always proved correct, how He always defended what He did and did what He defended...

Through all this He was always, for us, a rock, a mountain against which we leaned our backs and from which we drew strength. Even thinking of Him gave us morale and psychological superiority... From now on it will continue to be this way. In fact it will be even more so. We will feel Him beside us even more strongly.

Whenever we encounter difficulties, He will always be beside us. For now I will leave it there and embrace you once again with the warmth of our Dayı. And let me recount some memories of Him:

A news item about a chess championship was being watched on television. There is an Abi of ours who had walked with our Leader almost from the beginning of the road. In the report they say that a certain player can calculate thirty or forty moves ahead. Dayı must have come to his mind at that moment, because he says: “And think how many thousands of moves ahead Dayı could calculate. He foresees what will happen ten or fifteen years later and takes his steps accordingly. And time truly proves him right.” This is a clear sign of genius...

A meeting is being held in which certain matters are to be discussed and decided. Eight to ten people attend, Dayı among them. Everyone sets out the problems under main headings. An agenda of twenty to twenty-five items emerges. Dayı gives his view on one of them and looks at the comrade who raised it. The comrade’s first thought is, “I suppose I did not explain it fully.” And he tries to elaborate. During the discussion he realises that Dayı has not merely understood it; He has deepened it by at least four or five levels and is speaking accordingly. It is said that one of Dayı’s most

outstanding qualities was the depth of His thinking and analysis. Situations like this occurred many times. Far beyond merely having a general command of areas, regions and events as required by His duty, Dayı knew everything in detail and approached it deeply. For this, intelligence at the level of genius is not enough; one also needs an extraordinarily powerful memory. And of course, to use all this, one needs a great love of the people and revolution.

His memory was so strong... During the coup-plotting period, when He escaped from the coup plotters, He called certain places in order to establish contact with the Movement. The coup plotters had changed the numbers. So He tried to remember alternative telephone numbers. Even where people were not directly under Him, He knew the numbers of many administrators and cadres. Those too had been changed. While thinking through these, He realised that He remembered the number of a contact that had been given to Him sixteen years earlier. Years later, telling this to a comrade, Dayı said, “Even I think that is too much!”

At the same time He was humorous too... With such a memory, there was nothing the Movement knew that He did not know, nothing it had forgotten that He forgot. He was especially angry with those who said, “I forgot this, I forgot that.” He used to say, “Forgetting is the disease of our age; we absolutely need to investigate this in depth.”

One day, while leaving His study, He momentarily forgot something He was meant to take and came back to get it. “You are not going to be the only ones who forget; let us see what this forgetting thing is like for us too,” He said, both making a joke and once again reminding everyone of His constant struggle against forgetfulness.

In a house where people were staying, there was a comrade who had undergone an operation months earlier. By then the comrade had recovered. One day Dayı called. No one else was in the house. Normally, since that comrade was also a guest, he did not answer the telephone. But with no one else there, he answered. When Dayı recognised him, He asked about his illness and whether he was taking care of himself... The comrade was almost in shock from surprise.

Although He had no direct involvement with him, the fact that He remembered his health, knew about the operation and, during a telephone conversation of only a few minutes, gave advice about his health affected him deeply. Amid so much work, He was also concerned with such things, did not forget them, attached importance to them...

He placed great importance on cadres and wanted them to make proposals concerning their own work. More accurately, He made this obligatory. If a proposal had a sound logic in a positive sense, He would most probably approve it. So much so that someone who did not know Him might think, “Could it be that He is not looking carefully?” Because almost every proposal seemed to be approved. But proposals made without enough thought and calculation, or those that did not fit the general policy, were definitely returned. Sometimes with very serious criticism. His approach to proposals and His criticisms showed how detailed and deeply rooted His command of an area was. Most of the time, He never forgot contacts, developments or processes that even those responsible for the area had forgotten. Considering the dozens of areas and regions He directed, it is impossible not to admire Him.

There was a comrade who for a period carried out the role of switchboard between some contacts. Two or three years after that duty, Dayı said to him, “So you tell us off when we are late answering the

phone?” The comrade was astonished: “Far from it, Dayı, how could I dare?” After being pressed for a long time, the comrade remembered that two or three years earlier, when serving on the switchboard, he had become angry with someone for being late to the phone. Of course he did not know who the person he had scolded was. But among so many switchboard operators and so many incidents, Dayı had not forgotten that event.

★

Hello,

I too embrace all of you with the warmth of our Leader. When we received the news, I think almost all of us reacted in the same way. We froze. And even now that state of freezing continues in certain respects. When trying to write about Him, the pen freezes like that too. What can one say? By shaking hearts and consciousness, our Leader became someone who, through His martyrdom as well, taught, gathered and brought us together.

Before I became organised, the first book of ours I read was “Everything for Our Unity, Our Future and Our Victory”, about the coup plotting. That was when I first came to know our Leader. Of course, I mean knowing Him through reading. Then there were propaganda cassettes and so on, and after that the accounts of our Abis were added...

The more a person comes to know Him, the more one wants to know Him; curiosity honestly grows. What kind of person is He? During a particular period we lived through, those responsible for us said that our Dayı was closely following developments concerning us and was even asking about and taking an interest in our needs. Even this creates such a feeling in a person: wow! You say to yourself.

Wow!

And we know that our Leader was a revolutionary leader who dealt with every problem of this Movement, every aspect of the developments taking place, who knew the areas, regions and people, and who devoted His entire life and all His energy to His duties. Almost all of us have read the Congress Report. There, a definition of a leading cadre is given. In the accounts we have heard or read, we see the crystallised form of that definition in the personality of our Leader.

One of the common pains we all feel over our Dayı’s martyrdom is surely that this martyrdom came much too early. It is the dream of many of us to see Him addressing the people from a rostrum in Taksim Square. Perhaps we should say not “many of us” but “our shared dream”, because this dream is carried from tongue to tongue. Ever since I first became organised, for example, I have imagined such a scene. And strangely, I always place the rostrum in front of The Marmara Hotel! Yet the place normally used for the main rostrum is where the McDonald’s stands, where the IETT Operations Directorate is also located. I was speaking about dreams: there is a small questionnaire that Berkan Abatay filled in during his resistance. In it he says, “I would very much have wanted our Leader to see the revolution, because he is the one who deserves it most!” And that is truly so.

He was martyred at a very young age. The poet said “every death is premature”, but this was something else. Had His health been good, perhaps He would have carried our country’s revolution on His back for another twenty-five or thirty years. And we would have welcomed the revolution. We would have opened such a hole right in the belly of imperialism that His name would have been written far more greatly into the history of world revolution. But we will still make that revolution, we

will still introduce our Leader to all the peoples of the world. And we will do everything in our power to be worthy of Him.

Among our Leader's most important qualities were His determination to learn and His versatility. He did not like to learn anything halfway. Politics, philosophy, medicine, technology... whatever subject He needed, He would ask the relevant people for a report, gather whatever books, videos and CDs there were on it, and plunge into them. A few days later He would know as much about that subject as an expert. He had an extraordinarily powerful ability to understand and grasp things.

He made a special effort to ensure that every scientific and technological development could be used for the aims of the revolution. He was very open-minded and open to innovation, yet at the same time had a nature that weighed everything on a jeweller's scale. In this one can see both a great desire for the development of the revolution and the sensitivity required to recognise it correctly. With these qualities, our Leader was naturally among those who made our Movement so qualified and skilful in using technical possibilities and brought it to this level. It is something even the enemy bows before. While MİT did not even know what a computer was and showed the primitiveness of pulling the plug from the electricity in order to protect its computers, our Movement was already widely using computers in communications, the press and many other areas. It is said that this came directly through our Leader's direction, encouragement and sometimes insistence.

When a proposal to use computers was brought to our Leader, it was a subject He did not yet fully know either. At that time technology was not nearly as advanced as it is today. Forget the internet and a "café" on every street corner; hardly anyone even knew the word. Our Leader listened with great interest to the comrades making the proposal. It would speed us up, increase security and provide many other advantages... While sensing that it could be useful, many questions also crowded His mind. He asked questions that assessed the issue in many dimensions, including dimensions not even known to those making the proposal. Further research was carried out on questions that could not be answered, and so on. In the end, a decision was made on this "technological offensive". At that point, our Leader especially stated His trust in the comrades who had proposed this work and change.

In a general sense, the Party-Front's trust in young cadres is well known. Our Leader too had an exemplary attitude in this regard and, as far as possible, opened the way before them and encouraged them to take on duties and responsibilities in order to carry the revolution further. His versatility did not concern only "subjects"; in the same way, He also took a close interest in everyone around Him and everyone with whom He was in contact in one way or another.

There were times when He would take a walk in the park with one of our people who was troubled and listen to their problems, and times when He would write a letter to a ten- or eleven-year-old sibling who had written to Him describing their dreams of revolution and revolutionism. Naturally, those whom He took an interest in would be filled with a special enthusiasm.

He took an interest in everyone to the extent that security allowed. The enemy supposedly searched for Him all over the world, yet our Leader did not have any special state of "hiding" or "staying out of sight". His security came above all from His naturalness among people, from being one of them, from dissolving into their midst. He was a person whose way of life and thoughts had affected even His physical presence. Just as His thoughts were filled with love for the people, physically too He was entirely a man of the people.

In His way of speaking, laughing, looking and in His expressions, He was completely a person of the people. Not because He needed to appear that way or because it was required, but because that was simply His nature. Even in the period when He was most wanted, He was among the people, in the streets, the market and the neighbourhood. The enemy's greatest wound was our Leader's action for freedom and the fact that, though He walked through the streets, they could not reach Him.

We will have many more conversations about our Leader. We will read much more and learn much more. For this time I will put a full stop here and get up. Once again I embrace all of you with the warmth of our Leader.

With love.

★

Hello,

I embrace you with the warmth of our Leader. Although our Leader is no longer physically among us, He will continue to show us the way through His thoughts, His life and the Party-Front culture He created. After all, it was He who founded our Movement, brought it to today and, in one sense, created it. It is His will, His daring, His labour. The final message He passed on to us, His students, underlines these three qualities: labour, daring and being a person of will at every moment. When we achieve this, there is no obstacle we cannot overcome. Then we will be worthy of Him.

I too have heard some things about Dayı's life, His way of thinking and working. I think Dayı and leaders like Him have certain basic qualities in common. Through His life, Dayı is the most beautiful and meaningful example of being a revolutionary for an entire lifetime. He had previously written an article on this subject; you will remember it, "Revolutionism for a Lifetime"... In that article He explained the essence of revolutionism, and through His life He demonstrated it. There was nothing in that life except revolution. When I say nothing, I really mean nothing... A mind focused on revolution with all its thoughts, a person thinking twenty-four hours a day about revolution and its problems. And this throughout an entire lifetime... His knowing everything, knowing all of us, His strong memory, not forgetting or overlooking anything - all of this was connected with this intensity.

Dayı's words on this are well known: "If you forget, there is no revolution in your head. If there is no revolution in a person's head, there is the system in their head, there is filth in their head." In the style of revolutionism Dayı created, conscious will is decisive. Nothing is left to spontaneity; everything is planned; precautions are taken in advance; plans and programmes are implemented and checked; and always there is daring and labour... There is truly no other example of this style in today's world. You can be sure of that. I wish there were, but there is not. This pride and honour belong to us, to the Party-Front. Our strength lies precisely here: there is a style created by Dayı. In that respect Party-Front identity is like the Bolshevism of an era: an ideology, a culture, a style.

We know the trust Dayı had in His people, His comrades and Himself. In that sense He did not leave with His eyes behind Him. He fulfilled His duty until His final moment, as always. What matters is to live the revolution until the end of life, until the final breath; and He lived the revolution every moment, every second. With this consciousness and belief He was at peace, and He met death with this peace. His words "Do not be sad, do not cry" are very meaningful. They mean: embrace the revolution, embrace your duties. He trusted Himself so much that, when He lived through the greatest betrayal, He said, "If necessary, I will break this Movement down to its atoms and create it again." He drew the road of revolution for us.

Now the duty is ours. We will complete this road, win the revolution and present it to our Dayı. On this difficult road He will always be beside us. Again He will always show the way. We will advance with His style and methods, developing them still further...

A few days ago I saw Him in my dream. I immediately shared it with Dr. and B. Abi; it was an interesting dream... We are walking somewhere, where exactly I do not know, probably in a neighbourhood. Dayı asks me, “Do you take the minibus?” I say, “Yes”... I explain... at length... strange, just a dream... Meanwhile we see a poster on a wall. Something is written there. I show it to Dayı and ask, “What did we mean here?” He says, “There we quoted Lenin.” Then there are some others, but they are far away, three to five people; I do not remember who. Dayı says, “Call them; let me meet them.” I call out, but they do not come... Then I woke to the sound of the hatch for breakfast. That was the dream. What a strange connection!

There was a memory M. told about the telephone. I had heard it differently. It was like this: there was a telephone number called by one of our fighters. Normally Dayı did not answer it. But out of necessity He had to answer the telephone. The comrade would call each day and say, “I am fine...” This time he says, “I am a little unwell...” The next day again, “My head hurts...” Dayı says, “Take some medicine...” This continues for a few days; the comrade repeatedly says, “I am ill, I am not well, this place hurts...” and so on. (...) (This section is unintelligible because the prison administration blacked it out.)

There is a comrade answering the telephone at the switchboard: “I say I am ill and he does not understand.” Of course this comrade does not know that the person he is speaking to on the telephone is Dayı. Perhaps this was another memory... But in the 1990–91 period, Dayı would often visit the houses of fighters and teams and take a personal interest in each of them. Let us leave it here for now. With devotion to our Dayı, I embrace all of you once again. Greetings and love.

★

Hello,

This is also the text sent as our message. During the first days it got through; afterwards it was blocked. Let us share that too.

Yes, at that moment the world stopped, and when it began turning again it was naturally different. His physical absence was there, but His presence through what He had taught prevailed. Twenty days have passed and we are with Him in the same way. We act with His voice and His thoughts. This is exactly what Dayı is: the one who taught leadership consciousness from head to toe. How powerful, how simple these accounts are. They are the unshakeable traces of having lived Him and of continuing to live Him. Some of us met Him, embraced Him, looked into His eyes. Some of us dreamed so much of living that moment.

When He appeared on the screens, we watched silently and proudly. When we heard His voice, our hearts could barely contain themselves. A word of His, an attitude, a foresight that turned the world upside down would occupy our tongues and minds for days. And His leadership came alive not only for us but also in the eyes of the peoples of Turkey and the world, friends and enemies alike. There has been no leader in Turkey’s revolutionary history discussed as much as Him. The leadership of Mahir and his comrades, Deniz and İbo was very different. In days when everyone’s compass was set somewhere else, when serious upheavals were taking place, when ideologies were

being abandoned and new things “discovered”, He always foresaw what was correct. He tried to put it into life. He lived with it. Was that not leadership? Belief, daring and determination from head to toe.

The feelings of that first moment are truly important. They express things in their purest form. We are certain that the words “no one should shed tears” were not empty words. He knew us very well and knew our devotion, and so He felt the need to say this. Even so, some comrades, with the feeling “let us for once live this moment outside your expectation”, allowed themselves to do so. Afterwards it was again just as He said. I often borrowed the Congress cassette from Paşa and listened to our history in Dayı’s voice. It gave tremendous strength. When we were angry, when we said something could not be done, when perhaps we thought we were not understood, or when we had a serious shortcoming, it was always Him we turned to. I would put on the cassette and listen to Him, reliving our history again and again through His words.

There were many stories told about Him. The fact that, while eating, He knew everyone was watching Him, and feeling how great His responsibility was, would make Him awkward; this showed how natural and how much a man of the people He was.

In prison, to someone who said, “Dayı, I am very afraid. Give me permission and let me go,” He replied: “We have so many courageous ones; come, you can be our coward, what does it matter?” He had a heart great enough to give that person strength, to show the meaninglessness of his fear and the greatness of our family.

While talking with an ordinary prisoner who came to collect the rubbish, He inspired admiration; offering him tea and asking what he needed, He found a place in the prisoner’s heart. And later, when that ordinary prisoner learned that He was our Leader and was astonished, it was He who laughed. And that prisoner would say, “I saw Dayı; I did not know who he was. Had I known, I would not have let him bring me tea and wash dishes. I would have run and helped him,” and could not finish telling the story of that moment.

Those who did not meet Dayı, who did not have the chance to embrace Him, envy such moments even more. For example, prison guards used to tell stories. And they had truly lived those moments. Then they would turn and say, “How did he escape? If only it had not happened during our watch; for days they did to all of us in torture everything they could think of.” And from all these accounts emerges the reality of our Leader and the great effect He created.

Let me put not a full stop but a comma here. You must be reading the magazine announcements. Every heading has its own depth. There is so much we can take from them. And the most basic point: the truth that everything begins in one day and ends in one day. His revolutionary life is also proof of what His mind was filled with. For that reason, the call to redefine revolutionism is possible by living Him and understanding Him.

Dayı used to feel the enthusiasm of conquering the world, the belief in taking power; this pointed to the greatness of our horizon and the importance of our will. Once again I embrace you with the warmth of our Leader.

★

Greetings...

Hello,

I embrace all of you with the warmth of Dayı.

There is the emphasis “Dayı is revolution” in the latest issue. The concrete form and example of revolution and revolutionism. To concentrate on revolution with everything, with all one’s energy, to think only of revolution. He had a saying: “Everything that benefits the revolution is our friend; everything that harms the revolution is our enemy.” To look at everything from the standpoint of the interests of the revolution, to make this a style and a habit. And to be hostile to everything that causes even the slightest harm to the revolution, not to compromise with it... One of Dayı’s most important qualities was precisely this refusal to compromise with the enemy He meant here - which is generally the internal enemy, our weaknesses.

What essentially created our Movement and our culture as they exist today is this quality. No negativity, no weakness is left covered up; it is exposed and struggled against. Of course this requires labour, it requires patience. Our Movement and Dayı always showed this patience; at the same time, this process is the education of our people...

It was again stated in the announcement: “The problem is not making a mistake, but insisting on the mistake”... This is the point at which weaknesses must be cut away. There too one must be uncompromising and hard. That is how it has always been. Because what is decisive is not the interests of individuals but the interests of the revolution; no weakness, status quo or imposition that harms the revolution can be accepted.

We were always shaped by Dayı’s accounts, and we shaped our people in the same way. From now on it will continue like this. We will embrace His style and His revolutionism even more. We will continue to learn from His life. We will show what we have learned in life, in practical struggle. Only in this way can we embrace Him. This is the way to be His student. Always to be strong, to possess will, to be uncompromising, to be courageous... In essence, to be revolutionary...

I embrace you with Dayı’s warmth. Greetings and love.

Hello,

I embrace everyone tightly with the warmth of our Dayı...

We see the magazine announcements and our hearts ache. A person thinks: these were not things we should have missed. The enemy is the enemy; it does what enemies do. It knows where to strike us. Of course we know it too... Anyway. There was a heading about Dayı containing the words “A Father’s Compassion, a Leader’s Discipline”. There is the well-known story of the closeness and attention He showed Erol Yalçın in prison, and how Erol was affected by this and, through that influence, became a Revolutionary Leftist. While Erol was staying with members of other political groups, they spoke this way and that about Dayı. They said He was so hard, authoritarian, did not speak, was stern-faced, and so on and so forth. Erol became curious. Who was this person about whom so much was said, what was He like? He came up to our ward. Someone sitting at the table in the dining hall called Erol over and seated him. “Would you like tea?” he asked, got up and brought the tea. They talked. During the conversation, Erol learned that the man sitting opposite him was

Dursun Karataş... Naturally he was affected. What followed is known... On the road that led to martyrdom, he became a Revolutionary Leftist. I bow with respect before his memory.

This comrade also told another story. Dayı bought him a new pair of shoes as a gift. The shoes rubbed his feet, and for days he had to walk around in them. In any case, Dayı learned about it and became upset. “Take them off and give them to me,” He said, and had the shoes stretched so that his feet would be comfortable. Our Dayı could not bear for him to suffer even for another day or two... When “a father’s compassion” was mentioned, these moments came to mind. Of course a leader’s discipline is also very well known. It is equally well known how merciless He was towards weaknesses, shortcomings and indiscipline, how He spared no one’s feelings. Because He was the leader of a fighting organisation that had set out with the claim of revolution under conditions of fascism. In war, indiscipline means defeat, it means death, it means suffering more losses.

We believe in revolution... It was said that these too are among the basic parts of the legacy left by Dayı. It does not fit exactly, but I wanted to write on this. There was a saying comparing ideals to a star: “Ideals are like stars in the sky. Even if you cannot reach them, they light your way.” Of course socialism is not an “unreachable star” for us. But its dream and excitement both light our road and give us strength on this difficult march.

In today’s Turkey it is difficult to see the socialism of the future. And because of this, there are dozens of organisations in this country that set out in the name of socialism and then fell away. Yet just as we set out thirty years ago with enthusiasm, today we live with the same enthusiasm. There have been times when tens of thousands of our people marched behind the Party-Front. There have been times when there were not even ten of us behind that banner. There have been times when we put our signature beneath actions that shook the world; there have been times when we remained silent for years... But our ideal, our belief, our goal never changed. In every period, at every moment, it remained the same. This is the difference made by sound leadership... In that respect, we are fortunate.

And what did we feel when we learned of Dayı’s martyrdom, what were our emotions? Perhaps while living them we cannot fully express them. Sometimes, when we see what a comrade has written and find that they expressed it well, we say, “Yes, exactly, just like this.” In the end, whether we can express them or not, we have lived and continue to live certain feelings. But when what is expected of us is expressed, there is a statement to the effect that “pain and sorrow are ordinary feelings”... Can we deny our feelings? We cannot; we lived them... But we also need to think about this emphasis.

Again, in the announcement there was the statement: “One of the two basic duties Dayı left us is to develop the mass struggle.” How will we do this, what is the task that falls to us? We need to think more about these things. Let me leave it there and give the floor to the comrades.

Greetings and love.

★

Hello,

I embrace all of you with the warmth and fighting spirit of our Dayı. There is so much to write and tell... The metaphor of a star falling and the experience of it are very beautiful and meaningful. At the same time, they are very comprehensive... We can write only about the light the star gives off, or only

see that light... At the end there is a great concentration of light and the star slides away... We see and feel these things only to a certain point. It is the same when telling the life of the star... For example, we say: a life every moment of which was devoted to revolution. How much can we tell how that took shape; how much can we understand? According to one comrade, for example, His sleep rarely exceeded two hours.

Around two in the morning, most of the time, He would go to bed after the headquarters comrade responsible warned Him: “Dayı, you need to rest.” At such moments He was like an obedient child. He would change and lie down. Around 04.00–04.30 in the morning, most of the time He would get up by Himself. Or the headquarters comrade responsible would wake Him. He would immediately get dressed and until breakfast a feverish period of work would begin. From the accounts of comrades who lived with Him, the image of a true labourer of the revolution comes alive before one’s eyes...

It was the period when fax machines were widely used. He would read a fax sent to Him as it was still coming out of the machine. When the fax slowed down, He would become curious and impatient for the next sentence. Meanwhile, He would have a large squared notebook in His hand. In it He would write short notes in large letters. Because He wrote without looking at the notebook, some of the notes were diagonal, some straight, some wavy. A person could look at that notebook and see the struggle inside His mind.

Suppose a fax began arriving just as He was about to go to bed. Dayı, who a moment before had been obediently preparing to follow the warning, would turn into a hawk again. He would immediately run to the machine and take notes... He would immediately prepare a reply and hand it to the responsible comrade to be typed or encoded and sent. Naturally, at moments like these the responsible comrade knew not to warn Him. Dayı was such a person that He knew what kind of negative consequences even a one-minute delay could cause, and lived accordingly.

He would carry out the action together with the unit planning the action; He would live the surveillance together with someone being followed. There might be distances between them, but Dayı was there in spirit. I am certain He lived the Death Fast together with every one of our Borans, experienced torture with every one of our people, lived every lack of means together with us. In this sense too, He was a father. A father who grieved and rejoiced with His children...

There is so much to tell. We heard a great deal about Him, and as one thinks, more comes to mind. A short while ago I read Che’s writing on the martyrdom of Camilo Cienfuegos. And also Fidel’s writing about Che’s martyrdom. I recommend that those who have these books with them read them again. How clearly one sees the shared feelings and thoughts. And also what kind of link in a chain Dayı was. I want to make a few quotations here... Che says of Camilo: “He left at a time when everyone knew him and loved him with admiration. This could have happened earlier too. (...) Camilo and the Camilos are proof of the strength of the people, the highest expression of what a nation entering struggle can create in order to defend its purest thoughts and of its faith in attaining its noblest aims. (...) In his continuous and immortal renewal, Camilo IS A LIKENESS OF THE PEOPLE.”

One hardly knows which of the things Fidel said about Che to write...

“From the revolutionary point of view, from the point of view of our people, how should we see Che’s contribution? Should we think that we have lost him? It is true that we will not read his new

writings; it is also true that we will no longer hear his voice. But Che left a legacy to the world, a great legacy, and we who knew him so closely can be the heirs of Che. He left us his revolutionary thought, his revolutionary virtues. He left us his character, his will, his endurance, his understanding of work. In a word, he left us his example! Che's example will shape our people. Che's example will be the ideal our people want to reach!

"If we need to explain how we want our revolutionary fighters, our militants, our people to be, without the slightest hesitation we need only say this: 'Let them be like Che!' If we need to explain how we want future generations to be, we need only say: 'Let them be like Che!' If we need to explain how we want our children to be educated, again without the slightest hesitation we must say: 'We want them to be educated in accordance with Che's ideas!' (...) If we need to explain what we want our children to become in the future, then as passionate revolutionaries we must say from the heart: 'We want them to be like Che!'" says Fidel, expressing his feelings and thoughts about Che.

And we say:

Dayı is revolution.

Dayı is the people.

We must be like Dayı...

★

Again We Are With You

Again we are with you
Again we are hopeful
To take back everything
of a people from whom everything was stolen
We are with you, we are hopeful

Again we are with you
Again we walk with Hope
For the labour of the worker, the sweat of the peasant,
For the stolen laughter of babies
For the stolen dreams of our people
For their forbidden languages
Loading into the barrel
the anger of Iraq, Palestine and the oppressed peoples of the world
With you before us, with red flags in our hands, we walk

Again we are with you
Again hopeful, again we are fighters
Again we inscribe Hope on the walls
We carry Hope to hopeless hearts, street by street
In the squares we fight, barricade by barricade
In the mountains, in the cities, we clash house by house, hill by hill
Under siege we wave the hammer-and-sickle flag

Again we are with you
Again hopeful, again in new epics
Again we will melt in the cells
Again we will become a song of resistance in the dungeons
A day will come when we will rise again with the Offensive
We will become the anger of the people, the voice of justice
A day will come when we will win, when we will be defeated
Without being tossed to the right or left
Keeping you before us, beside our shoulder, in our consciousness
Creating epics, we will walk

If again we are with you
And again we are hopeful
If victory has been spoken on our tongues
and engraved in our consciousness
If again we are dying for those red days
And whenever we fall to the earth
we say “There Is No Death for Us”
If again we insist on socialism
It is because we walk under your leadership

Again and always we are with you
Again and always we are hopeful

If the peoples of Anatolia have a movement
If they have a Party-Front
If they have a Hope
You gave life to this Hope

Our people will walk through you
Party-Front members will fight under your leadership
Hope will speak with your voice
Our comrades will die under your command
They will walk to revolution with you

We will always keep you alive
in our hearts,
in our souls, in our consciousness
and in our people’s war of liberation

★

We Walked With Him, We Will Walk With Him...

“The road of revolution is rugged, winding and steep...” Mahir Çayan had written. And indeed, the road of revolution is exactly as Mahir described it. Walking this road is honourable, but at the same time very arduous. Those who want to walk this honourable road must be prepared to pay great

prices, including with their lives. After Mahir and his comrades, many set out to walk the road they had shown. But many hearts could not bear to keep walking without stopping along that rugged, winding, steep and difficult road while paying prices. Yet among those who set out were also young people who devoted everything, including their hearts, to the struggle; the future of the struggle would rise on their shoulders.

As the struggle developed and matured day by day, so too did the organisations and people who carried it forward and directed it. Among these young people there was one whom those around him called Dayı, and he worked without pause so that the struggle would advance on the correct line, develop and grow stronger. As the years followed one another, our Dayı, who worked with the same energy, without tiring and while confronting every difficulty, would increasingly add the quality of leadership to that of “Dayı”.

In the early period, many set out from the line of Mahir and his comrades. But that steep and arduous road quickly frightened some, and they gave up. Some were unwilling to walk for long on rugged, winding roads and tried to take shortcuts. But those were roads that did not reach the goal. Others chose to walk on safer roads, trying to erase the tracks on the correct ones. In the end, all their fates met at one point: unable to continue on the road, they became stuck in the swamp. We, by contrast, under the leadership and guidance of our Dayı, reached today without departing for even a moment from the difficult but correct road. What did we not encounter on this long and honourable road? What immense difficulties did we wrestle with, what great ordeals did we overcome? The streets, squares, mountains, cities and prisons of our country... We could never finish telling what they witnessed.

From those days to today, we walked this road without hesitation, crossing the barricades placed before us and passing through rings of fire. Advancing and reaching more forward positions came at the cost of great sacrifices. As our comrades were martyred beside us, without doubt our hearts were torn apart, but we continued forward without slowing our pace. And of course, while breaking through barricades and passing through rings of fire, there was someone showing us the road. If for all these years we have advanced without stopping, crossing difficult passes without becoming stuck in the swamp like some others, this is due less to our own skill than to our Dayı, who guided us and continuously showed us the correct road.

He became one of the few revolutionary leaders who showed the way not only to us and the peoples of Turkey, but, when the time came, to revolutionaries throughout the world. In the late 1980s and early ’90s, as the socialist bloc disintegrated and socialist countries were abandoned one by one to the mercy of imperialism, loss of faith within the world left had reached its peak and winds of surrender were sweeping everywhere. Some were bowing their heads before the fascist, imperialist forces they had fought, seeking permission and handing over their weapons. Even in such an atmosphere, we continued our revolutionary march without hesitation and without interruption.

Almost everywhere in the world, with only a few exceptions, the calls for “surrender” and “laying down arms” had, so to speak, become fashionable. These voices grated on the ears as though they came from the largest choir in the world. Without doubt those voices disturbed us too, but what echoed in our ears was not them; it was the deep voice of our Dayı saying, “We Must Run Faster.” And in order to run faster, we took the decision for the Offensive and launched forward at full speed. Even our enemies, seeing us like this, were left almost speechless with astonishment.

Throughout this difficult journey we walked under our Dayı's leadership, we saw every kind of pain. Some of our comrades lost their lives on torture benches, some were massacred with bullets. We saw the burned, charred bodies of some; beside others, we watched them become martyrs in the Death Fasts after melting cell by cell for hundreds of days. There came times when we also saw our loved ones turn their own bodies into balls of flame.

While living through all this, there was in our hearts some shame at having fallen a little behind them, and much more the pride and honour of being their comrades. At the same time, our hearts were scorched by their pain. Because we had lived through so much pain, there were times when we used the expression "our hearts have become calloused by pain". Of course, by calloused we did not mean that we no longer felt or had become insensitive; we meant that we had experienced those pains so many times. Otherwise, with every comrade who is martyred, our hearts always burn in the same way. In some situations, with some comrades, that pain is felt more deeply and burns more intensely. We have experienced this too; we are no strangers to it.

We experienced the greatest and deepest of these pains on 11 August. Because that day we learned that our Leader, who created our movement, brought it to the present through those rugged, winding and steep roads, and showed us the road and method by which we could go further, had been martyred. Of course we knew that, like every mortal human being, our Leader too would one day die. But the human heart cannot accept it as something natural. In our decades-long revolutionary march, our Dayı not only founded the revolutionary movement; over time he developed it and created the Party-Front. Throughout this journey, we advanced leaving deep marks on the revolutionary history of our country and the world that will never be erased.

In this mortal world, on the one hand we knew that one day we would face such an outcome; on the other hand, we wanted to keep the possibility distant and ignore it. It was as though our Dayı would always be physically among us. On 11 August we learned that the physical separation had taken place. Our people have a saying for such moments: "Fire burns where it falls." It was exactly like that. The fire had fallen into our hearts. It burned and scorched them. And we know that this fire in our hearts will not be extinguished easily. How could it be? Whenever we are in difficulty, we will always look for our Dayı.

Our hearts are burning, fiercely; our pain is great, immensely great. Yet despite all this, as in the saying "the traveller must continue on the road", we continue on our path as always. This was one of the greatest pains we have experienced until today. In the future we may live through similar or even greater ones. Our Dayı taught us not to fall into despair or panic in the face of pain, but to continue the march with still greater determination. Just as we put his teachings into practice until today, from now on too we will put them into practice in the same way. So let our enemies not indulge in empty dreams that we will become discouraged or falter. Until today we walked our road as we learned from our Dayı; from now on we will continue in the same way.

Just as the martyrdom of our Dayı burned our hearts, it also felt as though the struggle we are waging had been orphaned. After all, his labour was present in every particle of the struggle we carry on. A life given to socialism in the revolutionary struggle, and the stopping of a heart that beat for it throughout an entire lifetime, should resonate not only among his comrades but among all peoples. Our Dayı lived for the liberation of the peoples and died for it. We offer our condolences to ourselves and to all our people, and we bow with respect before the memory of our Dayı.

They say Dayı is dead
They cannot accept it
They cannot accept that you have become immortal

From the values you left,
from your line, from your comrades,
they are afraid of Dayı,
who never dies in the heart of the people

You will see, Dayı, you will see
We will fight oppression
As we fight, we will resist
As we resist, socialism
we will bring

And we will make the world
accept why you became immortal...

★

He Will Continue to Lead

Every death is painful. Every death is unjust and every death is untimely! But with some deaths, you experience that pain, injustice and suddenness a thousand times more deeply, far more intensely. You cannot bring yourself to accept it, you cannot acknowledge it, your mind cannot comprehend it; even the thought is enough to drive you mad. Even if your mind accepts it, you cannot command your heart. Life stops, time does not flow, your breath is cut off... Suddenly that black news comes and settles upon you. Time and life are over! So where are you to begin breathing again? How are you to begin! When it had never even crossed your mind, how are you to bear this news? How are you now to explain to the heart the black news of our most precious one, the one we guarded even from our own eyes, the one who made us what we are? How is the heart supposed to bear it? Who are we to rage at now, who are we to be angry with, who are we to shout at, whose collar are we to seize, whose throat are we to grip, whose guts are we to knot... Ah, damn you, treacherous fate! Ah, damn you, crooked fate! Could a person feel this much pain even if burned and scorched a thousand times? How are we to absorb this news?

Death does not suit some people. It does not suit them at all. You want them to remain just as you first knew, loved and became bound to them on that very first day, at that very first moment you set out on the road and committed yourself to their path. You want them always to remain that way. When no other possibility has even entered your mind, do not speak now to the heart of the dialectic of life and nature, birth and death. It does not understand that language. It knows the weight that has collapsed onto its shoulders, the fist knotted in its throat. It keeps company with the fire in which it burns and is scorched. What heart can accept this? What tongue can turn to utter it? It cannot say it! The heart, turned into a place of fire, does not accept it. Even if your eyes see it, you cannot acknowledge it. How could you command the heart? It was never a master of this language... Ah, damn you, crooked fate! Ah, damn you, vile fascism! I know there is only one culprit, and that is you! There is no vileness you have not committed, no oppression you have not inflicted, no pain you have not caused, no torture you have not carried out, no price you have not made us pay. If our Dayı has

joined the eternity of our Hope this early, this untimely, then you are the sole culprit. And the price you will pay for this will be great.

Fear US! Because we have accounts to settle and vengeance to take! And know this: that account will not close until you are consigned to the rubbish heap of history and buried in the place you deserve! This hatred, this anger, this fire of vengeance will not end.

Let your master imperialism fear too! We have lit fires on the summit of the mountain of anger and pain! And know this: those fires will not be extinguished until that day, until the river of red flags passes victoriously before our Dayı... Look at the mountain peaks, the gecekondu streets, the city squares... Look carefully! Know that each one you see is a Dayı now! Our reckoning will be more terrible than ever! As the peoples of Latin America say, “Those who depart cannot take their memories and experiences with them; they pass them on to those who come after.” Look carefully, look well! You will see Dayı on every street corner! With the same resistance and stance as always!

How right it is that the heart refuses to accept that Dayı is no longer physically among us. However painful this reality may be, even if we cannot always feel the full weight of his absence, the heart senses correctly! Because some are destined always to stand at the very front.

They are destined to stand there, upright and alive, never stepping back even a millimetre, always at the very front. Just as a fortress stands upright against the enemy and shelters those behind it without surrendering them, so too do they stand with heads held high before the human family, history and the oppressed peoples, like a plane tree standing motionless at the edge of a precipice. They are destined always to stand at the front, to be light in the darkest moment, to show the correct road along the most rugged, winding and steep paths. Dayı too is destined always to stand at the very front, in the place where he has always stood, standing as he always did. Just as Stalin, when the Nazis, the fascist Hitlerites, reached the approaches to Moscow, stood upright without retreating a millimetre and, becoming confidence, resistance and Hope in the hearts and consciousness of millions, led an entire country to victory in defence of the motherland; so too our Dayı, as always, where he has always stood, remains at the very front, motionless, and will remain there...

Just as yesterday he was our teacher, our Commander-in-Chief, our voice, our breath, our step, our arm that held, our eye that saw, so it will be today. He will continue to be our resistance, our Hope, our consciousness and our hatred of the enemy!

Just as yesterday he showed us, our history and our people the road to liberation and led us, so he will continue to lead. As yesterday, today too we will grow the struggle with the values he created, with his breath, his gaze, his hands and his consciousness.

Because in truth we will never be separated. Always and forever, under our Dayı’s guidance, “we will walk to the end on this road we know to be correct”. I know that knowing and feeling his physical presence gave a person immense confidence, ease and peace. But all the values he created give the same confidence, the same belief, the same consciousness, the same Hope and the same resistance, and they will continue to do so. We set out on this road with him. And with him we will reach the end of this road. We will reach tomorrow under his guidance, leadership and direction. Our existence is the existence of our Dayı!

We bow respectfully before his memory. We will continue to live with the pride of being his students, and his memory is our devotion to our martyrs and our promise of revolution!

To Our Dayı

Our beloved Dayı
You who brought our Hope into being
Who cleared the road before us
Who reinforced our direction
Our light
The light of our eyes!

This separation should not have been
You left us too soon
Though I say we have been orphaned
I cannot say you left us orphans
Our one and only Party
Is your greatest legacy

Our beloved Dayı
You brought the dungeons to their knees
Yet why could you not command
That scourge called cancer?
Inside, our hearts shed warm tears
Even when the tears in our eyes have dried

Our beloved Dayı
Now we have even more reasons
To reach the beautiful days to come
You are always with us
And we always move forward on your road

In the name of our Hope
Which you recreated from its ashes
The march will never stop...

The trust you left to our peoples
Will find the road of absolute justice

Our beloved Dayı
Master of the struggle,
The one and only legacy of the Islander’s road

The stones of our country’s road to liberation
Which you embroidered stitch by stitch
Are laid out in many colours
With the mosaic of peoples

When the class struggle

For which you put your life on the line
One day reaches its goal
Then all our peoples
Will know our Dayı

They will know that!
We had a Dayı
Our Dayı always existed
And will always exist

Our beloved Dayı
The pain of separation is like a fist
Knotted in our throats
Our anger makes the mountains roar!

We will miss you very much
We always loved you
How hard it is to become accustomed to your absence

Our consolation is this:
Wherever you have gone
With your whole being
You are with us
We know this very well

And we know that;
Our beloved Dayı
Your eyes are upon us

With the honour of being Party-Front members
Our honour with our struggle
Our struggle with our victory
Our victory with our people
Our people with you
Will live in socialism...

★

We Buried a Treasure!

Yes, Mother Earth, we have come before you once again. This time the treasure we are to bury is precious too. One of the most precious of all. It was not we who gave our treasure this value; history gave it, history brought him out from among us, and time worked upon him like lace. Do not mind that he is a black stone; which leader created by history and shaped by Anatolia is without value? Such is history: it sees summer in winter and autumn in spring. We are sorrowful, Mother Earth, sorrowful and just as angry. We are burying him far too early. In every part and every fold of this Karataş lies an immense history. Still upright and proud like a rock. It is a stone with very deep roots; the roots of the part we see reach into the depths of the history of colonialism.

In the ’70s it breaks from its roots in order to put down new roots. Alone in the middle of the Island, proud and free. The winds beat it and make it rugged. The Deniz-es beat it and it becomes Mahir. Pieces of Karataş scatter in every direction. The pieces make Karataş. Karataş represents Anatolia.

You know, Mother Earth, who has represented Anatolia and how; they all lie in your breast, one after another: the Pir Sultans, Köroğlus, Dadaloğlus, Deniz-es, Mahirs...

Their blood has not even dried yet. In periods when not even a leaf stirred, Karataş gathered together all the pieces it had scattered. Its pieces, its fjords, had much to tell, and they told of discouragement, weariness, desertion... of the old mountains that once roared and thundered, whose summits could not be seen, which never surrendered their grandeur, but which were shattered and scattered in the north winds and turned into particles of dust. Yet all this, on the contrary, gave strength to this Karataş... Yes, Mother Earth, in such a period, when mountains were being turned to dust, history chose our Karataş. “You, stand!” it said. “You will not scatter, you will not give up, you will not be broken apart and disappear.” People, the pieces, confirmed history and said “Dursun” to “Karataş”. And from that day to this Karataş always stood. He derailed the rollers of the oppressors, turned them into barricades, became a barricade himself and stood at the very front. He was shot in uprisings, caught in storms and tempests.

With the anger he grew through love of the people and the homeland, he emerged victorious in the “seizure” struggle he waged with the sun. That is the reason for the deep marks on his face. They are sharp lines no sculptor could give. Because history drew and engraved those lines in this war, on the side of the oppressed.

This is our trust to you. Know that this treasure has not been, and will not be, either our first or our last trust placed in you. After this Karataş, we will walk without him but with him. We will continue to speak with his voice. Be ready, Mother Earth; be ready to receive us.

You succeeded once again
In becoming immortal

Our Sabos, our Niyazis
Our 122
Will be astonished when they see you

And now the enemy
Is even more afraid
Of those who have become immortal

We are conscious and proud
To walk on your road

We will give your name
To newborn babies

And our people
With their own hands
Will dedicate that sacred day

To our memories

You succeeded again, Dayı
We are on your road...

★

There Is No Such Thing as Being Without Dayı!

Now my heart is one of so many swelling like a volcano. Its eruptions beat through my whole body, beginning in my chest. It feels as though fire is overflowing from my temples. Today the weight of being behind four walls is more unbearable than ever...

I remember a few months ago. It was an evening; the news bulletins said that Dayı had died. Who knows how many times the same report had been repeated by then. We watched silently. More than the content of the report, our attention was drawn to the old footage shown in the background. Immediately afterwards, when we went out for the evening prison walk, the comrade beside me asked, “What do you think of the news?” Without hesitating even for a moment I answered: “Baseless.” I was so certain of what I said that I had not even stopped to think...

My calm that day, that self-confidence, surprised even me. Later, when I thought about it a little, I said to myself, “We would feel it...” If one day Dayı were truly martyred, WE would feel it. The walls, the doors, the bars... the birds, the clouds, the wind would make us feel it...

And yesterday, on the evening bulletins, the same report appeared before us once again. Everything was almost word for word the same as on previous occasions. Similar images ran in the background. And yet there was something beyond words, something not in the report, not visible on the screen. A shiver entered the cell. I felt the hairs on my body stand on end. Deep inside me appeared an ache peculiar to fires...

This must be what it means to feel. It is difficult to describe in words... But to believe it; is it possible to believe such a thing? This time I said nothing to anyone. No one asked anything either. As though we had reached an unspoken agreement, we buried all the questions and answers in silence.

We fell silent...

The first light of morning carries sorrow from distant lands. Though the day rises as usual, the usual joy does not rise within us. Then we turn on the television... In the morning bulletins the same report appears before us again. And the same fire: the flame of doubt surrounding us does not go out, does not subside, does not turn to ash. It grows and grows...

I try to calm myself. I tell myself that, as hundreds of times before, this too is a lie. We will read the denial in a few days anyway. I say it, but I cannot command my own heart. It does what it knows; it burns...

The day began like this, hot, gloomy and oppressive. Towards midday a voice came from far away. Someone shouted, “It’s comiiing!” The voice echoed several times in my ears. I followed the ball’s path. First it fell into the neighbouring yard. Then it rose again and this time fell into our yard. Dozens of balls come and go every day anyway. But this one had come from far away and it was clearly carrying news. Suddenly fear gripped me. It was as though I knew: we would read the note

from that ball and in that instant everything would collapse, the world would darken. We felt it, and we were afraid of what we felt.

Helplessly, we opened and read the note that had arrived. In an instant time stopped, the world stopped. Everything stopped... A statement had been made and the news had been confirmed. That was what a friend listening to Özgür Radyo had written. He offered his condolences... How could one believe this? “No,” we said again, he must have heard wrongly... When the hour came, we went through the news channels one by one. At the same time our ears were on the radio. We waited with that strange fear hidden behind our calm. We had always said we were ready for everything; but we had never been ready for this. And the moment we feared arrived... There are very few moments when a human voice turns into barbed wire. This was such a moment, and the voice we heard was such a voice... Yet the newsreader delivered the news in the usual tone, without adding emotion. He ended with one final sentence: the news had also been confirmed by his family and lawyers...

Does that mean there is no choice now but to believe it? Still we say, “No!” In a moment someone will send us a message through secret roads even we do not know. The message will say, “No. Dayı is alive and at his duties”...

Even thinking that we might have lost him is unbearable. Especially like this, with hands and arms tied, between four walls. These damned walls, iron bars and barbed wire seem narrower and lower now. It is impossible to fit inside them. Even if we fit, our hearts do not, cannot fit...

It feels as though we are completely alone in the middle of the universe. An unfillable emptiness surrounds all time. Being without Dayı is worse than being orphaned, bereft and alone. We always imagined him together with the revolution. He would see that day. He would watch our passage with songs and flags. It was his right to see it, and our duty to show it to him... How can we now believe that he left us before that day came...

If there were not things that had to be done, we still would not believe it. We would challenge nature, life, science... everything. But now is not the time to collapse. Since we are Dayı’s students, then it is time to release our burning hearts into the mountains, the streets and the squares, to cry out his name and his immortality...

With immense endurance, fists clench. We shake ourselves and rise.

We must command these hearts...

We say that we never even saw Dayı. We had no memories spent with him. Not once did we shake his hand. The love overflowing from his gaze was enough for all of us, but we never saw it with our own eyes. Yet he was always with us. His existence gave us strength. In our hardest moments we felt his warmth beside us... So this is something far beyond physical existence. So there is no such thing as being without Dayı... How much we would have liked to be outside now, to bid him farewell with bursts of gunfire. Then let us pound on the doors: Bang bang bang!...

Let us begin from the dungeons of oppression and make earth and sky resound. Let those who tortured him, imprisoned him for years, forced him into exile, massacred our comrades and oppressed our peoples tremble... Bang bang bang!...

Our Beloved Leader

You
Who were our Leader
You had a will of steel
And eyes
That resembled Mahir’s

You
Who were our Mahir
Our Ernesto Che Guevara
Our Bedreddin
In the marketplace of Serres

We learned from you
To find courage in struggle
To win in resistances
To sing folk songs at the barricades
And under siege
To write epics

In the consciousness of leadership
Our ideals became steel

And you were
A dagger driven into the brain of the oligarchy
You still are
And you will always remain so

Because
Our armed struggle will continue with you
With many more of your valiant Islanders

On the road of revolution you showed
One by one we will become banners

The seeds you sowed
Will grow into saplings

The ideals for which you died
Will certainly be realised

On the road you showed us
We will always walk

We will break

The chains of our captivity
With our fists

In the mountains and in the cities
You will be our banner
Passed from hand to hand...

And you
Leader of our glorious struggle
Young man of our Hope
Machine-gun of socialism

From now on
In the mountains of our Hope
You will always be
The flaming wind
Of our revolution

★

Our Leader Was One of the Machine-Guns of Socialism

The first reports that our Dayı had been martyred were broadcast in the news on the evening of Monday, 11 August. The same reports continued in the morning bulletins on 12 August... Below we present some of the correspondence exchanged among us on the morning of 12 August, because it describes that day...

Hello...

Good morning. I hope you are well. We are well too. On the Show news they ran the caption “DHKP-C leader Dursun Karataş is dead” two or three times. They had also prepared a long piece, using footage of actions, tape ceremonies and so on... Watch Show if you have not already.

(...) I embrace you.

★

Hello Comrades,

A time when words knot in our throats and we struggle to write... According to the statement made by the Law Office, our Leader, our Dayı, has been martyred. His memory will continue to show the road of revolution.

Long Live Our Leader...

Long Live the Revolutionary...

★

Hello ... Comrade,

Unfortunately we received very sad news from Özgür Radyo. The People’s Law Office announced that your Leader, the valiant revolutionary Dursun Karataş, has passed away. We are saddened. We

are certain that his memory, the values he created and his militancy will be kept alive by all revolutionaries, first and foremost by our Party. Our condolences to you; our condolences to all revolutionaries. As MLKP prisoners of the cause, we share your pain.

★

Hello Comrades,

The news of our Dayı's martyrdom has also been confirmed by the Party statement. His martyrdom is an indescribable loss and pain for us... But through the values he created and what he taught us, he will continue to lead our glorious history.

The first commemoration will be held at 13.00. The programme is as follows: (...) His memory is our oath. With our Dayı's warmth...

★

Hello,

Our condolences. Time suddenly froze. This morning Show TV carried this news three times, giving Dayı's life story. I did not believe it. There is nothing to be done. There is not even time to grieve. That is too much of a luxury... We try to console ourselves by saying this, but it does not work. While running during morning exercise I thought of many things: "If it were true, how would we bring the body to Turkey, where would we bury him?" Then I became angry with myself too... To be without Dayı, to be deprived of such a Leader, is painful. Our condolences to all of us.

★

Dear Friends,

We learned with sorrow the news that DHKP-C Leader Dursun Karataş has been martyred. For this reason, with our sincerest revolutionary feelings, we offer our condolences to you, our friends.

The revolutionary movement of Turkey and its labouring people will not forget DHKP-C Leader Dursun Karataş and the important place he held in the revolutionary struggle. We have full confidence that in the struggle for independence, people's democracy and communism, he will be given the place he deserves.

As TKP/ML prisoners of the cause, once again we offer our condolences to you and, through you, to the revolutionary movement of Turkey and our labouring people, and we bow respectfully before the memory of Dursun Karataş.

TKP/ML Prisoners of the Cause

★

Hello,

A person does not want to believe it. But whether we believe it or not, we have lost our Dayı, our Leader. Our condolences to all of us!

I cannot find anything to say. I am shattered. Greetings to the comrades. I embrace you with our Leader's warmth and bow respectfully before him. I embrace you as our Leader would.

Hello,

We heard the sad news in the 13.00 bulletin. We share your pain. And yet it is a pain that grows anger. Without doubt, we will continue walking armed with this growing anger too! We offer our condolences with our deepest feelings... Please do not forget that we are beside you with our hearts and our consciousness.

With revolutionary greetings...

TİKB- (Union of Revolutionary Communists of Turkey)

Hello,

I embrace you. It is news as heavy as having one's breath cut off. We are like fish pulled from the water. We feel like orphans with our arms and wings broken... We are in a state where a person cannot find anything to say, cannot think, cannot comprehend. But our Dayı will continue to be present in every moment of our lives. He will continue to show the road, to walk at the very front... Knowing of his existence gives a person comfort; one cannot even think, cannot bring oneself to accept it, says it cannot be, cannot acknowledge it. In short, our condolences. Condolences to our people.

Hello,

It is clear that the visit will not come. It really would have been good if it had. There are some details that one simply cannot do without knowing... Where and when will our Dayı be laid to rest?.. Yes, there is truly nothing to say. This is a death that is very hard to believe and understand. And some deaths are like this: inside you, you feel the pain and the "meaninglessness", the emptiness, of thousands of deaths. With the deaths of revolutionary leaders... Yes, I truly still cannot comprehend it. A Party-Front without Dayı... But it is not actually like that... We know this and we need to think about it, otherwise this emptiness will not pass in any other way. Dayı existed with his heart and mind in the Party-Front... Then it is not true that he no longer exists. More than that, it is an outright lie...

Thinking about it brings relief. We must not stop thinking... Of course, what we think about matters too. I say our history, and images rush past like a film and this flow joins the present day. Here is the Party-Front... Here are US... A living Hope, a revolutionary will unto death, a revolutionary tradition that could not be made to bow... Is it not enough even to think of the 122? (...)

From Mahir's horizon we became connected to our Dayı. Two leaders met. That is it... And the Party-Front is Mahir, Hüseyin, Ulaş, Dursun Karataş... That is why it is a lie that he is dead... He will continue to live with a resistance as endless as his work. Always before us, beside our shoulder, in our consciousness... Dayı is Anatolia. Both our history and our future.

"The dead, the brave, shadow and ice, whatever there is
Become seed again
And the people, buried in the earth,
Become seed somewhere
Just as wheat sends out its shoot

And rises above the soil,
With its beautiful red hands
Piercing silence like a drill,
We are the people, we are reborn in deaths.”
(P. Neruda)

★

Hello,

We have joined our Dayı to the eternity of our Hope. It is very difficult to express in words the magnitude of the pain we are living through. It is just as difficult to contain our anger within these four walls. Only knowing that he will continue to live and show the way through his revolutionary legacy gives us strength. We will keep him alive...

To keep him alive means remaining loyal to his values.

To keep him alive means carrying his ideals forward.

To keep him alive means arming ourselves with his daring.

Dayı lives and will always live... Because, just as we learned from him, even in the hardest times we will make no concessions from Marxist-Leninist principles, we will trust the people and we will grow Hope...

His memory is our oath!

Kandıra F-Type Prison Free Prisoners

★

Still Beating

1)
The struggle still beats in your breast
Flags, waving flags
Their shadows upon your brow
We have closed our ranks and we are marching
We are with you... We are with you... We are with you.

No stopping! Never crying!
You are among your people, in your homeland
No mourning! You cry out from our shoulders.
We are with you... We are with you... We are with you...

Believing heart... With a steel wrist in the body
Together with you we rewrite history
The wheels of struggle are turning
We are with you... We are with you... We are with you...

The struggle is in us, we are the wheel

Your heart is a bullet in our hearts
We are the wheel, we are the struggle
The processions of victory advance
We are with you... We are with you... We are with you...

2)
Victor of the Unbowed

The banner of our Hope upon your breast
Your body scatters the mists
A Torch tearing through the darkness
The flaming storm of Hope was in your eyes
The target is forward! No stopping! Forward!

From shoulder to shoulder we carry the crown of victory
Victor of our rebellious history
You had gathered the rebelliousness of the mountains into your breast
The target is forward! No stopping! Forward!

The spark that set the steppes alight
Your name became a blaze in our palms
In the deserts of Karbala
With you we did not submit
With your mace we were Ferhat, levelling the mountains

As our bodies were riddled with bullets
You were our final word

The place where you lie is the soil where you were born
Your country, your People
Now beside your comrades

The target is forward! No stopping! Forward!

From shoulder to shoulder
You roar with waters that never end
Victor of our rebellious history
The target is forward! No stopping! Forward!

3)
You are in the melody of trembling branches
In our voice growing
With the rustling of leaves

We grew with the melody of your steps
You were the leaven of our bread
With your blessed morsels we multiplied

You were one, you multiplied
You were few, you grew

Our heart is a cry of rebellion
A leaden bullet in our vein

Leaves scatter in the wind
The faithless bend with the willow branches

You walked against the wind
You made all of us walk against the winds
While the leaves scattered, you put down roots

You were one, you multiplied
You were few, you grew

We grew stronger... We grew stronger
With you we grew stronger

Drop by drop we accumulated
We could no longer fit within our bounds

Listen to the voice of the branches
To the rustling of the leaves
It grows in the melody of our steps
It becomes abundant in the leaven of our bread

We gather in the valleys, in the valley of revolution
Our martyrs stand in ranks along the road
We are in the lakes where the waters unite
We could no longer fit within our bounds

We grew stronger... We grew stronger... With you we grew stronger!

4)
To the One Who Walked in Front

Beneath the sky, with our carnations
He was a spark that fell upon our soil
His name echoed across the soil of the homeland
We sprouted in his light

He is the one who walked in front
He walked to the end in defiance of the darkness
He did not give up
He did not stop

On the road he opened without pause
Strength to the knees
Light to the eyes
Enthusiasm to the hearts

In the brightness of every new day
As hearts carried freedom
He sowed Hope in burning hearts
The shoots are rising in rebellion

A ball of fire
Illuminates our heart

In the days when tongues were silenced
He turned the spark into the sun
He heralds happy tomorrows

The love of those great days
Lives in the peoples

26 August 2008

Dear ...,

First of all, on behalf of all of us, I greet you, all of you, with all my love and respect and embrace you tightly with the warmth of our Dayı. Ten days have passed since we heard the painful news that we had never expected and could not accept. We set out immediately to share our pain while it was still fresh, but it did not happen. When what Hüseyin Abi wrote was blocked - it will soon be ten days and we still have not learned what became of it - this time I set out. I hope I am not blocked and that, even with delay, I reach you to say: condolences to you, to us, to our peoples...

★

Dear ...,

This time I did not begin the letter by asking, “How are you?” Because I can imagine what you are living through, your feelings. For we too are in a similar situation. For days we have been living with the deep sorrow and indescribable pain of losing our Dayı, the Mahir who for decades patiently, daringly and determinedly embroidered beauty upon this old and polluted world. But like every pain, we will make this one too sustenance for our struggle. And even if sorrow is now to become an inseparable part of us, with every breath we take and every step we make, we will still be with Him.

Because He was our head teacher, the architect of our rebirth from our ashes, who brought us to these days - sometimes making us walk step by step, sometimes stopping us to rest, sometimes launching us into an Offensive and making us run. He will always remain so. For familiar reasons I cannot put all our feelings down on paper, but you know. Perhaps we lived and did exactly the same things. The moment we heard, we buried the indescribable pain we experienced in our hearts, let our tears flow inward, and cried out to the sky without censorship our devotion and our resolve to

continue learning from the unique legacy he left, from his precious memory and his life - so that the winds would carry it to the mountains and stones, to the wolves and birds, to spouses, friends and comrades...

Although we will always feel his absence, in order not to let it be felt in the struggle we loaded onto our marches and messages our determination to work with all our strength, even though we were laden with pain and sorrow - so that our friends would not grieve and our enemies would not rejoice in vain...

★

Dear ...,

Every death is premature. This one was earlier still. Although until today we were with Him both when confronting the most unbearable pains and when dreaming the most limitless dreams, we still had so much to learn, so much road to walk, so much to share. I did not attain the honour of dreaming together with Him; but I lived the honour of knowing the loved ones who had attained that honour and shared life with Him, of being a part of those dreams, and of contributing, in my own small measure, to what had been realised until 11 August. Those dreams are our shared love... With the consciousness and belief that it is our duty to complete them by crowning them with victory, once again I bow before our Dayı's precious memory with respect and devotion, and in His warmth, on behalf of all of us, I embrace you, all of you, tightly.

★

Ronahiya Hewiya min

(The Light of My Hope)

Know that since you began to smell of carnations, you have drawn even closer to our hearts. Now your breath is nearer to us. Your voice falls at every moment into the middle of our lives. We gather it up and keep it so that it may be a remedy for tomorrow. Your warmth - there it is! Right on our left side. We clench our right fist and place it over it. When longing overtakes us, that is where we touch now. Without you but with you, we run into the day, into our struggle. And every time, with the beat of our hearts tuned to you, we raze the wall of imprisonment to the ground. We reach you everywhere, at every moment. For where you are not is hopelessness itself.

Ronahiya Hewiya min;

There was a time when we had gone up to the mountains. We had only just fallen in love with the mountains. Yet you had long since been captivated by them. From you we learned how the heart is sworn both to spring and to Hope. You held the description of the place we were going. You were our vanguard! And after that day, we split the darkness with you. We found the paths with you. We pulled the mechanism with you and released the trigger with you. Together we rested at Kinzir on moonless nights. When the full moon washed the mountains with its white light, together again we were struck by the mountain chill.

At the summit of Munzur we touched the tip of the shepherd's star. When the mountains filled with the smell of gunpowder, you were the first we saw. When we cried out at Çalaxane, you were beside us.

To Love You...

This people loved you, Wise Master,
We loved you...
We saw, we knew, we came to know you
You conquered our hearts
We called you Dayı...

To love you is like Mahir
To love you is Hüseyin, Ulaş...
To love you is Niyazi, Sinan...
To love you is Sabo...
To love you is epic after epic
To love you... is US!

To love you,
Is to set out before dawn
And to be able to say “how fortunate” to the first death...

To love you,
Is to harden day by day in the struggle
As steel is tempered...

To love you,
Is the hatred of chains in our wrists
It is our refusal to bow...

The active form of loving you
Is to shoulder the Mauser
And go up into the mountains...

To love you;
Is to become a cry for truth,
A song for freedom,
A curse against tyranny...

To love you,
Is to live always with Hope...

As we love you
We love our people, our homeland
And with you we walk to revolution...

We Promised

We promised the squares
We will keep you alive
In the barricades that are built,
In the stones that are thrown,
In the Molotovs that are burned,
In the armoured vehicles that are damaged,
In the slogans we cry out

We promised the mountains
We will keep you alive
In the green of the Black Sea
On the peaks of the Taurus Mountains
In the rebellious mountains of Kurdistan
With crossed ammunition belts on our chests
In the loyalty of our poor peasants
At the muzzle of our Mauser

We promised our heart
Whenever it beats saying Hope
Whenever it grows saying love
Whenever we fall saying belief
Whenever we flow as a march
Whenever we strike saying struggle
We will keep you alive in our hearts as revolution

Ab-ı Hayat

It was a seed
It fell into the earth
It took life from the soil
It split and grew

It scattered new seeds into the soil
Into their water
It added itself,
Its love,
It began with its voice,
It gave labour,
Wrapped them around,
Became their sun...

The saplings yielded a thousand for one
New ones were added to the saplings

They grew, multiplied
The soil became fertile

The seed awoke
Anatolia was illuminated

He was upon that soil
The one who grew and multiplied the seeds
Now he has become the soil itself
He will give them life
He will watch his work with pride

(16 August 2008)

***

From a life flowing in the river of revolution
Your name roared in the hearts of thousands
With that photograph of yours carried upon chests
Your name was engraved on the monument of the immortals
(Your name was written upon the sea of red flags)

The wind became your voice and carried Hope
The mountains bowed before you, the waters roared
You rained down as a star; what remained was your light
Your intangible will was our legacy

Beyond pain and sorrow there is pride
You have a life that became a virtue for humanity
We have our Hope, brought to life by your belief,
The Hope that will shake the world from Turkey

Death was held captive by your love
Your courage became a road for all humanity
The consciousness of struggle you kneaded with labour
Will be carried breathlessly into those tomorrows
(It became a banner and is being carried to the free homeland)

***

With a great love
We followed behind you
In the grandeur / reality of your dreams
Rebellion grew

We joined heart to heart

Your love multiplied

With that noble will of yours / with the fire of your gaze
The dungeon melted

With the flood of your belief / in the flood of your belief
The barriers were overcome / the barriers were drowned

It was your honourable legacy in life
That remained with us

It was your smile that burned and scorched us inside / your enlightened mind
It was your immortal life / it was an immortal life
That remained behind / that was left behind

Hello Dear ...

First of all, greetings; I embrace you tightly with the warmth of our hearts. How are you? How are all of you? And of course, how are we? The answer to this question has always been, “We are well, well.” It will be so again; there is no other alternative. Yes, we were wounded, and the wound was deep. We were as if in mourning, though our mourning was not the kind that is generally known. Beyond that, we lived through, in every aspect, feelings that are particular to us. And we will continue to live through them.

There was setting out from one star, one dream. But it became its continuation. Then one had to say: The world stopped! For days we have been writing letters, sharing the same feelings. I said I should come directly to you, to all of you, because on the one hand there is the farewell, and on the other there are things being lived through while still fresh; they must be shared. Our sharing will not be limited only to these days. We will do this at every moment, every second.

You will ask how we are. You know, when he was leaving, our Wise One said there should be no tears. It was something he knew and foresaw very well. More than that, it was the greatness of knowing him. Some comrades stood for a long time; some of us tried to remain standing by showing intense will. We were like him, as he wanted and expected us to be. From now on it will be the same. Everyone around who heard - absolutely everyone - expressed their feelings very plainly. They voiced their respect. They shared their pain. They tried to explain what he meant to them. At that moment once again we cried out, “Who in truth is dead and who is alive?”

Is this not what immortality is, after all?

Once again I bow respectfully before the memory of our Wise One, I bow. With Hope and Resistance. Greetings.

S.

Oath / We Are Wounded

We are wounded
Our wound is deep
Our wound is sharp
Our wound is too great to close

We are wounded
Our wound is heavy
Our wound is painful
Our wound bleeds in torrents

We are wounded
How are wounds healed
Which hand
Which eye
Which tongue
Which wise one is the remedy
We know the answer

We are wounded
As much as we are wounded, we are honourable
Our honour is purer than water
How honour is attained
How to live honourably
How to remain with honour
We know

We are wounded
As much as we are wounded, we are proud
Our pride stands taller than the mountains
How pride is carried
How to fill oneself with pride
How to raise one’s head with pride
We know

We are wounded
We will not close our wound
Until that great day we will draw strength from it

We are honourable
We will remain honourable
For all eternity
We will not allow it to be stained

We are proud

We will look with pride
Until that great day
With it we will hold our heads high

(15.08.08 / S. K.)

★

Hello,

With the enthusiasm of the 30th year of our glorious Dev-Genç, we embrace you with the warmth of the most precious one of our Dev-Genç, our Dayı.

For 39 years, a voice that cannot be silenced has been travelling through western Asia. It is the voice of young people whose giant hearts beat with love of the people and the homeland, the voice of Dev-Genç members... It rises from the campuses. It always finds its echo in factories, fields, poor gecekondu neighbourhoods and on the summits of the mountains. We believe that today this voice, the voice of the young people with giant hearts, is stronger and louder...

We believe that in these days when they are living through the pain of the most precious of their own, their Dayı, once again they are on His road and once again they are the Mahirs of the struggle...

We believe that the Dev-Genç members who for 39 years, with the Birtans, Ekrems, Canans, Selmas, Eyüps and so many others, have been the name of Hope in torture chambers, sieges, dungeons, great resistances and in the brain of oppression, will from now on too continue on their road by overcoming every obstacle.

And once again we believe that for the freedom of their people and the independence of their homeland, the youth, the Dev-Genç members, will assume their historical mission and grow the struggle on the road shown by the Çayans, under the guidance of their Dayı.

Salute to those who created Dev-Genç and keep it alive. We commemorate our Mahirs, our Dayı and all our carnations, and we say they are in our hearts...

With our love and greetings.

Kırıklar No. 1 F-Type
Free Prisoners

★

“Those who, even at the moment of death, carry a strong belief in socialism and love for country and people cannot be defeated, whatever the conditions.” (Dursun Karataş)

We entered the week with newspaper and television reports that our beloved Dayı had been martyred. This time too, we wanted very much for it to be another false report. Unfortunately, this time it was not. With the statements confirming our beloved Dayı’s martyrdom, it became certain that what we did not want at all, what we would have given everything including our lives to prevent, had happened.

We were saddened, deeply troubled. What eased our pain was what he left us... And also that our comrades were beside him until his final breath. We thought he must have done whatever was

necessary for the future. And indeed he had... That is why we are at peace... We also know that with what our beloved Dayı left behind, we possess the strength and accumulation to realise our ideals.

Our condolences to all of us, to our people, to the peoples of the world... We wish success to the comrades who remain. And we believe that they will succeed.

We are trying to make ourselves believe that from now on we will continue our march without Dayı... It is said that “every death is an early death”, but this one was truly far too early. Whenever false reports appeared before, we always said, “He must live at least another twenty years.” And of course the reason we thought this was that we wanted him to see our ideals realised. Now what falls to us is to present to our Dayı an independent, democratic Turkey without exploitation... And we will. Once again we bow respectfully before the precious memory of our beloved Dayı and say that we will remain loyal to his memory.

★

We do not say farewell to you
Vanguard of Hope
We know you travel towards the future
Saying: The goal is socialism!

We do not say farewell to you
The future dream of our children
A song of brotherhood
Whose melody is justice and freedom

We do not say farewell to you
Spartacus from before the ages
Wise one of Anatolia
Valiant one of Bedreddin

We do not say farewell to you
The light upon our brow
The star of our flag
Vanguard of our road...

Uşak Women’s Prison
Free Prisoners

★

Feelings and Thoughts Written in the Visitor’s Book Opened for Dayı

You wrote the last 30 years of Turkey’s revolutionary history. You brought the legacy we received from Mahir and his comrades to a point where it is watched with admiration throughout the world, respected and taken as an example. Before your martyrdom we promise: we will be worthy of this legacy.

With respect.
C.

...

The soil and children of your homeland are waiting for you. Embrace them for us too. They are ENTRUSTED to you, your ideology is ENTRUSTED to us.
We will keep you alive in our struggle.
Ö.

...

The cause of revolution and socialism has lost another leader; our condolences. He was our Leader, our comrade, our commander. He was our family, our father, our beloved Dayı. We learned from him, with him we came into being, we became Hope. He was the heart beating for revolution and socialism. This heart will never fall silent.

Our beloved comrade, commander, Dayı: do not look back with concern. As your fighters, once again we promise that we will never shame you, our Party-Front or our peoples. Your name is our oath, the Party-Front is our Hope, the road you showed is our liberation. We swear that we will fight until liberation...
E. G.

...

My beloved Dayı, my guide, my Leader. On the revolutionary line you opened, in the struggle you showed and the war you waged, you became the Leader of me and of people like me. I am honoured and proud to feel you, to live you, to walk the road you opened. Your honour is our honour; your honour is my honour. Long Live the DHKP-C,
Long Live Leader Comrade Dursun Karataş!
Z. A.

...

★

Hello, my dear comrade. I promise that I will protect forever the legacy you left. We will miss you very much.
With respect.
H. M.

...

I brought greetings to my Dayı from Dersim. / D. E.

...

You will continue to live in our people and in our struggle.
C.

...

The Red flag of revolution and socialism...
I swear that I will carry that red flag forever.

A thousand greetings to you, our commander and Leader Dursun Karataş.
F. K.

...

What is death, when you are within us, respected Leader.

...

Salute to our great Leader.
Salute to the martyrs of the revolution.
E. A.

...

My Dayı, my Leader, I love you very much. / Ş. Ö.

...

I will remain devoted to my respected Leader and steadfast in my struggle.
Condolences to the peoples of the world.
Long Live My Leader Dursun Karataş
Long Live the DHKP-C
T. B. - Berlin

...

Salute to my Leader.
Throughout this life we showed our stance together against those who oppress. I will continue on your road: the world will come to know revolution better.
S. S.

...

You are always with us; we are always with you. Leader comrade, we love you very much.
H. K.

...

I cannot describe the pride I feel in being here and commemorating you.
To commemorate you is an honour.
Y. İ.

...

Everything flows, everything grows old... In a world that diminishes, only your light and your ideas will neither grow old nor diminish.
K.

...

With the Party you created, we will establish revolutionary people's power and keep you alive within it forever.
N. T.

...

Leader Comrade! Because of your contributions to Turkey's revolution and the truths you spoke until today, you will always live as an immortal.
Be certain: the flag you left will be carried by your comrades until victory.
T. Y.

...

My Dayı, may you live forever. Thank you for your love.
One of your nephews!

...

Our Dayı, our Leader. We love you very much. / P. S.

...

You always brought us
From darkness
Into the light
You were our Dayı
And you will always remain so
I bow respectfully before you.
A. S.

...

Our beloved Leader, our Dayı...
The new human being you created, the Party you created, will present the revolution to the peoples of the world.
M. Ç.

...

A thousand greetings to you. / H. Y.

...

We had a Dayı. We still do. Our longing will be for beautiful days. The road you showed and the existence of the Party-Front are our Hope.
H. A.

...

Salute. A thousand greetings to those who grow Hope.
Your struggle will be our struggle.
S.

...

Beloved Dayı, we salute you with respect and love.
I convey in the same way the feelings of Haydar, Murat, Aydın, Ayten and Rana. Farewell...

...

Leader Comrade,
Your death in this period orphaned the peoples of the world. In the period we are living through, the world Revolutionary Movement was without a leader; you were the leader. You were the one showing the road. We will walk with your light, with your guidance.
O. T. Switzerland

...

To our Leader! On this day when we have made your name our Oath and your Legacy our Flag, as I bid you farewell into immortality I repeat once again the promise I made when I began the struggle in our Party-Front, which is one with its leadership, which does what it says and defends what it does: “There is nothing I would withhold from our Party-Front and our People, including my life.”
Long Live Our Leader Dursun Karataş
With love, respect and devotion.
A. Ş.

...

The revolutionaries of Turkey are the best in the world.
S.

...

You taught us the road of revolution. / S.

...

We will keep you alive in our struggle. / L.

...

Our Leader, I will carry the legacy you left us until the end of my life.
N. Ö.

...

Our beloved Commander, our Leader!
DAYI, I cannot express my love and devotion to you. I loved you very much, and my love for you will live in my heart until the end of my life.

I kiss your hands.
C. G.

...

He Did Not Die, He Lives. Long Live the Brotherhood of the Peoples. / B.

...

Thank you for this great legacy you left us, our Teacher.
D. T.

...

Our beloved Dayı, our commander...
Thanks to you, the history of Turkey's Revolution will become still greater and rise still higher.
History will prove you and our Party right.
I salute you with respect. / H. T.

...

My Leader, my Commander, you are now our conscience.
I bow respectfully before you.
Z. K. - E.

...

Our beloved Leader, our Dayı, our Commander...
Today we live the joy of bidding you farewell to the soil of the country. In your physical absence our road will always remain open.
Long Live Our Leader Dursun Karataş.
Long Live the Revolutionary People's Liberation Party-Front
Long Live the Revolutionary People's Liberation Party-Front
Ö. N.

...

We are on your road!
D. A.

...

We support your ideas. Farewell! We are on your road!
With respect,
S.

...

We are on your road. / H.

...

We are on your road, to meet at the summits of revolution. Great Leader.
A. L.

...

Our pain is great, our loss is great, but our anger will be greater.
Our Leader Is Immortal.
D. - H. Ö.

...

I love you. I will always remain loyal to your struggle and your ideas.
Y. K.

...

Condolences to our people. / K. K.

...

History writes you in golden letters in the hall of heroes; we write you in golden letters upon our left breast.
Ş. K.

...

We Will Grow Your Work. Rest in peace.
Y.

...

A pale moon circles the sky
It is clear the time is near
That will shake nature and life.
S. Y.

...

With your self-sacrifice and daring, you became the Dayı of every area of our lives.
We will never forget you.
Our Tomorrows Are Free.
S.

...

My dear Dayı, our Leader,
Your departure from among us came far too early. Even if you are not physically among us, you will always live in the hearts, souls and consciousness of your comrades and our peoples. Your guidance will always continue. We will never forget you.
With my deepest respect.
Z.

...

You are the Leader and Hope not only of the country but of all the peoples of the world.
E. G.

...

Our dear Dayı, we loved you very much; you left us orphaned. But with the compass and light you left, I will remain loyal to your legacy.
H. Ç.

...

We live the sorrow of bidding you farewell into immortality as well. Now in the squares we will cry out your name even more loudly. We always loved you, and in defiance of friend and enemy we will continue to love you. You will always be in our hearts, our consciousness and our conversations...
We had a Dayı, and he will continue to exist...
Farewell beloved Dayı, farewell...
Y. G. from Rotterdam

...

My beloved commander,
Great Leader,
I kissed the head of your body
Because before the enemy
You did not bow.
I kissed your feet
Because in our revolutionary march
You never took a step backwards.
I bow respectfully before you.
Ş. E. from Vienna

...

You will receive the respect you deserve, more than all the labour you gave.
With respect,
A. Ö.

...

The peoples of Turkey and the world will walk to socialism under your guidance.
History will not forget you, our Commander-in-Chief.
S. G.

...

We will keep you alive.
F. K.

...

Your ideal is our ideal.
Endless respect and greetings.
H. B.

...

My Leader, my Teacher! Your road will be our light!
N. from Hamburg

...

To my Leader, my Comrade, my Dayı,
You will always wave on the banner of socialism.
We will always carry you in our hearts.
G. E.

...

My dear Dayı, my Leader, our Leader...
I love you very, very much. With your light you will illuminate our road. I will not forget you and I will not let you be forgotten.
Salute to those who fight.
S. Ç.

...

We will never turn back from this road!
Salute to you, our Leader Dursun Karataş!
D.

...

We will always keep you alive.
We will walk on your road.
C.

...

Dayı! I began this road believing in you; of course I will continue forever to walk on your road!
G.

...

Condolences to our people.
M. A.

...

Our Leader, our Dayı, we loved you very much. We always will...
M. A.

...

We Will Not Forget You. Farewell Comrade.
K. T.

...

Farewell to a life devoted to democracy and freedom.
R. E.

...

Our Leader, our Dayı and our Commander, we love you; we will walk on the road you showed. Your legacy will be our legacy. You are alive.
C. A.

...

Dayı, I always kept you alive in my heart. I have always kept the DHKP-C alive in my heart too. May the earth rest lightly upon you.
M. K.

...

So much was told, so much was said. But we always wanted to see you, to touch you. We were granted that, but like this. This was hard, our Dayı; salute to you. May all the sun shine upon you. May the stars be your comrades.
I do not say farewell.
E. A.

...

To our DHKP friends,
In our time, when everything connected with revolution in the world is made a target and belief in winning the future is weakened, being a revolutionary, being organised and especially being a leader are of great importance.
With this consciousness, we share with you the pain of having lost your General Secretary, your Leader Dursun Karataş, and convey our feelings of friendship and solidarity.
Devrimci Yol Europe

...

What remains from these days are those who go towards tomorrow, and also, in the name of tomorrow:
Those who resist...
Ö. O.

...

Our Leader, our Commander, we will never forget you; we love you.
R. T.

...

I do not know how a death can be expressed, how it can be written. Through your life you will be a light for humanity. You will not be allowed to be forgotten!
H. D.

...

As long as I carry this life, you will always be in my heart.
I will remember you with respect throughout my life.
H. G.

...

We will carry this flag you entrusted to your people until it illuminates your Hope and the Hope of our people.
H. Ş.

...

We will carry the name of Hope forever.
Leader Comrade Dursun Karataş
K.

...

Thank you, our Leader, for the labour you gave to us, to our people and to the revolutionary struggle.
C. T.

...

We love you very much, our Leader, our Dayı, our Commander.
A.

...

Great and Courageous Leader, May Your Road Be Open.
May the earth rest lightly upon you.
M. Ç.

...

Thank you for the labour you gave to us, to our peoples and to the revolutionary struggle.
A.

...

We came into being with you, and we will continue.
Glory to our struggle that walks with you.
C. K.

...

★

Hello! We love you. Respect, Dayı.
S. V. B.

...

Once again: We Are Right, We Will Win.
With respect.
C. G.

...

★

Hello Great Human Being,
Your place now is beside the Sabos, the Mahirs, the Ches and the other revolutionaries of the world. Farewell, the Last DAYI of the Peoples of Anatolia. Farewell Dayı.
B.

...

To Revolution and Victory! With you in our hearts and minds we will reach them, but still we miss you very much.
Y. A.

...

★

Hello great Leader. I do not believe I have lost you, and from now on I will not believe it either. I will continue always to keep you alive within me. I had only one wish in this world, to see you. I did see you, but if only it had not been like this. I love you very much.
V. B.

...

In this vast world, the family and comrades you created will not forget you; with the legacy you left to history, your family too will live with your legacy.
G.

...

With revolutionary greetings and respect, I COMMEMORATE you.
Rest in peace.
O. K.

...

You became a drop in our heart
You became a cry in our mind

With you we came into being, with you we will continue to be.
Y. Y.

...

Hello, our dear comrade, our Dayı, our teacher and master whom we know as part of our own lives...
We know that you did not leave us and go away. We will never forget you; you will always live in our hearts as the same Dayı, and we will never stray from the road you taught. Even though your pain still hurts our hearts, your presence will continue in hearts forever in the same way.
Condolences to all our comrades.
S.

...

My great Commander.
O. B.

...

May you rest peacefully where you lie. We will continue to follow your road.
Ş.

...

The martyrs of the revolution are immortal. The seeds you left us will always sprout.
H. Z.

...

Friendly and Revolutionary Greetings. / D. B.

...

I bow respectfully before this life devoted to revolution.
A Worker

...

My Commander-in-Chief, my Leader, my Dayı: with my devotion to the great family you left us, I salute you with respect. Do not look back with concern. We will carry the flag you left to the revolution, and just like Mahir and his comrades, you did not die; we will keep you alive in our struggle!
S. K.

...

The martyrs of the revolution are immortal. With love and respect from the Yıldırım family.
H. Y.

...

You said, “Do not cry”, Dayı... But know that it is not tears in our eyes...
Our hearts are weeping blood, Dayı. Long Live the DHKP-C.
O. B. - G. Ö.

...

Our beautiful, courageous Dayı, we love you.
A.

...

Beloved Dayı, to know you and to be your lawyer was the greatest HONOUR of my life.
With love...
With respect...
With longing...
M. D.

...

Salute to you, our Dayı, our Teacher!
B. K.

...

I offer my deepest respects to Leader Comrade Dursun Karataş, one of the leaders of Turkey’s Revolutionary History.
As a small worker of the Revolutionary Front you founded, I will try to be worthy of you.
Ö.

...

The sun sets in order to rise again; we know that at the dawn of our country you will rise again every morning of every day.
Z. G.

...

We feel the pain of losing you in these days when the peoples of Turkey and the world need you most.
As you yourself said: “We will shake the world once again, this time from Turkey.”
Dursun Karataş Is Immortal.
M. A.

...

Our Commander, our Dayı, our comrade.
You will always be with us. I remember you with love.
N. K.

...

Your road is the road of Mahir and his comrades. Our road is the road of the DHKP-C! That is, your road!
Farewell Commander.

...

You are the most unforgettable and irreplaceable of all Dayıs.
I remember you with respect.
E.

...

Salute to you, Leader and Commander of the people's struggle, and through you to all the Martyrs of the Revolution.
Z.

...

We remember you with respect. / S. K.

...

We Will Walk on Your Road.
İ. E.

...

You who illuminated my darkness! Dursun Karataş, who created the honour of being a Party-Front member! My respect is endless, my belief enduring.
Ö. B.

...

You will live in the minds, hearts and souls of your comrades.
Great Leader Dursun Karataş.
G. D.

...

My spouse lying in hospital, your student and nephew Deniz, baby Nidal Çaylan and I could not kiss your hand before you left. We love you. We will keep you alive. Your life full of heroism and self-sacrifice in the struggle will always light our way.
B. K.

...

Beautiful Human Being. Today you physically departed from among us, but your revolutionary culture and understanding will live forever in our hearts and minds.
You gave Hope its name...

...

Most precious Dayı,
Endless respect to you for leaving us a legacy. Rest in peace.
M. P.

...

Our Leader Dursun Karataş Is Immortal!

...

Condolences to the peoples of Turkey and the world. With the line of struggle you created and the tradition of struggle you built, you made history; YOU WERE A HISTORY. I believe that the tradition and history you left behind will continue in this way.
H.

...

You will always live in our hearts.

...

Through you we salute all the Martyrs of the Revolution.
The Struggle Will Continue, THE PEOPLE WILL WIN.
N. G. - S. G. - H. G.

...

You will be in our hearts, in our minds and always beside us. We will keep you and all the martyrs of the revolution alive. Through you we salute all the martyrs of the revolution.
Long Live Our Leader Dursun Karataş.

Our Leader, our Commander, our Dayı will always live.
We love you.
R. S. - T. S. - E. S. - E. S. - İ. S.

...

Like the fall of a star, each of our lives will be brief, but this time the life should not have been yours, Dayı.
B. E.

...

Dursun Karataş Is Immortal. I remember you with respect.
N. A.

...

We love you very much and we will never forget you throughout our lives. We are always on your road.
(Y. and E. family)

...

My beloved Leader,
I promise you that whatever the circumstances and conditions, I will never leave the road you showed me.
M. Y.

...

Salute to our Leader. Our Leader is immortal. We will carry you in our hearts.
C. K.

...

Dayı...
They allowed us only two seconds to see you. Can the longing of 38 years to see you fit into two seconds?
We love you.
H. Ç. (Switzerland)

...

A final greeting to my most remarkable client.
Ties

...

Sunny days will come.
We Are the People, We Are Right, We Will Win!
L.

...

Precious human being, I remember you with respect on behalf of the peoples.
A. İ.

...

With what you taught us, we will continue to struggle on your road until death. We love you very much.
Ö. G.

...

Our Leader, our Dayı, we will keep you alive in our hearts and in our struggle.
V. D.

...

Hello comrade,
Both namesake and comrade.
A very beautiful and lasting feeling.

...

Salute Dayı,
We will keep you alive in our hearts. You are our teacher, our Dayı, our everything. Everything will be beautiful and we, the people, will win this war.
M. A. and S. A.

...

Salute to you.
You will always be beside us.
Always, as you taught us,
Always refusing to accept,
Always being able to look further ahead,
All the values you entrusted
I will embrace and protect in my life.
I loved you as a Leader,
As a comrade,
With the warmth of a father.
This love will never end; I will always remain worthy of you.
E.

...

Farewell Dayı.
You will live forever in our hearts.
İ. G.

...

Our respected Leader is immortal.

CHAPTER 7

writings on Dayı...

Dayı Is the Will of 20 October

They Took Wing into Eternity

They were the arms and wings of the people
In the most hopeless times
Loading hunger onto their blue wings
On 20 October they laid their bodies down to hunger
They melted cell by cell, body by body
They did not break,
They did not bend,
They grew as their bodies became smaller
They were struck by bullets
They were suffocated with gas
They did not give up
They armed themselves with stars
They wrapped themselves in flames
With storm wings they merged into the blue
They became carnations on our breast
With their hearts locked onto victory
They became the 122 and took wing into eternity

For exactly a thousand years we have been raising lions in the cradle of Anatolia...

How many tyrants, sultanates, invaders and exploiters have been brought down before us, one after another. Countless times we were subjected to massacres. We are walking with the dream of an equal, free and just life... And our rebellion grows, challenging time and the rulers of time.

This history is the sum of thousands of resistances, large and small, of defeats and victories, and of remaining hopeful at all times. What connects yesterday to tomorrow and makes this historical flow uninterrupted is once again rebellion and Hope.

“We are the people, we are one of the people, we are the vanguard of the people,” Dayı had said. To be the vanguard of the people, to make Hope and rebellion permanent and to be able to say with endless confidence, “One day, certainly,” is possible only by knowing the secret of the Simurg in the legend. According to the tale, all the birds of the world chose the Simurg as their ruler and protector. Whenever something bad was about to happen to them, they believed the Simurg would come to their aid and protect them from evil. Then, after a time, things began to go wrong in the world of birds.

They were shot, burned, their very kind was targeted. And the birds waited for the Simurg with Hope. They waited for days and nights. But it did not come... And when the birds understood that the Simurg would never come, they were devastated and left helpless...

But there were also those who did not lose Hope. Saying, “If the Simurg does not come to us, then let us go to it,” they decided to go to the Simurg’s home on the heights of Mount Qaf. Together they beat their wings into the endless blue of the sky. From the very beginning it was clear how difficult and

harsh the road would be. Even the foothills of Mount Qaf, home of the Simurg, touched the clouds. Then, to reach it, seven bottomless valleys had to be crossed.

Along the road there were those who grew tired, those no longer able to beat their wings, those who let themselves fall into the abyss. And then there were those who turned back...

Nightingales who remembered their love for the rose, parrots who wanted to protect their multicoloured feathers, those who longed for the swamp... As the road grew longer, the number continuing on it became smaller.

And at last, those who, despite everything, continued beating their wings with Hope left all the difficulties behind and reached that place on the summit of Mount Qaf. Only thirty had made it that far. And there they learned that Simurg already meant “thirty birds”. Each of them, one by one and all together, was the Simurg... The Simurg is those who know they must walk and who, despite everything, do walk. They write history.

The will assumed on 20 October 2000 is the will of the Simurg. And victory belongs to those who know they must walk, even if the destination is the summit of Mount Qaf, and who do walk; to those who write history from yesterday into tomorrow. They are the ones who hennaed immortality in their palms and embroidered the epic of the Simurg back into life, stitch by stitch. The will of 20 October 2000 is where legends meet real life, where the heart meets reason, where yesterday meets tomorrow, and it belongs to US. That will was carried from Mahir to today, in the redness of hundreds of our carnations, in the person of the master who made us US.

This is the open secret of being able to stand upright for seven years despite everything, and of being able to embrace victory. At the same time, the Great Resistance became one of the most concrete and historic forms of acting with will. This conscious will was assumed in its most concentrated form on 20 October 2000 and spread through every moment of those seven years. Dayı says, “To act with will is labour and daring”...

The will of 20 October is labour: it was worked patiently, day by day, woven with care down to the finest detail and raised into consciousness. The confidence placed in the fighters who that day tied red bands around their foreheads and walked towards death was the product of years of labour. Likewise, each resister organised their own victory through a thousand and one labours... That is why what is essential in the heroism created is the organised state of mind brought into being through labour. And without doubt, the continuity of the resistance over seven years, growing by constantly producing new volunteers, was made possible through labour.

The will of 20 October is daring: in a place where countless praises are sung to the beauty of life, where sermons proclaim that there is no value left worth dying for, it is the daring to carry the flag of honour and virtue and walk towards death. Every day passed in hunger is a challenge to the “terror” of death. It is such a daring that over seven years history witnessed death being disgraced 122 times...

Our Wise Dayı is right: will is daring and labour... The Great Resistance was created with this will and carried to victory.

Dayı, the creator of the Hope of the 122, made our Hope invincible with such a will... This will assumed on 20 October 2000 is the will of our thousand-year rebellion; of our traditions enlarged epic

by epic; of Kızıldere, Metris, 12 July and Çiftehavuzlar; of our hawks who grew Hope in the mountains; of the heroes of the generation of revolution; of the Simurg, the Phoenix, and of course Dayı. The will of 20 October is what makes us US and is the guarantee of that great day... That is why the will of 20 October is in every moment of our lives...

When the migrant birds leave for distant lands
They will say farewell to us
As we see them off, we will be hungry
Perhaps few of us will remain
Perhaps none of us will remain,
If we remain, we will remain upright,
If we die, we will die bravely...
We will hunger for one season
To remain honourable in every season...
(Fırat Tavuk)

★

An Examination of the 'New Human Being'

We released the voice of our hearts into the middle of life: "You are us, and we will become you..." The guide for how we are to make the requirements of this hopeful melody concrete is, of course, Dayı. This is why we say that, beyond bidding him farewell, we have brought him and placed him right at the centre of our lives. It is because each of us is a candidate to become Dayı in every moment and every sphere of life.

To be Dayı is to possess continuity in the struggle to create the New Human Being. Precisely for this reason, although his biological life as a human being has ended, he continues his ideological life as the guide of the New Human Being.

In the light of our masters, from Che to Dayı, we see that the essence of the New Human Being is the uninterrupted struggle against capitalism's nature, which blinds human beings and turns them into a herd. Ernesto Che Guevara summarises this destructive effect of capitalism on human beings as follows: "... Under capitalism, the individual is governed by ruthless laws that generally remain beyond comprehension and understanding. The alienated individual is tied to the society of others like himself by an invisible umbilical cord... The laws of capitalism, blind and invisible to most people, act upon the individual without giving him the opportunity to think." (Socialism and Man / Ernesto Che Guevara / p. 75 / Yar Publications)

To be Dayı is to cut away those bonds of captivity that make human beings helpless. It is not to allow imperialism to destroy our minds, turn us into a herd and make us crawl. The footprints of the New Human Being begin where the boundaries drawn by the system end...

Tomorrow is reached through the direction of the New Human Being, who does not give up defending what is right even if only one person remains. That is why to be Dayı is to step into the future with the determination, "Let those who turn back turn back; I will not turn back from my road"...

Against the corruption of "do not even trust your father", the New Human Being trusts the people and trusts himself. And to be Dayı is to possess this confidence carried upon necks that do not bow...

To be Dayı is to be a shoulder on which comrades and friends can rest their heads, a hand they can hold, a back they can lean on and a heart whose fire can warm them...

To be Dayı is to possess conduct that mirrors our principles and ideals. It is to be able to take part even in the most ordinary tasks of daily life, without making a distinction between big work and small work...

To be Dayı is not to fall into capitalism's web of corruption. With the pride of the values grown by advancing directly against the system, it is to crush every kind of degeneration underfoot. Beginning with ourselves, it is not to regard the filth belonging to the capitalist swamp as fitting for any revolutionary...

To be Dayı is to declare war on incompetence, wretchedness, surrender and feelings of inferiority. And by using our minds, it is to find within problems the correct road leading to a solution. Those who become wretched before problems have, in the person of those problems, been defeated by the system. To be Dayı, by contrast, is to know how to win a victory against the system in every single problem...

To be Dayı is to oppose killing time. It is not to waste time, not to be without time. It is to make use of every moment in order to mix Hope into the mortar of time. It is to have a programme made up of tasks to be done and to be at work at every moment...

To be Dayı is to make the enthusiasm of being a revolutionary overflow to those around you. It is to love revolutionism and make others love it. And in this way, by sharing the greatest happiness in the world, to multiply it...

To be Dayı is to have endless patience, energy and care concerning the transformation of human beings. It is not to erase people and cast them aside. It is to know how to carry people. It is not to permit the dirty claws of capitalism to reach into people's hearts and minds.

To be Dayı is not to look at people with prejudice.

It is to know that what is unchanging is not people, but prejudices. And it is to make permanent the effort to enlarge what is revolutionary in people and to create the New Human Being...

To put it in Fidel Castro's words: "Where is it written that Marxism means renouncing human feelings, friendship, love for comrades, respect and appreciation? Yet it is love of humanity itself that gave birth to Marxism." It is true, and Dayı stands at the summit of this love. To be Dayı is to be filled to overflowing with this love...

To be Dayı is never to give up the effort to teach how to deal with the fears that stand in the way of contributions to the revolution. It is to make concrete how the needs of the revolution are met when the fears spread by the system are pushed back.

Knowing that the boundaries that confront the effort to create the New Human Being belong to the refuge of the 'old human being', it is to take steps forward and make others take them. By opening breaches in the walls of fear, it is to show the way for every step that will be taken beyond those boundaries...

To be Dayı is for the person who carries “it cannot be done” in their mind to grasp success with their own hands. It is to confront the system disguised as “impossible” with the power of revolutionary reason that makes the possible ordinary...

To be Dayı is to know how to learn and to try to learn something from everyone. As Che says: “We must go to the people with a spirit of inquiry and humility, and draw inspiration from the people’s great source of wisdom.” And to be Dayı is to be nourished from that great source of wisdom of the people...

To be Dayı is not to possess the luxury of forgetting, overlooking or failing to care. It is to act with the creativity of the people that values life...

It is to possess a clarity like clear water. It is to answer the confusion produced by the system with the certainty created by the revolution. It is to be able to look at every state of life with this clarity. It is to act without calculation, calling wrong wrong and right right...

To be Dayı is to read and learn theory “in order to make revolution in the Turkey of the world”. For that very reason, it is not to permit empty rhetoric or pontificating. It is to learn not for intellectual chatter, but in order to magnify the cry of the people...

It is to act with the consciousness that shared principles, rules and discipline are our strength. In Che’s words: “Revolutionary conduct is the reflection of revolutionary belief. If someone says he is a revolutionary but does not behave like one, he is nothing but a clown.” To be Dayı is to stand against such clowning as privilege, status-quoism and autonomy, and to grow the rank-and-file fighter...

Status-quoism is to construct slaves of the system inside revolutionism. To be Dayı is to demolish such refuges of weakness with the cannonballs of criticism. It is to walk towards revolution with the steel steps of being principled and disciplined...

In every step taken, every task performed and every activity carried out, it is to live and make others live the enthusiasm of “Tremble, oligarchy...” Like seeing the tree in the seed, it is to possess the excitement of making the revolution concrete even in the smallest tasks...

To be Dayı is to grow the revolution in the hardest conditions, in impossibilities, even in the midst of siege. It is not to allow anything to block the path of our revolutionary march. And it is the daring to overcome obstacles with great strides...

To be Dayı is to illuminate the darkness of circumstances with the fire of Hope. Knowing that whining and becoming pessimistic mean being defeated by circumstances, it is to be able to turn every place into a space for growing the revolution...

To be Dayı is, with one’s stance, style, fist and Hope, to be Anatolia. Against the helplessness imposed upon the people by imperialism and the oligarchy, it is to become the people’s Dayı and organise Hope...

To be Dayı is to be a revolutionary. And a revolutionary is one who revolutionises life, the people and the human being whom they embrace with great love...

It is to turn education into a living and “ordinary” form of sharing and to ensure that everyone participates in this sharing. It is to work constantly to find ways and methods for the development of one’s comrades...

To be Dayı is never to forget that the person who makes a mistake or falls into weakness is also our comrade. It is to march against weaknesses, not against people. By preserving the cleanliness and purity within us, it is to influence the direction, content and speed of transformation in the human being...

To be Dayı is to keep trying until the correct method of persuasion is found. It is to think, “It is not that they did not understand; I failed to explain.” For the one who looks for the mistake in others cannot find the power of solution within themselves either...

To be Dayı is to simplify the complexity called revolution and make it understandable, desirable and something whose requirements can be carried out.

For this purpose, it is to use a ‘local’ language. It is to set all complexity alight with the fire of simplicity...

To be Dayı is to devote one’s life to revolution. It is to be a revolutionary for the people for an entire lifetime. In Che’s words, it is to live with the choice that “there is no life outside the revolution”...

To be Dayı is to discipline the needs of daily life. It is to be the first to put one’s hand under the stone. It is to make self-sacrifice ordinary...

To be Dayı is not to ask from another person anything that one does not or cannot do oneself. It is to know that being just, as a choice of life and a form of relationship, is a measure of revolutionism. To be just is to be Dayı. To be just is the cornerstone placed today in the foundation of the future...

To be Dayı is to want results. It is to burn with the desire to create positive results. For solutions can be seen only in the light of that fire. It is to know that the solution to every problem lies within the problem itself, and to work until that solution is found...

To be Dayı is to live and make others live the honour of being a socialist. Through the example he sets, it is to make people say, “How fortunate that I too am a revolutionary.” It is to spread around oneself the honour of humanity’s revolutionary vein...

To be Dayı is to make the impossible possible, to make what is said to be impossible become possible. It is to be the spearhead of revolution and always thrust forward. And it is courage, courage, more courage...

To be Dayı is to be genuine and just. From the one who gives a bowl of water to the one who lends a shoulder in some way... it is to have a loyal heart that embraces everyone, forgets no one and takes responsibility for them...

To be Dayı is to be unable to rest without offering help, a road and a method for solving the problems of friends and comrades. Through the practice of taking responsibility, it is to crush the corruption expressed in “every sheep is hung by its own leg”...

Against the petty-bourgeois leftism that does not trust the power of the people, makes no effort to bring that power out, and gradually becomes rootless and is blown about because it has lost its bond with the people, to be Dayı is revolutionism for the people itself...

Knowing that revolution exists through the large and small contributions of ordinary people, to be Dayı is to be equipped with the creative power of trusting people from among the people. In Lenin's words, it is to make concrete in life the truth that "Only one who believes in the people, who plunges into the living spring of the people's creative genius, can be victorious"...

Dayı is the living example of what can be achieved by a person armed with daring that rises upon love of the people, with the consciousness that even when left alone they are the majority. And to be Dayı is to shake life with an unbowed head...

"It is not enough to interpret the world; the essential thing is to change it," Marx said. And to be Dayı is to grow Hope with the belief: "We will shake the world once again, this time from Turkey"...

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Dayı Is the Name of Being Principled on the Turkish Left(*)

Until today, many criticisms have been directed at the revolutionary movement on the Turkish left over many issues. From the understanding of Vanguard War to the proposal for People's Councils, from its stance towards betrayal to its prison policy, criticisms have been made; some have called it detached from the masses, others reformist. But there is one thing no one has ever said about the revolutionary movement until today: no one has criticised the revolutionary movement for being unprincipled. No one has been able to say that we acted pragmatically. On this point, the Leader of the revolutionary movement was clear and principled throughout his entire life. We can say that he is the name of being principled on the Turkish left; he is the one who said, "WE WILL ALWAYS SIT IN OUR UNCHANGING MARXIST-LENINIST CHAIR!" And that is what he did. For 38 years he never considered sitting in any other chair or leaning on any other power. Pragmatism was one of the foremost negativities against which Dayı fought throughout his political life. Each time, he was able to push aside with the back of his hand the short-term benefits that pragmatism might provide.

For pragmatic reasons he was never part of any unprincipled, ruleless alliance. "Every socialist force and movement must define its own identity and effectiveness without compromising the universal principles and theses of Marxism-Leninism. We cannot reconcile it with our Marxist-Leninist identity and personality to chart our political course, and to define our country and our revolution, merely by repeating what is written in Pravda, Zeri Populat or Renmin Ribao..."

Dursun Karataş embodied such a personality in himself and created an example for the Turkish left.

Unfortunately, almost all the predictions he made concerning pragmatic calculations proved him right. Pragmatism caused the left not only practical, but also ideological and cultural damage.

A principled life determines the whole life of a revolutionary, and the policies and conduct of a movement in every field.

In this sense, it was not merely on this or that issue, but in every field - in unity and alliances, in violence within the left and other questions, in resistance to the oligarchy, in international relations - that the Marxist-Leninist outlook and socialist principles guided all his policies.

His principled stance against violence within the left is another proof of this consistency. Even before 1980, when cadres of the revolutionary movement such as Turgut İpçioğlu, Kemal Karaca and Mehmet Büçkün were murdered as a result of violence within the left, it was again he who shaped the stance that would become an example to the Turkish left from that day onwards.

Under the conditions of that period, all the reactive proposals and ideas of cadres and fighters that arose here and there from inexperience and inadequacy were channelled by him in a revolutionary direction; it was in that period that he established the understanding of not responding to violence within the left in the same manner. Retaliation would undoubtedly have been the easiest course, but he chose what was principled, what would contribute to the revolution and to revolutionaries.

He always showed endless effort and persistence to make principles prevail in unity. Teaching the cadres of the movement to be principled was part of his cadre education. In an article in May 2002 he said: “Educating ourselves, making collectivity function, explaining to the masses, informing the masses and being open towards the masses must be our basic principles.” Throughout the period in which he led the movement, he never abandoned the principle of openness towards the people. It is as a result of his insistence and determination at this point that openness in politics and alliances, and the meticulous defence and implementation of revolutionary principles in actions, became distinguishing characteristics of the revolutionary movement.

The expression “We defended what we did, and did what we defended” is likewise a statement produced by his principled life and political line.

Being principled under all conditions is difficult; sometimes it requires paying great prices for those principles, and sometimes being able to renounce the “benefits” that unprincipled behaviour could provide. But both contribute to the revolution; both strengthen revolutionism. Being principled, not bending principles, protecting principles against ideological, political and cultural distortions that may come from imperialism, the oligarchy or the left - all this is part of the legacy he left us.

“Despite everything... trusting our proven ideological soundness... we must try to change relations between organisations that have turned into capitalist relations of interest, and to keep alive the importance, enthusiasm and excitement of revolutionary solidarity. ... On these platforms where revolutionary values have begun to disappear and pragmatism has become a principle, at first our stance will mostly be regarded either as a new pragmatism or as revolutionary immaturity... It would be idealism to think that the rotten ideas and attitudes of decades can be changed in an instant. When we continue patiently and stubbornly to defend what is right, those who truly carry revolutionary ideas, those who know the importance of revolutionary solidarity, will once again grasp the importance of being principled and being a friend, of genuine revolutionary solidarity, will feel the excitement and take positive steps.” (Dursun Karataş)

(*) This article was published in issue 159 of the magazine YÜRÜYÜŞ for Independence, Democracy and Socialism, dated 17 August 2008.

What Does Dayı Say?(*)

Our Dayı was the first person turned to in the ranks of the revolutionary movement whenever it was necessary to find what was right on any issue.

Asking “What does Dayı say?” and first learning Dayı’s view was usually the first thing done in order to make the correct decision.

When the betrayal of the coup took place inside the revolutionary movement on 13 September 1992, an attitude emerged among cadres of saying “I am with Dayı” without even feeling the need to learn the content of the issue. Dayı could not be the owner of a wrong idea or attitude. When deciding one’s position, the criterion was the confidence felt in this.

Some cadres who learned that Dayı had been held captive by the coup plotters for months were also shaking off the bewilderment into which they had fallen because of the problems experienced during that period. So it was the coup plotters, not Dayı, being at the head of the movement that had caused those problems! Once again they witnessed that under Dayı’s leadership it was impossible not to produce solutions to the problems of cadres, fighters and supporters, to leave problems unresolved, or to fail to value people.

Our Dayı was our guide, trusted without limit to point out the correct road under every condition. That is why, when he crossed the prison walls in the escape action of 1989 and went outside, all the cadres affirmed our Dayı’s mission of Leadership with great confidence. If our Dayı was at the head of our movement, there was no room for question marks such as “perhaps” on the road being walked.

Of course this confidence was not without reason. Our Dayı was the person all his comrades trusted most to show the road to revolution through his leadership ability. The history of the revolutionary movement was the material basis of this confidence. Indeed, the period of the Offensive, in which the Movement covered great distances in a very short time, was realised under his leadership.

This confidence did not arise by itself; it is not a confidence without foundation. Those who loved Dayı enough to give their lives, and those who were his enemies, had the same reason. That reason was the Leadership role Dayı played in the cause of the liberation of the peoples.

If Dayı Says It, It Is Right

Because it is confidence in Dayı’s political foresight and assessments. Of course this does not stem from attributing supernatural qualities to Dayı. It does not mean saying that Dayı is without error. But it does mean that Dayı possessed leadership qualities capable of reducing mistakes to a minimum.

This confidence in Dayı has material reasons formed through the historical process. Because Dayı was a leader who did not deviate even a millimetre from the Marxist-Leninist line. We can see this quality in the daring and determination he showed in embracing the THKP-C line at any cost against efforts to liquidate it after the Kızıldere massacre.

He showed it in the face of the 12 September junta's policy of crushing the revolution, by insisting on defending Marxism-Leninism and therefore the THKP-C line. He showed it during the period when attacks on socialism were at their most intense, in conditions where defending socialism required daring, by boldly defending socialism against the attacks of imperialism. He showed it by refusing to compromise with the betrayal of the coup plotters that emerged in our ranks, with the determination: "Rather than legitimise coup-making in this movement, I would break it down to its atoms and establish a new movement from among its ashes." This is one of the statements that best expresses Dayı's determination not to show the slightest tolerance in the ranks of the revolutionary movement towards any idea, policy or attitude that does not belong to Marxism-Leninism. The cadres of the revolutionary movement know the meaning and reality of this statement very well. Here one of the material reasons for confidence in Dayı becomes clear. Because under Dayı's leadership there was knowledge and labour, experience, foresight, a planned and disciplined understanding of work, and concentration.

Dayı was not one of those leaders who constantly change decisions, constantly make mistakes and fail to learn from those mistakes.

Dayı was a leader who taught in life that making mistakes is a human characteristic, but that what matters is to learn from mistakes and to take measures that can reduce mistakes to the lowest possible level.

Dayı was a modest leader who, while teaching and showing the way, and while possessing vast knowledge and grounding, also knew how to learn even from the most ordinary people.

For this reason, Dayı's decisions were decisions that had passed through many filters. In decisions taken under Dayı's leadership there was no aspect that could not see what lay ahead, that had not been programmed and calculated in detail, or that had been left uncertain. At the same time, in Dayı's understanding of leadership and struggle there was no timidity or lack of daring in taking decisions, no indecisiveness that split hairs but did not dare to take a step.

With these qualities, Dayı was the one who showed the correct road and took the correct decisions. Dayı was a leader about whom you could be as certain as you are of your own name that he would not make decisions out of emotional reactions, personal calculations or ambition. That is why the question "What does Dayı say?" was a question whose answer you knew would bring the correct answer.

For a movement this is a great source of strength and confidence. Where such confidence does not exist, it is impossible to defend great causes, to risk great prices, or to sacrifice one's life without hesitation on the road shown by the leadership.

Dayı was a Leader who walked with determination without deviating, even under the most difficult conditions, from the strategic line determining the road of revolution in our country. In Dayı's understanding of leadership there was no changing one's road in the face of difficulty, no taking refuge in the permission of the oligarchy, no beginning to defend a line acceptable to the system, or at least one that would not draw the system's violence upon itself. History is witness to this; the people are witness. Every cadre and militant is witness. The guidance contained in the answer to the question "What does Dayı say?" is this definite and clear.

Under the conditions of the 12 March and 12 September juntas, many opposite examples were seen. For such “leaderships”, what was decisive was not advancing on the road to revolution, but avoiding enemy attacks on the road they walked and being able to secure a life within the system. In these leadership understandings that we can call reformist-revisionist, theory was produced in order to legitimise their own positions within the system.

In Dayı’s understanding of leadership there was no settling into the system, no living within the system. On the contrary, against the system there was a war not only with weapons but in every ideological, political, cultural and moral field.

As the cadres of the revolutionary movement entered without hesitation into a struggle that created a 38-year history, they always felt and lived this confidence. As in Aşur Korkmaz’s words, “my eyes will not be left behind”, spoken as he set his body alight on 19 December, the heroes who gave their lives in a movement under Dayı’s Leadership did not look back with concern; they were without hesitation certain both of the correctness of the road they walked and that the values they created with their lives were in safe hands.

In short, throughout the history of the revolutionary movement, Dayı created the material basis for the thought “If Dayı says it, it is right” by organising step by step, in all the values and traditions he created, a practice that inspired fear in his enemies and confidence in his friends.

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The Answer to the Question “What Does Dayı Say?” Is the Road of Revolution

With these qualities, Dayı was a leader who did not choose what was easy in the struggle, but who always walked, and made others walk, towards what was right even when it was difficult. The road walked under Dayı’s leadership is the road of revolution. As Mahir also described it, this road is rugged, winding and steep. And in order to walk this road without hesitation, it is necessary to trust without hesitation in the correctness of the road and therefore in Dayı’s leadership.

Here the importance of the thought “If Dayı says it, it is right”, of the confidence a leader creates among cadres and supporters, becomes clear.

On the road shown by Dayı, great prices were paid and great values and traditions could be created.

The tradition of refusing to surrender, grown in sieges with the daring of saying “It is you who should surrender”, the culture of being able to sacrifice oneself on the road of revolution, and the making of heroism into something ordinary were achieved through this confidence. With this confidence, countless actions calling the enemies of the people to account could be carried out. The understanding that “there is no action that cannot be carried out by the fighters and cadres of the revolutionary movement” could be created through this confidence.

In sieges and in attacks directed at forcing the revolution to surrender, the daring of everyone in the ranks of the revolutionary movement, from cadre to supporter, to throw themselves forward without hesitation, and the understanding of pure and clean revolutionism, were created under Dayı’s leadership.

The truth is that asking the question “What Does Dayı Say?” and finding the answer to this question means answering how we will continue our revolutionary march and along which road we will advance. This is the reality of the revolutionary movement that many who have never possessed a genuine Marxist-Leninist leader do not and cannot understand. This reality can only be understood within scientific and revolutionary criteria.

The answer to the question “What Does Dayı Say?” will continue from now on too to illuminate the road of the cadres, fighters and the revolutionary movement. Once again, when determining our direction, we will benefit from Dayı’s guidance. Dayı has physically departed from among us, but his understanding of Leadership is with us. Our Dayı will again show us the road to socialism even if the whole world is in error. We will once again continue to sit in our own Marxist-Leninist chair. Because until today the honour of struggling under Dayı’s guidance has been ours; we learned from him, and we will put what we learned into practice.

(*) This article was published in issue 1 of the magazine YÜRÜYÜŞ Against Imperialism and the Oligarchy, dated 24 August 2008.

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The One Who Paved the Way Through Difficult Periods

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History of Leadership-1

Leadership is not a title that can be bestowed in a single day...

Leadership... is a mission that can be won through a historical process of development. Leadership is not a title that can be bestowed upon anyone in a single day. People can be appointed or elected to a managerial position in a day. But leadership is not such a phenomenon. It is a mission that can be gained through a historical development. In this sense, the best way to know a revolutionary who has acquired this title in history is to see that person within that historical process.

Without doubt, this is also the best way to tell of and understand Dursun Karataş. When we reach back into history, the turning points we encounter will also show us how the title “Leader Comrade Dursun Karataş” came to be attached to him within history.

There is no doubt that Dursun Karataş, with the Kurtuluş Group shaped under his leadership, with Revolutionary Left and the DHKP-C, and with the traditions whose formation he led, is a name that changed the course of the revolutionary struggle in Turkey. In this series of articles, we will try to tell, in its main outlines, this history - the history of leadership.[23]

When Dursun Karataş was martyred, he was serving as General Secretary of the DHKP. The predecessor of the DHKP, as is known, was Revolutionary Left. The history of Revolutionary Left, meanwhile, reaches back to 1973 as the struggle to embrace the legacy of Mahir and his comrades and to rebuild the Party. In other words, the history of Revolutionary Left in reality begins at the point where the organisational existence of the THKP-C came to an end.

That is also where the history of the leadership begins. Because this leadership showed itself first and foremost in the unwavering embrace of the legacy of Mahir and his comrades. And the beginning

23 Kurtuluş: Turkish for “Liberation”; used here in the name of the Kurtuluş Group and in publication titles.

of that embrace was 30 March 1972. The cadres who would first organise the Kurtuluş Group and then Revolutionary Left were the cadres produced by that embrace, and one of them was Dursun Karataş.

Their unwavering embrace of the THKP-C did not remain merely on the theoretical plane; it was an embrace integrated with assuming, with the same lack of hesitation, the tasks of the struggle posed by that period. Although the leading cadres of the THKP-C had been massacred at Kızıldere, what remained behind was not despair and surrender, but a Hope that the masses would follow.

The struggle developed in the Dev-Genç period, followed by the war against the 12 March Junta and then the Kızıldere resistance, had created a powerful Hope. The magnitude of the potential created by this struggle was beyond all predictions and expectations. There was a great potential, and there were sections taking one position or another around this potential. So who were they?

- The oligarchy put Ecevit forward with slogans of changing the system in order to draw this great potential into channels within the system. Ecevit was presented as “Hope”.

- Revisionists and reformists were on the scene: they said Mahir and his comrades were adventurists and had therefore been defeated.

- There were deniers: according to them, the reason for the defeat of Mahir and his comrades was ideological and strategic. A different strategy had to be developed - one centred on the workers, of course, and rejecting armed struggle, of course!

- There were exploiters. They appeared to defend the THKP-C. True, their assessments contained elements amounting to the claim that “the THKP-C was not really a party”, but because open denial would separate them from that potential, they intended to hide their real views and reveal them gradually over time.

- And there were the young, uncompromising defenders of the THKP-C, and among them was Dursun Karataş. Embracing the legacy of the THKP-C was embodied in this group under Dursun Karataş’s leadership. Because, unlike all the others, they had no subjective concerns and no calculations.

After 12 March, a great revolutionary potential had emerged, but in the same period passive theories, discouragement, denial of the cause and liquidationism were also everywhere. And what was striking was that these were widespread not at the base, but among the upper and leading cadres of organisations whose leadership cadres had been massacred. Those “inside”, in particular, were in this condition. The historical role of the young militants who defended the THKP-C therefore acquired even greater importance.

Neither Dayı nor the young militants struggling alongside him possessed, at that time, sufficient ideological and political accumulation. They also faced the methods of revisionism and opportunism, methods that were no less devious than bourgeois manoeuvring. Yet on one question they were clear; with that clarity, they embraced the ideological and practical legacy of the THKP-C.

For a time, Karataş and his comrades waited for the old cadres to intervene in the process and gather together the potential. But they saw that there was no serious initiative in this direction. Life, however, was not waiting. The tasks of the struggle were imposing themselves. It was in this period

that Karataş insistently defended the view that “even if only at a minimum level, an organisation absolutely had to exist”. And before long, he led the taking of practical steps in this direction.

The Front sympathisers who remained scattered until the end of 1973 nevertheless did not waste this period; whatever writings of the THKP-C could be found were read and discussed, copied by hand and reproduced. In one sense this period became a period of learning and assimilating the THKP-C. As they learned, their claims grew.

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The First Step of Leadership

As a result of work aimed at organising the youth potential, the Istanbul Higher Education Association (İYÖKD) was founded in November 1975. Dayı played a major role in the founding of İYÖKD. The process of establishing İYÖKD was at the same time the process in which Dursun Karataş rose to the position of leader of Istanbul’s revolutionary youth.

With his qualities as an organiser and his militancy, he had become a name who was trusted and whose proposals and ideas were listened to. The founding of İYÖKD was also one of the first important periods in which Karataş waged struggles against the “right” and “left” deviations he would frequently confront in later years.

A significant section of the “old” cadres, demoralised by the defeat of 12 March and having lost confidence in themselves, stayed outside the work, saying that such an association could not be founded. Others, from a “left” perspective, claimed that organising in legal associations would “expose people” and that the THKP-C had already been defeated for this reason. İYÖKD was founded through struggle against such right and left objections. As soon as the association was established, the “old” elements and various groups who had not appeared until then did not delay in showing themselves. There were also those who, on the basis of the ready-made potential and ready-made organisation, began laying claim to “leadership”. But it was impossible for these sections, lacking enthusiasm and belief, giving no labour, avoiding paying a price and keeping themselves distant from practice, to fulfil such a mission. For this reason, contrary to the “old” cadres, the more “grass-roots” young militants who were enthusiastic, believing and determined, and among them the cadres who came to the fore, above all Dursun Karataş, would gradually increase their weight.

İYÖKD under the leadership of Party-Front members had a mission and practice far beyond those of a student youth association. The campaign protesting NATO, the campaign for Unconditional Political Freedom for All Political Prisoners, the “Solidarity with the People of the East” campaign after the 1975 Lice earthquake, actions protesting IETT fare increases, the End Privileged and Paid Education campaign, taking a stance against chauvinism over the occupation of Cyprus with the slogan “Independent United Cyprus” in opposition to the “wait and see” attitude of TİP and similar organisations, and boycotts organised in the schools around academic-democratic demands were among İYÖKD’s activities in 1974-75. As can be seen, a struggle of a scope that could only be carried out by a political movement was assumed through the will and daring of the Party-Front members. They did not say, let us wait, organise, institutionalise first. Dayı and the comrades with whom he walked were, in this period, personally involved in and organisers of all the campaigns and actions mentioned here.

İYÖKD - and later İYÖD, which was founded in its place - undertook an important task both in embracing the legacy of the THKP-C and in gathering and organising Party-Front members in that period. It can be said that İYÖKD was also one of the places where revolutionary cadres and leaders were trained through the practice of organisation and struggle. Dursun Karataş, Niyazi Aydın, İbrahim Erdoğan, Sabahat Karataş, Sinan Kukul and Ahmet Fazıl Özdemir, among the cadres who would form the Revolutionary Movement, worked within İYÖKD and İYÖD and served on their executive boards.

As the young Party-Front members developed the struggle, their confidence in themselves grew. Despite the passivists, the deniers and the old cadres, an important mass force was achieved in the anti-imperialist, anti-fascist struggle.

In Dursun Karataş's later accounts, they had reached a level capable of moving tens of thousands of people, entering into clashes, responding to civilian fascist attacks on the basis of revolutionary violence, and feeling the need to reach and organise sections of the people beyond the youth. They learned and taught in the midst of actions and street clashes...

Following the murder by fascists of İYÖKD administrator Şahin Aydın and revolutionary student Kerim Yaman, boycotts were organised at many schools. The Main Building of Istanbul University was occupied, and on this militant line the largest mass mobilisation since 12 March was brought into being. In one sense, these were the first examples of the militant and mass line that would later be embodied in Revolutionary Left and the DHKP-C.

These first powerful resistances after 12 March developed from beginning to end under the initiative of Party-Front members. Under those conditions, boycotts and occupations were organised simultaneously in dozens of schools, and 50,000 people were marched. At the centre of all these developments once again were Dayı and the Party-Front cadres. Within a short time this practice was followed by clashes with the police in Sultanahmet, Topkapı and Kocamustafapaşa at the funeral ceremonies of workers and students murdered by fascists. While opportunist groups left the areas saying "let us not fall for provocation", the Party-Front members built barricades in these clashes, damaged armoured police vehicles with Molotovs, used dynamite for the first time in clashes, and learned and taught street fighting. Of these, the Kocamustafapaşa clash is especially important. The resistance in which Dayı and İbrahim Erdoğan, among the cadres who would form Revolutionary Left, personally participated and gave direction, was a resistance in which the revolutionary movement's initiative, mass character, daring and quality of leadership emerged openly and concretely.

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One Step Further...

The need had imposed itself for an organisation that would include other sections of the people beyond the youth and answer the higher-level needs of the struggle, and once again the same cadres would provide the answer. Under the conditions of that day, the name of this answer was the Kurtuluş Group. Dayı later assessed this name as follows: "At this stage, the point reached by ideological and practical development made us understand the necessity of taking an advanced step beyond the existing democratic organisations and creating different forms of organisation. This understanding enabled us to take our place in the political arena as the KURTULUŞ GROUP." This step, whose full historical and political meaning was not yet visible under the conditions of the day, carried enormous

historical significance. Dayı described the Kurtuluş Group as “the first step in which our Marxist-Leninist movement took shape”. Indeed, while the creation of such an organisation constituted an organised response to direct and indirect attacks seeking to liquidate the THKP line, it also served the formation of the consciousness of power.

If the founding of İYÖKD was one of the first steps in the formation of Dursun Karataş’s leadership position, the formation of the Kurtuluş Group was the next major step. Karataş, who during the İYÖKD process began to be called “Dayı”, was now to a large extent the recognised leader of the Party-Front members who were carrying the struggle forward in practice.

With the Kurtuluş Group, for the first time since Kızıldere a central organisation was created, and central policies concerning the struggle were being developed.

One of the most important things the Kurtuluş Group did in that period was to gather all Mahir’s writings and publish them as a book.

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Leadership Is Tempered in Ideological Struggle

The Party-Front members commemorated Kızıldere with the actions they carried out on 30 March 1975. These actions were a powerful expression of embracing the Kızıldere Manifesto and the THKP-C line. The young Party-Front cadres were clear on this question - but everything around them was confused!

İYÖKD began publishing a magazine called İleri, and the “old” cadres were placed on the Editorial Board. But it soon became clear that they never lifted their heads from debates over “Soviet Social Imperialism”, did not answer the ideological and theoretical demands of the youth, and moreover were covertly spreading denialist and liquidationist views.[24]

Within İYÖKD there were various currents, from TSİP members to THKO supporters, but the burden of practice was always on the shoulders of the Party-Front members. Of course, the Party-Front members did not complain about this. They had themselves shouldered that burden. But neither were they slow to notice attempts to settle upon the Party-Front potential created through their struggle. With each passing day it became clearer that nothing would come from the “old” cadres mentioned above.

A group of former leading cadres of the THKP-C sent an eight-page text out from prison and “literally left the revolutionary militants stunned”. These deniers, who would later be called the “Eight-Pagers”, were in the literal sense spreading poison.

Meanwhile, it became clear that some former Party-Front cadres outside, who were expected to oppose and struggle against them, had little intention of doing so. Their failure to do what was expected of them may have been a negative development, but in another respect this process also had to be lived through so that faces could be revealed. Faces and colours were becoming clear; those without the intention, strength or will to walk on the Front line were leaving one by one for ideological or other reasons. The denialist “old guard”, the “Eight-Pagers”, and many of the rightist elements who until then had remained within the Party-Front group in pursuit of careers, departed.

24 İleri: Turkish for “Forward”; here the title of a magazine.

The Party-Front members were left under the leadership of young and inexperienced militants, and the opportunists and revisionists calculated that they could influence this mass. But their calculations failed. Because Dursun Karataş and the other young Party-Front cadres succeeded both in giving direction to practice and in drawing ideological discussions towards the fundamental questions of the struggle. Many revolutionary militants who struggled on the road of Mahir and his comrades also supported this new and young leadership whom they saw personally beside them in practice. The brochure published later, in 1978, during the formation of Revolutionary Left summarised this period as follows:

“For years we waited for people from outside ourselves, coming from the previous movement, who would lead us through their theory and practice. The first to come rejected the previous movement, organised a view called Halkın Yolu and went to the PDA. The second came, organised a movement under the name Acil and chose focoism. The third came, organised a movement called KSD and are moving towards the swamp of revisionism.

“... while these separations were taking place, despite our political inexperience and theoretical inadequacy, we succeeded in remaining standing. And although we lacked serious political relations, many people, in the face of these separations, defended the essential determinations and revolutionary line of the previous movement. Every militant comrade who sympathised with the movement has an equal share in this achievement.” (Liquidationism in the DY Movement and the Revolutionary Line)

Leadership was first of all to remain standing against all deviations and to hold tightly to the ideology of the THKP-C. Dayı was one of the key people in achieving this during that period. In the second step, leadership was the daring to take the necessary steps without waiting for anything from anyone any longer. From İYÖKD onwards this daring had also been shown, and the name of that daring at the time was Dursun Karataş.

Those who, with the attitude “we are old, we know”, tried to push the young Party-Front cadres aside were themselves pushed aside by life and the struggle, and from then on the movement would be developed by Dursun Karataş and the Party-Front cadres under his leadership. The first period of the process extending from the Kurtuluş Group to the Revolutionary People’s Liberation Party-Front took shape in this way. In this process, every step was followed by other, stronger steps. No march on any road that had been taken was left unfinished.

(*) This article was published in issue 1 of the magazine YÜRÜYÜŞ Against Imperialism and the Oligarchy, dated 24 August 2008.

The One Who Paved the Way Through Difficult Periods-2

Time to Part Ways

Neither Later, Nor Earlier

A leader cannot rush; a leader cannot act before the conditions have matured. And when the moment to act has arrived, a leader can no longer delay that departure. A leader becomes a leader by being able to grasp that historical moment and take the necessary position at that historical moment.

The separation that took place in 1978 was precisely such a historical moment. And because Dursun Karataş was the one who, at that historical moment - neither earlier nor later - took that historical position, he would enter history with the title of leader.

Each of the “old” cadres who came out of prison in 1974 had tried to pull the potential in a different direction. Groups such as Acil, Halkın Yolu, KSD and MLSPB appeared one after another. Some openly denied the Party-Front line, while others, under the appearance of defending it, put into practice a line that had nothing whatsoever to do with it.

At this stage, when various groups were emerging, the uncompromising defenders of the Front line began to be called Dev-Genç members in the political arena. Despite the attempts of the old cadres to pull them this way and that, this group never deviated from its line, opposed the distortion of the THKP-C through “right” and “left” interpretations, and around them an organisation loyal to the Party-Front line was gradually taking shape.

The young revolutionary militants in Istanbul who were part of this group were also in contact with the Dev-Genç members in Ankara and the “old” cadres who directed them. But this relationship was largely spontaneous and loose, and far from meeting the expectations of the young Party-Front cadres and militants. So much so that the “old” cadres in Ankara not only failed to answer the ideological attacks directed at the THKP-C line from various quarters, but also avoided organising practice. Indeed, as a result of this ideological and practical sluggishness, they were unable to prevent a fairly broad section in Ankara that sympathised with the THKP-C from drifting into opportunist ranks. Yet despite all this, the Dev-Genç members in Istanbul wanted to preserve their confidence in the Dev-Genç cadres in Ankara and maintain the unity of the Dev-Genç members.

As a result of the meetings and discussions held in this direction, agreement was reached on “establishing a central federation like the old Dev-Genç organisation and securing ideological unity”. In parallel with the steps to be taken on these two points, the movement would move towards becoming a Party. As one of the steps in this direction, the magazine Devrimci Gençlik began to be published in 1975. The magazine stated very clearly: “The question of the Party remains our fundamental question.” In this sense, the process was called the “process of becoming a Party” by all Dev-Genç members. But how was this process to be lived? There was agreement on calling it a “process of becoming a Party”, but the way the process was lived in Ankara and Istanbul was different.

Architect and Militant of the Anti-Fascist Struggle

In 1975-78, the struggle against fascist occupations came to the fore. While the left was not yet organised, fascist terror had virtually occupied some schools and dormitories. The left was confronting such a phenomenon on this scale for the first time. Both the extent of civilian fascist terror and the phenomenon of schools and dormitories being occupied were new, and how to struggle against this situation was one of the most important questions facing the left at the time. In the Turkey of that day, Dayı came to the fore through the answer he gave to this question, through the understanding of struggle he proposed and led on this issue.

When the schools opened at the end of 1976, İYÖD proposed to all groups a programme of struggle against the occupations.

At first almost everyone accepted this proposal, but when the schools opened, practice did not conform to theory. Most of the left was prepared neither organisationally nor ideologically for an anti-fascist struggle that had to be conducted tooth for tooth. Dev-Genç undertook this task alone. In many places the occupations were broken and attempts to occupy schools and neighbourhoods were thwarted. Under the conditions of the time, Dayı was the architect of this daring policy.

He held the view that fascist terror could be confronted not by classical mass work, but through a militant understanding of struggle, and life was confirming this understanding. Let us also add that Dayı was not only the architect of this policy, but one of its militants. With a weapon at his waist, he ran from one school to another and, together with his comrades, took responsibility for the security of the masses.

Having won the confidence of the masses, Dev-Genç was in the leadership of the associations established in almost all the schools. But the horizon of Dayı and the other Party-Front cadres was not limited to the schools. Through the interventions of the Party-Front members, organisation soon began to spread into neighbourhoods and factories. The Dev-Genç organisation was reshaped accordingly and the struggle against fascist terror began to be carried out in a more developed and integrated way.

One: the unity of the Party-Front members; two: the launching of a conscious organisational process; and three: securing ideological unity still remained the most fundamental tasks.

There were Revolutionary Youth organisations in various provinces of Anatolia. In November 1976, the DGDF (Federation of Revolutionary Youth Associations) was established with the participation of İYÖD, AYÖD (Ankara Higher Education Association) and EYÖD (Erzurum Higher Education Association), and associations in many provinces also joined the federation.

DGDF spread rapidly as an organisation answering the Party-Front potential's demand for organisation. But the existing relations were far from answering the Party-Front members' other demands. For example, the Ankara faction, which controlled the magazine Devrimci Gençlik, remained far from a publishing line that would secure ideological unity and continued to publish articles on general, routine subjects.

The continuing practice, meanwhile, pointed to obvious differences in understanding the ideology of the THKP-C. The difference in the understanding of anti-fascist struggle was clear.

In theory, the line of “active defence” was defended in the anti-fascist struggle, but in practice the Ankara group implemented a passive, defensive line. In provinces such as Istanbul, Bursa, Tekirdağ, Edirne and Konya, where the understanding of the Party-Front members under Dayı’s leadership was put into practice, serious resistance was organised against fascist terror and fascist terror was forced to retreat. Everywhere the rightist understanding of the Ankara faction was influential, above all in Ankara, retreats were experienced in the face of fascist terror.

In Dayı’s words: “Although in appearance... we were together with the Ankara DG Group led by the old cadres, in essence the practice in Ankara and Istanbul and their approaches to problems had continued in different ways.” On one side were the “old” cadres. On the other were the “new”, “young” cadres, among them Dayı.

While one side - the old cadres - resorted to bourgeois manoeuvring, it was again the young cadres who showed maturity and safeguarded the unity of the Party-Front members. Dayı describes this period as follows: “From the day our relations with this group began, its bureaucratic, legalistic, spontaneous right line, always imposing what it knew, looking down from above and belittling the younger generation, revealed itself immediately in many questions and approaches. Nevertheless, with the understanding that ideological unity would take a certain time and that different ideas and approaches would be overcome in time, we chose the road of struggle without abandoning common sense and maturity.” But this maturity and self-sacrifice of the young Party-Front members was being neutralised as it struck against the walls of bureaucrats shaped by longings for the system, where revolutionary politics had been replaced by bourgeois politicking.

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The Historical Moment Draws Near, Step by Step

For a long time, the Istanbul group maintained the view that the differences between itself and Ankara could be overcome, while the Ankara faction regarded those in Istanbul as “left-minded” and tried to liquidate them.

The Devrimci Yol Declaration issued in April 1977 with the aim of creating a more conscious, more centralised organisation did not solve the problems either. Because even the Declaration, which had been agreed would be issued with the “joint approval” of the organisations in Ankara and Istanbul, was from the very beginning rushed through and published by the Ankara faction before the discussions had ended. Differences over issues such as the assessment of the past, the national question and Vanguard War remained unresolved.

The first issue of Devrimci Yol magazine appeared on 1 May 1977. The problem continued: Devrimci Yol magazine openly avoided writing about and discussing the theses of the THKP-C, filling its pages with general theoretical articles instead.

In reality, the issue was this: if they began writing about and discussing the THKP-C theses, their denialism would be exposed. Years later, some of DY’s leading cadres of that time would make the following admissions: “Our preference on this or that theoretical issue did not constitute our point of distinction from other political currents. If it had been something else, that too could have been worn.” (Taner Akçam)

“... From the beginning we never had an outlook saying that these, these and these views are our creed and that they will be realised.” (Melih Pekdemir)

At the time, however, in response to criticisms that “you are moving towards denying the THKP-C”, they went to extraordinary lengths to prove that this was not so. But life was gradually making their denialism impossible to conceal. In this situation, the Party-Front members now faced a new choice; they had to make a decision.

The passive line defended in the anti-fascist struggle, spontaneity in organisation, silence regarding the theses of the THKP-C, and the rightist outlook on cadre development could not be reconciled with the Front line and tradition. The Party-Front members would not accept these things. Parting ways with the denialism of the Ankara faction had now become a task.

History would judge the young Party-Front cadres according to whether they could take this step. At this moment, when history would pass judgement, Dursun Karataş stood on the stage of history as the leader of the young Party-Front members. The “Dayı” of the Party-Front members would become the decisive figure of this historical moment.

The decision Dayı would make at that moment in history was so important and decisive that whether “the ideology of the THKP-C would be kept alive or not” would be determined by this decision.

The process they had lived through since Kızıldere had taught them many things. They would make their decision with this accumulated experience.

In February 1978, Dayı and the other leading cadres went to Ankara to discuss matters one last time and try to find a solution to the problems. When these discussions produced no result, they informed the Ankara faction that they were “suspending their duties” and returned to Istanbul. In the same month, a meeting was held at the İTÜ-DER premises with forty cadres from the student youth, the neighbourhoods, the workers’ sector and other areas who were carrying the struggle forward in Istanbul. At this meeting, all the cadres declared that they supported Dayı’s decision to continue and keep alive the THKP-C line, and they themselves immediately proposed giving up their duties. Dayı opposed this because suspending the duties of these cadres, who were shouldering the struggle in every sphere of life, would create a weakness in the struggle against fascism; a stand would be taken against liquidationism, but at the same time the struggle would continue!

An incident from the period when these discussions with the Ankara faction were continuing is extremely striking. The Ankara faction was doing nothing in terms of armed struggle, but neither did it refrain from exploiting the sympathy created by the militant practice in Istanbul. For this reason, DY sympathisers in Anatolia did not really “doubt” that DY defended armed struggle and the THKP-C. But in February 1978, when the previously planned military actions in the 19 February campaign were halted after the leading cadres suspended their duties, Turkey fell into silence. This silence was in fact an indicator of the denialism and passivity of the Ankara faction, and, on the other hand, of Dayı’s daring in leadership. After all, there was no powerful organisation in existence, yet the young Front cadres had dared to raise the armed struggle. Was this not leadership? Could there be a leadership that acted only when it found everything perfectly prepared?

A Separation Shaped by Dayı's Patience, Seriousness and Discipline

In the end, the decision was made, that historical initiative was taken, and the separation from the liquidationists was declared; from then on, the Party-Front members would continue the struggle under the name Revolutionary Left.

The Revolutionary Left separation was, in many respects, a first and an example on the Turkish left. In the way the separation took shape, one can see the distinctive aspects of Dayı's style of leadership. "Despite all the disadvantages and situations that were difficult to endure, the maximum patience and flexibility that had to be shown were shown; throughout the entire process organisational discipline and the requirements of the struggle were not violated; conduct was always principled and open; and when the point had been reached where no one could any longer say 'this too should have been done'... the separation was brought onto the agenda at the correct moment, without ever resorting to conspiracies or traps, in a completely revolutionary manner."

During the period of separation, various circles could say, "there are no differences on fundamental views." But not even six months after the separation these views changed; there were clearly two different lines. Indeed, all the time that followed proved not only how deep-rooted and necessary the separation had been, but also how vital and correct it had been in opening the road of the Turkish revolution. This revolutionary separation was also the turning point at which the peoples and revolutionaries of Turkey gave Dayı the title of leader, never to take it back again.

Dayı's becoming almost a symbol of principles, patience and determination under conditions of being left alone also goes back to this period.

Confronted with the mass character and shattering force of the revolutionary movement's separation, the denialist, liquidationist DY sought help from provocations and armed attacks. With the support of some groups on the left, they tried to prevent the revolutionary movement from being accepted onto any platform. They attempted to impose a "ban on politics". But none of this could stop the flow of history. The revolutionary cadres under Dayı's leadership continued, firmly and patiently, to organise a new movement without abandoning principles and without falling into the whirlpool of violence within the left or provocations.

A new leadership was taking shape together with a new organisation. The leading cadres who gave direction to the ideological, organisational and political formation of the revolutionary movement came together and intervened in the question of separation, clarification and reorganisation. This process was on the one hand a process of organisation, and on the other a process in which the leadership of the movement became clarified. It was a process in which the Revolutionary Left leadership became distinct through its policies, its practical and organisational interventions and its fusion with the cadres; and in which, against the inadequacies and unhealthy aspects of various elements who had come to the fore during the spontaneous period, the leadership assumed a historical mission as the guarantee of the movement.

The meeting held at the end of 1978, which can also be called the "founding meeting of Revolutionary Left", had a decisive importance in shaping this process. The 20 December Decisions determined at this meeting became the decisions that shaped the development of the movement. Notes written in the Revolutionary Left leader's own hand at that meeting reveal the importance of

these decisions: “In an environment where the THKP/C has divided into a series of groups, we are face to face with the problem of organising a political movement. The creation of a genuine party is first and foremost a cadre problem. ... however much Marxist-Leninist theory may stand before us, without cadres it means nothing... the urgent problem is the cadre problem.”

Dayı assessed the process concretely, objectively and without allowing any exaggeration, acting with the foresight that a revolutionary movement would be brought forth from this objective environment and the existing cadre material. In this stance there was neither surrender to objectivity nor perfectionism; but the claim to organise a revolutionary movement, move towards becoming a Party and put PASS into practice was clear and definite. Those who said, “first let us organise”, always remained behind life in that process. Those who belittled organisation and dreamed of achieving great results through a few actions soon disappeared as well. What remained was the revolutionary movement shaped by correct revolutionary leadership; despite all its deficiencies, weaknesses and inadequacies, a revolutionary organisation would be founded, develop and grow stronger in the war against fascism. The leadership had foreseen this, put it into practice, and this was how history was written...

(*) This article was published in issue 7 of the magazine HALK GERÇEĞİ, dated 31 August 2008.[25]

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The One Who Paved the Way Through Difficult Periods-3

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Daring, Resistance, War

It was 1978. There was now a revolutionary movement in the arena of class struggle in our country that had declared that, against denialism and liquidationism, it would walk on the road of the Çayans. In a short time, this movement would show through its understanding of struggle and cadre development, its style of work, forms of action and, of course, its leadership and style of leadership that it was a different kind of organisation.

One of the fields in which this difference showed itself most clearly was daring in the anti-fascist struggle. The Gültepe raid, carried out in the first days of the revolutionary movement’s organisation, was one of the first major actions in which the daring of Dayı and the movement revealed itself. This action in October 1978 was the largest revolutionary military action carried out in our country up to that time. In the action, carried out by twenty-five militants, actions were organised simultaneously at many points in the neighbourhood; raids and punishments were carried out. In the process that followed, the neighbourhood was liberated from occupation.

With the same daring, FTKSMEs and SDBs were later formed. There was no practical precedent for these before them. Dayı brought these organisations onto the agenda by rejecting the schematic approach of asking “Was it in Mahir or not?”, by rejecting the style of work of the status-quo left that was still trying to carry the process forward through classical mass work, and by placing complete confidence in the militants trained by Dev-Genç. With the same daring, raids on police stations that were torture centres, and actions against figures such as the Customs and Monopoly Minister, the fascist chief Gün Sazak, and former prime minister Nihat Erim, were later brought onto the agenda. These forms of action too were firsts in the history of the revolutionary struggle in our country in terms

25 Halk Gerçeği: Turkish for “People’s Truth”; the title of a magazine/publication.

of their form, targets and content. Think of it: in a country without a very old or widespread tradition of armed struggle, it was difficult even to imagine military operations such as raids on neighbourhoods, on the headquarters of imperialist companies, or on police stations. Dayı, whose dreams always ran ahead of everyone else's, did not merely imagine these things; he also commanded their implementation.

The revolutionary movement was the first and only revolutionary movement to enter into open struggle against state terror.

So what was the material basis of this daring? It was a daring nourished by ideology and the strategic line, and deriving its strength from the claim to power. This is the explanation of why Dayı's style of leadership was shaped by daring under every condition.

Here the mission of leadership revealed itself: in Dayı's understanding of leadership there was no surrender to the inadequacy of subjective conditions or the limitations of possibilities. Otherwise, the line of action exemplified above could not have been possible. Moreover, in a process in which civilian fascist terror, as in Maraş, had risen to the level of mass massacre and state terror had been brought increasingly into play, it was essential to take new and bold steps in struggle, organisation and forms of action. These would be the measure of whether a movement and its leadership had fulfilled their duties before history.

The growing tasks could be fulfilled only through a stronger and more central organisation. In Dayı's words: "Even if its future was uncertain, a central organisation was essential." With this understanding, at the meeting of advanced cadres held at the end of 1978, a temporary central structure including Dayı was created and named the "Organisation Committee". The "temporary" character of the structure was a requirement of the period. The members of the Organisation Committee had come to the fore spontaneously in the struggle and, to one degree or another, carried within themselves the characteristics of the spontaneous period. Life would eliminate those within this structure who could not develop themselves, and Dayı's leadership, which would stamp not only that period but decades, would become clearer with each passing day.

Some ignored the rapid, mass and militant development of the revolutionary movement; others tried to belittle this development by calling it a "youth movement" and to portray the movement as consisting merely of "three or five armed activists" and a focoist line. Yet within a period approaching three years, the movement had organised itself in every sphere of life and among every section of the people, and had institutionalised itself on every front of the struggle, from publishing and culture and art to military organisation.

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A Movement Like a Building Site

Of course there were many problems and inadequacies in organising a new movement. Above all, there were illnesses and weaknesses carried over from the Devrimci Yol period. Spontaneity and legalism were characteristics seen in many cadres. But Dayı was confident in himself and confident in the cadres. "With this material, we have to build cadres and organisation and leap to a higher level," he said in those days, and that is what he would do.

One of the clearest differences in Dayı's style of leadership under the conditions of that day was his policy of trusting young cadres. This policy was so obvious that it could be clearly seen whenever

the responsible and leading people of the revolutionary movement and other political movements came together in various fields. Some even tried to use this to belittle the revolutionary movement as a “youth movement”. Quite apart from the fact that almost the whole of the Turkish left’s cadre base at the time had largely come from the youth, the presence of much younger people among the revolutionary movement’s leaders and responsible cadres was a result of the policy of Dayı that we have mentioned, and in fact Dayı continued this policy until the end. In this respect Dayı was also a master at employing, in one way or another, everyone who had something to do for the revolution and wanted to do it, despite all their deficiencies and weaknesses.

He did not compromise with deficiencies and weaknesses; but he trusted the people, trusted the cadres, and always gave another chance to one who had fallen... Under the conditions of that day, when the revolutionary movement was still in its infancy, this was undoubtedly even more necessary. A movement was being built step by step. There were no settled institutions. Everyone, beginning with the leading and administrative cadres, ran from action to action. When necessary, leading cadres went even to the smallest tasks. Military actions and theoretical work were intertwined. On one hand associations were being founded, on the other FTKSMEs. One day the plan for a demonstration was being prepared; the next, plans for gecekondu neighbourhoods were being drawn up with the participation of Dev-Genç members. And Dayı was in all of this, right at the centre of it. For example, Dayı’s labour was present in almost every stage of the building of the neighbourhood known today as Nurtepe in Istanbul, whose real name is Çayan Mahallesi. Together with his comrades in the neighbourhood and the gecekondu people, Dayı sat down and planned where the houses and roads should be, and where space should be set aside for a park.

Dayı always regarded an organisation as a structure resembling a building site. In a country where the struggle between revolution and counter-revolution is so sharp and harsh, this is only natural: on the one hand there are arrests, martyrdoms and weaknesses, while on the other new organisations are established, and so it continues. That building site is the place where the revolution is organised, the heart and headquarters of the revolution. And if there is a skilled site foreman, nothing can prevent that headquarters from organising the revolution and continuing the revolutionary march. It is thanks to this master that our march has not been stopped until today.

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A Fighter of Ideological Struggle

While carrying out a separation based on principles, rules and a genuine ideological foundation, the revolutionary movement conducted a persistent and comprehensive ideological struggle. Ideological struggle continued both through mass discussions and through publications. During the period of separation from Devrimci Yol, Revolutionary Left cadres organised mass discussions in every province and district they could reach. These discussions too were a first on the left. They reflected the leadership’s ideological and practical self-confidence. Indeed, the mass discussions generally created an atmosphere favourable to Revolutionary Left. For this reason, Devrimci Yol liquidationism later obstructed and sabotaged these discussions in many places.

In the same period, the revolutionary movement continued its ideological struggle through brochures and books published one after another: Liquidationism and the Revolutionary Line, Kurdistan and the Kurdish Question in Turkey, THKP-C and Two Deviations, and On the Question of Unity were published.

Dayı continued Mahir's tradition in ideological struggle. Ideology and theory were "for making revolution in the Turkey of the world". That is why, when debates about social imperialism filled the scene after 1974, despite his inexperience and his inadequacies in terms of ideological and political grounding, Dayı saw that this was not a debate serving the revolution and became one of those who directed the discussion towards the strategy of revolution. In every later period too, for example, instead of the fundamental priority questions of the struggle, he did not give value to discussions detached from practice on issues such as Kemalism or the women's question; he did not enter into polemics or theoretical speculation that did not serve the struggle. But when the road of revolution and the style of revolutionism were at stake, he carried on an unwearying and uninterrupted ideological struggle. When necessary, he did not hesitate to write and discuss the same things over and over again. Dayı stood against every deviation on the Turkish left and every deterioration in the understanding of revolutionism. He directed the cadres and publications of the revolutionary movement accordingly. We can say that he was an unseen fighter who appeared everywhere against every kind of degeneration and distortion on the left.

Ideological education and struggle always held an important place in Dayı's life of leadership. Even when he was leading the first organisation, one of the first tasks undertaken was reproducing Mahir's Kesintisiz by stencil, which shows the importance he attached to ideology. While the old cadres dragged their feet, the Front members, under the limited conditions of the day, carried out work such as leaflets, bulletins, posters and stamps. All these activities played a major role in the ideological education and development of the youth movement. They helped establish Party-Front theory and literature. When Dayı's history of leadership is followed, it can be seen that at every historical turning point there was a publication symbolising that turning point; Dayı either wrote these himself or they were written under his direction and supervision.

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What Dayı Taught the Left About Violence Within the Left

Until the Revolutionary Left separation, Devrimci Yol had not included the theses of the THKP-C in its publications and had hidden its denialist, liquidationist views. After the separation, it began to reveal these views more openly. This was nothing other than the confirmation of the concerns and criticisms of Dayı and his comrades, and therefore the historical confirmation of the correctness of the separation he had led. While efforts were made to belittle the separation with the demagogy of "three or five careerists" and portray it as if it were a "personal" matter, the denialism in the ranks of DY was exposed, and Dayı's foresight and leadership thus passed the test of history.

In the very first period of its organisation and development, the revolutionary movement came face to face with the negative phenomenon called "violence within the left". First there were attacks by DY. Then cadres of the revolutionary movement such as Kemal KARACA, Turgut İPÇİOĞLU and Mehmet BÜÇKÜN were killed by "left" groups. At those moments, Dayı's historical role and determining influence revealed themselves once again.

Until then, there were not many examples on the left of conflicts within the left reaching the point of killing. Therefore, there was little theoretical or practical accumulated experience from which to answer the question of what revolutionary policy should be in this field. When Kemal Karaca was murdered in April 1977, the first reaction of cadres and militants was that the necessary response should be given. "No!" said Dayı. He gave the instruction that there would be no retaliation in the same form, that is, by killing. The movement would not become a party to violence within the left that

harmed the struggle of the people. Through this approach, the seeds of a new tradition were being planted on the left.

If a retaliatory response had been given, it would probably have satisfied more, at that time, the supporter base that did not yet possess much accumulation or consciousness on this question. And that would have been the easiest and shortest route. But what distinguishes a leader is precisely this: policy is determined not merely by the wishes of the base of a movement, but by taking into account the interests of the people and the revolution.

Of course, violence directed against cadres of the revolutionary movement would not be left unanswered. Again with a policy shaped by Dayı's proposal, the attitude was developed of exposing and isolating in every sphere of life those who shed revolutionary blood, and this attitude proved quite effective.

In later years, violence within the left, which outside the revolutionary movement dragged along an important section of the left and caused unlimited harm to the people and the revolution, would repeatedly prove the importance and value of Dayı's policy and that it was the only policy carrying responsibility towards the people and the revolution...

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History's New Test

The greatest threat facing the people and revolutionaries was fascist terror. The revolutionary movement said: "Fascist terror, official and civilian, is a material force. And a material force can only be fought by a material force."

At the end of 1978 the Maraş massacre had taken place, and issue 2 of Dev-Genç magazine appeared under the headline "Let Us Put Revolutionary Violence Against Fascist Terror".

The clarity of these determinations was a direct reflection of Dayı's style and became the style and language of the revolutionary movement. Those who want to evade the tasks imposed by the struggle hide behind the convoluted expressions of theory. The style of those determined in resistance and war under every condition, however, is open and clear. We learned this from Dayı.

Immediately after the Maraş massacre, martial law was declared. Faced with martial law, the left faltered both politically and strategically. Some said it was necessary to wait and see against whom the martial law declared by Ecevit would be directed; some disappeared in order not to become targets; others withdrew within the limits of the system in the name of protecting positions. In the end, they avoided a practice that would neutralise martial law - and that could, of course, carry great costs.

The revolutionary movement, however, confronted martial law with daring. Far from retreating, it developed the armed struggle. At the time Dev-Genç magazine wrote: "The arrival of martial law cannot postpone the completion of the process of becoming a Party or the application of revolutionary violence against fascist terror; on the contrary, these are more necessary than yesterday." This attitude of "resistance and struggle under every condition" is one of the most determining traditions Dayı added to the history of the revolutionary movement - and, of course, it will always remain so.

What had to be done was clear. The army had issued a memorandum, and what would follow was more or less clear as well. But while revisionism and reformism were still pursuing policies tied to the CHP, groups such as Devrimci Yol, Kurtuluş and Halkın Kurtuluşu were also hiding their passivity behind certain mass movements.

Everyone had an answer, of course. So did the Revolutionary Movement.

The Revolutionary Movement declared its position, in the days immediately following the coup, with the leaflet entitled “THE AMERICANIST FASCIST JUNTA WILL NOT DEFEAT 45 MILLION PEOPLE”.

As stated in the declaration recounting Dayı’s life, it was Dayı himself who wrote this historic leaflet. Once again he armed himself with daring and, rather than leave his people alone with the oppression of fascism, he risked every kind of price.

Together with the leaflet, the revolutionary movement also called on all progressive and revolutionary movements to raise the struggle against the junta. In making this call, of course, it would itself be the first to carry out what it said. And that is what happened. The title of the leaflet written by Dayı also became the name of the revolutionary movement’s first campaign against the junta. While the campaign “The Americanist Fascist Junta Will Not Defeat 45 Million People” was being conducted, the revolutionary movement was naturally subjected to intense attacks. In an environment where almost the whole left had withdrawn from the arena, the revolutionary movement was virtually in hand-to-hand combat with the junta. In operations carried out by the junta, cadres including Dayı were arrested. This was the first major organisational blow suffered by the revolutionary movement. But the struggle would continue.

While the revolutionary movement continued its resistance to the junta under a new Central Committee led by Niyazi Aydın, a new struggle was beginning for Dayı under conditions of captivity. There was no doubt that he would become the master and leader of that struggle too, one with which he was already familiar...

(*) This article was published in Yeni KURTULUŞ magazine, dated 7 September 2008.

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The One Who Paved the Way Through Difficult Periods-4

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In Every Field and Under Every Condition...

The Leader of the revolutionary movement had been taken prisoner. Whether outside or inside, resistance to the junta would continue. The policy was clear on this point. This was also the task placed upon all revolutionaries by the leaflet written by Dayı declaring the invincibility of the people. As the struggle outside receded, the burden and role of the prisons objectively came to the fore.

The daring to make an accounting and confront mistakes: while on the one hand resistance was carried out against the junta’s oppression in the prisons, on the other hand an attempt was made to assess the past so that the movement could overcome its existing situation. At the beginning of 1983 this assessment was completed and published as a brochure entitled The Development of Our Movement and the Revolutionary Struggle.

This was the first central assessment made on the left after the junta. The brochure, produced as a result of discussions directed by Dayı, set out the reasons for the decline of the struggle and organisation after 12 September, identified deficiencies and weaknesses, and stated that DESPITE ALL THIS, continuing the resistance to the junta was the fundamental task of the period.

The making of this central assessment points to two characteristics of Dayı. The first is never to cover over problems. As a result, while the great majority of the left tended constantly to postpone assessments and reckonings into the future or never put them on the agenda at all, under those conditions the revolutionary movement showed the daring to evaluate itself. At the beginning of the brochure there was also this statement by Lenin: “Frankly admitting an error, ascertaining the reasons for it, analysing the conditions that gave rise to it, and carefully examining the means of correcting it - these are the signs of a serious party.”

Dayı’s daring to carry out such an assessment under those conditions, despite all the problems it might bring with it, was the result of this seriousness.

The second characteristic of Dayı embodied in this brochure was preserving the perspective of taking power however negative the conditions. No deficiency could be made into a reason for failing to assume the tasks of resistance to fascism. This was another emphasis of the brochure. Whether the junta’s policy of forcing surrender in the prisons succeeded or not would be one of the factors determining the future. To the extent that prisoners could be forced to surrender, revolutionaries would be humiliated in the eyes of the people, belief and Hope in revolution would be destroyed, and demoralisation would be made dominant in the ranks of revolutionaries. The “final blow” against the revolutionary movement, which had been largely pushed back outside, would be struck from the prisons. This was the objective reality that increased the role and importance of the prisons. The assessments made under Dayı’s leadership concerning the general situation in the country and the policies shaped concerning the prisons undoubtedly entered history as among the most accurate assessments and policies of this period.

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A Leader Who Lay Down to Die

In November 1983, elections were held within the framework of the junta’s manoeuvres of “civilianisation”, and ANAP came to power as a result. The revolutionary movement assessed that after the elections open fascism would continue in an institutionalised form. Indeed, the policies of the Özal government soon confirmed this. Those who expected civilianisation and a return to democracy saw that the Özal government continued its attacks as a civilian junta. The prisons were among the places where the attacks were most severe. The increase in attacks required the resistance to be raised to a higher level. The proposals made by Revolutionary Left prisoners again collided with the status-quoism of the left. And beyond status-quoism, theories legitimising new retreats were now on the agenda.

At this point, the Revolutionary Left prisoners decided on a Hunger Strike and Death Fast. Only TİKB prisoners responded positively to another call made to the left, and the resistance began in Metris on 12 April. Despite attacks, on its forty-fifth day the action was turned into a Death Fast.

On 29 May, the first Death Fast team, selected from among dozens of volunteers, was announced over the exercise-yard loudspeakers. It was the list everyone was waiting for with curiosity, the list of

those who would split the darkness like lightning. Abdullah Meral was among them. Haydar Başbağ, Hasan Telci. There were some of the movement's most experienced cadres, such as Şaban Şen and İbrahim Erdoğan... And there was Dayı, the Leader of Revolutionary Left. In the Death Fast resistance organised against the junta, Dayı, as always, was like a commander on the battlefield, at the head of his fighters, at the very front. It must be said that neither the oligarchy nor the left expected this. That is why, when the Death Fast team was announced, it surprised everyone in this respect.

It was normal for the enemy to think in this way because of its own understanding of a "leader". On the left too, because theories of "protecting the cadres" were then fashionable as one of the main justifications for passivity, Dayı's lying down to die was beyond what they could comprehend. But Revolutionary Left prisoners were not surprised. They were accustomed to seeing their Leader in the foremost positions of the struggle.

Dayı was undoubtedly everything to this movement. But he did not think, "if I am not here, the movement cannot exist." As he lay down to die, as a Marxist-Leninist he had endless faith that the struggle would continue and that his comrades would carry on the revolutionary march. He trusted his comrades so deeply that he left the authority to decide whether the Death Fast would end or continue - and therefore whether he himself would die - to cadres who had deliberately not been placed on the Death Fast. This period is particularly important in understanding Dayı's development. The facts lived through in the 1984 Death Fast process alone make it possible to see even more concretely what kind of leader Dayı was, how his leadership was formed step by step within life, and how it created such great confidence.

Four martyrs were given in the Death Fast. Through the resistance, the oligarchy's policies in the prisons were disrupted.

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The Strategist of the War in the Courts

It can be said that 1988 was one of the most intense periods theoretically and ideologically for the prisoners in the Revolutionary Left case. The Free Prisoners prepared a comprehensive "defence" to be read in the Main Case. This defence, called We Are Right, We Will Win, took shape as a result of months of discussion involving hundreds of prisoners. The Defence was, in one sense, the ideological war of the revolution against the system. And, as can easily be guessed, the commander of this war was Dayı. Dozens of groups were formed; through an intensive process of reading, research and discussion they prepared different sections of the Defence, while Dayı directed the clashes at every position like a strategist. Every section that was prepared ultimately passed through Dayı's approval and supervision.

The preparation process of the Defence created an example of internal democracy and collectivism within the organisation that had not previously been experienced on the left. In a later assessment Dayı said: "These discussions, under the ideological bombardment of imperialism and 12 September fascism, enabled our ideological unity to be developed by raising it to a higher level." (Congress Documents 1, p. 91)

It must also be added that the trial phase of the Revolutionary Left Main Case took place as a complete war of wills. In the Defence, which began with refusing to accept the rules of fascism and

extended to putting the system itself on trial, every word and every stance in the courtroom was part of a war; through his leadership of this war in the courtroom, Dayı added very bright pages to the tradition of resistance of the Turkish left. “We Are Right, We Will Win” was the title of the Defence. Then, when the Defence was published as a book, it became the book’s name. But it did not remain there: these two words became a slogan shouted in the actions of all working people, proclaiming legitimacy and being right. In the same period, the hunger strikes that entered the people’s agenda through the prisons quickly became a weapon of resistance in the hands of the masses. All these facts entered our history as indisputable examples of how a movement whose leading and administrative cadres had largely been imprisoned could make major contributions to the revolutionary struggle even from the prisons.

Was this not leadership after all: to be able to assume that mission in every field and under every condition?!

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Persistence Embodied in the Escape

In 1988-90, with the youth resistance of April 1988, the worker actions that began with the Netaş and Migros strikes of 1987 and continued with the spring actions of 1989, the civil-servant actions of 1989-90, and the struggles of the gecekondu poor who virtually rose to their feet again throughout 1988, 1989 and 1990, the class struggle in our country was entering a new period. The vanguard in every field of this period, when the pacification and depoliticisation created by the junta were slowly being broken, lay with the Dev-Genç members, the revolutionary workers’ and civil-servants’ movement, and the other organisations of the revolutionary movement.

In the same period, the prisons, until then associated mainly with resistance, this time came onto the agenda through escapes. From the oligarchy’s point of view, the most shattering escape was without doubt Dayı’s.

Until October 1989, when Dayı, through his action for freedom, went outside and resumed his duties, there had already been many escape attempts. The primary aim was to organise escapes on a scale that could get as many cadres and militants as possible outside.

When this proved impossible, concentration shifted to carrying out escape actions in smaller groups. Dayı showed absolute determination and persistence on this question and was quick to make this persistence the property of all cadres. “The first duty of all prisoners is escape,” it had been said. A process of concentration around this had begun. Each prison itself determined who would escape and proposed them to the movement.

As one of the first results of these efforts, Dayı’s escape took place. Other escapes followed in which many cadres of the revolutionary movement ran to freedom.

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Persistence in the Programme!

After Dayı escaped, an extremely intense process began outside. Through a procedure without precedent until then, he first asked the cadres for “approval for the leadership”. There was no example of such an attitude either in the history of the left or in the past of the revolutionary movement; this too would become one of the many “firsts” Dayı contributed to history. After all the

advanced cadres enthusiastically gave this approval, Dayı took practical command of the process. Reports were requested from every unit of the movement. Criticism and self-criticism were carried out. The escapes had created great morale outside. This moral force had to be turned into a material force. During this process many cadres proposed that Dayı go abroad. Dayı rejected this. To do so before creating a new formation and establishing institutions did not fit his understanding and mission of leadership. Despite all the risks, and despite being sought under shoot-to-kill orders, after the escape he began organising the movement's period of Offensive.

The brochure Where Are We on the Road, published in August 1990 as a result of the assessments made in this period, was, like the brochure The Development of Our Movement and the Revolutionary Struggle described above, a concrete example of Dayı's attitude of never covering over problems, never reconciling with weaknesses and absolutely rejecting mere expediency.

In the assessment process that produced this brochure, surrender to objective conditions, ignoring the strategic perspective, and wrong tendencies and weaknesses among cadres and administrators were condemned. One section of the brochure was devoted to "where the process of becoming a Party stood and how this process would be completed", and this question was answered clearly. This too was nothing other than an expression of the claim to power and of not deviating from the strategic objective - in other words, of a characteristic feature of Dayı's revolutionary life since 1974.

A movement had to have a "programme"; not only the movement, but all the units that made up the movement, all cadres, everyone had to have a programme. Lack of a programme was one of the things Dayı could tolerate least. The process of becoming a Party could not be left vague. Had they not fought the deniers and liquidationists for this? Had they not founded the revolutionary movement for this? The Party was not just any organisation; it was the embodiment of the claim to power, and was not power the fundamental question of every revolution?

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Daring and Initiative from Head to Foot

By the 1990s, as a result of the decision to retreat taken at the end of 1985, the revolutionary movement had succeeded, "despite all our deficiencies, mistakes and weaknesses, and despite all the pressure and terror of fascism, in remaining standing and, even if belatedly, in creating a potential that would help us overcome the process." The movement assessed its own situation as follows: "The integrity of the movement has been preserved; under conditions in which the left fell into ideological and organisational crisis, our movement was kept outside this crisis." So what made this possible? The policies developed and decisions taken by Dayı bore their stamp on a large part of the factors that made this possible.

There had been resistance in the prisons; new traditions had been created; and the struggle outside had also been given both moral and material example and guidance. The period of retreat too was not treated, as was classically seen on the left, as a period of "inaction". During the retreat, while attempts were made to organise the people's struggle in various fields, revolutionary violence was also used where necessary. In order to overcome the retreat, after the assessments mentioned above, a series of decisions were taken in March 1990 and these were put into practice with complete determination. Before moving into practice, relations based on single individuals were replaced in almost every field by committees. (It should be noted here that collective management in committees

and units was one of the matters on which Dayı had always been most insistent from the formation of the movement onwards.) The movement renewed itself in organisation, leadership, policy production and political action. From establishing committees to creating an underground organisation, from cadre education to building a military organisation, the movement was virtually being rebuilt, and the architect at the head of the construction was directly interested in every brick laid.

The state of mind of the period of Offensive can be expressed in two words: “daring and initiative”. It was a state of mind embracing the movement from head to foot; Dayı was at the top, and the enthusiasm he spread reached every level of the movement. The body cast out and purified itself of those who were not in harmony with this state of mind. Dayı did not hesitate for even a moment to confront elements, traditions and habits that “dragged their feet” against the Offensive. This daring, initiative, persistence and determination were followed by actions that won the sympathy of broad masses. Beginning on 30 January 1990 with the killing of police officer Kazım Çakmakçı, who had murdered the young worker Mehmet Akif Dalcı on 1 May, actions would continue against numerous enemies of the people. The presence of guerrillas waving the flag of the revolutionary movement in the mountains became known.

All these preparations were, of course, made under conditions of great deprivation. Dayı did not give value to those who said “first let us institutionalise... let these things be completed too”. “Waiting kills!” Dayı said, and he did not allow preparations to turn into inertia and sluggishness. The camp, for example, was created almost from nothing with this understanding. Dayı’s understanding was to learn war within war and to continue it. No revolutionary organisation, no leader, can wait for perfect and ready-made conditions; those who wait for such conditions never finish “waiting”. A revolutionary, when necessary, would carry out their training within the action itself. With this daring and this understanding, a practice was created that shook the status quos of 12 September and the deviations on the left. The rise of the revolutionary struggle in Turkey, moreover because of the particular conditions of the period in which it took place, drew the attention of the whole world.

It was of course unthinkable that this revolutionary development in every sphere of life would not meet attacks by imperialism and the oligarchy. Imperialism and the oligarchy launched a violent assault against this struggle. Executions and disappearances of militants of the revolutionary movement began. On 12 July 1991, ten Revolutionary Leftists, including leading cadres of the movement, were massacred. Under these conditions Dayı was moving through the streets of Istanbul, meeting many cadres and directing the war. But it should not be thought that only a military struggle was being developed during this process. No. On the contrary, this was also a process in which important advances were secured in the economic-democratic struggle and democratic positions were created.

From this point of view, the most fundamental subject of education and ideological struggle in the period was the consciousness of legitimacy. Let us state that Dayı played a special role in creating this consciousness. So much so that, in all revolutionary work and in every confrontation with the enemy, the need to act with our legitimacy was one of the strongest and unchanging emphases of his spoken and written education. This consciousness of legitimacy lay at the foundation of the stance that rejected military discipline in the courtrooms, of the stance that defended associations against torturers with barricades, and of the daring that could say to those surrounding houses under siege: “It is you who should surrender.”

Dayı told all cadres and militants: “Trust yourselves and trust the people.” In this period, for example, the policy of calling the youth to boycott came onto the agenda. Despite the view of some youth cadres that it could not be done, the leadership persisted, and in the end the boycott saw a huge participation exceeding all expectations.

As the struggle for the people’s justice rose, so too did the struggle of student youth and gecekondu residents develop. Daring, self-confidence and the claim to power also determined and shaped the struggle in the economic-democratic field. From the 3 January general strike to the youth boycott of 6 November, from the resistance of gecekondu labourers to the July actions of civil servants, the stamp of correct revolutionary leadership and policy could be seen in the people’s struggle...

(*) This article was published in Yeni KURTULUŞ magazine, dated 14 September 2008.

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The One Who Paved the Way Through Difficult Periods-5

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The History That Made Dayı Dayı

The struggle of the revolutionary movement developing in every sphere of life also brought with it intense counter-revolutionary attacks. 12 July was one of the first of the major attacks. But the attacks would not stop, because despite 12 July the revolutionary struggle under the leadership of the revolutionary movement was continuing.

One of the March 1990 decisions was to make use of the rear area for military training. A camp was created in this direction. Many leading cadres took part in establishing this camp. In fact, there were many difficulties and shortages in creating it. But two factors virtually created the camp from nothing: first, Dayı’s determination to put the decision into practice and, in this sense, his refusal to submit to any “it cannot be done”; and second, despite some who dragged their feet, the self-sacrifice of the labouring cadres of the revolutionary movement. The will, persistence, labour and self-sacrifice involved in creating this camp were of a kind to be taken as an example and from which lessons could be drawn.

Despite massacres such as 12 July and 16-17 April, none of the objectives determined for the period were abandoned. Yes, perhaps reaching those objectives would take a little longer, but they would not be abandoned. Whatever happened, this was a period for taking further steps.

“We must run faster” and “Courage, more courage” became the fundamental slogans guiding cadres and militants in this period. Both slogans were embodied in Dayı’s policies.

The imperialist siege and attack directed at Iraq in the Middle East was like a test for progressive and left forces before the “new world order”. The revolutionary movement had the advantage of facing this test under Dayı’s command. This was the Dayı who had played a very special role in establishing and turning into a tradition an anti-imperialist line of action on the Turkish left. When organising itself as a new movement, for example, the Dutch attack on Moluccan guerrillas and the Belgian attack on Katangan guerrillas were perhaps protested nowhere else in the world but in our country. (These protests took place in 1977-78.) As Dayı would later stress when recounting it, perhaps at that moment they did not even know where the homeland of the Moluccan guerrillas or

Katanga was on the map, but they knew where imperialism stood, and that was enough. Dayı had shaped all his comrades with the outlook of anti-imperialist struggle and internationalist solidarity.

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Even If It Is 'Against Everyone', If It Is in Accord With the Revolution!

For this reason, during the imperialist Gulf siege, the revolutionary movement had no hesitation. For roughly seven or eight months, an extremely intense period was lived in the anti-imperialist struggle, both in its mass dimension and its armed dimension. This struggle created echoes both within the country and throughout the world. In a period when one section of the left regarded the imperialist Gulf attack as an "opportunity" for itself, while others, through the assessment that it was a "dogfight", stayed away from an anti-imperialist stance, the attitude of the revolutionary movement was very different. Dayı would later summarise this difference in his assessments as follows: "Once again we had been contrary; we had done the exact opposite of what others were doing. Some organisations in the world that imperialism had not yet been able to bring completely under its control did not delay in joining our stance. When our ideological attitude was united with our actions, this also became a spark reminding people once again of the anti-imperialist stance that had begun to be forgotten." (Congress Report)

The revolutionary movement's determination to defend socialism was another indication of its refusal to bow to prevailing winds. While imperialism, in collaboration with Gorbachev's betrayal, was step by step developing the process of liquidating the socialist system, a large part of the left was still unaware of the counter-revolution. The revolutionary movement was clear both against Gorbachev revisionism and against the developing counter-revolutions. This clarity was in reality a result of the political determinations of Mahir and his comrades and of the formation created under Dayı's leadership throughout the 1970s. At the time there were two tendencies on the left concerning the socialist system. The first was the approach embodied in the TKP, which ideologically and politically regarded the CPSU as the "centre". The second was the approach that regarded the socialist countries as "social imperialist". These sections too were in an attitude of regarding the CPC and the APL as "centres". The approach of the revolutionary movement differed from both. It belonged to neither "camp". Indeed, for this reason the revolutionary movement's position was even called "centrism". Yet the question was one of planting one's feet on one's own soil and thinking with one's own mind.

It was a matter of not forgetting that we would make revolution in the Turkey of the world and of sitting in our own Marxist-Leninist chair. On this point Dayı was the owner of a principled stance rejecting every relationship of "subordination" and every kind of utilitarianism. And interestingly, while the winds of counter-revolution were blowing at full force, it was not the former "branches of the CPSU" but the revolutionaries who defended the historical gains of all socialist countries, beginning with the USSR. Those who had looked upon the CPSU or the APL almost as their "qibla" were the first to turn their backs on them.

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A Leadership That Turned Negatives into Positives

The attacks of the oligarchy continued with the massacre of eleven revolutionaries, including senior cadres of the movement, on 16-17 April 1992. After the 12 July 1991 massacre and the 16-17

April massacre that followed soon afterwards, the widespread view in many circles was that the revolutionary movement would never be able to recover.

Yet this expectation had already been frustrated from the beginning by epic resistance. The Çiftehavuzlar resistance in particular went down in history as a resistance that shattered all the calculations of the oligarchy. The resistance spread such enthusiasm and determination, and the slogan “our flag will wave in every part of the country” was embraced and assumed so strongly, that cadres, fighters and supporters of the revolutionary movement everywhere set about calling the oligarchy to account in anger. In the days following the massacre, the police virtually “could not go out into the streets”.

The reaction that emerged in the days following the 12 July massacre had been below what was necessary. In the assessments after 12 July, Dayı openly put forward this problem and turned it too into a subject of education.

The response that developed without orders or instructions after 17 April was the result of this education. Not covering up our inadequacies and weaknesses, but turning them into subjects of education, was the first step in turning blows into political victories. And during every blow lived through in the decades he led, Dayı was the one who did this completely.

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A Blow That Cannot Destroy Strengthens!

While the revolutionary movement was advancing on the road to the Party under the executions, massacres and disappearances carried out by the oligarchy, on 13 September 1992 it came face to face with a coup. This was not, as might first come to mind, a blow from the front of the oligarchy. This time it was an “internal” blow, a betrayal. It was one of the rare events that could befall a revolutionary leader on earth. And Dayı would have to pass through this test of history as well.

On 13 September a coup group took Dayı prisoner at the central base abroad and seized control of the movement’s leadership. They thought that leading a movement consisted merely of issuing instructions. Within the first few days they would understand that it was not so, but by then they had already entered the road of betrayal. From the moment he was taken prisoner by the coup group until the process reached a certain resolution, everyone once again witnessed in all of Dayı’s attitudes and conduct the qualities that made Dayı Dayı. Dayı’s foremost concern was neither his own life nor his own security; his sole concern was the movement. It was that the movement, in every brick of which he had labour, and which he called “my child, my teacher, my freedom, my everything”, should emerge safely from this negativity. For this reason, he first tried to resolve the coup without reflecting it to the enemy, in the manner that would cause least damage to the movement. These initiatives of Dayı were frustrated by the coup plotters, who had not the slightest concern for the movement and were occupied only with saving their own lives. Yet before Dayı’s daring, his powerful will that had passed through so many ordeals, and his self-confidence, the coup plotters were helpless. For this reason, even during the days they held Dayı captive, the initiative over developments was in reality in Dayı’s hands.

The issue was first attempted to be resolved at the level of the advanced cadres; when no solution came from this, at the beginning of 1993 the coup was explained to the cadres and the entire mass base. At both stages Dayı displayed an attitude that very clearly entrusted his will to the cadres of the

movement. Dayı, who in 1984 had also given his comrades the right to decide whether he lived or died, pledged at every stage of the coup process to comply with the will of the cadres. He trusted the cadres of the revolutionary movement. Indeed, immediately after the coup was made public, the cadres and supporters of the revolutionary movement overwhelmingly condemned and cursed the coup plotters.

As the coup was overcome in practice, the collective decision taken by all the cadres stated that “even if they were mad ravings, the coup claims would be discussed if only because they were attempts to smear us; for this purpose the coup plotters would also be invited to the meeting, and every condition, including their safety, would be secured so that they could defend all their claims...” This was, above all, Dayı’s confidence in himself. In the end the coup plotters did not answer these calls, but chose to flee and continue their betrayal. But there was now nothing they could do. The swamp awaited them. Under Dayı’s leadership, the revolutionary movement defeated this vile betrayal and continued its revolutionary march.

The diary Dayı wrote during the period in which he was held prisoner by the coup gang, which he entitled Diary of Being Defiled, and his writings entitled A Black Comedy: Coup in Our Movement, are historical documents reflecting Dayı’s will, his sense of ownership and how, even under those conditions, he continued thinking and producing for the well-being of the movement. Another historic stance was breaking the siege that arose when the coup gang of betrayal was largely embraced by the left and, at the same time, the oligarchy intensified its attacks. It was now time to do what was right “despite everything and everyone”, and the determination in Dayı’s words “we will break the siege” carried the necessary self-confidence to all cadres and supporters.

The coup had wanted to destroy the leadership; but look at the judgement of history: while the coup process strengthened the consciousness of leadership even further, it also became a process through which cadres and supporters came to know Dayı more closely.

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Sometimes ‘One Person’ Is Enough to Change Everything!

Within a year and a half, the movement had faced three major blows: the 12 July and 16-17 April massacres and the betrayal of 13 September.

In the process before the coup, the dream of the Party had begun to spread widely and be spoken of frequently. This expectation was created by the developing struggle. The assessment made immediately before the coup that “we are on the eve of the Party” already showed the material basis of this expectation. But after the coup, hardly anyone had the Party in mind - except one person. That one person believed that despite the massacres of the oligarchy and imperialism, despite the great betrayal the movement had lived through, we could become a Party. Becoming a Party would be the historical answer to these things.

On 1 May 1993 the squares disproved those who had been writing for months about “the two wings of Revolutionary Left”. The squares disproved the speculations and expectations that the revolutionary movement was finished and dispersed. Only seven and a half months had passed since the betrayal, and as written on the giant banners being carried, “Our Revolutionary March Continues”. This slogan was the expression of the will that broke sieges and defeated betrayals.

On 1 May 1994, despite the betrayal of the coup, the Revolutionary Left Forces were at Şişli Abide-i Hürriyet with a mass of eight thousand people. The main slogan of this large and enthusiastic cortege expressed the invincibility of the movement: “The Name of Hope Is Revolutionary Left”!

But in reality, though it was not visible in that square on that day, something else of historic importance was also taking place. In the days when the slogan “The Name of Hope Is Revolutionary Left” was being shouted in the squares, far from the squares, at a congress meeting under conditions of secrecy, a new name was being given to Hope.

In 1978, criticising Devrimci Yol liquidationism, among other things, for “leaving the process of becoming a Party to spontaneity” and leading the founding of Revolutionary Left, Dayı, after a war waged against siege from all sides, once again placed this objective before the movement, believed himself that it was possible and made the cadres believe it too.

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The Founding Congress Was Where the Dream Became Reality

Dayı was the first owner of the dream. Then he made thousands of Dev-Genç members partners in that dream and organised a new movement together with them. That movement overcame many difficulties with Dayı and came to this day... The Dream Became Reality with Dayı!

The Party Founding Congress convened some time before 1 May. And this was the reason behind the “silence” that had been noticeable for some time. The Party was the objective never abandoned since Kızıldere, the dream never forgotten. And now at last they had gathered for it. In his opening speech at the Congress, Dayı said: “Comrades, a very long time has passed before we could organise this congress. This long period is the historical formation of this congress. In this history there are our pains, our joys, our martyrs, betrayals and heroism.

... We had to fulfil the promise we gave to you and to our people. Convening the Party Founding Congress had now become a necessity.”

In that opening speech Dayı would frequently refer to the martyrs. Dayı, who never looked at any stage of the revolutionary process or any organisation through templates, was also shaping the Congress with an original understanding. For one thing, it was a congress lasting a very long time outside the classical moulds. Apart from collective discussions, Dayı personally held one-to-one discussions and assessments with cadres; the past, the future, everything was discussed.

Once again the cadres had gathered under the leadership of Dursun Karataş, who had led everything in the movement since 1974. As the Leader of the movement, it was mainly Dayı who had determined those who would participate in the Congress. And now, together with this historic step being taken, he too was transferring his will to the Party Congress. As a result of the first assessments and discussions, it was decided that the foundation of the Party and Front could be proclaimed, and by the collective decision of the cadres the Congress was named the “Founding Congress of the Revolutionary People’s Liberation Party and Front”.

In September 1994, following the Founding Congress and before the foundation of the Party had yet been proclaimed, Dayı was taken prisoner by French imperialism while entering the country.

The squares echoed with the slogan “Freedom for the Leader of Revolutionary Left”. But in reality Dayı now carried another title: General Secretary of the DHKP. The Party had been founded and naturally Dayı had been elected its first General Secretary. The one who paved the way through difficult periods was the guide of the Party; he would always remain so!

The first great social event after the founding of the Party was the Gazi uprising, and the will and power of the Party would reveal themselves in all their splendour in the Gazi uprising.

Because of the restrictions required by illegality, at some moments Dayı could not fully follow the reflections of the development of the uprising. But when analysing the developments in Gazi, he was as if in the middle of Gazi itself - and in reality even the words “as if” are too much. He was there. He was beside Ali Haydar Çakmak, Sezgin Engin and Fadime Bingöl. At other times and in other events it had always been the same.

He lived through the 1996 Death Fast and the 2000-2007 Great Resistance moment by moment and commanded these major clashes with the oligarchy. His persistence, determination and patience in these processes, his ability to mobilise cadres and supporters, and the daring to be able to remain alone and continue when left alone - in the words used above, the qualities that made Dayı Dayı - revealed themselves once again through these historical clashes. He was Dayı precisely because under every condition and in every period he displayed this stability, principledness, consistency and daring.

The actions following the proclamation of the Party were also in keeping with the daring he had established. Before 1980, the line of action capable of targeting former prime minister Nihat Erim and minister Gün Sazak had been a reflection of Dayı’s political daring. In 1996, that daring was the daring directed against some of our country’s biggest monopoly capitalists on the twenty-fifth floor of a skyscraper.

The Gazi uprising was followed by the 1 May demonstrations of 1995-96, in which tens of thousands marched under Front flags. Pictures of Mahir Çayan and Dayı were carried side by side on this 1 May. Everyone knew that if the Party-Front members had today regained their Party, if Mahir’s struggle could today be continued with a Party, the determining share in this belonged to Dayı.

During the Susurluk process, an uncompromising ideological struggle was waged against distortions on the left, and Dayı was the strategist of that ideological struggle. He repeated without stopping and without tiring: “Susurluk is the state.”

In the Susurluk process he was among and within the poor who filled the squares of the gecekondu neighbourhoods. He was the interpreter of the demands and longings of the masses and the barricade against their being channelled in the wrong direction.

Those who lived in the same place as him never felt they were in another country. Wherever he was, it was truly a place where Turkey and the struggle in Turkey were spoken and breathed twenty-four hours a day. That is why, in fact, like some ordinary exile, the expression “he was martyred far from his country” does not suit Dayı at all. He was never far from his country. Through his leadership, he was always at the front of the class struggle of the peoples of Turkey; against difficulties and obstacles, he opened the road along which the caravan of revolution would advance. He guided the road to be taken.

We end this series of articles, in which we have tried, even in summary form, to convey the principal stages in Dayı's process of leading the Turkish revolution, with the following words from Dayı's closing speech to the Congress. These words remain today both an instruction and a testament from Dayı to all his comrades: "Comrades, our Party is the only Hope of our people. It is in our hands to grow and develop this Hope. ... Our country is pregnant with revolution. ... The revolution in our country will not be a revolution like one in just any country in the world. Our revolution will be a great revolution that will influence from the Middle East to the Balkans, to Asia, indeed the world.

Our Party is the vanguard of this great objective. The duty of carrying this honour, accomplishing this mission and being worthy of it places even greater responsibilities upon you."

(*) This article was published in Yeni KURTULUŞ magazine, dated 21 September 2008.

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Dayı Means Clarity and Simplicity in Politics

Revolutionary clarity in theory and practice; political daring that defends what is right whatever the price; and the correct revolutionary stance...

Throughout the decades in which Dayı played a determining role in the class struggle as Leader of the revolutionary movement, countless upheavals took place in our country and in the world. During those decades Dayı witnessed powerful winds of revolution, and also the sweeping winds of counter-revolution.

He lived through the flow of the masses into the ranks of revolution, and also the years when silence prevailed.

He never allowed any development, positive or negative, to take the will of the movement prisoner. He was not directed by the process; he directed the process. Throughout these decades, on no issue concerning the peoples and revolution of our country or the world did he give value to the "wait and see" opportunism so often seen on the Turkish left. Where the peoples were concerned and revolutionaries had to speak, he never remained without a stance or without a policy. What had to be said might be incomplete, the action to be taken might be inadequate; but the revolutionary movement had to put forward its stance at that historical moment. Many actions and positions that left their mark on the Turkish left, and that assumed a path-opening mission when the left in our country and the world remained without a stance, emerged as a result of this understanding.

Apart from the first few years of his thirty-eight-year revolutionary life, almost all of it required him to determine policies and develop positions on various issues. For decades, he never had to feel "regret" or make self-criticism for any policy he had determined. This is undoubtedly one of the most honourable and enviable aspects of Dayı's revolutionary life. Dayı's characteristic was to identify what was right within the flow of life, before everything had already happened.

On the Turkish left there are many examples of remaining without a stance at critical turning points, or taking wrong positions, and then making self-criticisms five or ten years later. But these self-criticisms often mean little more than "confession". Those who claim leadership and vanguard status show what is right WITHIN life and struggle, IN THE RIGHT PLACE and AT THE RIGHT TIME. Dayı's practice was always shaped in this way. Initiative, daring and dynamism in taking a position were united with the correct political content of that position. However misty the scene, however

complex the developments, the revolutionary movement did not make mistakes in determining its side. What made this possible was a sound ideological foundation, daring and initiative, and a leadership instinct guided by years of accumulation and grounding.

To be left, revolutionary and socialist means to stand with the people, against oppressive and exploitative systems, and to view developments from the standpoint of the interests of the peoples. Seen in this way, the criteria of being revolutionary and of the revolutionary stance are very clear and simple. Yet in various developments both in the world and in our country, the attitudes taken by sections bearing a left or socialist identity, or defining themselves as such, did not possess this clarity. Because they did not look at events with this simplicity.

We can immediately recall some examples: resistance against fascism; the period of the Susurluk crash, when the counter-guerrilla became openly visible through a traffic accident; policies concerning Turkey's membership of the EU; assessments of Gorbachev's Glasnost and Perestroika policies in the Soviet Union; the fall of the Berlin Wall; the overthrow of the Ceaușescu government in Romania by the imperialists; the raining of bombs upon the Iraqi peoples in the "Gulf War"... And many similar events we could list were historical events in which the stances of the revolutionary movement and the left diverged, and in which the left either failed to determine a position or took a position on the wrong side.

Most of the developments we listed are developments on which the left failed to take the correct position in time and made self-criticisms years later. For the revolutionary movement, meanwhile, these developments are among the pages of its history of which it is proud. The Leader of the revolutionary movement created at this point a very clear outlook and a tradition worthy of pride.

For example, in the cases of Romania and Iraq, which correspond to different periods but have the same essence, imperialism was overthrowing socialist countries and petty-bourgeois dictatorships that had still not surrendered to imperialism, incorporating them into its own market and seeking to bury all resistance to the imperialist system in the depths of history. In the face of these imperialist conspiracies and attacks, the side of revolutionaries is clear. Of course, this clarity applies to those who are ideologically clear and consistent on the principles and values of revolution. Those who forget the reality of imperialism, make pragmatic calculations over imperialist attacks, or merely seek to get through the period of attack, will of course be swept onto different and wrong sides.

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Either with Imperialism, or with the Peoples...

When the reality of imperialism is not viewed simply and clearly, deviation is inevitable. One of the minimum requirements of the correct line is never, under any conditions, to forget the alignments of bourgeoisie and proletariat, imperialism and the peoples.

Staying away from pragmatic calculations, revolutionary clarity in theory and practice, and political daring that defends what is right whatever the cost are among the indispensable conditions for the correct revolutionary stance.

The place of the revolutionary movement is clear under every condition: to stand against imperialism. Under every condition a stance appropriate to this has been determined.

To stand against imperialism means taking as fundamental the fact that the alignment in the world is between imperialism and the peoples. This is possible only by looking at the world in the light of Marxism-Leninism.

To stand against imperialism means knowing the reality that imperialism is the centre of all evil in the world.

To stand against imperialism means seeing the reality that the liberation of the peoples lies in struggle against imperialism. Those who cannot or do not want to see these things clearly have not possessed clarity and simplicity in their policies against imperialism either.

Dayı expressed the need to stand against imperialism whatever the cost in his assessment of the "Gulf War" process as follows: "(...) even at the cost of earning the hostility of the collaborators of the entire imperialist world and of the left, relying on our own strength and accepting the weight of the prices, we had to stand beside the peoples of the Middle East and strike blows against imperialism." The essence of everything is here. To stand beside the oppressed peoples and strike blows against imperialism. Indeed, under Dayı's leadership the revolutionary movement fulfilled the requirements of this. The prices were heavy, but the basic measures of being revolutionary and socialist were also left to the future as a legacy through those heavy prices.

At the beginning of the 1990s, the honour was won for our country of being one of the few countries in the world where blows were struck against aggressive imperialism.

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Romania and an Example 'That Will Not Be Forgotten as Long as the World Exists'

Dayı's positions were equally clear in embracing socialist leaders who resisted the imperialist attacks directed at the socialist system, even if they were revisionist or opportunist, and in defending the gains of socialism. Dayı condemned the understanding of revolutionism and leftism of those who failed to take a clear stance against attacks on socialism as follows: "We were confronted with a picture that will not be forgotten as long as the world exists, one that will be remembered with shame in the name of revolutionism and communism. Imperialists, local collaborators, fascists, social democrats, nationalists, and those calling themselves Marxist-Leninist, socialist and communist had united on one front. The target of this front was Ceaușescu's socialist government, which contained mistakes but had committed the 'crime' of resisting imperialist attack. Even the resistance of Ceaușescu and his supporters, risking death, was not enough to awaken the sense of justice of leftists and communists whose minds imperialism had captured." (Congress Documents-1)

Yes, in fact, to take a stance against the counter-revolutionary process organised by imperialism in Romania, it was not even necessary to know the details of developments in Romania. It was enough to see the resistance put forward by Ceaușescu and those beside him at the cost of their lives, refusing to compromise with imperialism. The sides were clear from this point of view. Indeed, when the revolutionary movement took its position, it did not possess some of the information about the conspiracies and the lies of counter-revolution that would emerge later. It was obvious that those who murdered the Ceaușescus were attacking socialism, while the Ceaușescus gave their lives defending socialism. Yet for some sections of the left, the target was not imperialism but the mistakes of the Ceaușescu government. Some tried to find proof(!) for their past political assessments in the one-by-one collapse of the socialist countries. Some had surrendered their minds to imperialist

propaganda, virtually forgotten their side in the alignment between the peoples and imperialism, and greeted the counter-revolution as a “popular uprising”. Where such concerns and subjectivism came to the fore, correctness in politics could not exist.

The concerns of the revolutionary movement were different. The Leader of the revolutionary movement expressed what the concerns of revolutionaries should be as follows: “even at the cost of earning the hostility of the whole world, we had to be defenders of the proletariat, the people, justice, freedom and socialism.”

As during the “Gulf Attack”, the essence of the question is again here. The outlook put forward by Dayı was to stand against imperialism even at the cost of the hostility of the entire world, take a clear stand with the people, and defend socialism. Indeed, in this period when imperialist attacks intensified in every field, the revolutionary movement’s stance against imperialism was not limited merely to ideological determinations. Various revolutionary violence actions against imperialism were also put into practice at the cost of being placed on imperialism’s “Black List” and being subjected to massacres. The price required by the period would be paid, but the attacks directed against socialism would be resisted.

In the history of the revolutionary movement there was no attitude of compromising with imperialism, attributing absurd missions to imperialism such as “defending democracy”, or expecting anything from imperialism in favour of the peoples. The strategic line, ideology and leadership of the revolutionary movement were clear on this point.

If imperialism rained bombs upon the Iraqi people, occupied Afghanistan and Iraq, broke up Yugoslavia, set peoples against one another in the situation that emerged after the disintegration of the USSR, and brought its own collaborator governments to power under the name of “colour revolutions”, revolutionary policy was to stand against imperialism without leaving room for ambiguity, and whatever the mistakes of the previous governments in these countries, not to place expectations in imperialist occupation on behalf of the peoples.

That was the stance of the revolutionary movement. We can extend these examples further back as well. Dayı’s stance against the occupation of Cyprus, for example, is instructive in showing his clarity on this question and the simplicity of his outlook on revolutionism. In the process when Cyprus was occupied in 1974, the occupation was presented in the country as a “Peace Operation”. At that time there were those, such as TİP members, who hesitated to say that the interests of the Cypriot people could not lie under the protection of imperialism and fascism. Because they feared the reaction of chauvinism in our country, they avoided defending a solution to the Cyprus question in the interests of the peoples and avoided taking a stance against the Ecevit government’s occupation of Cyprus.

Despite their youth and inadequacies at that time, Dayı and the young revolutionaries with him embraced the theoretical legacy of the THKP-C and, in the light of this legacy and free of every non-revolutionary concern, were able boldly to put forward the solution in the interests of the Cypriot people as an “Independent United Cyprus”.

Those who produced deep and complicated theories in order not to take a position were in fact evading the most fundamental and universal principles and values of Marxism-Leninism. In an assessment of the Gulf War, Dayı gives this lesson to such “know-it-alls”: “It was not even necessary

to be Marxist-Leninist or socialist in order to take a stance against this imperialist savagery and oppression. It was enough to be honourable, to oppose imperialism and to be a friend of the peoples."

To be honourable, to be a friend of the peoples, was already to determine one's side with the people. Those who felt the suffering of the peoples within themselves could not close their eyes before imperialist attacks. Revolutionism in its purest form is to feel within oneself the suffering lived by the peoples wherever they are in the world.

It is known that wherever in the world peoples suffer, directly or indirectly imperialist policies stand behind that suffering. Therefore, those who feel the peoples' suffering within themselves do not hesitate to raise the banner of anti-imperialist struggle in the face of imperialist attacks.

Throughout his life Dayı was a leader who approached politics with revolutionary simplicity. This simplicity derived from looking at every question from a class perspective. To look and think in class terms is the key that opens the doors of the correct revolutionary stance. This too was one of the most important elements of Dayı's ideological struggle against reformism, revisionism and opportunism. A class outlook means acting in accordance with the fundamental and principal contradictions and the alignments based on them. This outlook became an ideological and traditional stance for the revolutionary movement. That is why, in every question we confront, using the measures we learned from Dayı, we first ask: on whose side is it - the bourgeoisie or the proletariat? We ask: in whose ranks is it - imperialism or the peoples? And we ask: whose interests does it serve, or will it serve?

The answers show us the correct revolutionary stance.

(*) This article was published in HALK GERÇEĞİ magazine, dated 31 August 2008.

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A Defence 'War'-1

The preparation of We Are Right, We Will Win was like a long war conducted under Dayı's command. A war extending not over weeks or months, but years. Towards the final stages of the war, the fighting took place position by position.

Dayı moved from one working group to another, from one ward to another, checking, discussing and making others discuss the preparations. Sometimes he was not visible, but everyone knew that every line written was under his observation. The work carried out by dozens of cadres was systematised within a single systematic framework in such a way as to strengthen one slogan: WE ARE RIGHT, WE WILL WIN.

Writing the Defence was one war; reading it from the court rostrum was another. At that stage too, many battles were fought position by position. In our history section this week, we will convey to you some passages from those clashes. The book A War, A Case and Victory gives extensive space to the preparation of the Defence as part of the Revolutionary Left Case. Most of the memories and information below have been compiled from that book.

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The calendar showed August 1988, almost twenty years ago...

In Metris Prison, feverish work was continuing simultaneously in seven wards opening onto the same exercise yard. The REVOLUTIONARY LEFT Prisoners gathered in these seven wards were working on the Defence that would soon begin. On the one hand daily activities - eating, drinking, cleaning - continued; on the other, Defence preparations... All work was directed towards the Defence.

Long-term studies and research were developed through intense discussions. Finally these discussions were put into writing. Some texts came from a single pen; others were the joint product of many pens. Then they were discussed again, their language and style reviewed. The whole aim was to produce a complete and beautiful work. “The Defence should be like a reference work, a bedside book,” they said - and indeed it became so. This was the reason for the painstaking work.

Everyone in the wards had a specific task connected with the Defence work. There were typists, those who read the texts aloud to the typists, those who checked the texts, those who corrected them... The lights in the wards burned twenty-four hours a day, and average daily sleep generally fell to about five hours. Sometimes even this had to be divided in two. Short naps became common. Because the work continued uninterrupted through the night until morning, the limit placed on daily tea consumption was removed.

One prisoner summarised those days as follows: “Our difficulty during those final months when the preparations for the Defence continued was not filling out the content of the Defence or elaborating theoretical questions. Throughout our prison life, even under the worst conditions and during periods when torture was at its most intense, we had carried out our educational work to the extent permitted by the possibilities available to us. The real problem emerged after that. Because when expressing our ideological-theoretical determinations, we did not like what we produced; with the desire not to be satisfied with what had been done and to make the best possible version, we worked meticulously. This caused us to lose time, and because the Defence stage in court was due to begin shortly, our work became compressed. Dayı frequently criticised us, saying, ‘this is one of our old illnesses; we leave a job until the last moment and finish it only just in time.’ He was right in his criticism. Faced with the problem of time that emerged as the Defence approached, we had nothing to say in answer to Dayı’s reminder of our old illnesses, no reasons with which to justify ourselves.

“...

“The busiest days of Defence work coincided with the 1988 Seoul Olympics. Comrades whose work was lighter, or who managed to find a little free time between two jobs, also watched the Olympics on television. When Dayı visited our ward while football footage was being shown, he said, ‘Be careful that we do not end up describing the match in the Defence.’ There was both a warning in this and a criticism of our being able to find time for watching football amid so much work. Although at that moment only two people were watching the match, we were ashamed as if everyone had abandoned all their work to watch it. If such a situation had existed, we should indeed have been ashamed. At a time when every comrade had motivated themselves for the preparation of the Defence, there could be no relaxing or allowing attention to scatter.”

*

“...

“The intensity of the Defence work also led us to acquire certain positive habits. We developed many qualities through this work: using time in the most rational way, strengthening habits of collective work, being able to concentrate on intensive work even under the most adverse conditions. Even some comrades who could not sleep in light or noise learned to make do with little sleep under lamps burning twenty-four hours a day, accompanied by the disturbing mechanical sounds of typewriters. Since it is a fact that the life of a revolutionary cannot proceed like the life of a bureaucrat in a predetermined and comfortable environment, one has to become accustomed to working under such conditions, sleeping in uncomfortable environments and adapting quickly to one’s surroundings.

“A slogan we produced during the Defence work became fixed on our tongues: ‘An end to conformism!’”

*

“As sections of the Defence were completed in their final form and accumulated in files, they became the apple of our eye. Trying not to dirty or crease them, and looking at them once more in that form, the labour expended to reach this stage came before our eyes and they gained even greater value. The Defence was like a sapling we had grown within ourselves. It had filtered through many difficulties and many pains. It had passed through many ordeals. And just when we relaxed, saying ‘this work is finished’, a development that made us break into a cold sweat caused us painful days [the prisoners were experiencing a problem of exile at that time]. But in the end we gave birth to ‘WE ARE RIGHT, WE WILL WIN!’”

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On the morning of 27 October 1988, in E and F blocks of Sağmalcılar Special-Type Prison, there was the bustle before court. The prisoners were put into the prison transport vehicles...

... As the vehicles turned from the main gate towards the courtroom, a storm of applause broke out from the crowd who had come to observe the trial. Extraordinary security measures had been taken that day. The crowd of observers had drawn the riot police to Baştabya as well. There were three or five soldiers for every prisoner. Shortly after the prisoners took their places in the hall, the observers began to be admitted. All the prisoners’ attention turned towards them. There were around five hundred people: Dev-Genç members, TAYAD members, DEMKAD members, workers, gecekondu residents and people from associations. In this limited time, the prisoners wanted to welcome every one of their guests, ask how they were even if only with a few words, and hear news from outside and from the struggle...

Even after the announcement that the court panel was coming, this commotion continued for a while. The panel entering the hall was surprised by the crowd. The colonel presiding over the court let his eyes wander for a long time among the observers.

And Dursun Karataş was called to the rostrum. Dursun Karataş first read and submitted to the court a petition describing the exile they had experienced and the events that followed, and lodging a criminal complaint. Then he began reading the Defence. In an instant complete silence descended over the hall.

“Our joint political Defence, bearing the signatures of forty-six [later forty-nine] comrades, has been prepared in one main file and two supplementary files. The total is 1,573 pages. In the lower corner of the first page of our Defence is the Revolutionary Left emblem, a hammer and sickle inside a star, and the slogan ONE WHO DOES NOT FIGHT FOR REVOLUTION CANNOT BE CALLED A SOCIALIST.” After this explanation, Dursun Karataş read the title of the Defence: WE ARE RIGHT, WE WILL WIN!

At that moment, how many people in the hall could foresee that within a very short time these two words would be shouted in marches of hundreds of thousands and become a slogan of struggle for all sections of working people? After reading the title, Dayı continued: “We set out for a new world, and we will certainly build that world.”

These people, who had paid heavy prices for every one of these unguarded and defiant words, were changing the concepts of crime and criminal through their Defence. When the hearing was adjourned at 12.00, yellow and red ribbons suddenly began raining down upon the Revolutionary Left Prisoners from the roughly five hundred people flowing towards the front of the stands. The prisoners’ eyes filled with tears; their skin tingled. They wanted to throw flowers to the observers who honoured them with this gesture, but they did not have a single flower...

While the prisoners were thinking how to respond to those who had jointly created this scene of honour, calls repeatedly came from the stands: “Dayı, show the cover of the Defence.” Dursun Karataş took the Defence file in his hand and opened the first page. Journalists continuously documented scenes they could not encounter anywhere else. This moment, with eyes shining brightly, was engraved permanently into everyone’s memory.

Neither the court, nor the hundreds of death sentences being demanded, nor imprisonment, nor the reality of the dungeon to which they would return four hours later. At that moment all of these seemed like lies. In this picture there was only one reality: organised power...

No one understood how the time passed that day. When the hearing ended at 16.00, it became clear that no one intended to leave the hall. Unable to refuse the request that the emblem be shown once again, the prisoners carried the file to the front of the stands. The moment the emblem was shown, a storm of applause broke out. The observers applauded the prisoners, the prisoners applauded their relatives, for minutes, and the applause continued until the final group of observers left the hall... It was more like a rally ground than a courtroom.

(*) This article was published in Yeni KURTULUŞ magazine, dated 7 September 2008.

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A Defence ‘War’-2

“Tell her not to cry,
Because we will win!”

Every line of the Defence being read came down like a sledgehammer upon the head of the system. The court panel felt those blows on its own body. Finally, in the section where the army was most radically accused, it attempted to prevent the Defence from being read.

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Like leaves blown from place to place, revolutionary prisoners who were constantly forced to change prisons had to enter new resistances in every prison they were sent to in order to regain the rights taken from them. Prisoners who had been exiled from Sağmalcılar Prison to Metris about three years earlier were transferred back to Sağmalcılar Special-Type Prison in October 1988. In those same days they also launched a nationwide resistance against the “1 August Circular”, which had been introduced with the aim of taking away their rights.

The reading of the Defence would continue during a new hunger-strike period. In the cold days of November, the effect of hunger made the cold even sharper. In the courtroom the prisoners sat wearing coats and jackets over thick jumpers... They waited for 16.00 to arrive and the hearing to end as soon as possible. But shortly afterwards a development that would revive the prisoners set the hall in motion.

Today the assessments concerning the “TC Army”, one of the supplementary sections of the Defence, were being read. The heading was: “From an Army That Waged a War of Independence to an Army That Crushes Wars of Independence.”

The first subheading was: “Who Is the Liberator and Who Is the Traitor to the Homeland?”

When the section heading was read, the military judges and colonel presiding over the court, whose sleep had completely disappeared, pricked up their ears. Members of the panel who had listened to the Defence until this section sometimes calmly, sometimes angrily, and sometimes dozing, were all on alert today. As the pages advanced, unease and intolerance began to dominate them all. Then a moment came when the unease reached its highest level and the panel whispered among themselves for a short while.

The judge said: “We are taking a recess.”

It was not yet 12.00. The prisoners asked one another, “What recess is this?”

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The recess was short. The decision read after the recess also answered that question.

“Having considered what is necessary: since the petition, part of which has been read under the name of a collective defence by some of the accused, has from the beginning contained insults against various institutions, persons and officials, as well as some other offences, and since it is considered that this will not come to an end and that the limits of defence are continuously being exceeded, it is decided that those who prepared the said petition be warned to remove such passages from the remaining section of the petition; that if they continue in this manner at the next hearing, the said petition shall be taken and placed in the case file and its reading in this form shall not be permitted; and that thereafter individual defences shall begin...”

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In short, the court wanted such sections removed from the Defence and threatened that if they insisted on reading them without removal, the Defence would not be allowed to be read.

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The prisoners went to the next hearing after this decision prepared for an operation. “On the day of court, everyone put on their operation clothes. If they tried to throw us out of the court by force, we would be dragged on the ground, our clothes would be torn... If the Defence was cut off, a protest demonstration would be held and a march sung collectively.”

The trial judge began the day, as always, by recording one or two bureaucratic formalities. When the paperwork was finished, he turned to Dayı and asked: “Dursun Karataş... In accordance with our decision at the previous hearing, did you remove the passages in your Defence that carry the character of insult?”

Contrary to Talip Orhan’s haste in wanting to reach a result without inviting Dayı to the rostrum, Dayı walked to the rostrum very calmly. Both the court panel and our observers wondered what our answer would be. In truth, although we knew what the answer would be, even we were excited.

“There is nothing we will remove,” Dayı said, looking directly into the judge’s eyes. He continued: “We are expressing the facts. We have no concern with attacking individual persons or institutions one by one. We are criticising this system and struggling to overthrow it. For that reason, there is no section of our Defence, not even a single word, that we will remove.” For a moment journalists’ flashes went off and the hall filled with the sound of shutters. The court panel was uneasy.

*

The judge must have been looking for a suitable answer to Dayı’s words, because he remained silent for a while and looked around. Then the following exchange took place between the presiding judge and Dayı:

- But Dursun Karataş... if you call someone a fascist, that too is an insult.

- No. That word exists in political literature, just like imperialism, neo-colonialism and so on.

- All right, you are right, the word may have a scientific basis. HERE YOU ARE PUTTING OTHERS ON TRIAL MORE THAN DEFENDING YOURSELVES.

- Of course we will put them on trial. This is our historical duty. We will put our ideas forward in the broadest and clearest form. We will explain to our people what we did and why we did it.

...

The judge could not continue his words. Turning towards us, Dayı said, “bring those books.” We gathered all the books we had brought with us that day and piled them on the rostrum from which Dayı was speaking.

The judge immediately asked:
- Dursun Karataş, what are those? What are they doing there?

- These are the documents supporting what we say in our Defence. The relevant passages concerning every statement we make have been marked.

- So are you going to read all of them?

- Since it is being said that there are insults and on this pretext an attempt is being made to cut off our Defence, then we will read them in order to prove that what we say expresses the truth.

The judge let himself fall back into his chair. He had brought trouble upon himself and the more he tried to get rid of it, the more entangled he became. Looking tiredly to his right and left for the approval of his colleagues, he said once again, “we are taking a recess,” removed his robe and went towards his room.

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It became the longest recess in the history of the court. Two and a half hours later the panel returned to the hall and the trial judge read the decision: “Having considered what is necessary... it is decided that the prisoners accused be allowed to continue reading the Defence.”

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It was a victory. A small victory, but a historic one. Who knows how many wars of will had already been fought over this position. Once again the winners were the Free Prisoners fighting under Dayı’s command.

*

31 March 1989;

“Today the final section of the Defence will be read. During the recess, foreign guests asked Dayı, who was the number one accused in the case, what Revolutionary Left defended, the history of the organisation, how it assessed other left groups, its view of the Kurdish question... and so on. They listened because they genuinely wanted to learn and understand. They took many photographs.

...

As soon as the court recessed, the prisoners began speaking with their guests. The German ZDF television team had come with their cameras and filmed the prisoner reading the Defence and the courtroom from end to end. A little later a group of thirty or forty women entered. The TV team resumed filming.

Those who had arrived were the people who had demonstrated in Sultanahmet against the 1 August Circular, had been attacked by the police, clubbed and beaten on the ground, but had escaped arrest... TAYAD and DEMKAD families.

After completing footage of the newcomers, the ZDF team continued its interview with the prisoners. Meanwhile the gendarmerie major tried to block the interview and placed barriers between the press and the prisoners. When Dayı began knocking the barriers down and throwing them aside, everyone immediately moved and knocked the barriers over.

This stance created sympathy among the foreign guests, and one of the women lawyers among them clenched her fists in approval, meaning “good”. The argument with the major continued, but after a while the major had to withdraw. The prisoners’ determination was reflected in the foreign guests as well, and they continued their interviews without taking a step back.

After the panel left the hall, when the prisoners went towards the observers in the stands to speak with them, carnations suddenly began raining down upon them. For the prisoners, this reward was worth everything. It was proof that the years inside under 12 September had not been spent in vain. There could be no better demonstration that a revolutionary can contribute to the struggle under every condition.

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The Dutch guests who had also observed the previous hearing could only arrive towards midday this time. That morning they had filmed the mass demonstration held in Sultanahmet. The demonstration had affected them greatly. They described it excitedly. The prisoners asked the guests for their impressions since the previous week. The arrival of the court panel interrupted the conversation.

The judges sat down, looking over the guests. A little later Talip Orhan, the presiding judge, began: “The duty of the press is to gather news. Of course we are not going to teach them that. But they should not come to a hearing as if coming to an action, like demonstrators. Let the interpreter translate my words and warn them not to disrupt discipline.” The judge was referring to his discomfort at foreign journalists making victory signs the previous week.

When the hearing ended, the guests were spoken to for the last time. They asked what the outcome of the trial might be. The prisoners told them they expected many death sentences and life sentences... As the guests were seen off, greetings were sent to progressives and revolutionaries in the Netherlands and other European countries. They departed saying, “We hope you regain your freedom as soon as possible.”

At the exit, while the prisoners were boarding the prison vehicles, the young woman who acted as spokesperson for the guests was seen crying. Hearing this, Dayı came to the window and shouted to the interpreter: “Tell her not to cry, because we will win!”

(*) This article was published in Yeni KURTULUŞ magazine, dated 14 September 2008.

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The Daring to Be Able to Stand Alone

“In today’s world it is impossible to be strong and fight the enemy without being prepared to stand alone... This is ideological soundness.”

Revolution is the movement to overthrow the existing system. To unite all forces opposed to the system and, at the same time, to be able to fight alone under conditions where no one else opposes the system, are indispensable conditions of being a vanguard and a leader. It can be said that the process of formation of the revolutionary movement under Dayı’s leadership almost always contained these two aspects together.

In the history of the revolutionary movement there are many resistances created under conditions where it was left alone under siege; at the same time, the revolutionary movement also had a determining share in creating the small number of positive unity practices in the history of the left. After 12 March, while intervening in the class struggle in 1974-75, on the one hand efforts were made to secure the unity of all Party-Front members, but on the other, starting from the fact that the class

struggle would wait for no one and tolerate no vacuum, the Kurtuluş Group was formed. Afterwards too, although periods and forms changed, this outlook was maintained. Persistence in uniting all oppressed sections against the oligarchic system, together with trusting one's own strength and doing what had to be done when left alone, formed the two basic aspects of Dayı's approach to the question of unity.

It is known that in 1976-77 Dayı also made persistent efforts to gather together the THKP-C potential and unite it under a single organisational roof. But when the Party-Front line was threatened with liquidation by the "old" cadres within Devrimci Yol, he did not hesitate, even if alone, to take a stand, saying that the liquidation of the revolutionary line could not be tolerated "in the name of unity". If there was to be unity, it had to stand on the ground of embracing the Party-Front line; one could not become a partner to liquidationism in the name of unity.

As on many questions, Dayı's approach to unity had a content that in many respects went beyond and criticised the negative formations on the left.

The history of the left is full of unities that could not even implement their announced programmes and spontaneously dissolved or collapsed. Many unities bringing together numerous organisations were established, unrealistic goals were set for them, yet most dissolved before organising any proper practice, or were simply abandoned to disappear without even an explanation to the masses.

Unfortunately, no legacy remained from this "graveyard of unity". Nor was there any questioning of why such a graveyard had emerged.

The main idea guiding these unities was sometimes leaning one's back on others, sometimes exploiting the masses' longing for unity, and sometimes evading tasks that had to be undertaken alone. Under Dayı's leadership the revolutionary movement neither organised such unities nor took part in them. Dayı occupied a very different position in his approach to the question of unity.

Dayı had a basic criterion: unity has meaning only if it serves the development of the struggle. Otherwise, it merely causes the idea of unity to be worn down in the eyes of the people. In the history of unity on the left, Dayı represented a realism that stayed away from exaggeration and from grandiose programmes unlikely ever to be realised. The concrete expression of this, before 1980, under conditions where everyone spoke of nothing less than "fronts" that would supposedly take power today or tomorrow, was his statement that what was possible and necessary was "unity of forces and action". Indeed, the only unities that could be realised at that time were precisely alliances of forces appropriate to this.

The revolutionary movement stayed away from every unity that served to deceive or delay the masses, or the mentality of "let friends see us together". It continued its principled and consistent policy on this question even at the risk of the left branding the revolutionary movement, which it could not draw into its game, as "opposed to unity". Because there were extremely important reasons why the left was unable to create genuine unity, and Dayı persistently pointed out the need to overcome these weaknesses. The most fundamental deficiency was the absence or loss of consciousness and the objective of taking power. In a 1995 article, Dayı assessed the fact that the Turkish left had discussed the question of unity for thirty years without achieving any positive result as follows: "(...) consciousness of power and the ambition and creativity necessary to take power did not develop; instead, the understanding 'let it be small, but let it be mine' became dominant. This understanding,

this culture, instead of uniting virtually all progressive, democratic, anti-fascist, revolutionary and patriotic forces through every relationship and every opportunity in order to take power, created fragmentation, sectarianism and conceit."

Groupism was another illness against which Dayı struggled for years. Let us quote again from one of his writings: "When the measure becomes the interest of one's own organisation, when everything is thought through on that basis and policies and tactics are drawn accordingly, and when every organisation and group acts with the same mentality, an inextricable chaos, competition, subjectivism and ultimately conflict, activity aimed at liquidating one another in one form or another, become inevitable. The past is full of striking and painful examples of this situation."

For Dayı, unity meant struggling for power. Those with consciousness of power do not flee from unity, do not view unity within the framework of their own narrow interests, and do not approach it with utilitarian calculations based on using or neutralising forces outside themselves. Within the framework of this understanding of Dayı, the revolutionary movement criticised wrongs on every ground and, without bending the truth, conducted ideological struggle against understandings that stood as obstacles before unity. At the same time, examples were created showing how positive unities could be built within struggle.

Examples of unity in the history of the struggle of the Turkish left such as the 1984 Death Fast, the 1996 Death Fast resistance, CMK (Prisons Central Coordination) and DETUDAP (Platform for Solidarity with Revolutionary Prisoners) were created as a result of this effort. None of these possessed exaggerated programmes like the unities that remained on paper. Some were unities of action; some were alliances of forces realised towards a limited objective. But it is an indisputable fact that these unities developed the struggle.

Of these, the 1984 Death Fast is an extremely striking and instructive example combining persistence in unity to the end with the ability to decide to resist alone when the moment required it. Great effort and time were spent organising the resistance together. But at the point where waiting any longer would have meant giving value to status-quoism and surrender, there was not even a moment of hesitation in deciding to lie down to die alone. When even a single political organisation wished to stand beside the revolutionary movement at this point, the requirements of unity were also fulfilled in relation to them. Dayı said that more advanced unities could be organised step by step within struggle, not on paper. Unities organised with objectives appropriate to the existing strength and reality of the left would at the same time develop a culture of unity on the left and create the conditions for organising more advanced unities.

The following assessment also shows that in his approach to the question of unity Dayı based himself not on abstract formulas of unity, but on the concrete situation and needs: "Today what must be done (...) without giving too much value to abstract and grand phrases, is to create unities of action and forces, proceeding from small to large and beginning from what is simplest, easiest and practicable. There is no obstacle before this. (...) Within these unities, relations of friendship and solidarity are developed and the struggle is advanced through the struggle of right and wrong among the masses of the people."

In this 1995 article, Dayı said that everyone opposed to fascism could take part in the proposed unities. On that day unity was approached within the framework of the struggle against fascism; at

another time it could be developed on another ground. What matters is being able to unite the forces of the people around various objectives against imperialism and the oligarchy.

Of course, creating unity is not in itself a magic formula for developing the struggle. On the contrary, unities in which no labour is given, which are not given flesh and bone through producing policies and adding strength, begin to form obstacles to the development of the struggle. There are many examples of such unities too.

One of the distorted outlooks that found a place in the ranks of the left also reveals itself here. People sign their names to the unities that are formed, but avoid shouldering the burden within the unity. Advertising oneself through the labour of others becomes the aim. One reason for the discomfort felt by the left towards the revolutionary movement on the question of unities was its uncompromising stance against these weak approaches. The left's discomfort on this point does not show that the revolutionary movement's unity policy was wrong; on the contrary, it confirms its correctness. Because it is again an undeniable fact that positive unity practices could be created through uncompromising struggle against these childhood illnesses of the left, while the dissolution of unities was most often the result of failing to overcome these weaknesses.

Both persistence in unity and being prepared to remain alone are self-confidence and ideological soundness.

While Dayı tirelessly developed policies and proposals aimed at uniting the forces of the people and the left, he also taught cadres that they must not be afraid of standing alone. Through his stance at historical turning points, he demonstrated this in practice many times. At the root of both attitudes lie self-confidence and ideological soundness. Those who lack confidence in themselves and their ideology act out of fear of dissolving within unities; they either engage in disruption or stay away from unity. Likewise, under conditions of being left alone, being able to withstand the attacks of the oligarchy and persist in defending the correct policy requires self-confidence and ideological soundness.

Before 12 September, in organising armed or mass struggle against fascist attacks; in resistance to the 12 September junta; and in resistance to the policy of forcing surrender in the junta's prisons, Dayı's policy persistently sought to act together with the left, but when left alone the tasks of the struggle were not evaded.

Dayı's defence and implementation of what was right, prepared when necessary to stand alone, and his refusal to become a partner to status quo and passivity in the name of unity, were also smeared by some sections of the left as "sectarianism".

There is no doubt that the revolutionary movement can say with complete peace of mind: if "sectarianism" means not compromising with imperialism and the oligarchy, if "sectarianism" means defending the interests of the revolution and the people, if "sectarianism" means not joining manoeuvres that deceive and delay cadres and masses, if it means resisting under every condition and showing the will to walk towards revolution despite everyone, then yes, we are sectarian... Of course the stance of the revolutionary movement had nothing to do with sectarianism. The reality was that the revolutionary movement defended unities that served not to evade struggle, but to shoulder the tasks of the struggle - and only such unities. Dayı taught us that if any unity does not serve the struggle, we should not be part of it and should not shrink from assuming vital tasks in the name of

unity. In a message he sent to prisoners, he expressed the necessity of being prepared to stand alone when required as follows: “In today’s world it is impossible to be strong and fight the enemy without being prepared to stand alone. Fighting imperialism, the oligarchy and its extensions alone is the greatest power in the world, one that cannot be replaced by any technique, weapon or force. This is self-confidence. This is ideological soundness.”

This is a very concrete truth. As a result of this correct outlook of Dayı, whatever the conditions, the revolutionary movement was able to risk standing alone, withstand attacks from every front, defend what was right and put it into practice. The period of the coup betrayal within the revolutionary movement was one of the strongest examples of being prepared to remain alone, when necessary, in order not to compromise what was right.

Dayı was a leader who, let alone standing alone, did not hesitate to defend what was right and did not compromise with those representing counter-revolution and the system even under conditions in which virtually “the whole world” had united against him.

One of the most concise statements expressing Dayı’s uncompromising stance towards coup-making is this: “Rather than legitimise coup-making in this movement, I would break it down to its atoms and establish a new movement from among its ashes.”

The coup process was a process in which the revolutionary movement was surrounded from all sides, a siege in which various left forces also participated at different levels. But because of this, the revolutionary movement neither suspended the tasks of the struggle nor compromised its principles in order not to remain alone.

Unity requires flexibility and concessions in order to meet on common objectives when necessary. But when the issue is keeping revolutionary ideas and principles alive, being prepared to stand alone is also a requirement of remaining revolutionary.

The same process is also an example of Dayı’s persistence in unity. Despite all the negativities of the left that embraced coup-making, this situation was accepted as a reality of the left in our country, and persistence in walking together with that left nevertheless continued. Dayı said that this reality of the left must not be forgotten, but that the struggle to change it must also continue. As a result of this outlook, the left contaminated by coup-making was addressed as follows: “Of course, what is desired in these unities is the formation and development of reliable friendships. But we do not stay away from unities because friendships are not reliable, because there are no friends. We believe friendships will develop within struggle.” (Congress Decisions)

Likewise, the epic of resistance created against the F-Type attack is one of the examples in which this policy appeared very clearly and was known by broad sections.

For the resistance process to be organised together with the left, an intense discussion process lasting months was lived through. But despite all persistence, unity on the ground of resistance could not be achieved with the great majority of the left. This could not become a theory for not resisting. Even if only with two political organisations, unity was put into practice on the ground of resistance. In the development of the resistance, the Free Prisoners were once again left alone. But writing an epic of resistance under conditions of being left alone was one of the qualities Dayı had mixed into the very yeast of the revolutionary movement. Thanks to this yeast, an epic of resistance lasting seven years was created.

The measures in Dayı's understanding of unity are very clear. Both unity and separation are for developing the struggle.

Approaching the question of unity with this legacy of Dayı will also make it possible for existing unities to develop and grow stronger, and for more advanced unities to be created.

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Uncompromisingness!

He did not compromise with imperialism. He did not compromise with the oligarchy. Under conditions where not compromising demanded a price, he did not compromise with theories defended in order not to pay that price... He did not compromise with weaknesses.

One of the Concepts That Defines Dayı: UNCOMPROMISINGNESS!

He was uncompromising. Because he represented unrevised Marxism-Leninism and uncorrupted revolutionism. Compromise was the rejection of the theory of class struggle, that is, of Marxism-Leninism.

Compromise meant bowing before the enemy; in other words, trampling revolutionism underfoot.

He did not compromise. As he took his final breath, he carried the pride of having been able to remain an uncompromising revolutionary until his last breath, and of never directing the movement he led to the wrong side for even a moment in the alignment between bourgeoisie and proletariat.

That is why he was the Leader, and would remain our Leader.

Dialogue, compromise, empathy, solving problems at the table... These are undoubtedly concepts everyone has heard many times. Since the beginning of the 1990s in particular, they have been among the concepts repeated most by the theoreticians of the bourgeoisie and the representatives of bourgeois politics within the petty bourgeoisie. While saying these things, every form of violence and force is condemned; it is added that "class struggle" has now outlived its life: "Farewell proletariat!" So what do we say? Struggle, resistance, classes, war... And because we say these things, the same circles accuse us of remaining in the "Stone Age", of being "dinosaurs".

At precisely this point, Dayı was undoubtedly among the names most targeted by imperialists, the oligarchy and the theoreticians of the bourgeoisie. Because whatever they wanted to destroy, Dayı stood before them as the representative of what they sought to destroy. They wanted to destroy revolution, socialism, armed struggle, illegality, the proletariat, class struggle, irreconcilable contradictions and Marxism-Leninism, and for thirty-eight years Dayı was their most determined representative.

After Dayı was martyred, the bourgeois press wrote that he was "the last continuer of the armed struggle" and "the last representative of the generation of the 1960s". In one respect this was true: he was the representative of the principled, disciplined, militant and believing revolutionism of the late 1960s, of the Mahirs, İbos and Denizs; of resistance that did not bow to juntas; of the objective of power; of being a fighter for the people's liberation. He represented those who saw force and violence

as a necessary instrument to be resorted to in the liberation of the peoples, those who accepted Marxism-Leninism as a guide to action.

Among the leaders of political movements organised from the first half of the 1970s onwards - leaving aside those who were martyred - there is no other political movement leader who carried the revolutionary line of that process through to today.

Of those who entered the political arena in 1974-75 as the leader of this or that political current, who remains today in the arena of class struggle? Who continues the claim and line they held then? Dayı truly was the one who carried the revolutionary line beginning with Mahir and his comrades into our own day. But there is one respect in which those claiming he was “the last representative of that generation” are mistaken, and greatly mistaken: every Party-Front member will keep Dayı alive and continue his legacy, and therefore he never remained, and will never remain, the “last representative”. The “theory of generations” is a theory bankrupted in the practice of the revolutionary movement; the flag handed over by Mahir and his comrades in March 1972 has been passed from hand to hand ever since, and different generations carry that flag together.

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Uncompromisingness Is One of the Main Links

Dayı, who had been the guide of the revolutionary line since Mahir and his comrades and continued that line with the same militancy, the same radicalism and the same uncompromisingness, while strengthening still further the claim and perspective of taking power, revealed in his opening speech to the Founding Congress the decisive importance he attributed to “uncompromisingness” with these words: “The main link of our sixteen-year history is formed by the line of armed struggle that we have continued under every condition against the enemy, and by not compromising with the enemy. Perhaps we paid a very heavy price for this. We gave dozens of leading cadres and fighters as martyrs...”

The main link, in one sense, gives the most fundamental characteristic features of a process. And in the words above two phenomena are listed as the main link, and one of them is uncompromisingness... Uncompromisingness had such importance for Dayı.

The following emphases Dayı made when assessing the legacy of Mahir and his comrades also show the importance he gave to the culture and tradition of uncompromisingness: “The traitors within the THKP-C repeated with great brazenness imperialist theories going so far as to say that imperialism was peaceful and its local collaborators progressive-democratic and national... Just as today the THKP-C in those days experienced the theories of the ‘new world order’ and the ‘peacefulness of capitalism’ imposed by imperialism upon the peoples of the world and repeated by revisionists. The uncompromising, never-hesitating stance of the THKP-C leadership in continuing the armed struggle in the face of this attack and betrayal is an important legacy left to us.” (Congress Report)

We see that the two phenomena emphasised above as the “main link” again constitute the most important elements of the legacy left to us. Decades later, when assessing the 17 April resistance, Dayı also stated that one of the most important aspects of the resistance was “the declaration that no tendency towards compromise with the enemy was carried”.

Compromise, or Uncompromisingness, Is an Ideological Question

Compromise cannot be regarded as an ordinary deviation or an ordinary problem. Whoever tries to present compromise as merely simple tactical differences, it should be known that a far more serious problem is being concealed there. Compromise is an ideological question.

Every revision of Marxism-Leninism, every corruption of revolutionism, is a step taken towards compromise with the system.

Its appearance in relation to a simple incident, or the fact that when it appears it may not seem likely to create very important political results, does not change its essence. Compromise is an ideological deviation, and its result in almost every case leads towards integration with the ranks of the ruling class.

Dayı gave very clear warnings about the consequences to which compromise would lead:

“Whatever rhetoric it sets out with, whatever large armed force it may possess, every movement that does not take a stance against imperialism and compromises with it is, in the final analysis, condemned to come under the control of imperialism and to colonise its country!”

What is meant here is of course compromise “on the ideological plane” with class enemies. In the course of the development of the revolutionary struggle, any movement may enter temporary ceasefires or agreements with the enemy it fights, or experience retreats because of subjective conditions; these are different from “compromise”. As we have said, compromise ultimately corresponds to an ideological stance.

Sometimes it begins with surrender in the face of the enemy’s tyranny, and surrender gradually captures minds as well, while compromise assumes a political and ideological character.

To defend Marxism-Leninism and the class consciousness of the proletariat means accepting that the contradictions between the fundamental classes that make up a society are also irreconcilable. Therefore, historically, in order to resolve this contradiction, the proletariat has to overthrow the power of the other class and establish its own power. Historically, the resolution of this contradiction requires “force”.

These are the alphabet of Marxism-Leninism. The conclusion arising from this is that those who reject the dictatorship of the proletariat, revolution, force and violence have essentially entered the road of compromise. At this point Dayı deserved to be remembered as the representative of Marxism-Leninism in its purest and simplest form. Because in him these fundamental and universal principles and concepts were never subjected to revision.

The same is true in practice... This includes uncompromisingness towards juntas and in the dungeons. We know that many compromises began under this fascist terror and went as far as rejection of the class struggle. As is known, compromise has no limit. Once this road is entered, compromises are inevitably followed by new compromises. The result is denial of the class struggle and the objective of revolution.

The Source of Uncompromisingness and Compromise

Was the revolutionary movement and its Leader Dayı uncompromising because they were very “sectarian”? Some repeated this for years. Perhaps they convinced no one, but at least this justification deceived themselves.

Uncompromisingness and compromise are concepts and attitudes that are determining not merely from a personal or practical point of view, but in terms of class alignment. Compromisers compromise not because they are personally “cowardly”, but because they are weak in class and ideological terms. Compromise leads to surrender, whether that day or later; the result is inevitable: “Not organising the people’s struggle because we say we will be defeated, we will receive blows, and not carrying it one step closer to revolution every day, could not be the method of revolutionaries. Those who do not carry this thought are condemned constantly to hold the people back from struggle, protect themselves and, gradually moving away from the reality of war and revolution, choose a road of compromise with the bourgeoisie and surrender.” (Congress Report)

At the source of compromise lies failure to believe in and trust the people. Dayı describes the helplessness of those who do not believe in the people:

“Every force that does not believe in the people... can do nothing before a greater force except give up and seek compromise. Those who are genuinely anti-imperialist and trust the people, despite temporary defeats... gather strength again among the people and continue the movement of rebellion. This is a long war. When this outlook is not possessed, in order to protect oneself from imperialist aggression, one enters a process of compromise with imperialism, acting with the logic of escaping with the least possible damage.” (Congress Report)

When this objective reality is clear, what does it serve to declare those who do not compromise “sectarian”, and those who do compromise “mature, intelligent, sensible leftists”? Marxism-Leninism or revisionism? Revolution or counter-revolution? Rather than be called mature, intelligent and sensible according to the measures of the bourgeoisie, we prefer to be branded dinosaurs or sectarian. This is our self-confidence, and when necessary to walk saying “whatever anyone says”, and never to interpret the praise of the bourgeoisie as a good sign, are among the forms of conduct Dayı taught us. For example, in an article describing resistance against the winds of compromise he said: “In a world in which imperialism told tales that the socialist system had been destroyed and socialism defeated; in a world in which many organisations calling themselves ‘revolutionary-communist’ lined up to compromise with imperialism and lay down their arms, raising the banner of armed struggle by saying ‘we are ML’ and challenging all imperialists and local collaborators was synonymous with being branded mad.” Dayı is the one who implanted in our minds the concept “despite everyone and everything”. That is why, while continuing Dayı’s legacy, we too will look not at what they say, but at what Marxism-Leninism says and which stance serves the revolution. Just like Dayı.

When analysing the intolerance and at times hostility of opportunism towards the revolutionary movement, Dayı also stated that the uncompromisingness of the revolutionary movement played a special role in this: “Because we expose their opportunist mentality far from revolutionary war, because we do not join their status quos, because we reject compromise, and moreover because we

do not operate like auxiliary organisations of other parties, their hostility towards our movement has very deep dimensions." (Congress Report)

Sectarianism is an accusation often resorted to on the Turkish left by those who want to conceal their own compromise and liberalism. In every period, the line of resistance of the revolutionary movement objectively performed the function of exposing status-quoist, surrendering and compromising tendencies on the left.

Within a class struggle in which the revolutionary movement exists, no one can legitimise status-quoism, surrender or compromise.

With Whom Did He Not Compromise?

During thirty-eight years of revolutionism, Dayı lived through periods when the winds of compromise blew very strongly. Compromise of course existed in various forms in almost every period, but periods when it turned into a wind became special periods of testing for Marxist-Leninists and revolutionary leaders. It was here that Dayı could stand upright against the wind.

Even when these winds blew on a world scale, nothing changed for Dayı.

During the years when the CPSU imposed upon the world left the revisionist interpretation of the policy of "peaceful coexistence", and in the period when compromise was theorised under the 12 September Junta, the revolutionary movement under Dayı's leadership rejected compromise.

For Dayı, it was very clear that resisting and fighting despite everything and everyone was the "only chance" of the peoples for victory.

That is why Dayı was uncompromising. Was there any need to look for another reason?

Dayı was uncompromising; looking at those with whom he did not compromise also shows why he did not compromise.

He did not compromise with imperialism.

He did not compromise with the oligarchy.

Under conditions where not compromising required paying a price, he did not compromise with theories defended in order not to pay the price.

He did not compromise with reformist theses.

He did not compromise with using others or being used in exchange for short-term interests.

He did not compromise with breaking from the people or looking down on the people. He never accepted this being called leftism.

He did not compromise with betrayal or traitors... Nor did he compromise with the lawyers of traitors.

He did not compromise with weaknesses.

He did not compromise with theories and practices that blurred the boundaries between being within the system and revolutionism.

All of these uncompromising positions were FOR REVOLUTION...

Those whose objective is an independent, democratic, socialist country and society could not compromise with these things.

Dayı meant the objective of an independent, democratic, socialist Turkey. And for that reason he did not compromise with class enemies or with anything that served class enemies.

(*) This article was published in Yeni KURTULUŞ magazine, dated 7 September 2008.

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Dayı Is Our History and Our Present

For the words “Dayı is with us” not to become empty and abstract, we must carry into the future the tradition of resistance and war shaped under Dayı’s leadership.

Dayı Is Our History and Our Present.
We Will Carry Him into the Future!

“We have always been proud of our past, our history... The future rises upon the past. Those who have no past cannot live the future. Relying on our past, taking strength from it and growing this strength, we will continue the revolutionary march. In this respect, past and future are like inseparable links in a chain.” (Dursun Karataş)

Dayı said the words above towards the end of the report he presented to the Congress. Now Dayı too is part of the history of which he said we were always proud. But Dayı is also part of our future. Because, as stated in the words above, we will walk by drawing strength from our past, from our history. Therefore, just as until today, from now on too Dayı will be with us at every stage and every step of our revolutionary march.

For us this is not merely a wish; it is also so because Dayı has a determining share in the strategy, policies, tactics, understanding of organisation and struggle, style of action and resistance, and traditions that will guide us at every stage of our revolutionary march from now on.

Carrying Dayı’s legacy into the future, growing and developing what has been handed over to us, is the duty of every revolutionary who today calls themselves a Party-Front member. There can be no discussion about this; this is the first meaning of the words “Dayı will always be with us”, repeated thousands of times since 11 August. For the phrase “Dayı is with us” not to become empty and abstract, we must properly and worthily shoulder this legacy and carry into the future the tradition of resistance and war shaped under Dayı’s leadership. Every Party-Front member must see themselves as responsible for ensuring this. We have assumed a heavy responsibility. Carrying and keeping Dayı’s legacy alive is a heavy responsibility. But if a burden has been shouldered voluntarily, with enthusiasm and excitement, it becomes possible to carry it.

While Dayı left us a full legacy and a heavy responsibility, he also taught us where and how we could find the strength to shoulder this responsibility. If we compare the legacy Dayı left us to a treasure chest, we can find within that same chest the strength capable of lifting it.

What Is Essential in Dayı-1

Fighting Spirit

Since 11 August, many writings have tried to explain different aspects of Dayı.

Since what is at issue is a thirty-eight-year revolutionary life - a large part of it spent as Leader of the revolutionary movement - it is of course difficult to fit Dayı's characteristics into short magazine articles.

Dayı left his mark on every sphere of life. He produced many policies that influenced the Turkish left and created traditions. Therefore Dayı offered perspectives relating to every sphere of life and every side of revolutionary activity. All of these are important and valuable. But what matters is to grasp what forms the essence of Dayı's outlook on every question. In other words: what is essential in Dayı? Every cadre and supporter must make this concrete and take what is essential in Dayı.

First and foremost, Dayı was a fighter. This is what every cadre and supporter must see first in Dayı. "Fighting spirit" should not be understood only in the military sense; no, Dayı's war was much more comprehensive. It was a war conducted in every sphere of life without exception and at every moment without exception.

It is a state of mind. It is a continuous state of war against EVERY KIND OF OBSTACLE standing before the revolution. The obstacles placed before our revolution by the system and its extensions are no secret to anyone. What is essential in Dayı is never, under any conditions, to compromise with these obstacles and never for even a moment to stop fighting them. The obstacles before the revolution begin with the pressure, terror, laws and prisons of the police and extend to our own weaknesses. At this point we can never say that the obstacles created by the oligarchy are the only important ones. Because in order to overcome the obstacles created by the oligarchy, we must first overcome the obstacles within ourselves. In this sense Dayı is a many-sided war. It is war against imperialist siege. It is war against bourgeois ideology. It is war against deviations on the left, reformism, revisionism and all other distortions attempted to be infiltrated into the left. And it is war against all individualist and petty-bourgeois weaknesses, habits and thoughts within ourselves. Here we are speaking of a war that will never end.

What is essential in Dayı is never, under any conditions or for any reason, to grow tired of or abandon this war. Is this not the aspect that attracts most attention in accounts of Dayı? A continuous state of war; aiming at every moment to strike blows against counter-revolution and taking steps at every moment to develop the revolution and revolutionism... It is like a summary of his life.

Those who neglect or fail to value any dimension of this war, or fall into hopelessness on any of its fronts, cannot be candidates to shoulder Dayı's legacy. Because every side of the war they neglect will weaken some side of themselves.

What Is Essential in Dayı-2

Realism

The fifteen thousand hearts gathered at Dayı's funeral are the expression of the material force that will carry Dayı into the future.

Carrying Dayı into the future is the duty of everyone devoted to the revolutionary movement, everyone who knows Dayı as their Leader and teacher. Workers, civil servants, gecekondu residents, our high-school and university students, housewives, even our children and elderly people - all will lend their shoulders to fulfilling the duty of carrying Dayı into the future. Just as fifteen thousand shoulders carried Dayı's coffin, thousands of our people will shoulder Dayı's legacy and carry it into the future. We have no doubt about this.

Those who are primarily responsible for carrying Dayı into the future are, of course, the cadres. They will be the vanguard, Leader and commander of the great march that thousands will continue with Dayı's legacy. At the beginning of 1990, during the preparation for the Offensive, Dayı said: "the essential element of the Offensive and our future is the cadres."

Before this determination, what he said was: "By enabling almost all our cadres, from the prisons and all fields and regions to abroad, to grasp the process through our participatory understanding, by raising into consciousness what they must do and what is expected of them... we can make the Offensive stronger and faster."

These lines also offer a concrete outlook in terms of the task standing before us today. Within this framework, the first thing we must do is grasp the process and raise into consciousness what the process expects from us.

Dayı was realistic at every stage. What are our needs, what material do we have at hand, what can be done with it and how? Organisation and struggle will be shaped accordingly. The first thing the process expects from cadres and militants is to keep Dayı alive and to show the strength and will to shoulder his legacy.

To make concrete how we can fulfil this task, let us continue by again setting out "what is essential in Dayı". What is essential in Dayı is to revolutionise all twenty-four hours of our day.

It is never to lose sight, even for a moment, of the claim to power and the perspective of taking power.

There is no doubt that, considering the richness of the legacy Dayı left us and the examples he created through his own life, there are certainly other things that must be added to these. But in terms of the needs of the process, these are the priorities.

The definition "One who does not fight for revolution cannot be called a socialist" is clear enough for everyone to understand and definite enough that no one can interpret it in a different way. This clarity is under attack in our country. Dayı was the architect of the greatest resistance to this attack. Organising has become in the Turkish left almost a forgotten and alien concept, and this concept absolutely must regain the place it deserves in revolutionary struggle. A revolutionism without

principles and rules, revolutionary activity without discipline and without a goal, is impossible. Whoever claims it is possible is either seriously mistaken or is carrying out an attack on revolutionism. All these wrongs, mistakes, distortions and degenerations define the battlefield on which we will wage this war. Throughout his thirty-eight-year revolutionary life, Dayı was inside this war. For that reason, his legacy on this question is extremely rich. All cadres and militants must assimilate the methods and experiences of this war. Carrying Dayı into the future must begin with reviewing our revolutionism personally, and our revolutionary activity in every sphere of life as a whole. How do we live, how do we think, how do we work? Reviewing these in the framework of Dayı's perspectives, instructions and advice means beginning to carry Dayı into the future.

If Dayı's legacy is to have a role in the future of the peoples of Turkey - and it certainly will - there will also certainly be people who shoulder and continue that legacy. This is one of the objective laws of history.

In a country that, in Dayı's words, is "pregnant with revolution", the people of an organisation that possesses the claim and mission to realise this historical birth must carry Dayı's legacy into the future in order to fulfil that mission. Carrying this legacy into the future and developing the revolution are one and the same thing. Dragging one's feet in carrying Dayı into the future, that is, in developing the revolution, is unacceptable. As we stated above, a historical march that has begun will continue, sometimes slowing and sometimes accelerating. It is clear that those who cannot assume this mission will be left behind, while those who can will come to the fore.

Dayı was the one who applied the Party-Front strategy with loyalty to the strategy and unwavering commitment to the goal, with daring and determination. Carrying Dayı's legacy through history means precisely doing this.

We must enlarge our horizon and our claim. Carrying Dayı into the future is, in one respect, of course this too. Remember the first brochures and books published under the signature of the revolutionary movement during the period when Dayı waged his historical struggle against denialism and liquidationism. The only problem of the young cadres was the problem of putting PASS into practice. All other problems were important and on the agenda as obstacles before implementing this. Of course it is true that those who cannot solve the small problems before them cannot solve the great ones, and that those who cannot take the small steps necessary to develop the people's war of liberation cannot take the great steps. But what we want to emphasise here is that even while taking the smallest steps, we must never forget our great march and our great objectives. During the junta years we see Dayı, on the one hand organising the resistances imposed by life on that day and leading the writing of epics within them, while in the same periods thinking about the strategic problems and solutions of the people's liberation.

Various successes can also be achieved in the class struggle without a claim to revolution and a perspective of taking power. But these successes lead nowhere. For this reason, in Dayı's revolutionary line, what was essential was not short-term and temporary success but the strategic objective. In terms of the claim to revolution and the perspective of taking power, carrying Dayı into the future means every one of our people possessing the belief and claim: "We will shake the world once again, this time from Turkey." At school, in the factory, in the workplace, in the streets of the gecekondu neighbourhoods, every step we take must reflect this belief and claim. The enthusiasm and excitement of this belief and claim must stamp every step we take. And we must know that it is then that we will have drawn much closer to Dayı and to Dayı's style of revolutionism.

And we walk behind him like a sea. We walk towards revolution; because we know that carrying Dayı into the future means every one of our people possessing the belief and claim: “We will shake the world once again, this time from Turkey.”

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What Is Essential in Dayı-3

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Organisation and Revolution

Let us pause here and go back to a moment many years ago. The calendar showed 13 September 1992. As will be remembered, a coup had been organised within the revolutionary movement and Dayı had been taken prisoner by the gang of betrayal who until the day before had been his comrades.

There is an important event during this period of Dayı’s captivity. After a while Dayı escaped from the place where the coup plotters were holding him. There is no doubt that until that day he had never imagined that he might have to escape from a place arranged as the central base of the movement, and the fact that they had forced him to do such a thing was by itself enough for him to feel unlimited anger towards the coup gang.

Of course he was angry. Yet, strikingly, during this escape Dayı informed only a few comrades at leadership level about the coup and then returned to the central base, to the coup plotters. For those who do not know Dayı, Dayı’s way of thinking and his priorities, this behaviour may seem extremely surprising and incomprehensible. But for Dayı there was a very clear reason. What was essential for Dayı was the organisation, the revolution. Under those conditions his “personal security” was of no importance whatsoever to him. What mattered was the organisation; because the organisation meant revolution. This was what he meant when he said, “Revolutionary Left is my freedom.” If the organisation was going to be harmed, his personal freedom had no meaning.

To carry Dayı into the future is to carry this way of thinking. It is to be able to say, “The revolutionary movement is my freedom, my teacher, my night and day, my life.”

It is to be able to integrate our anger, our love, our feelings and our longings with the revolution and the organisation.

If our lives, thoughts, methods and our struggle as a whole will determine the future of the organisation, the revolution and the people, no one has the right in this war to weakness or to compromises that make the future uncertain. This war must be waged from the Front. First of all, in our thought and practice we must take the future out of the realm of the abstract. The future is in fact the next stage of a historical process that began yesterday and continues today. The future is nothing other than what we build step by step from today. The future will be shaped in the way we begin shaping it today.

We have been shaping our future since the 1970s. And for this reason we have a sound foundation for the future. We have a powerful light showing us the future and unerring guides.

In his assessments of the past, Dayı said: “The THKP-C became the force that carried us into the future.”

The organisation rebuilt on 30 March 1994 will also be the force that carries us into the future. Dayı is the guide of this future under the leadership of the name of Hope.

How will we build the future, how will we carry the legacy? These must be clear in the mind of every one of our people. We must possess an outlook that reaches from simple, concrete questions to the strategic objective. To make it concrete again: What does a revolutionary do, how does a revolutionary live, what is their fundamental duty? What does an organisation in any field of work do, how does it carry out activity, what is its fundamental duty? What does a leader do, how does a leader live, what is their fundamental duty? These are a few questions. And in the answers to these questions lie the requirements for carrying Dayı into the future. In the answers to these questions lies our strategic objective.

In every field we must reshape revolutionism and revolutionary organisation according to the present needs of life and struggle. Dayı of course said many things about revolutionism, but the definition he most frequently emphasised and regarded as the essence of them all was this: Revolutionism is organising. Taking this definition one step further, except under special conditions, it is such a sharp “essential” that one can say that one who does not organise is not carrying out revolutionism. So what is organising? Organising is labour. Organising is mass work in its revolutionary meaning and dynamism. Organising is an endless and tireless ideological struggle against bourgeois ideology and demagogy wherever we are. When we enter into these details of organising, it becomes clear why revolutionism is organising and why one who does not organise cannot be regarded as carrying out revolutionism.

The task of the revolutionary movement is to make revolution. That is why the name of our march is the revolutionary march. Just as yesterday, today and tomorrow we will continue this march under Dayı’s guidance. It must be clear in the minds of all our people that carrying Dayı’s legacy into the future means growing the revolution. This is our concrete, current and strategic task.

Leadership Is Foresight

A leader is, first, one who can correctly analyse what exists; second, one who can foresee within certain limits what may come to be; and third, one who can rise above objective conditions in the direction indicated by what they see.

The bourgeois understanding of history and the Marxist-Leninist understanding of history are fundamentally different from one another. This difference stems above all from their different understandings of how history is made.

Who makes history?

We do not possess a denialist and individualist understanding of history like the bourgeoisie. We do not explain history through individuals and heroes. The question Brecht asks in his masterful lines about distortions in the writing of history does not apply to Marxist-Leninists. Let us remember Brecht’s question:

“Who built Thebes of the seven gates?
In the books there are only the names of kings,
Did the kings haul the rocks?

Young Alexander conquered India!
All by himself?
Caesar defeated the Gauls!
Did he not even have a cook with him?..”

The understanding of history that attributes history to kings, sultans and leaders alone is the result of the individualist, selfish understanding of the exploiting ruling classes and their effort to cover over the class struggle. It is the masses who make history. The dynamo of historical development is the class struggle. Then, does our characterisation of the Soviet Revolution as “Lenin’s work” contradict this outlook? Of course not. Nor does our special emphasis on Mao’s role in the Chinese Revolution, or our telling and naming of the slave rebellions through Spartacus, contradict this understanding.

Because the Marxist-Leninist understanding of history does not deny the role of the leaders and heroes of the masses, or their heroism, within the struggle of the masses. On the contrary, within determined historical conditions and as part of the movement of the masses, leaders and heroes can come to the fore at certain moments and periods through their role in accelerating or slowing that development.

Of course Spartacus was not alone when he rebelled; but the rebellion of the slaves was embodied in him and entered history under his name. Why his name? Because he was the one who directed the anger of the slaves against the slave-owning system, organised the slaves, guided them in their historical rebellion, walked in front and opened the road. Lenin too was not alone in the Soviet Revolution. But his stamp was on the will that showed the way and put forward historical decisions at historical moments. That is why the note entered into history concerning the Soviet Revolution as “his work” is neither wrong nor unjust.

The situation is the same when we say that Dayı created Revolutionary Left and the Party-Front. That is why accounts of Dayı and the history of the revolutionary movement are always intertwined. And of course this section of history will always continue to be told in this way. Because that is how it was written into history.

Leaders too are a historical phenomenon through their role in accelerating social development and placing the class struggle and the movement of the masses onto its course. That is why, just as it is impossible to write history without speaking of the masses, it is also impossible to write history without speaking of leaders.

Leaders cannot be artificially added to history. In other words, history does not accept patches on these questions. It cannot be forced. Leaders who will be written as part of history take their place within that history through the role they play in the struggle. And that role is embodied in their will and their foresight.

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Leadership Is Being Able to See the History Hidden in Detail

It was Castro who defined the processes, determined policies and tactics, and possessed the greatest clarity concerning the goal.

When describing Castro’s position of leadership, Che used this concise sentence: “When we went up to the Sierra Maestra, he was the only one who saw the future.” Castro was the one who could see

the future best and most clearly and therefore possessed the greatest clarity regarding the road to be taken and the policies and tactics to be followed on that road. And for this reason he was the leader of the Cuban Revolution. There are many names in history who earned this title - the title of leader - through the role they played in struggle: beginning with Spartacus, Bedreddin, Marx, Engels, Lenin, Mao, Stalin, Che, Cabral, Castro, Enver Hoxha, Dimitrov, Rosa, Farabundo Martí, Sandino, Carpio, Zapata, Kim Il Sung, Ho Chi Minh, Mahir Çayan... There is no doubt that we could name dozens more. Despite countless differences in their periods, lives and actions, what historically unites them under the title “leader” is the mission they undertook in the struggle of the peoples. In the history of almost all of them there is a break, a challenge, the raising of a new flag, the opening of a new road...

Processes and moments that can be called “turning points” in history, events and phenomena that are milestones of history, are where leaders reveal themselves. At these moments they come to the fore through their intervention in the process. Right or wrong, they show a direction. If the direction they show is wrong, history will forget them as quickly as possible; but if the intervention is correct and timely, that period and what follows will henceforth be remembered under that person’s name.

In the 1978 separation of Revolutionary Left from Devrimci Yol liquidationism, the view among a certain section was: “There is no important ideological or theoretical difference between DY and DS...” Many political movements did not take the separation seriously in political terms because they thought there was no serious difference between them. Of course many discussions took place and books were written at that time about this separation. But history would give the final judgement.

Before long the process showed that the differences between the theoreticians of Devrimci Yol and those who formed Revolutionary Left in their understanding of people’s war and Vanguard War, and the differences in cadre development, organisation and style of work that some regarded as “details”, were reflections of much more important differences at the foundation. Dayı’s role was to see this beforehand and place it on the agenda.

Dayı saw the historical meaning of phenomena presented as small and unimportant differences, even phenomena that the liquidationist DY leaders tried to dismiss with explanations such as “a printing error!” He foresaw where the understanding emerging in these “small” events would lead, and undertook the leadership of the revolutionary separation that was one of the most important events in the history of the revolutionary movement in Turkey.

Leadership is being able to see the historical magnitude of detail, or conversely, to see that some events which appear very important and large within a particular period and amid daily developments may in fact not carry determining importance in history...

Those who cannot determine what is fundamental and what is secondary, what is important and what is historically unimportant in the development of revolution also have an unstable place in history. One of the elements that makes the revolutionary movement different is the soundness of its determinations and foresight at this point, and the name of this foresight is Dayı...

The opportunist of the day, in order to save the day, makes a flea into a camel and a camel into a flea... The Leader sees the flea as a flea and the camel as a camel, and places them accordingly in history... Dayı was one of those who could do this.

Seeing the history in detail is not enough; Leadership is being able to do what what one sees requires! Leadership means possessing not only the ability to see the direction of events and

developments, but also the daring and will to do what that vision requires. Sometimes the direction of events is already completely clear; no special analysis or prediction is necessary. Yet the mission of leadership reveals itself here again; the ordinary person, even though events develop before their eyes, cannot take the necessary measure or give the movement the correct direction.

To foresee something, to determine what is fundamental and what is secondary without being swept away by the winds blowing at that moment, and to intervene in processes accordingly, requires certain qualities. A leader is, first, one who can correctly analyse what exists; second, one who can foresee within certain limits what may happen, that is, the future; and third, one who can rise above objective conditions in the direction indicated by what they see.

Leadership reveals its own ability and will at these three points. Being able to make correct forecasts and, in line with them, develop the struggle without being dragged behind objective conditions or surrendering to them, and being able to create new roads and methods, is the difference between ordinary management and leadership. Under conditions where circumstances change, balances of power are overturned, the movement confronts expected or unexpected difficulties, and the course of events changes, leadership foresees the direction of developments and gives the struggle and the organisation a direction accordingly. To the extent that it can do this, its mission of leadership is strengthened. Those policies and processes then pass into history as policies and processes bearing that leader's stamp and name.

The separation from Devrimci Yol, the creation of a new movement with Revolutionary Left, the development of a new policy of struggle against fascist terror, the great resistances against the junta and the years of the Offensive are remembered together with Dayı in history for precisely this reason. Some of the differences between the Turkish left and the revolutionary movement arose because they could not foresee the process correctly; others arose because, although they saw the development of the process, they could not display the will necessary to do what it required. In this sense objective conditions were surrendered to, the direction of events was generally not seen correctly or, even when seen, correct tactics could not be determined.

The resistance process in the junta prisons is like an expression of what we have said. In 1984 the junta had apparently handed its place to a "civilian" administration. But the attack aimed at forcing the prisoners to surrender in the prisons had intensified enormously. There, under those conditions, what was important? Protecting the leading cadres, or carrying out that resistance whatever the price? Which would play a role in advancing the revolution in history? The decision taken that day shows that Dayı gave a very correct answer to this question and that the future was analysed very accurately in this sense.

There was also a complete lack of foresight among a large part of the left in its attitude towards the junta's manoeuvres of civilianisation. And then there was Dayı's foresight! Dayı foresaw that the period after 1983 would be "the institutionalised continuation of open fascism", and from then until today this determination has remained the definition that best explains the existing administration in our country.

If you determine that the direction of developments will be "the continuation of open fascism in various forms", the policies and tactics you follow will be different; if you determine that the direction will be "towards democratisation", the policies and tactics you follow will be different. When Dayı determined that open fascism would continue in different forms, he was also setting the movement a

target of persisting in illegality, armed struggle, and forms of organisation and struggle appropriate to this.

Organisations that did not possess correct foresight regarding developments shared the errors of ordinary sections and determined that “civilianisation” and democratisation would develop. And this democratisation was supposedly going to happen within only three or five years. They were very confident on this point. So much so that, despite all signs pointing in the opposite direction, even at the end of the 1980s they continued theories such as “democracy is inevitable under EU pressure; therefore what the masses need is a legal party”. That democracy is still being awaited. And of course, because the predictions and what actually happened were different, the difference between the road drawn by Dayı from that day and the road drawn by most of the left continues. Deviations emerge depending on changes in conditions, individuals and particular social sections; leadership is ensuring that despite these changes, the movement does not deviate from its objective and fundamental direction. It is ensuring that on the rugged, winding and steep road of revolution, the revolutionary march does not stop. It is ensuring that the perspective of taking power is forgotten under no conditions.

Achieving these things undoubtedly requires, in certain respects, grounding, but beyond that grounding it requires a historical instinct, daring, certainty, clarity of objective, and the ability to risk both great prices and great risks. Only in this way can historical breaks and historical turning points be led.

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Leadership Is Being Able to Determine the ‘Right Time’ and the ‘Right Target’

One of Lenin’s greatest skills was correctly determining whom to strike in ideological struggle and in which period. What would create which results in which period? He was able to foresee this. As his forecasts were confirmed, his mission of leadership was strengthened.

In ideological struggle he was uncompromising in every period; he was in continuous struggle both against the bourgeoisie and against deviations on the left. But this struggle was extremely planned and foresighted. At one time he conducted ideological struggle against the Narodniks; at another, against the Economists. Later, again according to the period and conditions, he fought ideologically for example against the Mensheviks, after the defeat of 1905 against the Otzovists and Machists, and on the eve of the revolution against the social-chauvinists... Which struggle would come to the fore in which period depended on what the main obstacles before the struggle were, the characteristics of the period and what results were expected from that struggle. To concentrate, ideologically or politically, on the wrong targets at the wrong time would undoubtedly lead to wasted energy and other damage.

We can recall again this striking event from Lenin’s history of leadership: in 1917, in the vote inside the RSDLP over whether Russia should withdraw from the imperialist war, Lenin said, “either me or the war”. Opening the road of the revolution depended on Russia’s withdrawal from the war, and that depended on concluding a peace agreement. For this reason he took the position that if a decision came out for Russia to continue the war, “I am not here”. History proved Lenin right in this stance of laying down the gauntlet. When, concerning the date of the uprising, he said, “yesterday was too early, tomorrow will be too late”, he was again speaking with the same masterly foresight.

Revolutions, separations and breaks in the history of a political movement, Offensives, transitions from one organisational stage to another - all these, when realised with correct foresight, are entered in the columns of “success” and “gain” for the revolution in the class struggle.

It was the same in the history of the revolutionary movement. Had the break from liquidationism been historically too early, perhaps such a movement could not have been organised; had it been delayed, liquidationism would have completed its insidious move. The separation took place with a timing historically confirmed as correct.

In this sense the separation was a process that was patient but not sluggish, in which organisational functioning and principles, revolutionary morality and rules were not made matters of debate.

The decision on the Death Fast in the junta prisons, the revolutionary movement’s realisation of the “Offensive”, and becoming a Party - all these are historical turning points, and history has confirmed that the correct decisions were taken at the “right time”.

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We Must Possess Dayı’s Foresight and Will!

The shaping of leadership in the revolutionary movement begins with Mahir Çayan. From the beginning, the foresight and daring of rupture we have spoken of were embodied in him at the start of the process. Clarifying the road of the Turkish revolution was, for the period, a fairly rapid but patient process. The revolutionary movement developed step by step. The break was carried out step by step. So much so that practice too was intervened in “in parallel with theoretical clarification”.

In that historical period, there was a development process shaped both by extremely strong will and by extremely correct foresight. At no stage did they leave the process to spontaneity. Doing what had to be done a day earlier or a day later; taking one step too many or one step too few, could have interrupted the process and prevented the revolutionary rupture from taking place. Leadership could become leadership only by being able to bring the process to its revolutionary conclusion. Mahir succeeded in doing this.

Mahir possessed correct foresight as to what 12 March was, what it would do and what it aimed at. He also possessed correct foresight over whether, in the face of 12 March, it would be right to go abroad or remain and fight, and which would create results that developed the revolution. But as we emphasised above, this would not be enough. More than that, he also possessed the daring to fight in accordance with this foresight. The understanding of resistance and war that caused a manifesto such as Kızıldere to be written against 12 March developed upon these correct analyses and forecasts.

Following Kızıldere, Dayı took Mahir’s legacy and became the name that ensured the continuity of the movement by displaying the same mastery at turning points. The process in which the revolutionary movement emerged was the process in which Mahir’s leadership emerged; the process of recreating the THKP-C was the process in which Dayı’s leadership emerged. In both, the characteristics of daring, foresight and will were the same.

What enabled Dayı to identify deviations, weaknesses and shortcomings before everyone else and with clarity was thinking with this simplicity: “The reason for the existence of forms of

organisation, programmes, statutes, political tactics is the needs of the struggle and war." (From the Congress Report)

If anything - a policy, a decision, a strategy, a style of management - does not answer the needs of the struggle and war, then there is a problem there. It is that open and clear. Then there is a deviation, an inadequacy, a wrong, or in the most general sense something that is not going well or is not in its proper place. And that is precisely the point where leadership intervenes and, through its foresight and will, gives a new direction.

Does everything begin with leadership and end with leadership? Of course not. Because it is very clear that "A revolutionary leadership cannot be considered separately from its cadres, nor cadres separately from the leadership." This history was created within this whole. As Castro said: "This movement is much greater than any one of us can be."

Our strategy, our martyrs, our traditions, our cadres and our leadership are parts that make up the whole we call "the movement". The movement came to today within this whole and will continue on its road within this whole.

A publication of the revolutionary movement once stated: "No cadre, no revolutionary can fall into the easy assumption, 'after all, we have a correct revolutionary leadership', nor do they have the right to."

These words were written years ago, in Revolutionary Left magazine published in June 1993. Today it is clear that these words have now turned directly into an instruction; because no cadre of the movement can any longer live in the easy assumption that Dayı is there. To live in such an easy assumption would in fact mean nothing other than being plainly irresponsible.

So how are we to think? How are we to adapt the words above to today? The answer should not be difficult for any cadre to think of:

Then we will possess Dayı's foresight. We will display Dayı's will.

In this sense, as was stated in the same place:

"And every cadre must set before themselves as an objective all the qualities listed for a leader. All... cadres... must be leaders in their own fields, first of all in their own lives, through their initiative, abilities, discipline, self-sacrifice, political productivity and ability to resolve problems."

(*) This article was published in YÜRÜYÜŞ for Independence, Democracy and Socialism, dated 30 November 2008.

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One Country... One Person... One Organisation...

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Can Change the Course of History

Countries, organisations and people who show the will to write history "alone" begin, from that very moment, to multiply.

...

No, said Lenin, “this agreement must be signed or I resign”... It was a critical moment on the eve of the revolution. He had not convinced most of his comrades, but he was certain of his historical correctness. In order to show this to his Party and non-Party comrades, he defended his position alone and put himself forward...

Yes, said Mao, yes, revolution in China is possible only through a people’s war developing from the countryside. For a long time Mao’s thought was not accepted within the Party... But he was patient, he wrote, he organised the practice of the theory he defended, and sooner or later that revolutionary line would become the Party line... And so it did, and victory was achieved on that line...

This time we were defeated, but there is no turning back, said Fidel. The military defeat at Moncada turned into a political victory and the starting point of Vanguard War.

We must not allow the Road of the Turkish Revolution clarified by Mahir and his comrades to be liquidated, said Dayı. There were “old hands” before him, but they were sly, hypocritical and therefore lacking in daring.

Even if he stood alone, the political daring and will he put forward could secure the continuity of the Party-Front movement in the flow of history... And in the end, that is what happened...

In Russia, China, Cuba, Turkey and dozens of other countries of the world, at the most critical moments, the course of history was placed on its correct track by the stance of one person, one organisation or one country...

The world is in an uninterrupted war. The oppressed and the oppressors are in continuous struggle on every centimetre of the globe. They win and lose. Victories and defeats are experienced in turn...

1 January 1959 was the day of victory of the Cuban people against American imperialism and its collaborator Batista government. It was one of the most beautiful New Year’s Days celebrated by the peoples of the world. But the war does not end with victory being won. Because the “final” result of this war is still far away. And until that point is reached there will be victories, and blows as well... Reaching that point depends on not being discouraged by those blows and never turning back. This corresponds in the class struggle to what we call determination, will and belief.

On 9 November 1989, the imperialists were proclaiming their victory to the whole world. That day the entire imperialist media, through live broadcasts, showed millions of people the demolition of the wall separating East and West Berlin.

They tried to turn the demolition of the Berlin Wall separating capitalist Germany from socialist Germany into “the eternal collapse of socialism”. The world was bombarded with lies. Pieces broken from the Berlin Wall were placed in museums and put on sale, while the thesis “socialism is dead” was presented as proven. The fall of the wall was greeted with joy in the imperialist world. So much so that schools in capitalist Germany were closed and the day was declared a holiday. Their joy was of course not without reason; the fall of the wall would be followed by coups and counter-revolutions in many socialist countries and the restoration of capitalism.

In many former socialist countries where revisionism had come to dominate, while statues of Lenin and Stalin were removed, the hammer and sickle and red flags were stripped of their place as symbols of those countries...

This wave of reaction and the winds of counter-revolution that began in 1989 also affected many countries and organisations outside the socialist countries. Various countries and petty-bourgeois nationalist organisations that had stood against imperialism in alliance with the socialist system were the first to be swept away. Among movements claiming to be Marxist-Leninist, many were swept before the winds of counter-revolution by taking decisions for ceasefires, laying down arms and legalisation, or by removing the words socialist and communist from the names of their organisations and symbols such as the hammer and sickle. As this wave of reaction continued, some put forward wretched theories claiming that imperialism had changed in order to excuse their miserable deviations.

In short, on one side there was a powerful wind of counter-revolution, and on the other those being dragged before it... Encouraged by this picture, the bourgeoisie kept shouting “socialism is dead”, bourgeois ideologues proclaimed “the end of history” and tried to bury the class struggle. And with the same brazenness the imperialists called on everyone to “surrender”, imposing “either a change of thought or death”. Yet despite this siege, these ideological, psychological and cultural attacks and open threats of occupation, in one country of the world, Romania, a leader named Ceaușescu stood up and refused to surrender to the imperialist coup plotters. He died as an honourable socialist. Alone, at that moment, he could not stop the counter-revolutions in the socialist countries or block the restoration of capitalism, but by showing that one could resist even when left alone before that great wind of counter-revolution, he was martyred “as an honourable socialist despite his shortcomings”. In another corner of the world a country stood up: Cuba... It showed the determination to say, we would rather sink the island than hand our country over to imperialism. In another corner of the world a revolutionary organisation stood up; before the bodies of its comrades, massacred “to be presented as a gift!” to Bush, leader of the imperialist world, had even been buried, it showed the determination to say that whatever the price, we will continue to defend revolution and socialism. Other voices from other places joined these revolutionary departures. Against the wind of counter-revolution that wanted to sweep away everything before it amid the cries “socialism is dead” and “farewell proletariat”, an impassable barricade was built. One country, one organisation, could play such a historical role in the course of history...

Countries, organisations and people who show the will to write history “alone” begin, from that very moment, to multiply. Because their resistance alone multiplies and sows in the soil the seeds from which others like them will grow. In the struggle of those who can become a will alone, others find ground on which to develop.

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“Socialismo O Muerte”

(Socialism or Death!)

The first day of every new year is also the anniversary of the Cuban Revolution. This time, rather than the development of the revolution in Cuba, we have found it useful to consider the resistance of the Cuban Revolution - its leadership and its people - against the imperialist aggression that dismantled the socialist system.

When Cuba took the stance referred to above, it was under complete imperialist siege. For years it had already been under a US embargo. But relations with the other socialist countries had been enough to compensate for the damage of the embargo... Now those countries no longer existed. Beginning with Russia, the countries that returned to capitalism and joined the imperialist system cut their former relations with Cuba. Cuba was now “alone”. There was no Venezuela, Bolivia or Nicaragua beside it, as there is today.

On one hand there was imperialist siege and attack, and on the other serious economic problems. The siege and shortages imposed an even harder life requiring greater self-sacrifice upon the Cuban people.

No one can forget what was lived through in those years or the sacrifices of the Cuban people. Even food was extremely limited for years. But the Cuban people knew how to endure these difficulties with patriotism and belief in socialism, and how to overcome them. Cuba, as a whole country with its leadership and its people, displayed such resistance that even counter-revolutionaries who went to Cuba could find little to say.

Despite the attacks and even open threats of occupation, Cuba was determined not to surrender to imperialism. In those years, perhaps the words that changed the course of history were those spoken by Castro: “Rather than hand this island over to imperialism, we will sink it!” Cuba’s resistance became an impassable obstacle before the imperialist bandits’ aim of “completely liquidating the socialist system”.

When Cuba announced this daring decision to resist, there was no one beside it, not even a single country. There was no Venezuela as there is today, no Bolivia! Cuba was challenging imperialism “alone”. For the imperialists, Cuba was a country that “had absolutely to be brought to surrender”, an obstacle that “had to be overcome”. Perhaps it was small in population and geographical area. But because it defied imperialism, defended socialism and represented Hope for the peoples of the world - in short, because of the mission it played - it was a great force.

Despite their “great” successes in the Soviet Union and Eastern European countries, the imperialists could not tolerate a “small” island remaining socialist. They still cannot tolerate it.

They knew that a country resisting in socialism was the greatest threat and danger to the imperialist system, and with this class “consciousness” they obeyed no rule in the embargo and blockade they imposed upon the Cuban people. They showed no concern for any human value or any rule of international law. But Cuba was not Panama or Grenada, which they could enter from one side and occupy. The entire Cuban people would fight with weapons in their hands, and that island would not be surrendered until the last Cuban had been martyred. The determination to “sink” the island rather than become capitalist already meant a great deal in itself, and the determination of the leadership and the organisation of the people frightened the imperialists. It was as a result of this determination and organisation that they could not destroy Cuba. A small island became a position of great resistance. It defended socialism right beside the imperialist bandits.

About fifteen years ago, when the collapse of the socialist system was still very recent and the siege of Cuba was extremely heavy, a mobilisation of solidarity with Cuba was organised under the name “We Are Defending Hope”. Thousands of people, from intellectuals and journalists to workers, answered the call to defend Hope and were in Cuba in May 1993. Those who went did not see a

demoralised and frightened people there; on the contrary, despite all the economic problems and threats of imperialist occupation, they saw a people embracing socialism. Those who went to Cuba then were also fortunate, because they witnessed a scene rarely seen: in Havana, capital of Cuba, on 1 May 1993, they saw one million Cubans defending their leaders and socialism. That square that day was the answer to the imperialist siege and to the lies that “socialism is dead”. On that day millions were on their feet in all the cities of Cuba. The determined resistance of a country standing alone was undoubtedly also creating the conditions in which it would not remain alone.

This is almost a historical characteristic of being “alone”. Countries, organisations and people who show the will to write history “alone” begin, from that very moment, to multiply. Because their resistance alone multiplies and sows in the soil the seeds from which others like them will grow. In the struggle of those who can become a will alone, others find ground on which to develop.

One of the Cubans, conscious that socialism would always exist on the island and that great prices would be paid for this, expressed their feelings that day as follows: “Perhaps we will lose our eyes, our children, our lives. Perhaps the world will remain silent while we are abandoned to death, will watch our destruction to the end. But they will not see us lose our freedom. We will resist, yes, yes for Cuba.” (11 May 1993, Cumhuriyet)

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The Conditions of Revolution Are Never ‘Ideal’!

That was what had to be said. Under those conditions, the Cuban leaders and people did the only thing that could be done. At the cost of going hungry for years, they resisted the embargo, siege and economic difficulties. They defended socialism. They showed that socialism can be defended even under the hardest conditions.

They did not think, “conditions are not suitable”, “we have been left alone”, “under these conditions we cannot stand against imperialism”. Hope continued to exist through precisely this stance.

As a result of this resistance, Cuba today is no longer as isolated and alone as it was yesterday. With the morale and confidence given by the Cuban people, first and foremost the peoples of Latin America continued their resistance to imperialism. Every force deciding to resist imperialism knew that it would find a country like Cuba beside it.

This was a great force for every progressive government. Today more countries show economic and political solidarity with Cuba. Cuba is no longer alone. Despite their own weaknesses, there is now resistance to America by many countries and peoples. There is no doubt that what made this possible was the resistance carried out daringly and determinedly by one country under conditions of standing alone. Cuba both resisted itself and became a moral force for other peoples and revolutionaries.

When we look at the development of the Cuban Revolution, we witness how every obstacle before the revolution was overcome with great determination and at great cost. The 1990s, when the attacks of reaction and counter-revolution continued, were a new period of testing. And Cuban revolutionaries emerged with honour from that test and have done so until today. With the Great October Revolution in Russia, the world entered a new period, but what came before was difficult. Before it, some believed revolution could not be achieved. Some thought socialism could not exist in one country.

One organisation, the Bolshevik Party, thought differently. One leader, Lenin, thought differently. They believed that in Russia alone, on the basis of the Bolsheviks' own strength and leadership, they could carry out the revolution. In the years following the revolution, despite imperialist attacks and civil war, they also believed they could "build socialism in one country". This is how history was written. They showed the oppressed peoples of the world that they could succeed.

In the world of the 1990s, Cuba's role was similar. It showed the peoples of the world that resistance was possible. In the world of the 1990s, Revolutionary Left and all Marxist-Leninists in the world who shared the same stance, rejecting the laying down of arms, abandoning revolution and renouncing socialism, played the same role.

Standing alone confronts us sometimes on a world scale and sometimes within the conditions of the class struggle of a particular country; in one sense, the 1984 and 2000-2007 Death Fast processes, in which one was left "alone", were such processes. If Cuba had not resisted, or if the revolutionaries of our country had not resisted in the 1980s and 2000s, history would of course have been written differently.

In every period of history, a single person, a single organisation and a single country can play a role that changes the course of history. This is also in accordance with the nature of the class struggle. For this is the situation in almost every field of the class struggle. If a single person, a single organisation, when the place and time come, can dare to remain "alone", can risk the determination to "sink the island" or paying great prices in other forms, they can stand against the winds and reverse those winds.

Revolutionary processes evolve towards victory by overcoming these difficult roads.

"Standing alone" and "walking alone" are never things to fear. Those conditions may arise independently of our will. There are no "ideal conditions" for the revolutionary march. If we possess the determination to carry the revolutionary march through to victory, that means being prepared, when necessary, to remain alone and to pay the great prices brought by being alone. There is no other chance of victory.

(*) This article was published in YÜRÜYÜŞ for Independence, Democracy and Socialism, dated 4 January 2009.

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Dayı and Friend-Enemy

The first leaflet declaring that the revolutionary movement would continue the struggle against the 12 September junta was entitled "The Americanist Fascist Junta Will Not Defeat 45 Million People". Dayı himself wrote this leaflet. And the final subheading of this leaflet from his hand was: "OUR FRIENDS AND OUR ENEMIES".

When shaping the struggle against the junta, this was what had first to be distinguished. But this necessity was of course not limited to the junta period. At the very beginning of the Party Programme too there is a subheading: "IN THIS WAR THE ENEMIES OF THE PEOPLE ARE AS FOLLOWS". This too expresses a particular understanding.

Throughout Dayı's entire political life and in all the policies he developed, these two concepts - friend and enemy - held an extremely determining place.

In the end, the phenomenon we call "the alignment of classes in the revolution" is essentially the definition of friends and enemies. Likewise, in assessing relations and attitudes within the left, the measure is determined by the meaning given to the concepts of friendship and enmity.

It is clear that one who does not know their friend and enemy cannot determine upon whom they can lean and with whom they must always stand face to face. If friendship and enmity are vague, error is inevitable.

In one of his writings Dayı said on this question: "A revolutionary who does not know the enemy well cannot know well what to do or how to do it. A moment of carelessness, neglect or misjudging the enemy is enough for the enemy to come upon us and strike a blow... If every bond with bourgeois ideology is not broken, in the final analysis it becomes inevitable to come under its influence and become integrated into the system." (2002 New Year Message)

In his 2003 message he continued this emphasis: "If we are ideologically clear on the question of 'the enemy and us', we will grasp these realities much better and keep our vigilance in the class struggle alive. Otherwise traps are waiting for us."

In a 1999 article he explained the reason for this necessity as follows: "One who knows the enemy well also knows its methods well. They know well what it will and will not do. They do not give the enemy an opportunity." (Revolutionary Left, Issue 12, January 1999)

Clarity is essential. Because, "when how we will stand against the state, who is friend and who is enemy, become unclear, all assessments of what the enemy and friendly forces do and why they do it will also be shaped wrongly." (Liberation for the People, Issue 14, 18 January 1997)

We think the quotations above from Dayı's writings at different times are enough to show the importance he attached to knowing and clarifying friend and enemy.

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What Is Friendship?

One of the most important reasons Dayı frequently addressed the question of friendship and enmity was that the concept of "friendship" in particular had become extremely vague on the left.

"As with many things, the content of the concept of friendship has been emptied and what it means has become unclear...

"In practice its reflections appear either in extremely distorted forms or in forms that have nothing to do with friendship. Feudal friendships, ordinary friendships... There are many forms of friendship. And the essence of almost all of them is solidarity and protection in bad and painful days, in situations of weakness and powerlessness. For revolutionaries, however, friendship is the opposite of the enemy; it means taking responsibility for one another against the enemy, being together and standing by one another. Without any left political organisation or group carving things for itself... Everyone has to think: who stands by whom and how, how is solidarity shown, are we genuinely able to fulfil the requirements of friendship in the face of enemy attacks? Or what are we doing?" (Liberation on the Road to Victory, Issue 3, 29 July 1995)

This call was undoubtedly a historical call. And at the same time a current one. It remains valid today. Because the problem Dayı pointed to above still continues to exist.

The concepts of friend and enemy are extremely important and determining in relations within the left. Historical acts of solidarity and historical negativities in relations within the left are shaped according to whether this concept is correctly understood. For the left, friendship means first of all a common stance against the enemy. Dayı stated that this point is fundamental and stressed that no differences of strategy, method or tactics should stand before it: “A political organisation may dislike or regard as wrong the road and tactics followed by organisations that fight or even oppose imperialism and fascism. It may even describe them as anarchist or terrorist. But so long as these organisations and groups maintain their position against imperialism and fascism and continue to fight, they are in the ranks of friends. Friendship means a careful relationship and, especially, being together against the enemy. Those who move outside this have taken their place beside the system.” (Liberation Against Imperialism and the Oligarchy, Issue 20, 24 June 1995)

In the title of another article he explained the same question in still bolder lines: “Friendship Is Taking Responsibility, Being Together Against the Enemy.” (Liberation on the Road to Victory, Issue 3, 29 July 1995)

That is all. The rest is, to some degree, detail.

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A Blow to Friendship

The beginning of disregard for friendship parallels, in one sense, political deviation. Especially from the 1990s onwards, as determinations and attitudes towards imperialism changed, concepts such as progressivism, reaction and conservatism were turned upside down, and the concepts of friendship and enmity were likewise distorted or forgotten. Of course it was not only deviations concerning imperialism that made friendship forgotten. Groupism, competition and utilitarianism - almost all the weaknesses within the left - ultimately caused great damage to relations of friendship. The coup process faced by the revolutionary movement was a period when Dayı directed his heaviest criticisms at the left in terms of friendship and questioned the left’s understanding of friendship: “In style, attitude and joint struggle they forgot the enemy. In appearance, they still said we are friends.

“With friends like these, who needs enemies? What kind of friendship was this? If this was friendship, what was enmity?” (Liberation on the Road to Victory, Issue 3, 29 July 1995)

The coup process was a period in which the hostile attitude of the left was directed straight at Dayı and ugly speculation concerning Dayı was spread very widely on the left. Yet in the years following that process too, Dayı was the person who tried to secure the unity of the left and to establish on the left a revolutionary understanding of friendship and unity. The coup process had shown the degeneration through which the left could stab its own friends in the back, and for a movement claiming to create the revolutionary front and carry out the revolution, this was not a reason to turn its back on the left but an indication of the need to intensify ideological struggle towards the left. Indeed, as a leader possessing the claim to revolution, this is what Dayı did.

In terms of friendship, the coup process remains a characteristic example of how friendship cannot be, and is undoubtedly an example that will not be forgotten for many years.

There is another example that will not be forgotten when friendship on the left is discussed, one lived in 1971-72. On that example Dayı says: “The unity of the THKP-C and THKO against the enemy, their sharing the same bases, uniting around the same target, and Mahir Çayan saying ‘the execution of Deniz and his comrades concerns the prestige of the Turkish Revolutionary Movement’... and developing policies and action tactics accordingly, even sacrificing his own life, are attitudes rarely seen in the revolutionary movements of the world and which everyone can take as an example without any complex. This must be the essence of revolutionary friendship, of being together against the enemy. This is how we think... We believe there is much that everyone must learn and question on this matter.” (Liberation on the Road to Victory, Issue 3, 29 July 1995)

In the mid-1990s, fascist MHP, the informer İP and the system party CHP were invited as “guests of honour” to the Statute Congress of KÇSKK (Board for Confederation of Public Employees’ Trade Unions). This invitation was another striking example of friend and enemy being confused on the left. In an article in which he also addressed this incident, Dayı put the problem as follows: “The concepts of friend and enemy of these three groups [meaning the reformist groups that made the invitation] are unclear. The line they follow has produced this result. For years, in the name of ‘tactics’, such policies have been fashionable and implemented... Not ideology and principle but utilitarianism dominates. Everything has been shaped according to crude utilitarianism.” (Liberation on the Road to Victory, Issue 25, 30 December 1995)

As emphasised here too, one of the most important factors confusing friendship and enmity on the left is utilitarianism. Another, without doubt, is becoming integrated into the system. It is beginning to implement a permission-seeking line aimed at reassuring the system. In that situation too friend and enemy will again be confused.

Another example of this confusion is the relations of Kurdish nationalist movements. In an article assessing the PKK’s alliances and conflicts with the Barzani and Talabani movements, Dayı again draws attention to vagueness or pragmatism in the understanding of friend and enemy: “In its policies and tactics it makes calculations according to Middle Eastern politics in which it is unclear who is friend and enemy and when. Therefore there is no reason why those who are friends today should not be enemies and collaborators tomorrow. For these policies and tactics to be abandoned, the understanding must change. Unless the understanding changes, in the name of tactics those called collaborators today will be friends tomorrow, and those called friends today will be collaborators and traitors tomorrow.” (Liberation on the Road to Victory, Issue 9, 9 September 1995)

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Treating a Friend Like a Friend and an Enemy Like an Enemy Is an Indispensable Principle for Dayı

One example:

We want to recount one incident as an example of how Dayı expressed the left understanding of “friendship” in the boldest terms. In fact there are many similar incidents, but since it is impossible to recount them all, we will content ourselves with one.

It was 1995. The Pir Sultan Abdal Cultural Associations in Istanbul organised a Commemoration Night at Ali Sami Yen Stadium concerning the 2 July massacre. But because of irresponsible approaches by various sections of the left, the night had been diverted from its purpose and turned

into a marketplace in which organisations advertised themselves, while various problems arose between the organisers of the night and the groups. The oligarchy did not delay in exploiting this situation through reports along the lines of “the left is eating one another”.

In an article published after this night, Dayı asked: “Everyone must ask themselves: what was gained? What did the revolution gain? Are those who organised the night our friends? If they are our friends, were we genuinely able to fulfil the requirements of friendship? If not, why?” And he made the following assessment on friendship, still very instructive for the left today. It is useful to quote the relevant section as it is:

“Those who organised the night may, according to everyone’s own criteria... have made mistakes. At times they may even have fallen into attitudes... giving the enemy a weapon. Despite all this, if we still regard them as friends, unlimited freedom of action does not arise there. We have to do what we consider right by trying to persuade them, without sabotaging the night or inviting the enemy’s attacks and demagogy. It may be that we cannot persuade the organisers of the night on any question we want. Under those conditions too, we do not have the right to do what we want despite them. If we regard them as friends, if we still do not regard them as reactionaries and enemies, what has to be done - even if they fall at times onto reactionary ground - is to take them out of that ground. We cannot do this by force or by creating negative images. At this night organised by the Pir Sultan Abdal Cultural Associations too, because of these negative attitudes the organisers did not come to a more positive line. On the contrary, just as the oligarchy exposed the left, they too have made propaganda in this direction and tried to condition the masses of the people, especially sections of the Alevi faith and people who are not yet sufficiently politicised, against the left. In short, the results of these attitudes were written into the enemy’s profit column.” (Liberation on the Road to Victory, Issue 3, 29 July 1995)

He underlines it repeatedly: if we regard them as friends, what has to be done is clear. Friendship is not an abstract concept. In relations within the left it must make itself concrete. Dayı shows this through the example above. The incident by itself may not be regarded as “large” or “important”, but the understanding Dayı put forward is one that covers all relations on the left.

The fact that even the political movements that criticise us most, and those we criticise most, can trust us despite these criticisms is a result of this.

It is also this understanding that has kept the revolutionary movement outside conflict within the left. Treating our friend like a friend is for us neither a pragmatic calculation nor a symbolic gesture; it is a matter of understanding. On the ground of ideological struggle we can criticise them mercilessly. But no one doubts that we will fulfil the requirements of friendship.

Dayı ended the article we referred to with these determinations: “Even if we do not agree with the programme and discipline understandings of actions organised by forces we regard as friends, we must stay away from behaviour that disrupts their programme and discipline. Forcing open a banner, shouting slogans, staging demonstrations, causing fights, cannot be a requirement of revolutionism or friendship...

“We must show the masses of the people that revolutionaries are not forces competing with one another and quarrelling for publicity; on the contrary, they support their friends under every condition and criticise what is wrong on appropriate grounds.

"... Those who seek publicity at every opportunity at the cost of provoking fights and breaking unity are far from revolutionary consciousness of power. For this reason, a not insignificant section of the left has emptied friendship of its content, blocked the road before unities of action and forces, and fallen into attitudes of waiting for an opportunity to catch and expose one another's weaknesses." (Liberation on the Road to Victory, Issue 3, 29 July 1995)

Dayı drew such definite and bold lines at this point that, despite certain negativities experienced on 1 May 1996 and despite the fact that it was again the revolutionary movement that criticised these negativities most sharply, he emphasised that the distinction at this point still had to be made on the basis of friend and enemy: "The irresponsible behaviour of certain groups in the 1 May square cannot push any organisation claiming to be left and revolutionary into an attitude of '... let us not get involved' in the face of enemy attack. This attitude plainly means saying to the enemy: 'we are different, do not touch us, do whatever you want to them'. This was exactly the attitude of EP and ÖDP on 1 May." (Liberation on the Road to Victory, Issue 51, 29 June 1996)

Various forms of these negativities frequently confronted the left, and shortly after the article above Dayı again felt the need to return to this subject: "The measure in friendships and enmities is whether they serve one's own interests. When the measure becomes the interest of one's own organisation, when everything is thought through on this basis and policies and tactics are drawn accordingly, and when every organisation and group acts with the same understanding, an inextricable chaos, competition, subjectivism and ultimately conflict, and activity aimed at liquidating one another in one form or another, become inevitable. The past is full of striking and painful examples of this situation." (Liberation on the Road to Victory, Issue 5, 12 August 1995)

So what is to be done? How are these understandings that block the road before unity to be overcome? In fact the answer is not very complicated. Again, the word belongs to Dayı: "Unless we get out of these quarrels, neither friendship nor unities of action and forces can develop. The left cannot fight together without learning friendship, solidarity and self-sacrifice for one another. We must learn." (Liberation on the Road to Victory, Issue 3, 29 July 1995)

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Internal Enemy - External Enemy

Within Dayı's concept of "enemy", the "internal enemy" also holds a special place. Although this is partly a separate subject, let us touch upon it briefly under this heading. The internal enemy is everything left to us by the bourgeoisie or coming from it that weakens our struggle. He says: "We have to bring the struggle against this enemy, which we call 'weaknesses and deficiencies', down to questioning our daily lives and dwell on it every day. ... if we do not make an accounting, the enemy or worm within us will, invisibly but every day, take away a small part of our revolutionism, push us towards the system and destroy us. The growth and strengthening of the internal enemy within us, and its going onto the attack from the same front as the enemy, follows such a course."

No one should underestimate this enemy. The revolutionary movement lived the consequences of underestimating it during the coup period. That was the period when the internal enemy turned into the external enemy. In the light of this historical experience Dayı makes the following determinations: "The small mistakes and weaknesses of hundreds of people mean hundreds of violations of rules and principles in discipline, life and war. Therefore they mean hundreds of weapons handed to the enemy. If measures are not taken, the internal enemy will first surround individuals and, through

those individuals, the organisation, rendering it ineffective. Whether its name is internal or external enemy is not very important. What matters is why we call it an ‘enemy’.

“Those who set back our war, loosen our discipline, lower our morale and enthusiasm, break our unity, try to pull our ideology backwards and to the right, try to make degeneration dominant in daily life and impose a petty-bourgeois way of living... are our enemy; the opposite is our friend. In this respect there are no thick walls between the internal and external enemy. The difference is this: those who fall into weakness because of lack of consciousness and education, those who carry the internal enemy within themselves, can through correct revolutionary intervention be rescued from its sphere of influence and won over... With the external enemy, however, we have no chance or possibility of educating and transforming them. At that point it is obligatory to take a frontal position against the external enemy.” (From the Congress Report)

Dayı’s Unchanging Advice:

Narrow the Enemy Front, Multiply Your Friends!

“We must be engaged in the effort to organise all sections seeking rights and freedoms and wanting to struggle against the system, and to make them struggle against the system; we must show the ability to narrow the enemy front as much as possible and broaden our ranks.” (Liberation on the Road to Victory, Issue 17, 4 November 1995)

Elsewhere on the same question he said:

“Our consciousness of power has to be much stronger than ever before. Strong consciousness of power means learning to fight with perspectives and tactics that narrow the enemy front that seeks our existence every day... and broaden and strengthen the people’s front.

“Throughout the country, in all regions and fields, we must approach the question who is friend, who is enemy, whom can we neutralise, whom can we draw to our side, with the understanding of narrowing and weakening the enemy front as much as possible.” (Liberation for the People, Issue 6, 16 November 1996)

Because this is how revolution advances.

In conclusion, knowing friend and enemy, treating a friend like a friend and an enemy like an enemy, is one of the indispensable requirements of walking to victory in the struggle.

It is clear that however much the left takes these things into account, so long as it cannot overcome illnesses such as groupism and competition, its theoretical acceptance of them does not mean very much. But we can still say that Dayı’s continuous efforts on this question, first, helped define the concepts of friendship and enmity theoretically with clearer boundaries; second, at least served as a warning to the left; and among cadres and supporters of the revolutionary movement created a consciousness that will never disappear. At the foundation of this consciousness is “treating a friend like a friend and an enemy like an enemy”.

This is the understanding Dayı taught us and that we too will continue insistently to apply throughout our march.

(*) This article was published in YÜRÜYÜŞ for Independence, Democracy and Socialism, dated 18 January 2009.

Dayı and Justice

A person in leadership is one who does not place their own feelings in the foreground, who does not apply double standards, and who applies revolutionary justice equally to everyone.

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Those who do not value the people, who attempt to lead without listening to the people, who wound the people's sense of justice, cannot win the people's confidence.

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"A leader who does not work harder than everyone else, who does not persist passionately in succeeding, cannot and should not ask the same things of others."

Justice is a concept that has to a great extent become identified with Dayı. There are two fundamental practical sources of this identification. The first is that he himself was the organiser of a line and period of action symbolised as "the people's justice".

The second source of this identification is the great and continuous importance Dayı attached to justice within organisational relations. While he himself was extremely sensitive about acting justly towards cadres, he always gave special importance to cadres acting justly towards those under their responsibility. Because justice was, in one sense, the foundation both of socialism and of being a socialist. Those who were unjust could not lead the construction of a new society. For this reason, one of the questions Dayı was least tolerant of was injustice by leaders. Injustice by a leader at the same time meant committing injustice "in the name of the organisation"; and an organisation known for injustice could not create confidence among cadres or the masses. It can also be said that an organisation marked by injustice has lost the chance to develop, become a mass force, make revolution and build a new society. There is no exaggeration in this, and Dayı always sought to make all cadres of the movement internalise the great importance carried by justice.

That the revolutionary struggle should follow a course answering the demand for "justice", and that in internal organisational functioning and the organisation's relations with the people the measure of justice should become an unerring line, were two of the most important aspects of Dayı's leadership.

During the decades in which Dayı led the movement, there were people whom, during necessary reckonings for the development of the struggle, he criticised severely, punished in one form or another and, though rarely, expelled from the movement. Among them there were of course some who persisted in failing to see their own mistakes and shortcomings, criticised Dayı and even became angry with him. But one thing is a fact: everyone who left or was expelled from this movement may say many things about Dayı and the Movement, but no one can say, "I was treated unjustly."

This is an expression of the reliability Dayı created on this question through decades of practice.

In his words: "They can say anything about us, let them say it, but let no one call us 'unjust', let no one be able to say 'we were treated unjustly'." And that is what happened. The sincere respect shown

before Dayı's coffin by people who had been expelled from the movement or separated from it in various ways was also a result of this aspect of him. But for Dayı this was never an issue limited to being a "personal" characteristic. We should emphasise this especially. Justice and being just possessed for Dayı a meaning and importance far beyond that.

Starting again from his sayings on this question, we can describe that importance in this way: justice today is not so much a question of calling to account certain crimes committed against the people as it is a question of building the future. Through it, you do not merely put forward a solution for today to a problem belonging to today; you also put forward an understanding concerning the future. This is why, especially when an injustice was displayed by leaders, Dayı would first make the criticism: "In this state, how can the people trust you? How can we build socialism in this way?"

There Is 'Justice' in the Yeast of the Movement

The year 1978, when the Revolutionary Movement entered the political arena, was a period when fascism escalated its terror in every sphere of life and destroyed the people's security of life. Dayı thought, "We should show the masses our revolutionary justice from today." And this thought would also constitute the difference of the revolutionary movement from other sections of the left in the anti-fascist struggle. The retaliatory actions carried out against fascist terror during this period answered the masses' longing to call to account and their longing for justice, creating confidence among the masses. (In the Offensive of the '90s too, justice actions would undertake the same mission by showing that the enemies of the people would not go unpunished, that the struggle would continue under every condition and that the revolutionary movement could not be destroyed.)

This was one side of the justice in the yeast of the movement. There was another side to this yeast as well. Extreme care was shown to ensure that revolutionary actions struck clear, obvious targets. Dayı recounts two of these in his historic speech at the Congress as follows: "Whatever the conditions, as the builders of tomorrow's revolutionary power, revolutionaries must be able to show their sensitivity regarding revolutionary justice. It is because of this understanding that, following a line different from almost the entire left, even in police stations we raided and disarmed we distinguished between the guilty and the innocent. We did not shoot people indiscriminately on the grounds that this was a force of the state. Among fascist state forces who murdered our comrades, we found the actual killers themselves and punished them.

"... For example, in 1979... fascist Erdal Görücü, the senior sergeant commanding the Kağıthane Gendarmerie Station, who drew his weapon and forced a group of our comrades returning from distributing leaflets to surrender, martyred our comrade Hüseyin Aksoy despite his surrender. Following this incident, a broad campaign was opened in the area and the people were informed that fascist Erdal Görücü would be punished... A short while later Erdal Görücü himself was found and punished.

"Again... during the seizure of an oil truck and the distribution of the oil to the people, a team attached to Şişli Police Headquarters intervened. While three police officers in the team were not in favour of killing through armed intervention, a police officer in the team named İsmail Top martyred our comrade Hüseyin Taş... Because they knew our movement's understanding of revolutionary justice, police officers who were themselves in this team conveyed the name of the actual killer to our

movement. The killer İsmail Top was also announced to the people, and after it was stated that he would be punished, he was found and punished without anyone else being harmed."

After recounting these examples, Dayı stated that this form of approach might be regarded as a "luxury" under different conditions, then explained why it was followed and the political essence of this understanding: "... in the birth of a revolutionary movement, in its gaining acceptance among the people, and above all in cadres internalising revolutionary justice and reflecting the conception of justice of revolutionary power, [these actions] played an extremely important role. When this understanding is developed, in choosing friend and enemy, valuing friendly forces, winning people over and approaching the people, it will also bring with it maturity, confidence in one's own strength, and freedom from worship of violence and force."

What happens if this understanding is not possessed? The answer in fact concerns the claim to power and the socialist perspective. Dayı says at this point: "Those who think the opposite, when they gain possession of instruments of violence and power, go as far as using counter-revolutionary methods without distinguishing guilty from innocent, and ceasing to value the people and revolutionary, left forces outside themselves. They terrorise the people by applying a non-revolutionary line with a revolutionary appearance, in which weapons determine politics..."

Indeed, various manifestations of this understanding have been encountered on the left, beginning with the tendency towards "violence within the left". And if the revolutionary movement was able to remain outside violence within the left, this was also related to this understanding of justice.

This sound, unerring understanding of justice is present in the yeast of the revolutionary movement. The master who mixed this yeast into the Turkish revolution was Dayı, and we can say with pride that this yeast took hold in this movement.

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Justice and Our Claim to Socialism

There is no doubt that we are not a movement applying day-to-day policies and pursuing day-to-day objectives. We aim for revolution; and revolution is the work of the masses. Therefore the only road to carrying out revolution is to win the masses and make them fight. This is the main link. It is here that justice acquires determining importance. For the masses to trust us means, among other factors, that they trust our justice. We give the word to Dayı: "The people will reach their conclusions by comparing every kind of behaviour of ours, our words and what we do, with what until now they have learned from and personally seen in the parties of the system. Who are these people? What is their difference from those they have seen until now? Are they really different from those who exploit and deceive them? At every step we take, the people will ask these questions and seek answers." Our style of leadership and our understanding of justice will determine what answers the masses find in us.

Those who do not value the people, who attempt to lead without listening to the people, who wound the people's sense of justice, cannot win the people's confidence. "At the root of these mistakes," Dayı continues, "lies imitating the bourgeoisie's style of leadership, failing to value people and humiliating them. Securing the people's contributions... is possible only through the confidence and belief that will be created. When this is not done, the masses may support us here and there, may

participate in the war, but they do not understand that this war is their own war and enter it with all their possibilities and strength.

“(...) In relations, the most frequently seen negativities are failure to value the people, failure to educate them, and failure to take their demands, feelings and traditions into account. There are also attitudes such as mistreating the people’s resources, failing to protect and value their houses, cars and every kind of material resource they offer to the struggle, damaging these things, and even in places some leaders using them for their own interests.

“(...) The people cannot trust revolutionary leaders who do not value them, who do not show that they too can lead and solve their own problems, who constantly issue orders like bourgeois managers while failing to take their problems and feelings into account, disregarding their culture and traditions and not thinking about their property and lives. In the end the people conclude that these too are no different from the despots of centuries or from bourgeois managers, and move away.”

That is why, even when using the smallest resource of the people, it is of vital importance not to commit injustice, and not to cause injustice even in the most ordinary decision in our region or neighbourhood. If an injustice has been committed against the people, Dayı’s instructions at this point were very short: “Go and correct it however you correct it!”, “go and make amends.” If an apology was required, he ensured an apology was made; if material compensation was required, he ensured that too. As is known, there is a close relationship between authority and justice. Every political organisation tries to establish authority. But the bourgeois understanding of authority and the understanding of authority of the revolution and revolutionaries are different, and this difference is above all a manifestation of the difference in understanding justice.

Dayı explains this understanding in this way: “A revolutionary organisation can establish its own prestige and authority by fusing more closely with the people, leading them correctly, teaching them to lead, developing their confidence in themselves and showing a revolutionary way of life.” There is of course another side to authority: it is reinforced by measures taken by the revolutionary movement against counter-revolution. Sometimes this is an action against fascists or informers; sometimes it is warnings in various forms against exploiters or usurers. Sometimes they are exposed; if they can be educated, they are educated; sometimes punishment is applied... But even on this side of the matter, what is essential is to make the people grasp the revolutionary understanding of justice and to give them confidence on this question.

“If these practices and punishments are not approached with a perspective that educates the people and deters counter-revolutionary elements from their activities, the people will not understand what is being done... and through the incitement of counter-revolutionaries... what is done will be distorted and will move away from the objective. In every behaviour and activity of ours we must be able to see what the people understand and what we gain... Think of an informer in a neighbourhood or village. If the people living there are unaware of that person’s counter-revolutionary activity such as informing, if the necessary warnings have not been made in ways the people can understand and that person is punished, the people will look at us with suspicion. They will ask ‘perhaps?’ questions... If we do not carry out broad activity to answer sufficiently the questions in the people’s minds, it is possible for counter-revolutionary ideas to become dominant, acquit the informer and accuse us. But if the informer is exposed before punishment, the people first try through their own methods to make the informer abandon the activity and neutralise them. When, despite all this, a person who refuses to abandon informing is punished, the people will say ‘they deserved it’, trust the organisation’s justice

more, and this will also deter other possible informers." (Liberation on the Road to Victory, Issue 18, 11 November 1995)

Here the main question is not so much the punishment of an informer as securing confidence in the organisation's justice from every angle. The issue is to give confidence that those who commit crimes against the people will not remain unpunished and that the punishment itself will certainly be correct.

For example, the revolutionary movement's approach during the coup period is another example showing the importance of this "question": "When we said that we would certainly call the coup plotters to account, of course calling to account the crimes committed was important, but even more important was that 'today and later too we had to be a movement whose justice could never be doubted'."

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Justice in Internal Organisational Functioning

Dayı describes a process of reckoning: "Those who tried to impose themselves, whatever their charisma or position, were answered with our revolutionary justice. - Because, Dayı said - our people had to walk believing in our measures of justice, our moral values, our consistency and so on, on virtually every question. While walking, there had to be no doubt in their minds." (Congress Report)

The concepts of crime and punishment are also among those Dayı used most frequently, as a natural extension of the importance he attached to justice.

An organisation had to possess the concept of "crime and punishment" and an understanding of law expressing it. These principles and rules at the same time determine the fighting strength of that organisation. Because it is clear that an organisation without principles or rules, in which no understanding of law and justice has formed internally, is an undisciplined organisation. Dayı always tried to establish this understanding and culture. Those who approach the question of crime and punishment "humanistically" are far from the reality of war and do not possess a claim to revolution. War has its own rules. Whether some like it or not, that is how it is. "Who would not want revolutions to be without blood and war? But that is a debate belonging to a very distant past. War will proceed by these rules," states one writing of the revolutionary movement. The continuation is this: when a crime occurs, punishment will be applied within these rules and the scales of justice will weigh within these rules. Those who do not fulfil the requirements of these rules cannot continue the war and cannot win victory. More than that, those who do not apply these rules are in fact committing injustice. Humanists who oppose "punishment" are in fact not tolerant but unjust. Because they want crimes that cause suffering to the peoples and make them pay prices to be forgiven.

We can say that at this point Dayı was a leader who made the Turkish left grasp the reality of war. In one of his writings Dayı states: "Until today we did not win any victory or any value easily or cheaply; no one bestowed them upon us. We tore almost everything away by force, through labour and blood. In order to protect what we have won and our values, and to obtain still greater gains, we will make greater efforts, give more labour and shed more blood." (Congress Report)

When everything is won at such great cost, can one stay away from implementing justice against those who cause the people to lose what they have won and those who try to prevent these gains from being recovered?

One of the simplest reasons for the great importance Dayı attached to justice was precisely that he had personally been inside every stage of this struggle in which nothing was won easily. In parallel with the importance he attached to crime, punishment and justice, this was also very important in Dayı's organisational measures.

When assessing any person, Dayı attached great importance to that person's sense of "justice". If the person in question was a leader, this became an even more primary and necessary point of assessment. A leader's "first mark" should be given by looking at their "justice".

Whatever a leader expects to be done, "they must first do it to themselves. Those who do not do this to themselves become carriers of hypocrisy and disbelief when they attempt to apply the same thing below them. This means the creation in a revolutionary party of the infrastructure of decay, injustice, favouritism, cliqueism, factionalism and, naturally, distrust and failure to fight." (Congress Decisions)

Dayı often said: a leader who does not labour cannot ask those under their responsibility to labour; a leader who is not self-sacrificing cannot ask others to make sacrifices. He states very clearly: "A leader who does not work harder than everyone else, who does not persist passionately in succeeding, cannot and should not ask the same things of others." (Congress Decisions)

This is justice. And this is why "A person in leadership... is one who does not apply double standards and applies revolutionary justice equally to everyone."

Now it is appropriate to recall the emphasis at the beginning: how can someone who commits injustice inside the organisation become one of the architects of a new and just society? This is why justice is a question that can never be belittled in an organisation. This is why, in an organisation possessing the claim and perspective of taking power, justice must be handled as one of the most fundamental questions.

Both Dayı's theoretical writings and his practice continuously told us this and showed us this.

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Justice Is Our Strength, Our Future;

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Dayı Gave Us the Strength; We Will Create the Future!

As a concept, the people's justice became established above all through the revolutionary movement's revolutionary violence actions at the beginning of the 1990s. In one respect, the actions of this period were a reckoning with the junta years and with crimes committed against the people. But, as emphasised above, they were not only about reckoning with the past or developing the dimensions of the current struggle; those actions were above all about the FUTURE.

In the "Assessment and Activity Report" prepared under Dayı's leadership in 1991, the actions of this period were assessed as follows: "During these one and a half years we carried out many actions targeting torturers and enemies of the people. The fundamental perspective of our actions was to develop and spread the understanding of 'revolutionary justice'. When we took the decision to develop the armed struggle and spread armed actions, the question of which link we would grasp and advance through was also important. Because armed struggle could not develop without being based

on an objective ground that would win the sympathy and support of the people. Under conditions where oppression, torture, injustice and the usurpation of rights - in short every kind of injustice - prevailed, where working people were oppressed and could not raise their voices, where force was used against those who sought their rights, to the extent that we succeeded in becoming the implementer of 'justice' and the voice of people subjected to injustice and torture... our actions would be effective. And indeed, our practice of action based on this perspective gained legitimacy among relatively broad sections of society." (Case File-2, p. 94)

An organisation's friends must be certain of its justice.

Its enemies too must fear its justice.

An organisation that can fulfil the requirements of justice towards both friend and enemy, and that does not deviate a millimetre from justice towards its own cadres, fighters and the people, is without doubt an organisation no one can stain. Such an organisation is without doubt strong from the outset in terms of moral values. Injustice is an element that decays countries, regimes, societies and organisations. Its opposite is strength. Dayı gave precisely this strength to the revolutionary movement.

(*) This article was published in YÜRÜYÜŞ for Independence, Democracy and Socialism, dated 1 February 2009.

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Dayı and Unity-1

"Great popular movements, great revolutionary uprisings cannot take place unless the organisation and unity of the people are secured."

We should state from the outset that Dayı was always directly involved in all the unity discussions the revolutionary movement conducted with various revolutionary, democratic and progressive forces, and in the policies followed and decisions taken on this question. Beyond being a leader concerned with everything in the movement, unity was among the questions Dayı always took an interest in and attached importance to under every condition. According to the intensity of the process and his duties he might perhaps have left this or that question partly in a secondary position, but for Dayı unity was never among those things that could be "left in a secondary position".

To emphasise the importance of the question he said: "Great popular movements, great revolutionary uprisings cannot take place unless the organisation and unity of the people are secured. If the united revolutionary war of the people is reduced merely to frequently repeating words about unity, without persistently addressing in practice how these organisations will be realised... no result can be obtained." (Liberation Against Imperialism and the Oligarchy, Issue 17, 3 June 1995)

We can say that Dayı always became the representative of this persistence on the Turkish left. As part of the Front understanding and as a means of building the people's front step by step, securing the unity of left forces at one level or another and in one form or another was always important to Dayı. As a result of this importance, the "question of unity" also occupies a considerable place in Dayı's writings. In this sense, because it is difficult to reflect even the main outlines of "Dayı and Unity" in a single section, we will present the subject in two parts.

The Essence of the Unity Question Is Clear

The unity question can be approached theoretically from many different sides, but its essence is clear. Often the discussions and objections raised around the question can obscure this “essence”. The essence is to be able to bring the broadest sections of the people into opposition to imperialism and the oligarchy.

“The organisation and self-expression, on the basis of many different ideas, of hundreds of legal and illegal forces opposed to the system, against fascism and in the most general sense wanting democracy, is beneficial for the revolution. We must develop these. The unity of these forces and their joint action against the system even around economic and democratic demands is important. If we want to develop the revolution, if we want genuine freedom, then by freeing ourselves from petty calculations and childish understandings - and of course with everyone maintaining their own claim - we must help create these unities and form more advanced ones.” (Liberation Against Imperialism and the Oligarchy, Issue 15, 20 May 1995)

Dayı was aware that this appearance of the left, its fragmented structure and its inability to come together on almost any question objectively weakened the credibility of the left among the masses and its claim to power. In this sense, the importance attached to unity was directly related to the claim and objective of taking power.

“While it is of great importance to show our reaction against the enemy more strongly, to give confidence to the people through acting together and to show that we are the future holders of power, in practice the opposite is seen. And on the basis of this appearance the enemy develops policies, trying to give the masses the idea, ‘... look, this is the condition of those promising you liberation; they are eating one another’, and to some extent it succeeds.” (Liberation on the Road to Victory, Issue 3, 29 July 1995)

Dayı was ambitious and persistent on the unity question. But he was not a dreamer. Creating a positive tradition in relations within the left and establishing a law peculiar to the left was one of his fundamental aims throughout his revolutionary life. Yet he never adopted the approach: let there be unity... whatever form it takes. Being ambitious did not mean establishing unities with no feet on the ground. Nor did being ambitious mean producing glittering unity programmes filled with unattainable goals.

Dayı said: “For great steps we must first learn to take small steps. Today these steps can be taken in areas where fascist attacks and the people’s potential are strong. (...) But we cannot obtain the result we want merely by dwelling on what is fundamental. In order to make this reality concrete we have to pass through many intermediate stages which we describe as small steps at a lower level, stages that are complex and even difficult and painful. We are not dreamers. The negativities of years, even decades, will not disappear in a short time.” (Liberation Against Imperialism and the Oligarchy, Issue 17, 3 June 1995)

Elsewhere, again proposing to begin from “what is simplest and easiest”, he said: “Let everyone keep their communism and genius abilities to themselves. Today the task, in this concrete situation, without placing too much value on abstract and grand phrases, is to create unities of action and forces, proceeding from small to large and starting from what is simplest, easiest and practicable.

There is no obstacle to this. Those who say there is an obstacle are opportunists and nationalists who continue the negative political legacy of the past and approach everything on the basis of their own interests." (Liberation on the Road to Victory, Issue 5, 12 August 1995)

Seeking "absolute agreement" in unity is in fact identical with not wanting unity. Unity is a question of minimum common ground. More than that, unity, as Dayı very frequently emphasised, is something possible through mutual concessions. If one says "I will not make any concession on anything", that again means not wanting unity, even obstructing it. "Undoubtedly it may not be possible to agree on every detail, but at least with all revolutionary-democratic political structures unity can be secured on minimum conditions concerning the policies developed by the oligarchy against the prisoners and what the general stance of the prisoners against these policies... should be." (Liberation on the Road to Victory, Special Issue 2, 30 October 1995)

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Dayı Did Not Imprison the Understanding of Unity in Fixed Forms

The left has a breadth consisting of revolutionaries, reformists, democrats, insurrectionists and nationalists. At this point Dayı generally acted with the perspective of uniting all the forces of the people and the whole left. But rather than acting according to one fixed form or another, he developed policies according to the ideological, political and organisational needs of the process. At times unities that absolutely had to include reformists were defended; at times models that would embrace all the forces of the people, such as a Democratic Opposition Assembly, were brought onto the agenda; at times a Revolutionary Front covering only certain sections of the left was proposed. Did these contradict one another? Of course not. Nor were they alternatives to one another.

What was essential in unity was not the forms but the objectives. As a result of a wrong formation on the Turkish left, in almost every period secondary elements such as the forms of unity, even its name, came to the fore. For this reason too, whenever a proposal was put forward, Dayı took care almost every time to emphasise that the name was not determining. What mattered was not the model of unity, but the understanding. "No understanding that is not taken up on a foundation embracing every legal, semi-legal and illegal form of organisation and struggle, developing from small to large, bringing what is concrete and practicable onto the agenda, aiming from unities of forces and action towards more advanced unities, and that does not aim to overthrow fascism, can secure unity or develop ideas on this question." (Liberation on the Road to Victory, Issue 5, 12 August 1995)

"No one can deny that all progressive, democratic, anti-fascist, anti-imperialist and revolutionary forces opposed to fascism and imperialism and supporting the overthrow of fascist power must unite for struggle under names such as unity, bloc, platform, front and so on.

"This is necessary, more necessary than ever. But if the questions how and for what are not answered correctly, if organisations aimed at struggle are not formed around these correct answers, every unity that is formed is condemned to collapse in a short time." (Liberation on the Road to Victory, Issue 25, 30 December 1995)

Dayı put even more clearly that the content, not the forms, of unities was important: "Our unity models may be found wrong. They may be discussed in terms of their content and names. We are not obsessed with 'either it will be what we say or it will not happen'. The fundamental link in our approach

is to unite all forces opposed to the system, make them fight, and on a basis covering every legal, semi-legal and illegal field... to be able to unite all revolutionary left forces and accelerate the march to victory by striking central blows at power." (Liberation on the Road to Victory, Issue 51, 29 June 1996)

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The Value Given to Positives and the 1996 Death Fast

Dayı attached great importance both to the smallest positive development on the left and to the smallest negative one. From the beginning, using the weapon of ideological struggle, he tried to grow what was positive and prevent what was negative from growing. He greeted even the smallest step taken on this question with great enthusiasm, however uncertain its future. He expended great energy to make it permanent and grow it. For example, these lines he wrote in August 1996 are an example: "As a result of the foresighted and careful efforts of Marxist-Leninists, the Turkish revolutionary movement took steps towards unity among revolutionary forces in many fields and, despite some problems, began to obtain positive results. The Prisons Central Coordination, DETUDAP and 1 May are the most striking examples of this unity." (Kurtuluş, Issue 1, 3 August 1996)

In the 1996 Death Fast, resisters belonging to many political movements resisted shoulder to shoulder and embraced death together. Dayı assessed this resistance in those days as follows: "The Death Fast action, through the joint action of many political structures and their facing death together, can be assessed as steps, however gradual, away from dogmatism, towards confidence in one's own strength and away from groupist illnesses. (...) Revolutionary forces showed that when united, even if they pay heavy prices, they are a force that cannot be underestimated and, by putting correct policies and tactics into practice, can create important results." (Kurtuluş, Issue 1, 3 August 1996)

He regarded the 1996 Death Fast as a beginning in terms of unity. He wrote this too: "The Death Fast fighters demonstrated very strikingly the reality of being able to die together when necessary and hammered into everyone's mind the importance of the unity question. Those who still go to extraordinary lengths and make petty calculations in order to avoid serious duties on the unity question, those who still practise the most fanatical groupism under the mask of unity, must, in the face of our martyrs sharing death together, turn back once more and think about how realistic what they have said about unity really is...

"A struggle that continues by sharing death together can open the road for the beginning of a new process in the Turkish revolutionary movement." (Kurtuluş, Issue 1, 3 August 1996)

But this did not happen. Because, as Dayı again pointed out at the time, "In order for the positive results of the unity achieved under conditions of captivity to be reflected correctly outside, it is an essential need to transform the lack of organisation outside into organisation and to take the struggle out of a fragmented state and give it central content." (Kurtuluş, Issue 1, 3 August 1996)

This need was not answered.

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Why Could Unity Not Be Achieved?

The following section from an article by Dayı entitled "Why Is Unity Not Achieved?" puts the framework of the problem very concisely:

“Unity is not a simple phenomenon that can be realised as desired by those who say ‘Unity, what?... I am a communist...’ and base themselves on imitative, distorted and sectarian ideas, regarding their own wisdom as self-evident; nor through the utilitarian approaches of the Kurdish nationalist movement, which handles every development according to its own interests; nor through the unification of the left within legal socialist parties.” (Liberation on the Road to Victory, Issue 5, 12 August 1995)

The following lines also show very clearly “how unity cannot be achieved”: “We cannot accomplish this task through many left political structures raising storms in a teacup, through competition and petty calculations. On the contrary, if this situation continues, division and fragmentation will develop still further, the present morale and enthusiasm of the masses will decline, and the oligarchy will use this weakness too to seek ways to push back the people’s potential and will even resort to provocations.” (Liberation Against Imperialism and the Oligarchy, Issue 17, 3 June 1995)

Whenever we exposed the negativities on the left and the weaknesses and deficiencies concerning unity, there were almost always those who said we were exaggerating the situation and bringing the negativities to the fore. Anticipating this objection, Dayı wrote: “Some may say that we paint a very pessimistic picture. Those who say this are not realistic and want to conceal the existing situation. Is there nothing at all that we do together, nothing in which we stand together against the enemy? Of course there is, though very little. But these are so few, so exceptional, that they disappear within the general negativity. Yet the history of the Turkish Revolutionary Movement has witnessed beautiful and exemplary attitudes of friendship, solidarity and even internationalism in the face of fascism.”

Dayı made all these criticisms and listed the negativities without regarding them as elements that made unity impossible: “Despite all this, Kurdish nationalists, those who base themselves on armed struggle and those who do not, legal party supporters, and everyone who says they are against fascism can establish unities of action and forces around concrete programmes, on targets no one can reject, and on the basis of various forms of struggle. Within these unities, relations of friendship and solidarity are developed, and the struggle is advanced through the struggle of right and wrong among the masses of the people. The struggle brings new separations and alignments onto the agenda.” (Liberation on the Road to Victory, Issue 5, 12 August 1995)

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Unity Is Self-Confidence

The lines below draw attention to one of the most important reasons why unity cannot be achieved: lack of confidence in oneself:

“Those who believe in the correctness of their ideas never think that they will melt away or disappear within joint organisation and joint struggle; on the contrary, they use every opportunity to establish bonds with broader masses, educate them and make their correct ideas accepted. Those who do not do this, who produce artificial theories in order not to do it, are afraid of the masses. Today, for all legal and illegal left organisations, parties and groups, even individuals, claiming to be against imperialism, fascism and capitalism, the main obstacle before the creation, at least at a democratic and legitimate level, of a central organisation and a Revolutionary Front is not fascism, but the groupist and competitive characteristics of political structures and their lack of confidence in their ideas. Those who flee from the united organisation of the people and insist on continuing this

flight are objectively responsible for the fact that the struggle of the masses does not develop on a broader scale and for the enemy striking blows at the people's movement." (Liberation on the Road to Victory, Issue 44, 11 May 1996)

The issue is not, after all, to achieve absolute agreements in the understanding or programme of unity. On the contrary, every unity is at the same time a ground for ideological struggle. From its programme and statutes to its practice, everything is at the same time a subject of struggle; but this is no obstacle either to coming together or to doing work together:

"We do not possess naïve and simple ideas of the kind that would eliminate the reality that we stand in different places, such as 'let all of us think the same thing and do the same thing together'. Ideological clashes will always continue as the struggle between right and wrong, and we act with the thought that 'what is right will sooner or later establish its dominance'." (Liberation Against Imperialism and the Oligarchy, Issue 17, 3 June 1995)

Dayı advised everyone to trust themselves. Because that would be the mortar of unity:

"On the Turkish left, all structures claiming to be communist or Marxist-Leninist must leave behind inward-looking, sectarian, group psychology and learn how to put into practice the policy of the broadest alliances for revolution; they must leave behind the fear of being destroyed by others and learn to trust themselves." (Liberation on the Road to Victory, Issue 5, 12 August 1995)

Those who could not learn to trust themselves were in fact those who were ideologically weak; remaining outside unities never saved them from coming face to face with the bankruptcy and impasses of their ideologies. Dayı asks and questions this point very clearly: "Those who do not want to participate in such platforms must explain why they do not participate; those who remain silent must explain why they remain silent. If they have other truths, they must work to make us accept those truths. Silence, fleeing from unity, is lack of confidence in oneself; it is fleeing from revolution." (Liberation on the Road to Victory, Issue 32, 17 February 1996)

Unity Is Ideological Struggle

Dayı made openness towards the left a principle too, and taught this to all cadres. Unfortunately, a negative tradition has become established on the left in our country and to a large extent still continues: political movements, for various reasons and calculations, do not criticise one another, overlook attitudes that can never be regarded as legitimate in the name of the left, and adopt expedient attitudes, saying, "let us not be the ones who fall out, let us not be the ones who criticise". If the revolutionary movement is now a movement that has shown the daring openly to continue criticism and ideological struggle on the left, Dayı was the one who created this tradition. And this tradition, these daring departures that draw their strength from Dayı, became one of the greatest obstacles before decay on the left.

In an article emphasising friendship and unity during a period when the oligarchy's attacks intensified, Dayı said:

"Today the enemy, that is fascism, is conducting an all-out struggle to strike blows against and destroy almost every political movement fighting it. Fascism is fighting revolutionaries in a common front with all bourgeois parties and imperialism. When we look at the condition of revolutionary and

left political movements, however, in contrast to the common front and common attack created by the enemy, there is fragmentation, blind fighting, competition, trivialities, storms in a teacup and eating one another." (Liberation on the Road to Victory, Issue 3, 29 July 1995)

For Dayı, the defence in the name of political movements of lack of principle, pragmatism and degeneration were phenomena no movement and no revolutionary should tolerate; Dayı's attitude was: "even if everyone calls us sectarian, we will not compromise with these things."

Did a political movement sacrifice a unity to its own publicity? Did a progressive trade union invite fascists to its congress instead of strengthening revolutionary-democratic unity within itself? Did a unity discussion become blocked by selfishness and egocentrism? Did a party or movement claiming revolutionism and socialism approve the liquidation of revolutionaries from a field? Dayı fought all of these tirelessly and without giving up.

(*) This article was published in HALK GERÇEĞİ magazine, dated 15 March 2009.

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Dayı and Unity-2

Because of the approaches and traditions of the left in our country on the question of unity, unity is a subject requiring great labour and patience. Dayı frequently emphasised this reality, and himself never withheld this labour and showed more than enough patience.

"Preserving our revolutionary purity and honesty, we will continue to dwell on securing the unity of revolutionary forces and building the revolutionary front. But this will never be shaped according to the group interests of others; it will take the interests of the Turkish revolution as its basis."

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"The obstacle before a greater war and joint struggle is not the enemy, but us... It will not be very easy to obtain positive results without fighting this culture."

*

"We are not among those who say unity is the only road for struggle. But no one can deny that unity is a greater force."

*

Creating the decision-making mechanisms of the joint struggle of left forces and the masses of the people is an unavoidable duty. Those who flee from this duty are those who want to leave the masses powerless before the enemy and those pursuing petty calculations.

Unity was both a powerful longing and desire among the left masses and an important need produced by the struggle. For this reason, unity is spoken of a great deal on the left in our country. Yet two problems concerning its content almost continuously stand as obstacles.

The first is to set out the aim and objective of unity. We frequently hear words such as bloc and front.

When satisfactory answers are still not given to the questions what is the objective and for whom... for what and how people are to come together are also left in a vacuum.

The second is the attempt to realise unities through certain political impositions, one of which Dayı expressed as follows: “The fundamental criterion of revolutionary-democratic unities cannot be ideas of participating in elections and entering parliament or achieving ‘peace’ with the oligarchy. Unities can be developed at every legal, illegal, armed and unarmed point. The criterion of legitimacy is neither parliament nor legality. Revolutionary unities aim not at reconciliation with the system, but at conflict and raising the people’s movement still further... The fundamental criterion for unity must be revolution, not peace and bourgeois democracy. Today’s need is, in general, the Revolutionary People’s Front and, in particular, revolutionary-democratic or anti-imperialist, anti-fascist unity-bloc or Front.” (Liberation on the Road to Victory, Issue 25, 30 December 1995)

What Is the Main Obstacle?

Continuing the words above, Dayı says this about the formation of unities: “When petty calculations and narrow ideas are left behind and the interests of the peoples of Turkey are taken as fundamental, there is no reason why these things cannot be put into practice...” There are of course countless obstacles before unities. Dayı was not belittling the problems that existed at this point. But one point he stated is very important: “When the interests of the peoples of Turkey are taken as fundamental...”

For example, when listing in one place the obstacles before unity, he states: “The only obstacle before creating the united organisations of the people and confronting the enemy at every level, disrupting its plans and advancing against it, growing and strengthening in order to bring it down, are objections made on flimsy grounds. At the foundation of this lie groupism, competition and lack of faith in the reality of the people and revolution. There is the passion for ownership.” (Liberation on the Road to Victory, Issue 44, 11 May 1996)

But however numerous the problems, overcoming the obstacles is just as simple. Dayı tried to direct the left to this point. Nor did he give value to the approach on the left that blamed only others on the question of unity; he drew attention to everyone’s responsibilities on this question: “Naturally, this process extending over many years has fed various forms of distrust and created judgements. It is everyone’s duty to destroy all these negativities and prepare the conditions for standing together against the enemy. No advanced point can be reached and the problem cannot be solved merely by blaming someone. If everyone looks at the past with the belief that today we have to be together, they will see both themselves and others differently, and the negative judgements and subjective attitudes formed for this or that reason can be seen. The obstacle before a greater war and joint struggle is not the enemy, but us. It is the negative culture created intentionally and unintentionally. Without fighting this culture, at least without making the supporters of political structures understand the necessity of joint struggle, it will not be very easy to obtain positive results.” (Liberation on the Road to Victory, Issue 51, 29 June 1996)

The Obstacle Is Us!

Dayı puts the problem extremely clearly. And to overcome this obstacle, undoubtedly an accounting is necessary: “The correct revolutionary line of unity will create conditions in which every organisation sees itself better and strikes great blows at the oligarchy. But if this line is not reached and past wrong policies are persisted in, growth will give way to contraction, factions and separations. Many negative experiences of unity have been lived through. Everyone claiming revolution must rethink all this.” (Revolutionary Left, Issue 12, January 1999)

Groupism, competition and egocentrism appear before us as the problems. But these are in fact forms of conduct that come to the fore at the point where there is weakening in the claim to revolution and responsibility towards the people. Elsewhere, placing “love of country and people” at the foundation, Dayı says: “the calls by every shade of the left... at various times... for unity of left forces and fronts announced with glittering programmes disappeared before even making their names heard. This is a game. Those who want to play this game again are condemned to experience the same outcome. Those who feel in every respect the heat of revolutionary war and what counter-revolution does, those filled with love of country and people, must, without chasing dreams, put onto the agenda what can be realised and what must be done, insist upon it and follow it through.” (Liberation Against Imperialism and the Oligarchy, Issue 17, 3 June 1995)

It should also be added here that Dayı’s horizon of unity was not limited merely to uniting certain sections of the left. As well as embracing all sections of the left, it pointed to an objective beyond them: “We must adopt the understanding of being able to bring into struggle and make use of... everyone we do not regard as an enemy. Indeed, today we must evaluate well the contradictions among various fascist groups and Islamist sections, and seek ways of bringing into the struggle those groups that say they oppose imperialism and the system, by revealing how sincere they are in these claims.” (Liberation on the Road to Victory, Issue 17, 4 November 1995)

Which of the revolutionary front, unity of democratic forces or broader forms of unity comes to the fore and takes priority may change according to the period being lived through, but the outlook of uniting all sections that have contradictions with the system must always exist. The issue is to “unite the people”, and Dayı continuously reminded us of this essence of the unity question.

“We must make the idea of the necessity of unity belong to the broad masses of the people. (...) Without saying opportunist, reformist, radical or passive, taking the unity of the broadest masses of the people as fundamental and without neglecting the possibility of finding common points with everyone, we must succeed in uniting and directing the strength of all opposition sections at one centre, towards one objective.” (Liberation for the People, Issue 6, 16 November 1996)

The Aim and Measure in Unity:

To Be Stronger Against the Enemy

This responsibility and, connected with it, confidence in oneself and one’s ideology have key importance on the question of unity. When unity on the left is discussed, the example of the “Old Dev-Genç” is frequently given as an ideal example of unity, with emphasis on all sections of the left having

been together in the old Dev-Genç. So how was this unity broken? The left does not discuss this very much.

The answer lies again in confidence in oneself and one's ideology. Dayı described in this way the separation experienced in democratic mass organisations before 12 September, which made unities difficult: "Opportunism and liquidationists who lacked self-confidence and feared ideological struggle and practice left the democratic mass organisations with the people they could detach and moved towards establishing their own sects. They lacked confidence in themselves in the struggle carried out in mass organisations on the basis of unity against imperialism and fascism. For this reason, they quickly fled every ground they lost or where they could not secure a majority." (Congress Report)

This approach and practice were of course not limited to the period before 12 September. For example, after 12 September, the opportunist and reformist left, which did not even answer the revolutionary movement's proposal to establish a common prisoners' families organisation, set about organising another "unity" with the same content. Recounting this process in the Congress Report, Dayı stated: "Moreover, everyone who called one another Maoist Grey Wolf, leftist, Russian lackey, counter-revolutionary informer united with great 'maturity' without making a single word of self-criticism to one another. Even TİKB, with whom we had faced an action such as the Death Fast and shown an example of solidarity among prisoners and families, must not have seen its future in alliance with us, because they too did not delay in joining these ranks." What is the issue here? Creating a strong prisoners' families movement, or other things? When "other things" take precedence, fragmentation and inability to come together become inevitable results. Yet if the aim is clear as "being stronger against the enemy", practice will develop differently.

"A democratic organisation may not want to go beyond struggle within the limits of the system. That is understandable. Even within these limits, it is not very difficult to create grounds where the unity of revolutionary-democratic forces, discussion of problems, finding solutions, how reactions should be shown, how rights should be won and so on can be discussed. If we concentrate our efforts and ideas on confronting the enemy more strongly and making it impossible for the oligarchy to emerge from the deep crisis it is experiencing, there can be no problem that cannot be solved." (Liberation on the Road to Victory, Issue 32, 17 February 1996)

Yes, Dayı sets this measure. Loyalty to this measure can bring together all revolutionary, democratic and progressive sections and can also make it possible to create organisations "like the old Dev-Genç" within democratic mass organisations. But as long as existing understandings and weaknesses continue, speaking of this is nothing more than empty nostalgia. Concerning confronting the enemy together, Dayı made the following determination in a 1996 article: "Against the bourgeoisie's tactic of 'attack, weaken, destroy and protect the system', the revolutionary left forces have no common tactic that will bring out their joint struggle, disrupt the bourgeoisie's tactics, obtain results and develop the struggle of the masses... almost everyone creates their own agenda and confronts the rulers alone. This makes the enemy's work easier and gives it a very broad field of manoeuvre." (Liberation on the Road to Victory, Issue 35, 9 March 1996)

Nor can it be said that the condition of the left today is very different. Despite the many different existing unity platforms, what exists does not possess the strength, capacity or content capable of changing this picture.

Unity and Friendship in Dayı

There may not always be unities among left forces based on particular programmes and statutes. But friendship is not like that. It is something that should always exist without the need to make a special agreement. In relations among the left, Dayı always had an approach that attached importance and value to this. Political movements in difficulty for one reason or another were supported to the extent strength permitted, and even the smallest solidarity and support shown during difficult periods of the revolutionary movement was never forgotten.

It is a fact that those who do not fulfil the requirements of friendship also find it difficult to establish strong and sound unities. When speaking of friendship, Dayı of course approached it not merely as a matter of “intention” but on its class foundation. For example, he said: “A political organisation may dislike or regard as wrong the road and tactics followed by organisations that fight or even oppose imperialism and fascism. It may even describe them as anarchist or terrorist. But so long as these organisations and groups maintain their position against imperialism and fascism and continue to fight, they are in the ranks of friends. Friendship means a careful relationship and, especially, being together against the enemy. Those who move outside this have taken their place beside the system.” (Liberation Against Imperialism and the Oligarchy, Issue 20, 24 June 1995)

This definition of friendship is one the left must not forget even today. Because the left in our country paid, and is still paying, a very heavy price for the destruction of this understanding.

“The understanding of friendship and solidarity began gradually to disappear from before 12 September onwards. In its place, every step came to be aimed at liquidating one another and gaining superiority over one another. Once this was the intention, instead of preparing the conditions for being together and being friends, and acting accordingly, outwardly many phrases about friendship were used while in essence the seeds of enmity were sown and everything necessary was done not to be together.” (Liberation on the Road to Victory, Issue 3, 29 July 1995)

The results of this destruction are known: “Fights, insults, armed clashes, provocations of demonstrations and marches and, in the end, the loss of the lives of hundreds of revolutionaries and patriots.”

Moreover, these things happened at a time when unity was spoken of most and when many unity and front proposals were on the agenda. This picture and the understanding that created it are a huge burden on the back of the left. Because, as Dayı also said: “The owners of these murders, clashes and ugliness... made no self-criticism either to their own people, to the left or to the people. Sometimes, when they were forced to, they brushed it aside with a few self-critical words between the lines. (...) In appearance, revolutionaries and patriots were no longer being killed by revolutionaries. But the same way of thinking remained, merely waiting for the conditions in which it would emerge.” (Liberation on the Road to Victory, Issue 3, 29 July 1995)

Dayı wrote these lines in 1995. Indeed, the reality he stressed in the final sentence was proved again and again in later years. The negativities of “violence within the left” were made to be lived through again by the left.

Was Dayı’s statement a prophecy? Of course not. It was foresight arising from correctly analysing the condition and understandings of the left. There had been a “shift”, a “deviation” in the measures of

friendship and enmity, and the measure in enmity had become whether it served one's own interests. Once the measure becomes the interest of one's own organisation, when everything is thought through on this basis and policies and tactics are drawn accordingly, and when every organisation and group acts with the same understanding, an inextricable chaos, competition, subjectivism and ultimately conflict and activity aimed at liquidating one another in one form or another become inevitable. The past is full of striking and painful examples of this situation. Some still have the same mentality..." (Liberation on the Road to Victory, Issue 3, 29 July 1995)

The factors that produce an atmosphere of fighting and conflict within the left are in fact no secret. Nor is it always necessary to look for agents or provocateurs. Take for example: "They are publicity-seeking. They do almost anything to promote the name of their organisation. At this point friendship, alliances, unities of action and forces, and the interests of the revolution mean nothing to them. They are complex-ridden and jealous. For this reason, in competition they act with a recklessness that pushes the limits of logic." (Liberation on the Road to Victory, Issue 3, 29 July 1995)

There is the atmosphere of conflict. Such recklessness can easily lead to clashes. Of course there are also many ideological and political reasons at the foundation of the problem and, as stated, these reasons have become a burden.

For this reason, while Dayı kept the revolutionary movement outside violence within the left, he also continuously worked to prevent violence within the left.

Many calls to the left to question and condemn violence within the left were shaped directly by Dayı. From the 1990 call "Let us question murders within the left and prevent the negativities and new deaths that may arise" to the meeting on "relations/conflicts within the left" organised in Sağmalcılar Prison in the same year, all efforts in this direction bore his signature. Likewise, finally, after long discussions, Dayı had direct labour and effort in the creation in October 2005 of the "Platform for Dialogue and Solution Between Revolutionary and Democratic Structures". He followed the process of discussion that resulted in the formation of the Platform with great enthusiasm, determination and patience, and made great efforts for this process to conclude positively.

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Unity and Consciousness of Power

"Look," Dayı often said, "look at the class consciousness of the bourgeoisie, look at its hatred." If the left acted with class consciousness "at least as much as the bourgeoisie", the solution of many problems would become easier and possible.

"While almost every section of the oligarchy wages a united war against revolutionaries and the people, the inability of revolutionaries, even at a limited level, to confront the oligarchy together shows that they carry a culture more backward than the oligarchy." (Liberation on the Road to Victory, Issue 32, 17 February 1996)

What he calls backward culture is the question of class outlook that he frequently mentions. Because backwardness emerges at the point where one moves away from class outlook.

The culture in question confronts us frequently and in almost every field. One part of revolutionary policy on unity is to fight this culture: "It has become clear that propagandistic words have no importance. From the beginning we spoke of a negative culture existing on the left concerning unity

and stated that struggle had to be waged against it. Negative culture - that is groupism, utilitarianism, lack of principle and lack of seriousness - confronts us in an even more aggravated form than before. So long as this culture is not fought and continues to exist, degeneration in revolutionary ideology and morality will continue and deepen, and lasting unity will not develop on the left." (Revolutionary Left, Issue 9, November 1997)

To look in class terms is to look with the claim and perspective of taking power. Today the people react against the division and fragmentation of the left. With the legacy coming from violence within the left, this can also turn into distrust, and at this point the left has to prove itself to the people. Dayı frequently drew attention to this necessity: "We must show that revolutionaries are not forces competing with one another and quarrelling for publicity, but on the contrary support their friends under every condition and criticise what is wrong on appropriate grounds. We do not need crude publicity-seeking. Those who pursue publicity at the cost of provoking fights at every opportunity and breaking unity are far from revolutionary consciousness of power. For this reason, a not insignificant section of the left has emptied friendship of its content, blocked the road before unities of action and forces, and fallen into attitudes of waiting for opportunities to catch and expose one another's weaknesses." (Liberation on the Road to Victory, Issue 3, 29 July 1995)

Without chasing ideal, glittering and immature dreams, what we have to do and what we can do are clear. Dayı's proposal and the framework he drew in 1997 remain valid today too in terms of the unity of democratic forces: "Uniting all democratic forces and creating organisations within this struggle is an unavoidable task. Such a struggle and organisation cannot be achieved by anyone saying 'I am doing it, follow me'. Unless the problem is approached within the scope of uniting and organising all democratic forces, even around a limited programme, unless common points are found, it will not be difficult for the forces of the people to fragment again and again." (Liberation for the People, Issue 14, 18 January 1997)

Throughout the period in which Dayı produced policy as Leader of the revolutionary movement, he made dozens of unity proposals to the left; in most he received negative replies, in very few positive ones. But on this question he never showed the slightest weariness, discouragement or hopelessness. He never deviated from the outlook he expressed in the words: "We believe that everyone who claims to be on the left, who is against the system and supports the overthrow of fascist power has common points on which they can act together and agree." (Liberation on the Road to Victory, Issue 44, 11 May 1996)

Even at times when the negativities of the left reached their most extreme points, he believed that the left could establish unities and that efforts had to continue to help it do so. Because at this point Dayı trusted, beyond the condition of the left, himself, his organisation and the people.

In conclusion, let us end our section on "unity" by conveying these words of Dayı: "What the peoples need today is not for revolutionary forces to condition one another negatively, but to develop positivity, unity and friendship. Naturally, different ideas will create different organisations and different practice. What matters is to take steps towards unity and common struggle by taking common points as fundamental without bringing differences to the fore. Those who cannot accomplish this, by fuelling negativity and provoking unity, can produce no result other than serving the oligarchy's policy of divide, rule and weaken, and making the enemy happy." (Revolutionary Left, Issue 8, July 1996)

(*) This article was published in HALK GERÇEĞİ magazine, dated 22 March 2009.

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Dayı and Revolutionism

Dayı was always inside life and practice. But in him this never turned into one-sidedness. On the contrary, he was a leader who directed the movement through both theory and practice. For him, solving the theoretical and political problems of the revolution and solving the daily problems of the struggle were tasks of equal importance. In this sense he thought about every theoretical and practical question the revolution placed before us and developed definite understandings. In this series of articles, we will deal with the leadership's approaches on various questions, its theoretical determinations concerning them and the practical formations it created in various fields. Dayı and Theory, Dayı and Justice, Dayı and Strategy, Dayı and the Left, Dayı and Unity, Dayı and Education, Dayı and Discipline, Dayı and Internationalism... These subjects could be extended almost without limit; within our series we will deal with the principal ones. According to the headings we take up, we will try to answer the question: "What did Dayı say and what did he do on this question?"

In the statement made by the revolutionary movement concerning Dayı's martyrdom, it was said: "In the person of his revolutionary life, revolutionism will be redefined." In this sense, as the first part of our series entitled "What the Leadership Taught", although we have partly touched upon it before, we thought the most appropriate heading would be "Dayı and Revolutionism".

While Dayı created a practical example in terms of revolutionism, in his theoretical writings he also set out his understanding of revolutionism very clearly and, moreover, attached very great importance to it. What revolutionism is and is not can be said to be one of the most important aspects both of Dayı's ideological struggle against the left and of organisational education and cadre development. Because almost all distortions emerged as products of distorting the definition of revolutionism. And conversely, all problems experienced in ideology, theory and practice, all weaknesses not overcome, produced as their first result the degeneration of the definition of revolutionism. For this reason, the question "what is revolutionism?" was constantly on the agenda, both in his writings and in organisational education.

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Clarity in Definition

In Dayı's definition of revolutionism, everything is determined with fairly definite and bold lines. The sharpening and thickening of these lines was also closely related to the processes experienced by the Turkish and world left; the junta period required such clarification. Then the collapse of the socialist system created the same need. It was inevitable that those whose definitions of revolutionism were unclear, those who could not insist on the historical meaning and function of revolutionism, would move away from revolutionism during these periods. In fact this clarity is valid not only in terms of revolutionism but also in relation to concepts such as being democratic and patriotic. In an article on "theories of provocation", Dayı explains this necessity as follows: "Everyone claiming to be revolutionary, democratic, anti-imperialist, anti-fascist and left must support this war. (...) There is no need for very complicated theories to see the facts. Look at the approaches of the oligarchy and imperialism and you will see the facts. Either you are with the oligarchy and imperialism or you are with the revolution. You can criticise our road to revolution and our methods, but if you

claim to be revolutionary you must not fall onto the same line as the oligarchy." (Liberation on the Road to Victory, Issue 27, 13 January 1996)

Here you see an indisputable measure: either you are with the oligarchy and imperialism, or you are with the revolution!

Another point that deserves special attention here is that the adoption of different strategic choices and methods in the revolutionary struggle does not change this measure. To put it more concretely: even if, unlike Marxist-Leninists, one defends a strategy of insurrection or even the parliamentary road, if one says "we are revolutionaries", then not falling onto the same line as imperialism and the oligarchy is an absolute and indisputable measure of revolutionism.

In the same article another dimension of this measure is set out: "It is clear that the attitudes of revolutionaries towards the oligarchy cannot fall onto the same line as those they see as the enemy. The actions and tactics of the revolutionary movement can be criticised. But in the face of the enemy, no organisation or person fighting the state can be opposed together with the state. It cannot be said, 'we have nothing to do with them'. Whatever reasons those who do the opposite put forward, it means they defend a revolutionism permitted by the state." A party or individuals defining themselves as revolutionary is not enough for us to accept them as revolutionary. We look at how far their practice, policies and position correspond to the definition they see as worthy of themselves. And when we look at this, foremost among the measures in our hands are precisely these measures put forward by Dayı.

Political Content:

Revolutionism for the People!

Revolutionism is love of the people and the homeland. The expression "love of the people and the homeland", which has become established in our language, is one Dayı frequently used and introduced into our literature.

"Without creating a powerful patriotism and love of the people in our own personality, in our cadres and in our people, revolutionism cannot be practised. If it is practised, an easy revolutionism and, with the same ease, a return to the system will not be difficult." (Liberation on the Road to Victory, Issue 2, 22 July 1995)

There are many different factors directing people towards the ranks of revolution; these may be objective or subjective. For revolutionism to cease being something dependent only on these factors and become permanent, the question "what are we revolutionaries for?" must be answered correctly and our revolutionary practice made appropriate to that answer. Dayı's repeatedly asking a question that many might say "has an obvious answer anyway" was the result of this necessity. The title Dayı gave to the article from which the quotation above was taken also shows the framework in which he approached the issue: "Practising Revolutionism for the People."

In that article in particular, Dayı reckons with petty-bourgeois revolutionism and with the values the petty bourgeoisie carries into the ranks of the left as a result of its class and cultural characteristics. He shows both the economic and political roots of this phenomenon, and also that revolutionism

cannot be like this. He says: “In the famous expression, Turkey is a country of petty bourgeois. (...) The petty bourgeoisie’s possessiveness, its longings for the bourgeoisie, its passion for a distorted way of life, not fully knowing what it wants or why, uncertainty, indecision, zigzags and so on are all characteristic forms of behaviour. It opposes the system. It even wants revolution. ... But although in words it knows that revolution is a long-term task, requires self-sacrifice and is full of risks, when in practice it comes face to face with these realities it struggles, digs in its heels over old habits and, whenever it finds the opportunity, puts its own longings and thoughts into practice. (...) In appearance it works for the aims of the organisation. It is not organised.”

The petty bourgeoisie’s contradictory condition - appearing organised while being unorganised, wanting revolution while failing to fulfil its requirements - can be overcome by clarifying the understanding of revolutionism for the people. Because then a person acquires a much stronger and sounder political ground from which to overcome populism, careerism, the state of not knowing what one wants and resistance to abandoning old habits.

The phenomenon we call “24-hour revolutionism” can emerge only in this way. In the Congress Report, Dayı defines the content of “24-hour revolutionism” in this way: concentrating on the strategic objective, living the revolution, the country and the liberation of the people in one’s mind at every moment, sufficiently feeling and internalising the burning problems of the revolution and our own problems... Does the bold and sharply defined character of Dayı’s definition of revolutionism, and of his answers concerning how and why revolutionism is to be practised, produce a “perfectionist” or “idealised” revolutionism? Of course not. On the contrary, he always strongly opposed defining revolutionism as though it were something only “superhumans” could do. In Dayı’s eyes, cadres and fighters too should not be idealised or defined as superhumans.

Years ago, as early as 1983, a brochure written under Dayı’s leadership put forward the following understanding: “Those who want to make the superhuman dominant in place of the conscious human being will become demoralised before the training and possibilities of the enemy forces and, at a certain point, will embrace various deviant views that deny the creativity and self-power of the masses of the people. At the essence of defending the theory of the ‘superhuman’ lies lack of confidence in the people and in oneself and the worship of power. ... Those who act with the understanding of the ‘superhuman’ are far from enriching the line of armed struggle and from educating, organising and mobilising the masses of the people.” (The Development of Our Movement and the Revolutionary Struggle) When Dayı’s opposition to the theory of the “superhuman” is considered together with his opposition to the definition of “clever leftism”, it becomes far more concrete and vivid how he approached revolutionism.

Yes, revolutionism does not require us to be “super” people; but revolutionism also rejects “ordinariness” and “becoming ordinary”. If revolutionism in its political meaning is love of the people and homeland, then it requires being able to risk dangers, make sacrifices and pay prices for the people and homeland.

Dayı's Definition of Revolutionism

Is the Rejection of 'Clever Leftism'

What was clever leftism? Clever leftism was the definition of "old" revolutionaries and "old" socialists taking refuge in the system. They would return to the system and at the same time continue passing themselves off as revolutionaries and socialists. This could not be permitted. Clever leftism began in the prisons after the junta with statements such as "we must protect ourselves, we are needed outside", and continued outside with the theorisation of "risk-free revolutionism". Through this understanding, values and theories THAT CANNOT BE PLACED SIDE BY SIDE WITH REVOLUTIONISM were introduced into the world of the left.

Under the slogan of "sleeping comfortably at night", a phenomenon no one fighting for revolution in any country of the world could ever defend and absolutise was put forward almost as an essential quality of a party. European imperialism could be openly defended. The monopoly bourgeoisie could be declared progressive and democratic. Revolutionaries could be turned away from while they were dying... We will not prolong it; where this kind of leftism could lead became clear with all its striking force during the Great Resistance.

"Clever leftism", which virtually became the line of reformism and at times received support from intellectuals, was not criticised sufficiently and radically by many sections of the left. In keeping with the general condition of the left in the field of ideological struggle, a militant ideological attitude was not taken against this distortion. Except by Dayı and the revolutionary movement! The revolutionary movement's struggle against clever leftism did not begin only after attitudes emerged during the Great Resistance that were utterly unacceptable in the name of the left, let alone revolutionism. These phenomena had begun to emerge as early as the 1980s, and our criticism of clever leftism dates from then.

Yes, we can say definitely that Dayı was the exception to the picture we have drawn above. And this exception pioneered the stance that prevented rationalised leftism from becoming dominant over the left. It is thanks to the tooth-and-nail ideological struggle we waged against clever leftism under Dayı's leadership that reformism could not impose its own conception of leftism upon the left.

In one of his writings Dayı explained why this struggle was so important: "We can say that today open war against fascism and what has to be done in this war is not the hardest aspect of our struggle. What prevents us from carrying the war forward in higher forms and going more deeply among the people, and what consumes the great majority of our energy and time, is bourgeois ideology infiltrating our ranks under the appearance of revolutionism and socialism." (Liberation on the Road to Victory, Issue 2, 22 July 1995)

Clever leftism was embodied in reformism, but its direct and indirect effects naturally reached different sections of the left and sections of the people who placed their hopes in the left, taking on many different forms.

Clever leftism is a leftism settled inside the system. In this sense it has turned revolutionism either into a spare-time activity or an ordinary profession. This side was also one of the degenerations Dayı most sharply opposed in revolutionism. "These kinds of people who have internalised petty-

bourgeois culture and understood revolutionism as an ordinary profession within the system" were people against whom Dayı fought most fiercely inside the movement, especially in certain periods. Such people would either change or fall outside the movement; Dayı was very clear that there was no place in the movement for people with these qualities. What do those whom Dayı calls "these kinds of people", those who turn revolutionism into an ordinary profession of the system, do? "This understanding, ready-made from top to bottom in life, producing nothing, lacking creativity and self-sacrifice... by developing ready-made expectations, lack of creativity and self-sacrifice, understanding revolutionism almost like an ordinary profession within the system, imposed salaried revolutionism upon us. If these cadres charged with organising the masses in regions and fields cannot even sustain their own lives among the masses, however brilliant the words may be, in essence it means nothing is being done. This mentality is first of all itself not revolutionary. Those who are not themselves revolutionary cannot train revolutionaries or organise the masses." (From the Congress Report)

In fact the quotation above, by listing what must not exist, also powerfully emphasises how revolutionism must be.

The concluding sentence is undoubtedly the kind that every revolutionary should make an earring in their ear: "Those who are not themselves revolutionary cannot train revolutionaries or organise the masses."

This is why reformism loses its revolutionary dynamics; those who do not want to lose their dynamics must wage the struggle to revolutionise themselves at every level and reject every kind and every extension of clever leftism. Clever leftism, concerned with legitimising itself, criticises the militant and radical line more than the system. Because only in this way could it prevent its real face from being seen. To the extent that it could conceal that what it said and did was incompatible with socialism and being socialist, it could continue the deception within the left. A militantly uncompromising ideological struggle against clever leftism was therefore essential. Bowing before the status quos of clever leftism would have meant death for the left. In the end, we did not allow revolutionism to be killed. And in this great war too, Dayı stood before us with his definitions of revolutionism.

Many revolutionaries have watched or heard of it: in the film Ten Days That Shook the World, which tells of the Soviet Revolution, a Bolshevik soldier answers someone trying to make theoretical analyses to him: "On one side there is the bourgeoisie, on the other there is the proletariat"... Dayı frequently gave this as an example when discussing revolutionism. Because in the end revolutionism comes down to precisely this alignment.

Where are you? And what are you doing? Being in the right place, beside and in the ranks of the proletariat, is the first indispensable condition of revolutionism. The second aspect of revolutionism is how one lives and how one fights within this alignment.

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Uninterrupted 'Internal War' and Strengthening Revolutionism

For Dayı, revolutionism is not a static or absolute phenomenon.

For Dayı, revolutionism is a continuous state of war. The mind, heart and life of every revolutionary are the arena of the uninterrupted war between the system and revolution. Because he approached it

in this way, he frequently emphasised that the conflict between system and revolution within every revolutionary continues in many different forms, that there is never room for relaxation in this war or for the intoxication of absolute victory.

The place where Dayı saw this war and its positive or negative results most concretely was undoubtedly the prisons. That field, where the revolutionism of many revolutionaries was exhausted, also shows how revolutionism can be made permanent. Dayı developed in various writings the theoretical conclusions he drew from this practice, which he knew in every aspect.

“Prisons have always had two faces. One face is that they are schools; the other is that they grind people down like millstones. Especially under conditions where the organisation loses strength outside and the enemy’s psychological superiority continues, the millstone begins to grind faster. (...) In reality, if there has been no strong reckoning in the dilemma between revolution and counter-revolution, and no real ideological rupture from the system, it will not be difficult to go back and settle once again into the system. When people who have lived through torture and captivity go beyond the walls... the difficulty of torture, oppression and captivity confronts the person once again. To practise revolutionism means risking these things once more. ... The conflict between the system and revolution begins again very rapidly, and the wavering personality that has not achieved a real break from the system is confronted with a choice between what their comrades and the people expect from them on one side and, on the other, the oligarchy’s threats of oppression, torture and death. Those who do not carry belief in the great cause of revolution, or whose belief is weak, are defeated by the enemy’s oppression and force and return to the system by betraying the people and their comrades.”

This is, of course, a result. It is the result of failing to strengthen and internalise revolutionism and failing to establish it on a correct and powerful foundation. The petty bourgeoisie, which looks for easy roads, cannot endure difficulties and expects a revolution in the near future, is at its most radical in days of victory and in years of defeat is most ready to compromise, surrender and betray in order to save itself. But if this aspect of the petty bourgeoisie is known, if one does not remain satisfied with existing revolutionism, and if the questions of for whom and for what revolutionism is practised, what kind of revolutionism is practised and what kind should be practised are asked tirelessly again and again, this result can be prevented.

When such results emerge, Dayı says they must be viewed calmly and scientifically. That is how he looks at them and makes the following analysis: “The essence of the problem is this: when a complete rupture from the system in thought, and therefore in conduct, has not been achieved in every respect; in processes of defeat, repression and difficult conditions, and when Marxism-Leninism and socialism have been weakened ideologically and materially and have lost strength, it is very difficult or impossible to carry Marxist-Leninist thought without deviating to the right or left and without emptying it of its content. (...) Thousands of revolutionaries who were tossed to the right and left, became opportunist, lost faith in revolutionism and became reformist, even became selfish and chose the life of an ordinary petty-bourgeois intellectual or one alien to the people, did not choose this road because they carried evil spirits. What dragged them there was the pessimism born of their wrong understanding and wrong application of Marxism-Leninism.” (Congress Report)

Preventing this result and preventing such pessimism from being born is of course in our hands. In another article, Dayı shows the source of this pessimism very concretely and thereby also shows us how to avoid this result: “If the style of work is not examined and a revolutionary style of work made dominant, things reach such a point that revolutionary enthusiasm, love of the people and patriotism

disappear completely. For whom and for what revolutionism is practised becomes unclear. The person now lives day to day, does daily tasks and daily deceives the movement. Work that has not been done is presented as though it will be done and constantly postponed to the future... Or there are supposedly ill-intentioned people who, despite all that person's own self-sacrifice and ability, somehow never work and never listen. Naturally... under this style of work... lack of productivity will deepen contradictions between people, bring disintegration onto the agenda, and in the end a pessimistic and gloomy mood filled with questions that somehow cannot be explained and whose answers are unknown will begin to dominate."

The revolutionary Dayı describes, by contrast, has a broad horizon. They are ambitious. When necessary they know how to challenge alone, and when necessary how to walk alone. But they never give up organising the masses. They do not surrender to spontaneity. They are labouring, conscious and daring. The answers to the questions FOR WHOM revolutionism, FOR WHAT revolutionism and WHAT KIND of revolutionism are clear in their mind.

(*) This article was published in YÜRÜYÜŞ for Independence, Democracy and Socialism, dated 11 January 2009.

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Dayı and Discipline

Discipline exists in every sphere of life. In the lives of individuals, classes, societies and states, it always exists to one degree or another and in one form or another. In the class struggle, discipline makes itself felt more powerfully. The bourgeoisie fights against the people through disciplined forces. Although its content and form are different, the oppressed too have great need of discipline in this war.

Despite differences, it is certain that every force that wants to win victory in the class struggle needs discipline. This is why Dayı dwelt on this question so much throughout his life of leadership. A leader who wanted to make his organisation fight inevitably needed it.

As will be seen in the passages from Dayı's writings quoted below, for Dayı discipline was not merely a question of "obeying rules" in the narrow sense. No, discipline had a meaning far beyond this and contained dimensions beyond it. Discipline had functions that brought an organisation into being, made it resilient against the attacks of counter-revolution and made concrete its claim to power. Dayı fought to ensure that discipline was taken out of its narrow meaning and grasped in these dimensions, and to make such an understanding of discipline dominant.

Of course, before conveying Dayı's determinations on this question, it must be said that Dayı first waged this struggle through his own practice and his own life. To say merely that Dayı "had a disciplined life" is not enough; discipline was truly a completely internalised phenomenon in his life, and his entire life was shaped by this internalised discipline. Until the end of his life, including his final days, he always acted in accordance with the requirements of that discipline. It had become that natural in him.

In this sense, before passing to Dayı's other determinations on the subject, let us state that his life itself is an education in discipline.

“Victory cannot be reached without losses, negativities and pain. But reducing all these to a minimum and moving one step further every day on the road to liberation depends on our persistence and discipline.”

In Dayı, Discipline

Is One of the Cornerstones of the Struggle

What is the vital importance of discipline, its place in the struggle? These words of Dayı contain the answer: “A genuine leader is a person who finds the road to live and reach the masses even under conditions where, let alone a dense revolutionary potential, there are no relations and no possibilities at all. There is no prescription for the question how. The answer lies in revolutionary belief, creativity, being disciplined and boundless love of the people.” (Congress Report)

Discipline is counted here together with belief and love of the people. It is one of the few determining elements that can make it possible to develop struggle and organise the people from almost nothing. During the period of preparation for the Offensive, Dayı encountered a certain “resistance” originating from some people. His accounting there was this: “Some advanced cadres were failing to adapt to the new process and, as a beginning of this, were not giving the requested reports, resisting with flimsy excuses. Either we would surrender to these impositions and the movement, filled with uncertainty, would continue consuming itself a little more every day and disappear along a dark road, or with a new understanding of cadres and a new discipline we would recreate the central authority and make it dominant.” (Congress Report)

One of the first things a movement deciding to pass to a new Offensive had to do was “secure discipline”. Because without it, that is, without discipline, an Offensive could not be carried out. Dayı states that at the beginning of the years of the Offensive he waged a great struggle against the “culture of ruleless revolutionism”.

When one looks at Dayı’s Congress writings, it is seen that on almost every occasion he dwells upon the question of discipline. Indeed, all the quotations used in this section of our series come from his Congress speech. Is it necessary to be this “strict” on discipline?

Where discipline is not understood or internalised, this is the question most frequently asked. Dayı answers it like this: “Those who do not reckon with their own deficiencies and weaknesses, those who are not ruthless towards themselves, often think that we exaggerate small mistakes, shortcomings and weaknesses. Because a thorough ideological rupture from the system, which is the foundation of this thought, has not been achieved and because the realities of war and the ruthlessness of the enemy are not fully understood, it is not seen how these apparently small deficiencies and weaknesses emerge every day among hundreds of our people and what kind of damage they cause. The small mistakes and weaknesses of hundreds of people mean hundreds of violations of rules and principles in discipline, life and war, and therefore hundreds of advantages handed to the enemy.

“If measures are not taken, the internal enemy will first surround individuals and then, through individuals, the organisation, causing it to become ineffective.” (Congress Report)

We think no more needs to be said.

For an organisation, discipline is in fact a matter of existence or non-existence.

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Discipline: Its Absence Weakens, Its Presence Strengthens!

Discipline is also a weapon of defence for an organisation. Yes, such a weapon that in defending the organisation no other weapon or instrument can replace it. “Despite all its technical equipment and power, the enemy is very weak before our revolutionary will and discipline. What makes it strong is the enemy within us, which has infected us from capitalism and is in attack every moment and every hour in order to weaken our will and discipline.” (Congress Report)

What does this enemy lead to? Dayı continues: “If we do not struggle radically against this internal enemy, against deficiencies and weaknesses, longings for the system and the many different forms of those longings, with our own hands we weaken the will and discipline of the organisation and open the road to the enemy.”

Discipline is a friend. Lack of discipline is an enemy. It is that clear and definite: “The internal enemy consists of many deficiencies and weaknesses that almost all of us see in daily life, in action, in organisational discipline, in comradely relations, in ourselves and others, that we have received from the system and have not yet thrown off. They confront us in many forms such as liberalism, sectarianism, individualism, populism, lack of discipline, laziness, failure to value people, ambition and so on.” (Congress Report)

In the end the internal enemy is an invitation to the external enemy. Indeed, in his Congress speech Dayı also assessed lack of discipline as an element “inviting the enemy”. If one pays attention, discipline is always listed both among the most important weaknesses and among the most vital necessities.

“Rules”, as one of the main elements of discipline, were also among the things Dayı continually dwelt upon. Those rules too are among the most important parts of “defending” the organisation and the struggle.

It is clear that a fighting organisation, and individual revolutionaries, are continuously confronted with danger. Dayı draws attention to this and says: “It is not possible to remove and eliminate danger completely. But it is in our hands to reduce this factor as much as possible and secure the safety of organisational relations. The basic road is to establish a regulated revolutionary life. It is not enough for us alone to be regulated and principled. We have to educate and train all our people within our network of organisational relations with this understanding.”

That is not all. Dayı points to other dimensions of discipline too. He says, for example, that discipline means “self-confidence”: “Despite all its technical equipment and strength, the enemy cannot be superior to revolutionary will. We can defeat its superiority in strength and technology only through our will and discipline. Will and discipline at the same time mean self-confidence and creativity. Where will and discipline weaken, self-confidence and creativity decline and even begin to disappear.” (Congress Report)

Think, for example, of a revolutionary wanted by the oligarchy and forced to live under difficult conditions; their greatest strength too will be discipline: “What will protect them from dangers, surveillance, coincidences and denunciations is a higher will, discipline and vigilance.” (Congress Report)

When assessing the attitude of some cadres in a particular field at the Congress, Dayı stated: “(...) they imposed themselves and openly rejected organisational discipline, orders and instructions. Of course they do not say, ‘the order and instruction are wrong, we are not obeying’. They choose the road of not doing it through endless excuses. In this respect, questions such as organisational membership, organisational discipline, orders and instructions, centralism and so on are still far from being internalised. No member, fighter or cadre can reject the orders and instructions of the central will and put their own decisions in their place. Whatever the price, they have to carry out orders and instructions. (...) Many subjects - war, the culture of war, discipline, military discipline, centralism and democracy, orders and instructions, organisational membership, responsibility, how the struggle against weaknesses should be conducted and so on - are still not sufficiently understood in the ranks of our movement and, together with weaknesses that cannot be underestimated, are slowing us down. We must continue dealing with them.”

Here, the cornerstones of the phenomenon we call discipline have been listed quite clearly by Dayı. And as he said, he continuously dealt with approaches that openly or covertly degenerated and weakened the phenomenon of discipline. Because, as he again stated there, “it is the natural law of war; war proceeds through rules, orders and instructions... The fundamental point shaping our outlook must be whether something is in the interests of the people and whether it develops the revolution; we must look at principles, rules and values through precisely this measure.” (Congress Report)

In Every Field and in the Whole of Life

Discipline for Everyone

One of the cornerstones of Dayı’s understanding of discipline is that discipline must be applied at every moment of life; another is that it applies to everyone. Discipline is a whole. It must show itself in every sphere of life. If someone appears to favour extremely strict discipline in organisational functioning but in daily life is in the exact opposite condition, there is inconsistency, insincerity and lack of grounding in discipline.

“How does a leader who does not personally educate and supervise cadres in the field of work, who limits themselves to meeting a limited number of cadres occasionally and for limited periods of time, fill the twenty-four hours of the day? What is their way of life? It is not a way of life occupied with solving problems, striving and running for this. (...) Rather, it is an undisciplined, spontaneous life. It is very difficult for a cadre who does not discipline every aspect of their life and who does not live revolutionary motivation at every moment to show the necessary discipline, self-sacrifice and determination in revolutionary relations and work.” (Congress Report)

The discipline of a revolutionary in daily life, discipline in action and discipline in carrying out tasks are not independent of one another. Someone who behaves in an extremely spontaneous and loose

way in daily life cannot say, “you should see me in action”. Nor can someone who is complacent in the democratic field claim they would behave differently if they were somewhere else. Dayı summarises: “Whether in the democratic field or another field, wherever we are, we have to take life and struggle seriously in every respect and discipline them. Those without a disciplined life cannot have disciplined organisational relations either. Our offices, our democratic associations and we ourselves must reflect in every respect a disciplined revolutionary life, organisation, seriousness and credibility.” (Congress Report)

Here, in this final paragraph we quoted, there is another point Dayı draws attention to: our discipline is in fact an indispensable part of our credibility and our ability to inspire confidence. How can the masses trust an organisation that appears before their eyes as undisciplined, failing to keep its promises, doing nothing on time and behaving loosely? One of the questions Dayı most often emphasised regarding discipline was that discipline was for “EVERYONE” inside the organisation. In particular, Dayı was uncompromising towards leaders exempting themselves from discipline. Just as a leader cannot be privileged in any other matter, they cannot be privileged in discipline either. The petty bourgeoisie is especially inclined towards privilege. Rules of discipline are good for others, but when it comes to itself they become debatable: “The petty bourgeoisie (...) becomes uncomfortable as organisational supervision intensifies. It finds very creative ways to escape supervision. When the discipline and punishments it applies to others are applied to it, or it senses that they will be applied, it becomes unbalanced and takes on rebellious roles. (...) when it realises that it cannot live within the organisation while keeping the system alive, it regards every road as permissible.” (Liberation on the Road to Victory, Issue 2, 22 July 1995)

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The Essence of Discipline

Taking discipline and rules “mechanically” is a problem we frequently encounter. Mechanicalness means losing sight of the ESSENCE in both discipline and rules.

The first thing that must be said about the essence of discipline is: DISCIPLINE IS FOR REVOLUTION. To oppose discipline is to oppose revolution, to oppose struggle, and therefore to oppose an organisation powerful enough to change the existing system. In an article in which Dayı approaches discipline from this viewpoint, it is said: “No one can be forced to practise revolutionism. But if people have voluntarily joined revolutionary activity, they have to obey its rules and do what is required. Those who do not can return to the filth of the system. But let alone revolutionism, no one who has even a little morality and character and says ‘I am progressive, I am democratic’ should under today’s conditions sleep comfortably for even one night without struggling, teaching people what they know and educating the masses. Those who know and do not act, those who know and do not take part in or support revolutionary struggle, whatever their appearance, are serving the enemy. Under present conditions, struggle is no longer merely a question of ideology; it has become a question of morality and conscience!” (Revolutionary Left, Issue 12, January 1999)

“Whether in the democratic field or elsewhere, wherever we are, we have to take life and struggle seriously in every respect and discipline them. Those without a disciplined life cannot have disciplined organisational relations either.” Yes, the essence of the question of discipline is whether or not one practises revolutionism, whether or not one wants revolution. One who wants revolution must also fulfil the requirements of the discipline it demands. It is not possible both to want revolution and to oppose discipline.

In the following determinations of Dayı concerning rules too, there is a brief account of the essence of discipline: “To be regulated, to obey rules, does not mean failing to take changing conditions, specific characteristics and what has to be done into account, preventing work or creating sluggishness. Rules are not templates applied uniformly and mechanically. Rules exist for tasks and needs to be fulfilled in a healthy way. When principles and rules are abstracted from creativity, courage and daring, tasks, orders and instructions often cannot be carried out and serve only to protect the individual. Rules of course exist also to protect the individual. But above all they exist to carry out tasks and protect the organisation. Nothing can come before these.” (Congress Report)

As we have touched upon on various occasions before, Dayı possessed an outlook that rejected templates, moulds and status positions and always fought against them. His approach to discipline and rules was the same. How discipline will take shape in any field and period, how “strict” or “flexible” it will be, how much there will be instructions and how much proposals, what will be turned into rules - none of these can be determined in advance; what determines them are the needs of struggle and organisation. Dayı expresses it in this way: “The fundamental point shaping our outlook must be whether something is in the interests of the people and whether it develops the revolution; we must look at principles, rules and values through precisely this criterion.” (Congress Report)

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Dayı and the Leader

We want to complete the section “Dayı and Cadres”, published in the previous part of our series, with these words of Dayı concerning leaders, words that amount to a manifesto and that we were unable to include in the previous issue:

“In daily life, revolutionary relations and every part of revolutionary work, we must condemn bureaucratic relations and the bureaucratic style of work and make the militant type of leader dominant. The militant leader is the new type of person who does not give up before difficulties, who finds the material causes of deficiencies and mistakes, confronts them without hesitation and corrects and renews themselves.

“A revolutionary leader is a person who, without laying down in advance the condition ‘I cannot do it’, puts forward all their energy, self-sacrifice and creativity in order to do it and tries to do the best possible.

“A leader is a person who teaches those under them if they do not know, completes their deficiencies if they are lacking, and if they are afraid removes their fears and gives them confidence.

“A leader is a person who, under enemy surveillance, siege and captivity, does not separate the Party’s honour from their own honour, resists, tries to do something for their Party even with their final breath, and whose loyalty cannot be doubted.

“A leader is a person who, even if not directly assigned to military units, possesses the consciousness and state of mind to fight when under enemy surveillance or siege, and does fight.

“A leader is a person who trusts themselves, sets an example to people through this confidence and accepts the dangers brought by revolutionism.

“A leader has to be an example in daily life, in relations with the masses, in their field of activity and in action.

“A leader is a person who, before themselves, secures the safety of their Party and comrades and thinks about their future.

“A leader is a person who challenges the world and has risen to change the world, possesses enthusiasm, morale, belief and determination, makes this felt, inspires belief and confidence, and is someone who must be followed.

“A militant leader does not establish their authority over people by relying on powers and position; they make their leadership accepted by relying on their abilities, the art of leadership and above all their self-sacrifice.

“A leader is a person who does not put their own feelings in the foreground, does not apply double standards and applies revolutionary justice equally to everyone.

“A leader is a people’s leader who, despite intellectual accumulation, is not arrogant, is modest in relations with the people and comrades, and can understand, listen to and teach all kinds of people from among the people.

“A leader is a person who is not afraid of making mistakes, possesses initiative, produces policy, knows what to do and how to do it, organises, makes others fight and fights themselves.

“A leader is a person who recognises no obstacle in reaching the objective and, through determination, self-sacrifice and guidance, does not surrender to objectivity but changes it.

“A leader is a person who, among many complex contradictions, knows how to distinguish the principal contradiction, the fundamental from the secondary, and never loses sight of what is fundamental.

“A leader is a person of duty. They do not argue with the order they receive, do not say ‘I cannot do it’, and carry it out at the cost of their life.

“A leader is not divisive, fragmenting or demoralising, but unifying and gives morale and enthusiasm; even at moments when people have reached the point of moral collapse and serious negativities are being experienced, they know the existing situation and its causes, complete people’s deficiencies or inadequacies, show and correct mistakes within comradely relations, raise morale again, lift up those about to fall, and give no opportunity to those trying to take advantage of a crisis. In moments of victory, meanwhile, they do not become intoxicated, do not permit people to become loose or complacent, and do not give opportunities for enemy attacks.

“A leader is not merely someone who works themselves, but someone who makes others work; while working they attach great importance to collectivity, believe that through this collectivity people will be educated and learn more rapidly, know how to call to account and how to give account, and believe that they themselves will also learn from collective work.

“A leader is a self-confident person who is open and honest towards their Party and comrades and does not hesitate to make self-criticism before comrades and the masses concerning their deficiencies and weaknesses.” (Congress Report)

(*) This article was published in YÜRÜYÜŞ Against Imperialism and the Oligarchy, dated 1 March 2009.

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Dayı and Education

It can be said that at every turning point when the movement confronted great difficulties, and on the threshold of every new Offensive it placed before itself, one of Dayı's primary emphases concerned education. In this sense he always attributed fundamental importance to education.

While preparing this section of our series, the fact that we found it difficult to choose among Dayı's many writings and sayings on education is perhaps itself an indication of this importance.

He gave detailed answers to the questions what will we teach and how will we teach, and tried to create a new formation on this question. We can say that Dayı also played a leading role in breaking the status quos that had formed on the Turkish left concerning what is called "educational work".

As stated at the beginning, at every turning point there is special emphasis on education. If there is a great obstacle before you, in order to overcome it; if you want to take a great step, in order to find the necessary strength - in short, both for small victories and for final victory - for Dayı "education is indispensable".

During the process of breaking from Devrimci Yol liquidationism, the tasks were set out as follows: "The separation has now become concrete before the peoples and the left. We had to fulfil the tasks of explaining the points of separation to the people, presenting our perspectives and approaches, completing our internal education accordingly... taking everything up anew and cleansing ourselves of DY's ideological and cultural influences." (Congress Report)

During the formation of the new movement Dayı likewise said: "We could succeed in creating a new organisation and a new approach only by taking democratic functioning within ourselves as fundamental and raising internal education and consciousness on this basis." (Congress Report)

While the movement was still in its formation process, it faced a "separation". The attitude towards that deviation too was an educational question: "We were a movement that took confidence in our cadres, and especially in young cadres, as fundamental and understood participation as an educational activity." (Congress Report)

The end of the 1980s: Gorbachev's betrayal was taking place. The revolutionary movement's most important weapon against the winds of counter-revolution was ideological struggle and, of course, its most important instrument was again education. In describing the process Dayı emphasised: "The internal education discussions we had begun... continued in a very lively way." (Congress Report)

The years of the Offensive... Dayı listed what was required "to recreate the spirit of the Offensive" as follows: internal education... reckoning... raising revolutionary practice...

For example, the year is 1998: "The question of learning, teaching or education in general is a subject on which we must dwell seriously. Many deficiencies and weaknesses in the process we are living through have their source here." (Revolutionary Left, Issue 11, August 1998)

The year is 2002... In a New Year message Dayı again insists on the same emphases: “The duty of a revolutionary is naked and simple. Whatever the conditions, it is to educate, win people and organise.”

In short, there is almost no period in which Dayı did not continuously bring this question to the fore in organisational functioning.

“Education” is also the self-defence of an organisation against the attacks of the oligarchy. How?

“War organisations, as a result of constantly confronting the enemy’s policy of destruction, have to attach more importance to educational activity than anyone else. It is clear that if the activity of learning and teaching is not understood as a fundamental duty, the enemy’s policies of annihilation and capture will succeed.” (Revolutionary Left, Issue 11, August 1998)

Leaving aside attacks, the revolutionisation of people too passes through education. If there is no education, there is no revolutionisation: “People with intense contradictions with the system join the struggle easily. But if we cannot educate them, with the same ease they return to the system or become counter-revolutionary.” (Revolutionary Left, Issue 10, March 1998)

Within this framework, cadres and leaders who do not carry out educational work, whatever other work or actions they may be doing, are in Dayı’s eyes leaders and cadres who are “not fulfilling their duty”: “Those who do not read, research and refuse to learn from others form an obstacle before our development. The foundation of learning is feeling responsibility, asking questions and finding answers.” (Revolutionary Left, Issue 11, August 1998)

We can gather Dayı’s approach to the question of education under two headings:

- The outlook he gave concerning the importance and continuity of education.

- The outlook he offered concerning the form and content of education.

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How Should the Aim and Content of Education Be Understood?

Dayı dwelt on this as much as, even more than, the importance of education. Because, as decades of practice on the Turkish left have shown, it is very clear that no result has been or can be obtained through classical educational programmes and classical forms of education. So much so that Dayı often said, “if you are going to do it like that, do not do it at all.” So how should it be done? “First of all, we must take the question of education out of abstraction and stagnation and approach it on the basis of the needs of the revolution. We must stay away from education where it is unclear what is being learned and taught or why, and which does not answer needs. Every cadre, in the region and field where they are, must answer correctly dozens of questions such as ‘what do we have to do, what is the need, with what human material and how will we solve all this, what instruments will we use’, and approach educational policy through a realistic programme...” (Liberation Against Imperialism and the Oligarchy, Issue 18, 10 June 1995)

If educational work somewhere does not produce the desired result, the first explanation that comes to mind is usually factors such as the people there having difficulty understanding or having a low educational and cultural level. Yet for Dayı this is a completely wrong explanation. If educational work fails or is inadequate, first we must look at what kind of education we are doing and, second, at

the educator: “When the needs of the revolution are programmed separately and thoroughly in the concrete conditions of every region, field and unit, the questions of whom, what and how we will teach emerge. Our education must come out of abstract, bookish phrases and be simple and clear enough for everyone to understand. If people do not understand, that means we are failing to explain. We have to know how to explain. A teacher who cannot explain and cannot teach is an unsuccessful teacher.” (Liberation Against Imperialism and the Oligarchy, Issue 18, 10 June 1995)

What is the aim? In fact this is what must never be lost sight of when educational work is discussed. For Dayı this aim has two dimensions. More accurately, Dayı did not approach education only as the education of cadres and militants, but in both dimensions: the education of cadres and the education of the people. Within this framework the concept “We must popularise education!” is also a concept Dayı put forward and one that expresses one of the most fundamental aspects of the problem. The aim will therefore be shaped accordingly: “Under today’s concrete conditions the education of cadres... must be approached as the training of people with the personality and ability to organise the masses of the people and make them fight. Wherever the masses of the people are, conditions must be created in which people from every section become the leaders and responsible people of the field in which they are.”

A correct aim and a correct content are preconditions for obtaining results from education.

“Obtaining results in education is possible not only by spreading and making education continuous, but also by answering correctly the questions how will we educate and what will we teach. We cannot approach education detached from our own history and the reality of our people. Of course knowledge is a great power. Knowing the history and cultures of other peoples is an enrichment. But first we will learn our own history, our own reality and our own struggle. Those who do not live with their own history and their own people, who do not embrace them, who do not build revolutionary struggle upon the richness of this history, cannot succeed.” (Revolutionary Left, Issue 11, August 1998)

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The Form of Education

What we understand by education also determines how it will be shaped. Those who have in their minds an abstract, non-militant and bureaucratic style of education detached from the needs of the struggle always look for perfect conditions. They will begin from “societies” and follow the classical line; a ready cadre will be sent to conduct the work, and there will also be a large quiet hall.

Against this understanding and style Dayı says: “Education cannot be limited by any rule in terms of form, place or time. We must take a broad view of where, when and how education will be carried out. A house, a factory meeting room, professional and democratic organisations - everywhere is a place of education. Nor can it be imprisoned within legal and illegal conditions. (...) Our fundamental condition is to multiply our cadres, spread them throughout the country and raise the war. Everything, all rules and the style of education, must serve this aim.” (Liberation Against Imperialism and the Oligarchy, Issue 18, 10 June 1995)

In another article he expresses the same emphases as follows: “The field of education is everywhere. No force and no rule can prevent or postpone education. Whatever the justification, education that is blocked or postponed ultimately means knowingly making mistakes and causing

mistakes, inviting the enemy and becoming an obstacle before revolutionary development. (...) There are conditions for carrying out education under every legal and illegal position, in the mountains, cities, gecekondu neighbourhoods, factories, schools, everywhere the people are. To say there are no conditions means not going to the masses of the people. It means failing to understand the importance of cadre development." (Liberation Against Imperialism and the Oligarchy, Issue 18, 10 June 1995)

One aspect Dayı persistently emphasised in practice was that educational activity must be spread through the twenty-four hours of the day and that all cadres must understand education as a continuous duty. Every task and every relationship within life, every political and cultural phenomenon we encounter, is a subject of education. But this of course does not mean leaving education to spontaneity. On the contrary, every individual revolutionary, every unit and every field must have educational activities tied to a concrete programme and plan.

The measure is very clear in Dayı: every cadre will educate both themselves and others. "Without exception, every leader, everyone concerned with the masses and every cadre must have groups whose direct education they undertake. Whatever the place, time or conditions, this task must be carried out. Whatever type of activity one is engaged in, those who do not personally undertake educational activity cannot be said to be carrying out revolutionary work." (Revolutionary Left, Issue 11, August 1998)

Beyond even doing revolutionary work, Dayı in one sense identifies education with revolutionism. In a more recent writing he says: "If every one of our people, our people at every level, is not educating people, organising the masses and creating possibilities, one cannot speak of that person's revolutionism. One cannot be revolutionary without going to the masses and burning with their problems. One can only be a petty-bourgeois intellectual." (2003 New Year Message)

Without any exaggeration we can say this: education is the foundation of revolutionary activity and mass work. Those who do not understand it in this way, who see education only as an academic or theoretical matter, or as something peculiar only to petty-bourgeois intellectuals, have failed to understand the essence of the question. Education is the claim to revolution and the objective of revolution. This is why Dayı often drew attention to the fact that on the left "why ideological struggle and education are carried out has been forgotten" and reminded people of it.

To give up educating is to give up revolution. Yes, this is not an "extreme" statement; it is reality itself. The question is that important and that fundamental.

Let us look at another statement of Dayı here too: "It is true that making people who have no habit of reading at all read books is a difficult task. But to give up educating, making fight or even developing such a person as a cadre because this is so is lack of faith in the masses of the people. (...) If they cannot read and write, we will teach them. If they have no habit of reading, we will give them that habit."

And from here he moves again to the form of education, drawing attention to the necessity of being creative and productive and never status-quoist or schematic: "There is no single, uniform form of education. To understand education as saying 'read these books' or bringing three or five people together and making them read books is not education but deceiving oneself. Of course these things too must be done. But (...) the necessary things must be taught. People with no accumulation at all

will soon grow bored because they understand nothing from books full of dozens of words they do not understand and developments they do not know, say ‘I do not understand’ and give up. The educator must know the reality of our people and find forms of education accordingly. Relying on our own history, taking what we ourselves have lived before us, we have to educate in our own style. We must find methods for explaining philosophy, socialism and the history of revolutions in our own style. We must establish the bond between theory and our revolution, indeed our daily struggle and life, our beliefs and feelings. If we do not do this, we cannot take education out of being an abstract phenomenon.” (Revolutionary Left, Issue 11, August 1998)

What Kind of Educator?

“An educator cannot educate without living the excitement of education and grasping its importance. To educate means first of all taking seriously the subject one will teach and preparing like a student. One often sees someone say, ‘I know the subject anyway’, and go before the masses without any preparation. What emerges is an uninterested, soulless explanation. Little remains in the listeners’ memory and they have learned nothing new. The time spent, the risk endured, the labour given - everything has been wasted. An educator cannot be like this. They will study the subject they are going to explain, master it, even adjust their style and tone of voice, and only then go before the masses.”

This writing, which enters into such detail as the educator’s tone of voice, is also an example of how Dayı organised almost every task and how, when offering perspective on a question, he shaped it in all its details.

While emphasising the importance of the educator educating and preparing themselves, he also gives this example: “Education may be given not directly to a mass but even to one single person. This does not mean the subject can be taken lightly. This time preparation takes a different form according to that person’s consciousness and characteristics. Individuals or masses almost always recognise labour, seriousness and what is convincing, and they respond to it.” (Revolutionary Left, Issue 11, August 1998) Think of it: even if you are going to educate a single person, you will still prepare yourself as though you were going to educate thousands. In fact preparing is at the same time learning, remembering what you know, completing what is missing, expanding your store of knowledge and going before the person or people you are responsible for educating in that condition. Teaching and learning are always intertwined in Dayı: “Before answering the question how will we educate, we must find the answer to how we will learn. A not insignificant number of our people who appear as cadres carrying many responsibilities do not read, learn, research or discuss enough. What does this mean? Clearly this cadre does not teach, does not organise, and moreover does not take the problems of the struggle seriously.” (Revolutionary Left, Issue 11, August 1998)

In another article he details this as follows: “While teaching, we must know how to learn. Those who do not know how to learn cannot be teachers. Being a teacher cannot be achieved without learning and labour. Even when learning and teaching a subject that appears very simple, we have to be serious and give labour. (...) Otherwise a purposeless, soulless education emerges, one that does not answer the needs of the revolution, causes people to make mistakes and makes things sluggish; this is not what we need.” (Liberation Against Imperialism and the Oligarchy, Issue 18, 10 June 1995)

Two things are necessary if educational work is to produce results: labour and patience. Wanting immediate results and, when they are not obtained, failing to persist in mass work is a wrong approach. The most important place where labour and patience must be spent is in knowing the masses. One who is responsible for educating cadres, cadre candidates, supporters and masses in their field must know their field and the people in it well. Several passages from writings in which Dayı emphasises this are as follows: “Without understanding the masses and giving labour, they cannot be educated or won.” (Liberation on the Road to Victory, Issue 17, 4 November 1995)

“Without knowing the people, we cannot teach them. Because we cannot correctly determine what and how we will teach. Today, especially in neighbourhoods, villages and factories where the revolutionary potential is high, conditions exist for mass education. What we have to do is determine what we will tell them, how and where.”

“First of all, the contradictions of the people we will educate from every class and stratum with the system, their specific conditions, the education they have received, contradictions among themselves, their historical and social structures, all need to be analysed from every angle. Without this, a correct educational policy cannot be determined.” (Liberation Against Imperialism and the Oligarchy, Issue 18, 10 June 1995)

At the foundation of the Party, at the Congress, the question of education was also discussed at great length. In the Report Dayı presented to the Congress too, the question of education carries a special weight from every angle. There every cadre and leader is again reminded that they must be an educator: “All our leaders and cadres at every level must possess the qualities of a teacher capable of educating cadre candidates, sympathisers and ordinary people, teaching them the ABC of revolutionism as though teaching the alphabet, and must internalise this task. There is no one else outside themselves who will carry out this task. Waiting for someone from outside means leaving people uneducated, failing to organise the struggle and failing to make thousands of people who want to fight actually fight.” (Congress Report)

Education Is Not a Magic Wand,

But It Is an Important Force

Nothing, of course, is a “magic wand”. But we can still say that education is the solution to many of our problems. Put the other way round, where there is no education, there are many problems.

For example, many units complain that there are not enough people and that possibilities are narrow. Yet the solution to all these things lies in the masses - but in educated masses: “The fundamental question is the human being. The source of people is the people. If this simple truth is not forgotten, if we go to the people as necessary and explain in a revolutionary way what we want from the people and what we want to do, if we educate them, this people will give us everything we need. Those who do not go to the people and do not educate the people can educate neither themselves nor cadres. They cannot bring the people into the war. They cannot create any possibilities.” (Liberation on the Road to Victory, Issue 2, 22 July 1995)

Popularising education and thereby being able to educate the people has key importance at this point. One who can accomplish this has solved many problems and opened the way to solutions:

“When we succeed in educating the people in masses, before the enemy there will emerge a politicised people and an inexhaustible source of cadres. Moreover, natural leaders of the people will reveal themselves and shoulder very great burdens.” (Congress Report)

Education is one of the most fundamental conditions for becoming permanent in a field and making the struggle continuous. Some may find the role attributed to education exaggerated. Dayı says: “It is impossible to achieve this without placing revolutionary education at the centre of all our work. Every cadre conscious of taking power cannot carry the excitement, enthusiasm and thought of revolution without training cadres and fighters and educating the masses. For a cadre, every sphere and every moment of life is an educational activity.

“... In a field committees (...) may disintegrate. But if our organisation there and our widespread educational activities are not in a position to compensate for our losses, if we have not educated our people for this purpose, despite all support from outside we cannot become permanent in that field. The road to becoming permanent is to bring forward new people, develop cadres and develop people into cadres within broad and continuous education.” (Revolutionary Left, Issue 11, August 1998)

(*) This article was published in YÜRÜYÜŞ for Independence, Democracy and Socialism, dated 25 January 2009.

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Dayı and Criticism-Self-Criticism

No organisation and no person can advance without criticising and questioning themselves and making an accounting. They cannot maintain a stable line of development or answer the needs required by conditions. Criticism and self-criticism, or in the broader sense questioning and accounting, are constantly on the agenda of every organisation and every leadership that wants to march to power. It was the same with Dayı, of course.

As has been witnessed concretely in earlier parts of our series, in Dayı there is consistency and unity between theory and practice on every question. Criticism-self-criticism too was for Dayı, beyond being a subject for pompous phrases, one of the important aspects of practice itself. In this sense, rather than merely conveying Dayı’s theoretical determinations on criticism-self-criticism from his writings, we prefer to make concrete how, in various processes and events, he regarded criticism-self-criticism as a vital question and applied it. Dayı was not a leader who limited himself to abstract determinations on the importance of criticism and self-criticism. This mechanism was truly extremely important and determining for Dayı in every process. So much so that at times he regarded the operation of this mechanism and the ability to make an accounting as a condition for the organisation to continue its political activity, in other words as a condition of existence or non-existence. And of course it is. The struggle was shaped by countless turning points, and at every new step an accounting was essential. As he stated when assessing the period after 12 July: “Without questioning the deficiencies and weaknesses of the past and internalising the lessons drawn, it was very difficult to take a positive step.” (Congress Report)

For Dayı, self-criticism means “accepting revolutionary truths”. This definition he made in his 2003 New Year message is, we think, one of the finest definitions of self-criticism. “Accepting revolutionary truths” is the essence of criticism-self-criticism; because if you do not accept them, then you are circling around the mechanism of criticism-self-criticism but not actually making self-criticism.

Accounting for the Past

Is Building the Future

Criticism, self-criticism and accounting are not things expected only from cadres. On the contrary, they are mechanisms that political movements, as movements, must operate first of all. Because it is the movement itself that must carry this culture - the culture of criticism and self-criticism - to cadres, militants and supporters. This culture cannot be created merely through theoretical determinations. The movement itself has to be the example of questioning and accounting.

We can say that the 1983 brochure The Development of Our Movement and the Revolutionary Struggle, written under Dayı's leadership, or the 1990 brochure Where Are We on the Road?, were among the boldest self-criticisms and accountings ever put forward by a movement on the Turkish left.

Concerning the process in which the brochure Where Are We on the Road? emerged, in a writing about the 12 July martyrs and especially Niyazi Aydın, Dayı stressed the determining importance of accounting and self-criticism as follows: "The year is 1989-90... Revolutionary Left has to enter a new process. It has to live the years of the Offensive. (...) It was necessary to make an accounting of the past process and build the future on this accounting. Niyazi was one of those who believed that being self-critical was necessary in order to build the future." (Liberation Against Imperialism and the Oligarchy, Issue 22, 8 July 1995)

"As the movement... placed a new Offensive programme before itself, in an atmosphere like 12 September, where rightist winds negatively affecting cadres in many respects were sweeping everywhere, it had to carry out work with the cadres in its hands. By criticising many cadres who were deficient and weak, taking them through a process of self-criticism, giving them another chance and assigning them responsibilities in practice," they were enabled to overcome themselves. (Congress Report)

That "the future will be built on the accounting of the past" is perhaps a determination voiced by many sections but put into practice by very few. The revolutionary movement and its leadership belonged to the second category. Making a revolutionary accounting of the past, of the period of Mahir and his comrades, was also one of the most important aspects of the formation process of the revolutionary movement and the ideological struggle in that process. This too is one reflection of the importance Dayı attached to accounting and his stance against "covering over the past". At every new process this showed itself in different forms. Indeed, just as the movement preparing for the "Offensive" at the beginning of the 1990s put comprehensive criticism and self-criticism into practice and made an accounting, the same mechanism was operated during the Congress period in 1994.

Again we follow this period through Dayı: "Questioning, reckoning, means placing our practice, the organisation of individual regions and fields, the development of the war there and various attitudes on the table and questioning what and how we did or failed to do. An accounting abstracted from war, organisation and mass activity, one that does not guide practice (...), cannot go beyond general criticisms and self-criticisms that turn into a priest hearing confession." (Revolutionary Left, Issue 7, December 1995) Accounting is obligatory; but not superficially or merely to get it over with... Dayı

asks: “What did you do and how did you do it, what were the objective and subjective factors that led to wrongs and weaknesses? How did the leader who directed all this take each step, decide, lead, educate, live and so on?” Without finding the answers to these, no accounting has been made.

One of the most fundamental aspects of the Congress process was precisely this: both at organisational level and at the level of individual cadres, answers had to be found to these questions. “From top to bottom all our cadres had to make an accounting of this situation in complete openness. If this accounting was not made, the enemy defeated today would reappear tomorrow in a stronger and more insidious form and cause damage. Whatever form it took, finding, revealing and destroying the ideological foundations of the problem was the most important question of the Congress.” (Revolutionary Left, Issue 7, December 1995)

Dayı’s question “why?” is famous. But this is not one isolated “why?”; it is a chain of “whys” following one another. On some question Dayı asks why. You make an explanation and give a reason. Dayı continues: “all right, why that?” Your answer may meet the same question. And so it goes on until the real cause and root of whatever result has emerged is found... Because only then is genuine criticism and self-criticism reached.

“If we do not carefully take up and examine how these correct determinations take shape in life, how the masses perceive us, what conclusions they draw from our policies and forms of behaviour, and if we do not see our deficiencies, mistakes and positives and go to the masses and develop in a more correct way, development is impossible.” (Liberation on the Road to Victory, Issue 18, 11 November 1995)

(*) This article was published in YÜRÜYÜŞ Against Imperialism and the Oligarchy, dated 8 March 2009.

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The End of Fleeing from an Accounting

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Is Fleeing from Revolutionism

The mechanism of criticism-self-criticism was also always operated towards the left as a part of ideological struggle. “Despite everything, despite all the negativities, within the reality of our country we must continue the task of warning and criticising these organisations in order to pull them towards the correct revolutionary line.” (Revolutionary Left, Issue 12, January 1999)

But what was important for Dayı was that the revolutionary movement criticise itself and continuously make its own accounting. While Dayı persistently continued ideological struggle towards the left throughout his entire life of leadership, criticised distortions on the left and called them to account, he also constantly drew attention to the fact that boasting before the left or explaining our inadequacies through the left could not be our method. Dayı always said one thing: a movement aiming for power does not compare itself with the left. What Dayı says at this point is very clear: “We can say we have covered certain distances. But all this is not enough for an organisation that wants to march to power; it is very backward. Especially for a Party that, under the leadership of the Party and Front, aims to bring thousands and tens of thousands into the armed war, it is not in a position to answer the need.” (Congress Report)

For it to become capable of answering the need, existing deficiencies must be overcome. How will they be overcome? Of course by finding the causes and reasons for those deficiencies; that is, by MAKING AN ACCOUNTING. By showing the daring to accept our own deficiencies; that is, by MAKING SELF-CRITICISM: "... while millions of people are searching, it should not be our task to occupy ourselves with groups that have nothing to do with the people. This too is a form of escape. It is escape from revolution, escape from the people. We must turn to the masses, absolutely to the masses. For this, we must turn to ourselves, criticise ourselves and adopt the task of asking, if necessary dozens of times until we obtain correct answers, the questions 'what are we doing, what have we failed to do and why?' Everything, every explanation that does not organise the masses and raise the armed action is an expression of the fact that we have not sufficiently turned to ourselves... of our deficiencies and weaknesses." (Revolutionary Left, Issue 12, January 1999)

Immediately following these words Dayı also states: "Our comrades in all units and fields have to think without buts and howevers in order to open the road to faster development. No one can get anywhere through cunning, tricks or evasive wrestling. There is no road of escape; either revolutionism is practised as it deserves or the enemy finds you and renders you ineffective. (...) This road is not revolutionism."

Escape from an accounting is always possible, both for individual people and for organisations; a justification or form can always be found. But the result of fleeing from an accounting is also inevitable: moving away from revolutionism.

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To Make an Accounting Is to Be Strong

The absence of a tradition of questioning and accounting plays a determining role in the continuation of many deficiencies and the gangrening of many weaknesses. For this reason, Dayı's writings directed towards the left frequently contain calls for an accounting.

"Because the stance before the enemy was not approached from a revolutionary outlook, and because these conspiracy theories from before 12 September were not questioned even after the junta, these wrong ideas were repeated from the court rostrums of 12 September and the ideas of ordinary bourgeois liberals came to be defended..." (Liberation for the People, Issue 14, 18 January 1997)

"It is certain that this pragmatism is more primitive and backward than the pragmatism of the CPSU, CPC and APL. If the left we are speaking of does not question this style and renew itself, it will experience the end experienced by all pragmatists..." (Liberation for the People, Issue 14, 18 January 1997)

Accounting, accounting, accounting... If this is absent, there is no healthy development and no healthy positioning. Dayı's criticism of various unity initiatives on the left also focused at this point: "Moreover, everyone who called one another Maoist Grey Wolf, leftist, Russian lackey, counter-revolutionary informer united with great 'maturity' without making a single word of self-criticism to one another." (Congress Report)

Maturity without an accounting is not maturity. On the contrary, unities formed by fleeing from accounting and criticism-self-criticism have rotten foundations. There is not a "mature" attitude there, but a left childhood without the courage to confront its own deficiencies.

Dayı's 'Personal' Self-Criticism and Accounting

There is no doubt that in dealing with this subject, it would be an omission not to touch upon the question of "asking for approval", a special example of Dayı making concrete in his own practice the importance he emphasised on every occasion of criticism-self-criticism and accounting.

When Dayı came out of prison through the freedom action in October 1989 and resumed his duties, he first made his own self-criticism and asked the cadres for approval for this duty. Dayı put forward his self-criticism with the daring and openness seen in the following lines: "I was in the position of the natural leader of the movement, known as such by our cadres and our people. But in the new process, in order to direct our cadres and implement our policies, I had to regain the confidence and support of the cadres. We had lived through a period of defeat. Whatever the objective and subjective conditions, as Leader of the movement I was first-degree responsible for the positives and negatives. Moreover, apart from our organisational deficiencies and mistakes, I had also personally fallen into deficient, wrong and weak positions..."

As he said in one of his writings, an accounting "without buts and howevers". I am the Leader of the movement; therefore I am first-degree responsible for the positives and the negatives!..

He does not stop with this "general" determination of responsibility, and again with the same daring sets out his deficiencies "personally" too, then continues: "The criticisms and self-criticisms of this were made both before the cadres and before the people, and although it was accepted that we had overcome these deficiencies and weaknesses, in the new process we were to live through, in order to stand more strongly against enemy attacks and strike powerful blows, first of all we had to be strong internally.

"Through a written text setting out the old negativities too, emphasising the reality that the leadership too is human, and dwelling on what we had lived through in the past and what we had to do... confidence and approval were requested. (...) With great enthusiasm and confidence they gave approval to the leadership." (Congress Report)

The healthy functioning of the mechanism of criticism and self-criticism begins first of all with the person accepting their responsibility. Failing to accept one's objective or subjective responsibility in this or that question means closing the door to that mechanism and accounting from the beginning. In this respect Dayı also offered an important personal example.

The Necessity of Criticism-Self-Criticism for Cadres

"We have to bring the struggle against this enemy that we call 'weaknesses and deficiencies' down to questioning our daily lives and dwell on it every day. If we do not make the accounting 'what useful and harmful, correct and wrong things did I do today, and if I did them, why?', the enemy or worm within us will, invisibly but every day, carry away a small part of our revolutionism, push us towards the system and destroy us. (...) Those who do not reckon with their own deficiencies and weaknesses, those who are not ruthless towards themselves, often think that we exaggerate small mistakes, shortcomings and weaknesses." (Congress Report)

“For these people who do not like organisational discipline, supervision or a hierarchical relationship, who do not want to be called to account, (...) who have not written a report for years, have always fled from giving account and have remained beyond supervision, allowing themselves to be supervised and giving account seemed like their annihilation. It was not possible for a movement that could not even call to account or obtain reports... to continue political activity...” (Congress Report)

As the movement entered the period of the Offensive, these were the first things with which a reckoning was carried out. Because no progress could be made with a cadre structure that rejected criticism-self-criticism and accounting in this way. Of course what mattered in the later process too was to make questioning and accounting permanent. Cadres and militants who initially stood on a positive line could very well fall into negativities if they did not operate this mechanism. In the new process the culture of war was being learned rapidly, but it had always and continuously to be asked: “How this culture is reflected, how it is applied or not applied, needs to be questioned. When we carry out this questioning on a correct foundation and overcome ourselves, it will not be difficult for us to grow the war of the Party and, rapidly renewing ourselves, spread the war across different fronts (...).” (Congress Report)

Accounting, criticism-self-criticism is at the same time education. In both the pre-Offensive process of criticism-self-criticism conducted under his own leadership and the criticism-self-criticisms of the Congress process, Dayı turned this mechanism into education.

“To reckon and question is an ideological war continuing against the enemy. This ideological war with the enemy is the re-education of cadres. It means finding the roads and methods by which we will resist enemy attacks, expose them and render them ineffective.” (Revolutionary Left, Issue 7, December 1995)

When Dayı spoke of questioning and accounting, he generally placed the main emphasis on cadres and leaders. Because if any unit cannot continue the struggle, cannot achieve mass growth and cannot carry out its work and tasks, the responsible person, commander or leader there “absolutely has to question themselves.” The following determination says this: “A leader is a self-confident person who is open and honest towards their Party and comrades and does not hesitate to make self-criticism before comrades and the masses concerning their deficiencies and weaknesses.” (Congress Report)

Criticism-Self-Criticism Is Also

Part of the Solution to Problems

In the class struggle problems almost always exist. What is essential is to be able to analyse their causes and reasons and bring into play the appropriate means to overcome them. In this sense criticism-self-criticism is one of the most important weapons of a revolutionary organisation, and at the same time of every revolutionary, in the face of problems: “... every day we hear reasons full of ‘it cannot be done’ and ‘there is nothing’ concerning programmes not being put into practice or being put into practice only to a very small extent. ... Because why the programmes are not put into practice

is not pursued, because there is no collective discussion, criticism and self-criticism, the programmes disappear... and sterility comes to dominate the process through problems." (Congress Report)

If there are serious deficiencies in a field, one of the reasons is that the mechanism of criticism-self-criticism is not operated and the leaders in that field do not make an accounting. Although there are exceptions, this is generally so. In other words, absence of the mechanism of criticism-self-criticism is one of the most important sources of problems. Therefore one of the most important parts of the "solution" to problems is the same. We can see this approach in many of Dayı's writings: "... When there is no persistence in reaching the programme and objectives, and when during this process the positives and negatives are not sufficiently discussed, rich lessons drawn, put back into practice and tested, obtaining the desired result becomes impossible.

"When the desired result is not obtained, increasingly unproductiveness and repetition of oneself... begin to grow." So what must be done? He shows the remedy too: "It is possible to overcome this negativity through open criticism, self-criticism, discussion, collectivity, and by reshaping practice with the lessons drawn from practice." (Congress Report)

Negativities in another field are set out and Dayı once again points to the same thing as one dimension of the way out: "We could and had to emerge from all these negativities through a healthy assessment of the process and through criticism and self-criticism. Our aim was for commanders and fighters... to stand up again and walk through sincere self-criticism." (Congress Report)

For example, again when speaking of negativities in another field at the beginning of the 1990s, he said: "They could overcome this impasse and unhealthy situation by being open to criticism, concentrating to the utmost on what had to be done, knowing how to learn from the masses and applying the programmes and perspectives presented to them." (Congress Report)

Criticism and self-criticism are one of the fundamental measures showing a movement's vitality and dynamism. They are a manifestation of a claim. Those without a claim are not very disturbed when this mechanism does not function: "In this atmosphere where there was no production of thought, collectivism, enthusiasm or morale for a new Offensive, and where these were not kept alive, criticism and self-criticism could not exist; mere expediency had become the dominant phenomenon." (Congress Report)

In another assessment Dayı points again to the same element: "When there is no work or education for mass work and action, there will be no discussion, criticism or self-criticism on this basis either..." (Congress Report)

For this reason there is no doubt that criticism-self-criticism is not something that can be approached in isolation from all other aspects of organisational life, functioning and revolutionary struggle. But within that whole, it is also an aspect that must never be neglected.

(*) This article was published in YÜRÜYÜŞ Against Imperialism and the Oligarchy, dated 8 March 2009.

Dayı and the Claim to Power

"We will be worthy of our martyrs. No one can prevent us from fulfilling their testament to live with the Party and march to power with the Front." Mahir set out "to make revolution in the Turkey of the world". Dayı, who took over his legacy, continued Mahir's outlook on power with the claim "We will shake the world once again, this time from Turkey." In this sense, Mahir Çayan and Dursun Karataş represent the claim to power on the Turkish left. The fundamental question of every revolution is power. We remember Mahir and Dayı with the mission of being leaders of the Turkish revolution precisely because they embraced this claim and aimed at a struggle and organisation appropriate to it." (Yeni Kurtuluş, Issue 1)

The lines above appeared in one of the first assessments made after Dayı was martyred. We can make the emphasis above concrete in this way: if the fundamental question of every revolution is the question of power, then we can say that foremost among the qualities every revolutionary leader must possess in order to undertake that mission is an unwavering and undeviating perspective of taking power. Dayı possessed such a perspective without the slightest hesitation. As with most of the qualities that define him, we see this in both Dayı's theory and his practice.

The first organisation Dayı led after Kızıldere in organisational terms was the Kurtuluş Group. The Kurtuluş Group was, in one sense, the nucleus of the revolutionary movement that has continued until today. When assessing the mission of this group, Dayı places special emphasis on creating consciousness and the claim to power: "The principal importance of the mission of the Kurtuluş Group is that it was the first step in which our Marxist-Leninist movement took shape: defending the THKP-C legacy against various opportunists who wanted to gnaw at the THKP thought from the right and the left; forming consciousness of revolutionary power under the guidance of the ideological views and struggle of the THKP-C; being ambitious, self-confident and, whatever the conditions, never deviating from the course of revolution..." (Congress Report)

Then came the formation of Revolutionary Left in the struggle against Devrimci Yol liquidationism. Revolutionary Left was, in historical development and connected to the first, the second organisational formation led by Dayı. When its place in history is described, the emphasis is again on the same point: "The unity of Revolutionary Left and the THKP-C finds expression in ideology, politics and practice, but above all in the responsibility felt towards our people and the peoples of the world, in the spiritual formation created by this responsibility, in self-sacrifice, determination, consciousness of power and, when necessary, not hesitating to sacrifice one's life." (Congress Report)

The Revolutionary Left process was at the same time assessed as a "process of becoming a Party". The Party was the objective. But why the Party? Because POWER was the objective! In Dayı's words: "To be a Party meant a higher consciousness of power and a more developed war. For this reason we wanted to possess the weapon of the Party. ... The Party means greater ideological confidence and, with this confidence, raising the war still further, enlarging the hopes of the masses of the people and bringing power closer." (Congress Report)

Although many different phenomena came to the fore according to processes and needs, the place of the claim and perspective of "power" and the emphasis placed on it were never absent in Dayı. It was so in the Kurtuluş Group, so in Revolutionary Left and so in the formation of the Party. Yes, everything was directed towards it: marching to power, drawing closer to it and conquering it...

“What is the strategic objective? No doubt we all know it. Our strategic objective is the anti-imperialist, anti-oligarchic revolution, that is, revolutionary people’s power. All our effort, all our activity, the fundamentals of our style of work, the programmes of all fields and regions, units, individual cadres and special-task units have to be locked onto this strategic objective.” (Congress Report)

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Claim and Belief!

We can say that one of the causes of deficiencies emerging in struggle, both at the personal and organisational level, is lack of claim and lack of belief. And it is also a fact that claim and belief are generally found together. In other words, claim and belief form a whole. If one is absent, the other too is absent or weak; the reverse is also true.

“A Party and its cadres ambitious for revolution,” Dayı says, “must, as a result of this great claim, possess the confidence, enthusiasm and belief to overcome every kind of obstacle that comes before them and frustrate all the enemy’s manoeuvres and blows. When these high values are possessed, the atmosphere of lack of claim, filled with ‘impossibles’, virtually having lost the claim to revolution, in which sluggishness and laziness grow and everything ends with impossibilities and excuses influencing one another, will give way to great enthusiasm and advance.” (Liberation Against Imperialism and the Oligarchy, Issue 18, 10 June 1995)

In this sense one of the words Dayı most frequently said to cadres was “be ambitious”. The words “Be ambitious; do not forget that you are an alternative to power!” must undoubtedly be made an earring in the ear of the revolutionary movement, indeed of all revolutionaries.

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Power and Claim!

“Every revolutionary has to be ambitious. Lack of claim means lack of power. But unfortunately there is no claim, or only a very weak claim, for revolutionary power. First of all, organisations with a claim must be courageous in solving the problems of revolution, self-confident in realising their claim, and possess the ability skilfully to unite all forces that can be united in order to reach their objective.” (Liberation on the Road to Victory, Issue 5, 12 August 1995)

There really are many indicators of the left’s lack of claim. Failing to act in a “unifying” manner and failing to develop an approach capable of embracing all the forces of the people is one of them. At this point Dayı makes a very clear formulation: lack of claim is lack of power. Likewise, distance from the objective of power is also lack of claim. Dayı points to one of the most important sources of this situation on the left as follows:

“Because the utilitarian, egocentric and insecure understandings taken from parties such as the CPSU continued, consciousness of power and the ambition and creativity necessary to take power did not develop; instead, the understanding ‘let it be small, but let it be mine’ became dominant. This understanding, this culture, instead of uniting virtually all progressive, democratic, anti-fascist, revolutionary and patriotic forces through every relationship and every opportunity in order to take power, created fragmentation, sectarianism and conceit. This culture, instead of unity of forces and action, alliances, friendship and solidarity to develop and grow the revolution, classifies forces as those useful and not useful to its own development and takes its own interest as fundamental in

unities of forces and action and alliances." (Liberation on the Road to Victory, Issue 5, 12 August 1995)

Unfortunately, the revisionist tradition played an extremely negative role in the left losing self-confidence and in the claim to power becoming vague. Elsewhere in the Congress Report on the same subject Dayı says: "In the past, everything said by the parties of countries that had made their revolutions was taken and applied as dogma by imitators. (...) By belittling themselves before these parties, organisations caused their self-confidence and ideological independence to weaken. The weakening born in self-confidence and ideological independence brought weakening in consciousness of power and lack of principle and insensitivity in struggle against deviations."

"Groupism", one of the elements Dayı often emphasised in ideological struggle towards the left, was in fact an expression of precisely this condition. It should be stated that the same negativity and the weakening of consciousness and the claim to power also played a great role in conflicts within the left. Those without the objective and claim of power cannot see beyond their own small worlds and the interests of their own groups.

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The Claim to Power and the Left

The absence of consciousness of power is the source of many negativities on the left. When describing the deviations on the left after 12 September, Dayı depicts the condition of the left inside and outside the country as follows: "The form taken abroad by the confusion and shock inside of left leaderships that had not genuinely believed in fascism and revolutionary struggle, had not overcome petty-bourgeois opposition and were not equipped with consciousness of power, was refugeeism and singing from the sidelines." (Congress Report)

Above we stressed that one of the sources of personal and organisational negativities is lack of claim. Not only that. Approaches to the question of unity on the left are also determined largely by whether there is a perspective of taking power. Because, as Dayı stated, those possessing a claim to power will attach special importance to the policy of being able to unite everyone with consciousness of power. In another writing Dayı expressed this still more clearly: "On the Turkish left, all structures claiming to be communist or Marxist-Leninist must leave behind inward-looking, sectarian, group psychology and learn how to put into practice the policy of the broadest alliances for revolution; they must leave behind fear of being destroyed by others and learn to trust themselves." (Liberation on the Road to Victory, Issue 5, 12 August 1995)

There is no doubt that among the left we want to form unities and fronts, there are many different strategic and political determinations. Dayı of course did not deny these. But Dayı said that unities were necessary and obligatory DESPITE THEM. "Despite all this," Dayı says, continuing: "Kurdish nationalists, those who take armed struggle as fundamental and those who do not, supporters of legal parties, everyone who says they are against fascism can form unities of action and forces around concrete programmes, on objectives no one can reject and on the basis of various forms of struggle. Within these unities relations of friendship and solidarity are developed, and the struggle is advanced by waging the struggle of right and wrong among the masses of the people." (Liberation on the Road to Victory, Issue 5, 12 August 1995)

To be able to say these things is both self-confidence and thinking from the outlook of power. This is why for years he tried to make the left grasp that unity also means mutual concessions.

There is no need for further analysis to determine that those who do not do this are distant from the claim and objective of power.

“That the left, which set out to defeat the bourgeoisie and establish working-class power, cannot organise even a united democratic people’s opposition is an expression of backwardness, groupism and lack of a claim to power. The development of those who seek a place for themselves within the bourgeois opposition supported by the oligarchy, organise their reactions accordingly and take a liquidationist position against revolutionary movements is highly striking.” (Liberation on the Road to Victory, Issue 32, 17 February 1996)

Those aiming at power must possess both the uncompromisingness required by the objective of power and the flexibility required to take power. Uncompromisingness is towards the enemy; flexibility is towards the forces of the people. And those who can achieve this in practice become the leaders of the struggle, the Mahirs and Dayıs of revolution.

The Manifestation of the Claim

In our country the claim to power is, in one respect, embodied in armed struggle. “The THKP-C means defending, whatever the price, that the road to overthrowing oligarchic states and establishing revolutionary people’s power passes through armed struggle.” In this sense the concept “perspective of armed struggle” is also frequently used in Dayı’s writings.

“From top to bottom, in all fields and regions, whether we are organised according to the perspective of armed struggle, whether on this basis we conduct cadre work, whether we organise the masses accordingly, what kind of propaganda and agitation we carry out - almost everything must be approached from this outlook and ‘deficiencies and wrongs’ exposed.” (Congress Report)

Although in one part of the left, especially the reformist front, the word is no longer even pronounced, the historical definition of revolutions has not changed. Revolutions involve smashing the existing state mechanism from below upwards. It is clear in Dayı too: “From the beginning we approach the armed war... from the perspective of United Revolutionary War... and envisage overthrowing the oligarchic state. Therefore, the Party that will act as strategist of this war must possess the ideological and cultural structure to continue the armed war and ensure that all organisations are in harmony with this.” (Congress Report)

Of course, theoretically aiming at power is not enough. There must be a corresponding reality in every field: in cadre development, organisation and conduct of the war... Many organisations set out for this - aiming at power. But at various stages this claim weakened or disappeared. One of the most important causes weakening or eliminating the claim is the losses inevitably caused by struggle. Dayı draws attention to this: “Bringing the victory of the people’s war closer and carrying this war to the objective of power with the least possible pain and loss for our peoples is a responsibility of the leadership of the revolution. But when everything is subordinated to this, the perspective of war and power becomes blurred and alliances become unclear. If policies are formed in accordance with contradictions among the ruling forces and reforms are taken as fundamental, the war drags on and on and obtaining a result becomes impossible.” (Revolutionary Left, Issue 8, July 1996)

Here armed struggle undoubtedly carries determining importance as the means of reaching an objective; that objective is revolutionary people's power. The armed struggle of those who do not possess this objective and do not defend a revolutionary people's power undoubtedly does not correspond to a claim to power. Let us conclude this aspect of the subject with a short but concise sentence of Dayı: "Those who do not act with the perspective of revolutionary people's power on the class and national plane cannot direct themselves towards overthrowing the oligarchic state." (Congress Report)

Claim and Soundness

Countless phenomena in the class struggle constantly throw the forces in that arena to the right and left. Those who are not clear ideologically and politically cannot remain in their place before these factors.

They struggle. Political clarity, meanwhile, is the claim to power. Only then do you have an objective towards which you will walk straight ahead without deviating right or left or being tossed about. One of the most important factors protecting the revolutionary movement under Dayı's leadership from deviations was undoubtedly this political and strategic clarity.

That is why he always warned: "The laws of the bourgeoisie are made to protect its own power. When this reality is forgotten, surrender to bourgeois laws also begins." Then? What follows is known: "This is the 'clever leftism' through which imperialists and collaborators want to make revolutionaries adapt to the system and make it dominant. We have to remain completely outside this reality. Those who cannot remain outside it cannot carry or organise the claim to revolution. ... For this reason a revolutionary has to put into practice with their mind and every cell an organisation outside the system. Living within the system does not mean living and organising inside the system in the way prescribed by the system. It is the exact opposite." (2002 New Year Message)

For those chasing short-term successes and short-term developments, sometimes the legal field becomes extremely attractive and sometimes the promises of pragmatism draw organisations towards themselves. Look at the history of the revolutionary movement; you will never see either of these. Because under every condition Dayı stressed these two dangers. Failing to be aware of these dangers meant watching passively as the movement was dragged and swept away. The aim of the ideological attacks developed by imperialism, especially from the beginning of the 1990s onwards, was the same: completely severing the left from the claim to revolution and power.

Those who did not see the essence of this attack could not strengthen themselves against it. They could not build the necessary ideological and practical barricades. This was one of the distinctive periods of Dayı's leadership. It was Dayı who set out the danger most clearly and led the organisation of the clearest stance against it: "In this way imperialism and the oligarchies would bring revolutionism and the struggle of the oppressed peoples under their control, destroy the claim to power and leave no obstacle before the permanent continuation of their rule. Revolutionary rhetoric, illegality, organisation, armed struggle, resistance, war against power and thoughts of taking power were now old ideas that had to be put aside. Instead, ideas that imperialists and oligarchies could tolerate and that their democracies could digest, and a practice appropriate to these, had to be defended. Those who still defended the old, those who still insistently said revolution and socialism,

were obstacles in their own struggles. They were sabotaging, disruptive elements. They were disturbing stability!...” (2003 New Year Message)

Rather than become “clever leftists” or receive praise from the bourgeoisie saying “how sensible, how mature they are”, the revolutionary movement under Dayı’s leadership chose to stand at the head of the “terror lists”. For this reason he ended his thirty-eight-year revolutionary life as a revolutionary “wanted” by imperialism and the oligarchy. There is no doubt that this life choice of Dayı went beyond a personal choice; this choice, this style of leadership, was the natural result of being a movement with a claim to power.

Dayı’s Cadres

Are Cadres Who Embody This Claim!

For Dayı, when an organisation conducting the class struggle assesses its cadres, institutions and other possibilities, and when it assesses whether any result obtained is sufficient, the measure is always power. For example, in an assessment at the Congress he states: “Especially during the last three years we have used the concepts of war and the culture of war a great deal. We tried to create a culture. We can say we have covered certain distances. But all this is not enough for an organisation that wants to march to power; it is very backward.”

The road to overcoming backwardness and inadequacies is again, first of all, equipping cadres with the perspective of power, the claim and, in Dayı’s words, the “ambition”: “Every fighter and supporter of ours, not remaining satisfied with what exists, must with all their energy, creativity and revolutionary ambition explain our reality to the masses, and in order to organise the masses show the Party-Front spirit, discipline and revolutionary claim with greater self-sacrifice than ever before.” (Liberation on the Road to Victory, Issue 44, 11 May 1996)

The perspective of power is a phenomenon that determines forms of struggle, action and organisation and the style of work in every sphere of life. The outlook on the masses, mass work, organising, education, propaganda and agitation, and assessment of possibilities of a cadre who thinks and acts with the claim and perspective of power are all determined accordingly. It is clear that work carried out by a cadre who does not look with this outlook will remain sterile and not adequately answer the needs of the revolution. Tirelessly and without growing weary, Dayı calls on us to broaden our horizon:

“When we approach everything meticulously and seriously, give it value and labour, the people will not leave these unanswered. Our horizon must broaden. We must strengthen our claim to revolution still further. The pessimism of the petty-bourgeois intellectual and the demoralised, their lack of faith in the people and the revolution, must not be thoughts and forms of conduct belonging to us.” (Liberation Against Imperialism and the Oligarchy, Issue 18, 10 June 1995)

A movement is as great as its claim to power and as the number of cadres who embody that claim. Dayı left us a movement with a great claim; multiplying cadres who embody this claim remains our task. As we finish this part of our article, let us recall again these words of Dayı at the Congress:

“To build the Party is first of all to know that the Party is the alternative to power, and to equip ourselves and others with this consciousness.”

(*) This article was published in YÜRÜYÜŞ Against Imperialism and the Oligarchy, dated 15 February 2009.

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Dayı and Cadres

“Cadres who have received good education, are equipped with correct revolutionary perspectives, possess Party discipline and the spirit, confidence and creativity of being Party members...”

The masters of Marxism-Leninism and the leaders of the world revolutionary movement frequently touched upon the importance of cadres in this struggle. Dayı too gave this question a major place both in practice and in his writings. Cadre policies have a determining place in the world revolutionary movement’s leaders earning that title. Because it can be said that only leaders possessing a correct cadre policy can become leaders. This undoubtedly played a part in Dayı’s leadership too.

He was always a Leader loved, respected and learned from by cadres. And there is no doubt that he always approached his cadres with confidence. Even while carrying out the hardest reckonings with them, he continued to trust them. Because the movement existed with them, with their positives and negatives; and it would continue to do so: “The principal element in taking our claim out of being merely a claim and making it concrete in everyone’s eyes is the cadres. The education, employment, protection and development of cadres, and opening the road before them in time, are of great importance. Mistakes we make at these points, deficiencies that may arise... will affect everything and cause negativities. For this reason, from top to bottom, we must dwell carefully especially on the education and employment of cadres.” (Congress Report)

Continuing these words, in summary, he says that “the principal link” in developing the movement and struggle and in the people participating in this struggle is the cadres. It was clear that without “cadres who have received good education, are equipped with correct revolutionary perspectives, possess Party discipline and the spirit, confidence and creativity of being Party members”, the war could not be raised. The Party and organisation that would develop the war could of course not be considered independently of cadres. “What are the Party and organisation? The Party and organisation are an instrument for putting the strategy into practice, for revolution. The motor of this instrument is the cadres. If cadres or the leaders of regions, fields and units do not see themselves as the motor of this instrument and do not assume its function, the instrument ceases to operate.”

Dayı’s statement quoted at the beginning is the most concise account of the importance he attached to cadres and the mission he placed upon them: “The principal instrument for grasping victory is the cadres.”

Without sufficiently solving the cadre question and without securing continuous productivity in this field, partial successes may be obtained but victory cannot. The principal instrument for grasping victory is cadres.

The Cadre Question Is One of the Fundamental Questions

When speaking of cadres, their training, multiplication and education, Dayı frequently used the concept “the cadre question”: “Our fundamental problem is the question of cadres who will carry our revolutionary policies to the broad masses of the people...” (Liberation Against Imperialism and the Oligarchy, Issue 18, 10 June 1995)

Yes, this is a problem in the true sense of the word, and an almost permanent one. The answer to why he used the concept “cadre question” lies in the character of the war in our country and the enemy’s policies.

After saying “victory cannot be achieved without securing continuous productivity in cadre development”, Dayı immediately adds: “Because the enemy knows this very well too, it continuously wants to block development by massacring and imprisoning our cadres. This effort of the oligarchy cannot prevent final victory. But it delays it. We must overcome this.” (Liberation Against Imperialism and the Oligarchy, Issue 18, 10 June 1995)

Elsewhere the same problem is presented from a different angle: “Today... we face the cadre question. Because of the nature of war, both the Party-Front and all armed-struggle organisations in the world have always had a cadre question. At this point the answer to the question ‘why’ is the nature of war. Only those who do not struggle to take power, who compromise with the system and protect the system can have no problem called cadres.” (Revolutionary Left, Issue 11, August 1998)

In the same writing Dayı says: “War organisations, because they are constantly confronted with the enemy’s policy of destruction, have to attach more importance to educational activity than anyone else.” In saying this, he also shows the road to securing continuity of cadre development within such a war, whatever happens.

“No form of organisation and no chain of measures in the world can completely eliminate enemy operations. But it is possible to reduce this to a level that cannot prevent the development of our war. (...) It is impossible to achieve this without placing revolutionary education at the centre of all our work. Every cadre with consciousness of taking power cannot carry the excitement, enthusiasm and thought of revolution without training cadres and fighters and educating the masses.” (Revolutionary Left, Issue 11, August 1998)

The “problem” and its solution are clear. The problem is the cadre question. The road to continuity of the struggle passes through cadre development. And the road to cadre development passes through mechanisms of cadre development and education... Elsewhere in the same article it is said: “But if our organisation there and our broad educational activities are not in a position to compensate for our losses, if we have not educated our people for this purpose, despite all support from outside we cannot become permanent in that field. The road to becoming permanent is to bring forward new people, develop cadres and develop people into cadres within broad and continuous education.”

A Critical Approach to Cadres

Is Indispensable to Cadre Development

Cadres are the leaders of the struggle. Each is the leader of the field where they are, equipped with that mission. But this also means their negativities acquire great importance. For this reason, while as Leader of the movement Dayı continuously drew attention to cadre development and tried to create its mechanisms, he also devoted a large part of his time and labour to the education of the movement's existing cadres and to fighting their deficiencies and weaknesses. This was an endless war. And because of the nature of the struggle, it will not end either. The self-critical attitude of cadres and their continuously assessing themselves are among Dayı's foremost expectations of cadres. Because a cadre who begins to see themselves as "the most correct" and "the cleverest" will from a certain point onwards begin to see themselves as superior to the masses. One step beyond this is blaming the masses for every deficiency and backwardness that emerges in the struggle. There is no need to spell out specially the step beyond that! "We often hear directly from cadres in mass activity that they did what was required, but despite this could not succeed in cadre development and mass organisation. (...) generally external reasons for failure are sought and found too. Trying to explain the problem through external causes prevents us from turning towards ourselves and... by covering over mistakes ensures that negativities continue. (...) This care and questioning are not carried out sufficiently, and unforgivable mistakes are made in the approach to the people, in the style of leadership and in relations." (Liberation on the Road to Victory, Issue 18, 11 November 1995) Cadres truly have key importance: both in positives and negatives, in success and failure...

"The smallest selfishness, indecision or conduct contrary to the organisation on the part of leaders and advanced cadres will be reflected excessively among the masses and cause greater negativities. Staying away from appearances and swagger, seeing the concrete realities of life and ourselves and courageously addressing our own reality, we had to solve problems and bring forward a practice no one could deny..." (Revolutionary Left, Issue 7, December 1995) Seeing oneself above the people makes the person with that outlook no different from a bourgeois politician from a certain point onwards. Dayı regarded this as degeneration and decay and frequently repeated that no revolutionary organisation could permit it. At this point he was clear and radical both in analysing the essence of the problem and in confronting it:

"(...) No cadre or fighter of ours can misuse relations with the people. They cannot lead the people as though driving a herd..." (Liberation on the Road to Victory, Issue 18, 11 November 1995)

At this point, there is no doubt that criticism of an ordinary supporter and criticism of a cadre will be different.

"The distorted thoughts and tendencies towards the system of someone newly entering the struggle can be tolerated and explained as that person needing education. But for those who know what revolutionary struggle and being a cadre mean, the question is not so simple and innocent. Those who know a cadre's duties but do not carry them out and take refuge in excuses must first look at themselves. When they begin seeking answers to questions that can be extended as 'who am I, what is my duty, what must I do?', they will see themselves at the centre of the negativities they live through and the excuses they put forward." (Revolutionary Left, Issue 11, August 1998)

“Not developing cadres means killing and leaving unorganised the hatred and anger against the system of millions of people from among the people, workers, peasants and labourers who are being oppressed and exploited a little more every day.”

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Confidence in Young Cadres

When “cadre policy” of the revolutionary movement is mentioned, one of the first characteristics that comes to mind is confidence in young cadres. It has been a policy followed since the formation of the revolutionary movement and, of course, Dayı’s understanding was determining in shaping this policy. If the revolutionary movement showed a great development between 1978 and 1980 that surprised everyone and was able to spread throughout the country, one of the most important policies making this possible was the policy of trusting young cadres. Very great responsibilities could be entrusted to very young people. Under the conditions of that day this too was a matter of daring, but Dayı both trusted the cadres and possessed this daring.

The same understanding played an extremely important role in Dayı’s intervention during the years of the Offensive at the beginning of the 1990s. Especially in that period, the resistance of cadres who could not adapt to the new process and dragged their feet was overcome in one sense by trusting young cadres and giving them responsibilities. One aspect of the success of the Offensive process was the broadest possible participation of the dynamism of youth in this process.

After the Party was proclaimed and the oligarchy attacked it with all its strength, one of the fundamental roads to repelling the attack was again the same: confidence in young cadres! Dayı said: “Once again, keeping itself outside dogmatism and abstraction, the revolutionary movement showed the ability creatively to solve the problems confronting it in different ways. Through the policy of trusting young cadres and correct education, it was seen that cadres could achieve many things said to be ‘impossible’, possessed initiative and embraced the organisation.” (Revolutionary Left, Issue 7, December 1995)

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Developing the People into Cadres

At this point, parallel with the development and “popularisation” of the struggle, let us also mention a more specific aspect Dayı drew attention to in cadre development. As is known, during the first process of development of the revolutionary movement the main source of cadres was the student youth, especially higher-education youth. But development after 12 September was different; the movement took root much more broadly among the poor masses of the people. Naturally, this had to have a reflection in cadre development too. It had to. At this point Dayı stated in his Congress speech what should not and what should happen: “We still make great mistakes in employing cadres. Instead of revolutionary soundness, discipline, self-sacrifice and loyalty, we look for a person who talks well. Such people are held in high esteem and promoted. Yet hundreds of thousands of ordinary people from among the people, angry with the system and full of desire to fight but not knowing how to fight or what to do, uneducated, disappear between the wheels of the system. We must go to the people. Those who talk a great deal, learn by rote, cannot withstand pressure and look for a road to escape when they see difficulty...”

We must deal not with the petty-bourgeois intellectual who seeks a road to escape, lacks creativity and self-sacrifice, looks down on the people and humiliates them, but with the people. (...) This labour of ours will not remain unanswered."

Indeed, the developments after the Congress increased still further the importance of the aspect Dayı drew attention to. More important developments were experienced in the popularisation of the struggle. In a writing two years later, Dayı again drew attention to the question of the source of cadres: "The process we are living through commands all Party-Front members in every region and field to assume greater responsibilities and to develop the people into cadres. In order to develop people from among the people into cadres at every level, make them fight and create people's organisations, everyone must turn towards the masses with greater consciousness and claim." (Liberation on the Road to Victory, Issue 44, 11 May 1996)

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Confidence in Cadres and Participation

The participation of cadres was a phenomenon shaped during the very formation process of the movement. Dayı said of that process: "We could succeed in creating a new organisation and a new approach only by taking democratic functioning within ourselves as fundamental and raising internal education and consciousness on this basis. In our movement, especially at this stage of the process of becoming a Party, our internal democracy had to find expression in broad participation. This participation would bring with it ownership, ideological unity, a new spirit of Offensive and the soundness of the new steps we were taking."

In his speech at the Congress, Dayı summarised his general approach on this question, including the formation period of the movement, in these words: "A movement that does not trust its own cadres or make them partners in solving its problems will not have much chance in the future either. If we are to create the future, then although it may assume very different forms in different processes, we first have to follow a policy taking the participation of the movement's cadres, and increasingly the people's ownership and participation, as fundamental."

During the formation process, as a requirement of this understanding, for example, the draft brochure Liquidationism in the Devrimci Yol Movement and the Revolutionary Line, which we can describe as the first publication of the Revolutionary Movement, was published after cadres discussed it and presented their contributions and approval.

The method followed in the first conspiracy the revolutionary movement confronted at the very beginning of its struggle - in 1979 - was also one of the seeds of the tradition of later years. Dayı describes the participation of cadres in that process as follows: "We were a movement that took confidence in our cadres and especially in young cadres as fundamental and understood participation as an educational activity. Relying on this confidence, we announced the conspiracy activity to all our cadres and supporters through a short brochure. Within a few months... this conspiratorial gang... was defeated. The revolutionary functioning of our movement, its understanding of democracy and its policy of trusting cadres proved themselves in practice, and the cadres experienced the honour of embracing the movement." (Congress Report)

At the beginning of the 1990s, the operating principle of the movement preparing for the Offensive and of Dayı standing at the head of that Offensive was again the same: "Given the sensitivity and

difficulties of the process, there was no other road to bringing out the will of the cadres through democratic functioning. This functioning was at the same time a result of our policy of openness towards cadres and the people. (...) No force can bring down through demagogy, trickery and lies a movement whose mortar is openness and confidence. This had to be our principle." (Congress Report)

It had to be so because a stronger and faster Offensive depended on making the cadres grasp the process through an understanding of participation. It had to be so because, in Dayı's words, "the principal element of the Offensive and of our future was the cadres." As a result of assessments made in this process, a brochure entitled Where Are We on the Road? was published. Dayı's assessment of this brochure also sets out very clearly his outlook towards cadres: "The centre of the movement had to trust the cadres, and the cadres had to trust the centre. Confidence could be reinforced through openness. Without knowing the real condition of the movement it is very difficult for cadres to understand its programme and tactics, to be creative, indeed to be persistent and resistant. If cadres do not know the programme followed by the organisation, its various tactics and their weak and strong sides, and if their contributions on fundamental questions are not secured, gradually alienation from the organisation and the understanding of looking for problems outside themselves become dominant. ... In the light of these realities, without falling into democratism or anarchism and without weakening centralism, informing cadres about the problems of the movement and asking for their contributions to the roads of solution had to become an indispensable form of our work." (Congress Report)

Securing the participation of cadres was in fact nothing other than opening the road for them to embrace the movement's problems and develop will and initiative for the development of the revolution. Without cadre participation, nothing could be done.

Every stage of Dayı's stance during the coup process was also an expression of his confidence in cadres and his understanding of participation: "A coup had taken place, and from the first day when we were unable to prevent it, we saw the cadres as the platform of solution. Only the cadres could determine whether a movement and the leadership of a movement were legitimate or illegitimate." (Congress Report)

Indeed, at every stage and in every discussion of this process, Dayı never hesitated to place himself under the will of the cadres and pledged to abide by the decisions the cadres would make. And this was something the coup plotters never did and never could do.

The centre of the movement had to trust the cadres, and the cadres had to trust the centre. Confidence could be reinforced through openness. (...) No force can bring down through demagogy, trickery or lies a movement whose mortar is openness and confidence.

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Developing Cadres and Developing People into Cadres Cannot Be Postponed

In a writing dealing with the question of education, Dayı counts cadre development as one of the fundamental criteria for the success of an educator and, in the same sense, a leader: "A teacher who cannot explain or teach is an unsuccessful teacher. A successful teacher is a person who understands our needs and trains cadres accordingly."

Immediately after this, to those who set cadre education against the needs of the struggle and at this point make the work difficult in the face of what the movement asks, he gives this reminder: “The education of cadres, the organisation of the people’s movement and the raising of the struggle at every level cannot be approached as separate from or alternatives to one another. Neither the education of cadres nor the raising of the struggle can be postponed. In the same process we have to overcome many other problems.” (Liberation Against Imperialism and the Oligarchy, Issue 18, 10 June 1995)

In short, cadre development is something that all supporters, cadres and leaders of the movement must never forget. As we said at the beginning, the cadre question is the most important question. The Party can assume its historical mission if there are cadres. Dayı stated at the Congress this “identity” he established between the Party and cadres as follows: “The Party exists with its cadres, its leaders and its members. It fights and makes others fight through them. Cadres stand at the main link of our problems. Only when cadres become conscious of being Party members and of Party duties does the Party cease to be an abstract concept and perform a function that merges with broad masses of the people, brings them into the war in increasing numbers and grows the war. This is the real meaning of the Party. Therefore, the problem lies with us, the leaders and cadres. Without putting a scalpel to the deficiencies and weaknesses at this main link, without digging into the material causes of deficiencies and weaknesses and eliminating those causes, the Party cannot acquire its real identity.

“We have to give the Party its real identity.”

Before concluding this section in which we have summarised Dayı’s approach to cadres, we want to recall this determination he made at the Congress concerning the function of the brochure Where Are We on the Road?: “The brochure Where Are We on the Road? took cadres who in thought stood at a distance from the movement and brought them right to the centre of the movement. In summary, together with quite heavy and numerous problems, it said, ‘Let us solve these problems together, let us smooth our road to revolution.’ It said, ‘We believe in revolution and socialism; let us grow this belief together and shake Turkey.’”

Dayı described the training of “cadres who reject objectivity, trust themselves and say ‘whatever we do, we will do it ourselves’” as one of the main links of the Offensive process.

It is the same today.

Such cadres are a fundamental need of today too.

As Dayı said concerning Where Are We on the Road?: “let us solve the problems together, let us grow the struggle together, let us shake Turkey!”

(*) This article was published in YÜRÜYÜŞ for Independence, Democracy and Socialism, dated 22 February 2009.

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Dayı and the Masses

“The focal point of revolutionary work is to go to the masses with correct policies. Those who cannot create mass power and do not organise the masses have no chance of success.”

“Let all the dogmas belong to them. Those who do not organise the masses and do not fight can deceive themselves for a while longer with dogmas, but revolution will be made by those who organise the masses.”

“It is clear that the focal point of revolutionary work is to go to the masses with correct policies. Those who cannot create mass power and do not organise the masses have no chance of success.”

“Possibilities, strength, everything lies in the masses. Those who do not go to the masses can possess nothing. Gradually they are forced to become hopeless, unambitious and tired. If we are not helpless and wretched people incapable of organising anything, we must go to the masses.” There is no doubt that “the masses” is a concept carrying special importance for every force taking part in the class struggle. The outlook of political movements towards the masses and their approach to them, meanwhile, is one of the most fundamental points distinguishing those movements from one another.

What was Dayı’s outlook towards the masses, and what approaches did he attach special importance to and bring to the fore on this question? Before answering these, we think stating the following will give a certain idea. Dayı was a leader who created the most mass-based movement on the Turkish left apart from the Kurdish nationalist movement. Yet what is interesting is this: despite this reality, throughout the years of struggle he was confronted with criticisms from different sections of the opportunist and reformist left that the movement was “detached from the masses”. For this reason, on the question of the masses he frequently dealt with this contradiction of the left too.

“For twenty-five years we have listened to theories claiming that Vanguard War is detached from the masses, that we think of making revolution on behalf of the masses, that these actions do not educate the masses and so on - theories having nothing to do with the masses, the reality of our country or our world outlook - repeated again and again with the same examples...”

So what was the real situation?

On one side there was the “mass character” of those claiming revolutionary strategy was detached from the masses, and on the other the mass character of the movement accused of being detached from the masses...

“Those who for twenty-five years have made propaganda about Vanguard War that has nothing to do with reality, who put forward the view that it is detached from the masses and see the working class and the people as their own monopoly, unfortunately, despite all their high-pitched rhetoric, have been unable to establish any serious bond with the masses...” (Liberation on the Road to Victory, Issue 27, 13 January 1996)

In the continuation of the article from which we took the quotation above, Dayı says: “Those who say we will make revolution on behalf of the masses have attributed to us the absurd views of groups that can never merge with the masses and whose views have ended in failure in life. Our war continues in the political, military, economic and democratic fields through every form of struggle.”

Confidence and Claim:

“The People Will Reach the Reality of Revolution.”

In the process we are living through, it is a clear fact that we have not been able to mobilise against the system all classes and strata of the people opposed to fascism. As on all other questions, at this point too Dayı first of all opposed every kind of exaggeration. In the ranks of the revolutionary movement he made dominant a continuous sensitivity against exaggerating the periodic actions of the masses just as much as against belittling their feelings, resistances and actions.

Despite the masses being under the influence of system parties and reactionary sections, he frequently emphasised that this must not turn into distrust of the masses: “Because of their lack of organisation and not knowing what and how to do, the people either misdirect their reactions or, deceived by the demagogic discourse of various merchants of religion and reactionary-fascist parties, continue their search in these places. (...) We must resolve this contradiction. Starting from the simple truth that revolution will be the work of the people, we will approach the masses of the people with their class characteristics, see that reactionary and counter-revolutionary ideas are temporary and demagogic, shape revolutionary propaganda by taking the values of our people into account, and persistently go to them. We will explain the truths. (...) reactionary propaganda will increasingly become ineffective and the people will reach the reality of revolution.” (Liberation Against Imperialism and the Oligarchy, Issue 18, 10 June 1995)

Elsewhere, drawing attention to the masses’ deviations within the system, he takes up this problem again: “The people are deeply dissatisfied with the system and... do not want to live in this way. But (...) in what kind of system and how they want to live is unclear. The masses of the people see very clearly the filth, injustice and savagery of capitalism. But what is the alternative? We must make the people understand our programme of REVOLUTIONARY PEOPLE’S POWER AND SOCIALISM.” (Liberation on the Road to Victory, Issue 2, 22 July 1995)

This confidence is emphasised again and again. Because it is known that one who does not possess this confidence cannot fight, cannot risk prices, in short cannot practise revolutionism. Nor is an abstract confidence lacking ideological and political content enough. This confidence too must have substance. “When we lead the masses of the people, embrace their problems and persist in this, the masses through their own experience will see the truth and, overcoming the organisations of the system, understand how alternative organisations are formed, how those organisations function and how they struggle.” (Liberation on the Road to Victory, Issue 4, 5 August 1995)

There is no doubt that our task is not easy. “We should not list problems one after another and expect the masses to join the struggle through a few leaflets or speeches. A lasting relationship established with the masses is not this. The masses want to be embraced on every question, to find solutions to their lack of solutions and to see strength before weaknesses. We must accomplish this.” (Liberation on the Road to Victory, Issue 17, 4 November 1995)

But however difficult it is, there must be confidence that it will be achieved. Marxist-Leninists in many countries of the world have achieved it. We too will achieve it. Confidence produces claim. Dayı is always ambitious at this point. He made this self-confidence and claim first of all the property of the

cadres and leaders of the revolutionary movement. Because no revolutionary movement can develop and organise the masses without possessing this confidence and claim: “System parties, trade unions and very different professional organisations can remain standing... so long as they keep the masses in their ranks. We must take the masses out of their hands. Taking the masses from their hands means embracing every kind of economic and democratic demand of the masses... and leading them.” (Liberation on the Road to Victory, Issue 4, 5 August 1995)

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Understanding the Masses Within Their Own Objectivity

For a revolutionary, trusting the masses is of course indisputable. But on the left, as we stated above, there is also exaggeration towards the masses. This exaggeration closes its eyes to the objective position of the masses within the existing system and is far from seeing their real condition. Then styles of work that do not correspond to this real condition cannot produce results either. The following lines of Dayı, for example, are only one passage from writings in which he frequently drew attention to this aspect of the masses: “It is true. The masses are not a herd. They come to rallies, watch and in many places even offer support to the revolutionary movement; but when it comes to their voting preference, in accordance with habits formed within the system, they do not neglect to make their own calculations. This is how the gecekondu people are, whom some yesterday looked down on and accused by saying, ‘they say Deniz, İbo and Çayan but give their votes to the CHP’. More precisely, under conditions where the revolutionary alternative has not realised an enormous rise, the masses continue their dual attitude between the bourgeoisie and revolutionaries.” (Liberation on the Road to Victory, Issue 25, 30 December 1995)

Elsewhere he draws attention to this position of the masses in this way: “... the masses cannot become revolutionary merely through the application of correct ideas and tactics; they do not develop complete confidence in revolutionaries in every respect. The masses have been exploited, oppressed and deceived for centuries. As a result, they approach almost everything with suspicion and constantly test revolutionaries by checking how far what is said is actually put into practice.” What happens if this reality of the people is not understood? Arrogance and conceit develop before the people’s backwardness: “Petty-bourgeois intellectuals who have not sufficiently grasped the reality of the people and have not understood the people’s historical, psychological and political character, while attributing great values to themselves, make a habit of regarding the people as backward and even humiliating them. As a result of these habits they do not understand that the people must be valued, that one must also learn from them and share with them. On the contrary, they always see the people as a herd to be directed from above. But the people, who are not a herd, do not trust these people and do not follow them. Even if the people are deceived for a temporary period and fall into empiricism, after a while they see the truth and, through their own logic, put everyone in the place they deserve and draw their own road of life.”

One who does not define the people correctly cannot possess a correct mass line. In the section of our series entitled “Friend-Enemy” we spoke of Dayı attaching special importance to defining these two phenomena. Connected with this, defining “the people” is also a phenomenon to which he attached special importance from the point of view of revolutionary struggle and “the alignment of classes in the revolution”.

The answer to who is included within the concept of the people has not appeared this openly, as a priority and this frequently in many writings: “We must destroy these distorted understandings

existing on the Turkish left for years, which have not internalised the reality of the people, do not approach the people in the true meaning of the word, narrow the people, imprison them within certain sections and exclude broad masses of the people. In this respect it must become clear who is included within the concept of the people. The people are the sum of all classes and strata that have contradictions with imperialism and fascism, whatever their thoughts, their present position and the ground on which they are aligned today. We must accumulate strength. Strength is the people." (Liberation Against Imperialism and the Oligarchy, Issue 18, 10 June 1995)

There is failing to define the people correctly as a "definition", in terms of the classes and strata it contains. And there is also failing to know the masses correctly. This form of not knowing too is frequently encountered on the left. Both intellectuals and various sections of the left do not know the masses, yet pontificate. Some of the "childhood illnesses" on the left have this as their cause: "So much so that, when he speaks somewhere or distributes a leaflet, the masses of the people will immediately move and condemn those notorious petty bourgeois. (...) Yes, this is the way of thinking." (Liberation on the Road to Victory, Issue 4, 5 August 1995) Influencing and organising the masses is not so easy. When the easy-going way of thinking sees that what it expected has not happened, with the same speed it evolves into hopelessness and lack of belief. At this point Dayı draws attention to labour: "The masses are not enlightened by short-term propaganda or a few leaflets distributed in limited numbers. Those who think they can bring the masses into great struggles requiring self-sacrifice in an instant and without intensive labour are alien to the masses. There are dozens of forms of educating the masses and creating a collective psychology. (...) Without mechanically separating forms of struggle from one another and without saying 'this is reformist, that is revolutionary', roads must be found to bring out and direct every kind of reaction. (...) Educating the masses, bringing them together, creating strength and being able to mobilise them must be the fundamental measure." (Liberation on the Road to Victory, Issue 17, 4 November 1995)

Another reflection of the outlook that does not know the masses is blaming the masses for negativities and inadequacies. The carrying of this petty-bourgeois thought into revolutionaries is a danger that feeds lack of belief. For this reason Dayı's understanding on this question is extremely instructive and warning. When the masses were concerned, Dayı always expressed an understanding that did not blame the masses but held the revolutionaries responsible: "If in every sphere of life we do not create organisations that take the masses of the people out of the control of state ideologies and do not take steps in this direction, revolutionaries will be responsible for the potential of the masses of the people and the working class being used by the bourgeoisie, channelled in the wrong direction and even destroyed." (Liberation on the Road to Victory, Issue 15, 21 October 1995) This is, of course, the difference between intellectual thinking and revolutionary thinking.

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The Assemblies Are the Concrete Form

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of His Outlook Towards the Masses

We can say that the Assemblies - people's organisations proposed as base organisations of various sections of the people - are the concrete form embodied in practice of Dayı's outlook towards the masses, his confidence in them, his revolutionary policies that would bring out their will and creativity, and his belief that "revolution will be the work of the masses".

For Dayı, the Assemblies are not a form of organisation proposed merely for a particular period. Although the conditions in which they will take shape in practice change according to the process, they remain continuously among the objectives of the revolutionary movement. Because base organisations are among the important and indispensable forms of organisation for bringing the masses into the revolution in the process advancing towards revolution. Dayı expressed this importance as follows:

“The fundamental instrument that will change this picture is to grow the self-power of the masses and make it concrete in action. This is the organisation of the masses. It is uniting and making fight all opposition forces. Forces that unite and fight become aware of their own power and see that they are not as weak as they thought and that the forces of the people are the only invincible force in the world. (...) It is in our hands to remove the obstacles before the road of revolution and accelerate this process. The solution lies in the organisations of the people. It is creating organisations through which the people can govern themselves and securing their right to speak and decide.” (Liberation for the People, Issue 6, 16 November 1996)

On this question we can also comfortably say this: such organisations, which make concrete the people’s right to speak and decide and bring out their will, were formulated for the first time by Dayı with this clarity and concreteness. On the Turkish left he continuously struggled against the failure to operate base organisations and democratic mass organisations in a way that would “bring out the will and creativity of the masses”: “We must sincerely accept the coexistence of very different ideas in people’s organisations. So long as they are not contrary to the people’s general demands and do not serve the enemy, there can be no harm in the same demands being expressed in different styles and understandings. Among the strata of the people there are various motifs that we find wrong and that the enemy uses more. Our people do not defend or encourage these within the organisations mentioned, but if people from among the people use these motifs they do not try to prevent them by force either. (...) In one respect, people’s organisations must carry such differences within themselves. Through skilful policies and tactics (...) we must remove the confusion in the minds of the masses.” (Revolutionary Left, Issue 9, November 1997) Because this outlook has not been sufficiently internalised on the left, joint organisation of the left in mass organisations generally does not last long. Because of the same distorted outlook, the left did not participate in organisations such as People’s Assemblies, Youth, Workers’ and Civil Servants’ Assemblies either.

Many movements feared remaining in a minority in those Assemblies. Dayı said when these tendencies were on the agenda: “We believe in our correct ideas and know that the masses of the people will sooner or later understand what is right. Even if we do not take part in the leadership of united people’s organisations, even if for a long time we remain in the minority, we declare before history and the people that we will abide by the decisions of these joint organisations and the people. We also have the right to demand this declaration from all organisations and individuals who call themselves revolutionary. Those who cannot do this, without taking refuge in any theory, absolutely have to reconsider their thinking.” (Liberation on the Road to Victory, Issue 44, 11 May 1996)

These words of Dayı set out, with indisputable clarity, both his outlook towards mass organisations and base organisations and his ideological and political self-confidence.

Revolutionism and the Masses

Going to the masses is indisputable from the point of view of revolutionary strategy. But Dayı shows us another front of this too. He emphasises that it is also an extremely determining element from the point of view of “revolutionism”. So much so that he states it as one of the criteria of revolutionism: “One cannot be revolutionary without going to the masses and burning with their problems. One can only be a petty-bourgeois intellectual. He will not go to those masses, will live in an elite circle, will discuss and write not the problems of the people but the problems of the elite; unfortunately, through the direction of imperialism and the oligarchy this illness has developed considerably on the left.” (2003 New Year Message)

The revolutionary will go to the masses and become the concrete proof among the masses of their theory, policies and claim. Even if the revolutionary among the masses says nothing, they are like a living instrument of propaganda. Every step they take, positive or negative, will affect the revolutionary activity there. Again we listen to Dayı: “We must be able to show the masses of the people clearly that we are the alternative to capitalism. The people will reach conclusions by comparing every kind of behaviour of ours, our words and what we do with what until now they have learned and personally seen from the parties of the system. Who are these people? What is their difference from those we have seen until now? Are they really different from those who exploit and deceive them? At every step we take the people will ask these questions and seek answers. Petty-bourgeois revolutionaries frequently misread the silence of the masses of the people, even their reactions that appear to give approval, and by failing to value the people and trying to lead without listening to them, they fail.” (Liberation on the Road to Victory, Issue 18, 11 November 1995)

We said going to the masses is one of the measures of revolutionism. In the light of the lines above, we can add that conduct among the masses develops through two styles: proletarian revolutionism and petty-bourgeois revolutionism. One organises the masses; the other disperses them.

This is an extremely important question, and for years Dayı waged an ideological struggle to make a correct outlook towards the masses dominant among his cadres and fighters. Because this is not an ordinary question.

Every distorted outlook on this question will directly drive the masses away and push the revolution backwards. Here we will give, through a long quotation, one of Dayı’s answers to the question how should we look at and behave towards the masses. It is a passage that should be read again and again.

“In relations, the most frequently seen negativities are failure to value the people, failure to educate them and failure to take their demands, feelings and traditions into account. There are also attitudes such as misusing the people’s possibilities, failing to protect and value their houses, cars and every kind of material possibility they offer to the struggle, damaging them and even, in places, some leaders using them in accordance with their own interests. Instead of sharing the people’s feelings and thoughts and respecting their traditions and beliefs, constantly ordering and demanding, sectarian attitudes in the long term drive the people away from the struggle. The people are not professional cadres who give twenty-four hours to revolution, think of nothing other than revolutionary struggle and have no dependencies. They live within the system with their families, children and

work, and support revolutionary struggle in order to continue these lives under better conditions. To the extent that we educate them, raise their consciousness and embrace them, they add greater strength and energy to the struggle.

“Their complete revolutionisation... will develop in proportion to our making the alternative system concrete within the struggle and showing it in our own organisations and personalities. The people cannot trust revolutionary leaders who do not value them, who do not show that they too can lead and solve their own problems, who constantly issue orders like bourgeois managers but do not take their problems and feelings into account, who disregard their culture and traditions and do not think about their property and lives. In the end the people conclude that these too are no different from the despots of centuries and bourgeois managers and move away.” (Liberation on the Road to Victory, Issue 18, 11 November 1995)

Here lies the importance of a correct outlook towards the masses. If we are the alternative to power, then the question of the masses must be clear in our minds from every angle.

When emphasising “the principal duty” in one of his writings, Dayı lists these things as follows: “Patiently going to the masses, correcting wrong ideas among the masses on almost every question, educating them and explaining why organisation is necessary... ensuring the emergence of the masses’ own organisations, their defence and decision-making mechanisms!” (Revolutionary Left, Issue 7, December 1995)

These principal duties undoubtedly remain valid today too. We must assume this principal duty by looking at the masses as Dayı looked at them, trusting them as Dayı trusted them, and organising through the methods he proposed in order to put down branches and roots among the masses.

(*) This article was published in YÜRÜYÜŞ for Independence, Democracy and Socialism, dated 8 February 2009.

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From Mahir to Dayı

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39 Years on the Road of Revolution - 1

We possess an honourable history of thirty-nine years. To tell the history of the Revolutionary Movement is at the same time to tell Mahir and Dayı.

We possess an honourable history of thirty-nine years. To tell the history of the Revolutionary Movement is at the same time to tell Mahir and Dayı. This history was written under their leadership. Their guidance stamped every stage of this history. At every obstacle and rough place we reached level ground under their guidance. With them we walked from defeats to victories.

Mahir and Dayı are two names identified with the road of the Turkish revolution. They always pointed towards power. No obstacle, no betrayal they confronted, no blow suffered diverted them from the objective of revolution.

If today on these lands there are those fighting for an Independent Democratic Socialist Turkey despite all the policies of annihilation and siege of imperialism and the oligarchy, this continuity was brought to life under their leadership. If the peoples of Turkey possess a Hope of liberation, their

labour is present in the creation of that Hope and in keeping it alive against attacks seeking to suffocate it.

Mahir is the one who clarified the Road of the Turkish Revolution. The strategic line was drawn under his leadership. Dursun Karataş became the name of determination to continue this strategy under every condition. And every centimetre of this road was walked by our martyrs. All of them - Mahir, Dayı and all our martyrs - today once again point us towards the road of revolution. Walk, do not hesitate, just walk, they tell us; this road leads to revolution. At the end of this road lies the power of our people; walk! Victory is waiting for you at the end of that road; you only have to walk with determination! Trust yourselves and be ambitious!

This is what they say. Their calls, their testaments, their instructions echo in our ears.

They became the strategists and fighters of this history. Theory took shape in their hands. Politics found direction in their hands. Practice developed with them. Traditions were created under their leadership. They led this war from the very middle of the struggle. While Mahir and his comrades created the first traditions, it was Dayı and our Leader comrades who added new traditions to them. Kızıldere was for us the road opening to power. Dayı became the guide of the revolutionary march on that road.

They left a precious treasure as a legacy to the peoples of Turkey. This precious treasure is the thirty-nine-year history of the revolutionary movement. This series of articles is a brief account of the revolutionary march to which they devoted their lives.

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Strategy, Party, Leadership

Socialists existed in our country from the beginning of the 1900s. But almost half a century had to pass before one could speak of a socialist movement aiming at revolution and power. Revolution, in its real meaning, entered the agenda of the left only in the Turkey of the 1960s. The peoples of Turkey encountered a revolutionary alternative for the first time in this period. To make these determinations does not mean denying the existence, labour or heroism of socialists who had laboured and paid prices for socialism until then. Dialectically, their labour and the prices they paid undoubtedly carry historical importance as part of the accumulation that prepared this breakthrough of the 1960s. We must learn this history. For everyone claiming to be revolutionary this is an obligation. Learning our history and distinguishing its determining aspects carry great importance in shaping our future. To learn the thirty-nine-year history and to know Mahir and Dayı is, in this sense, not merely to learn history but to see ahead of us, know the road we will walk and know the future.

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The Party-Front Is a Milestone

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in the History of the Turkish Revolution

“The history of the revolutionary movement reaches back to the end of the 1960s, to the years when the THKP-C sprouted. And this long process is a rich history in terms of adapting Marxism-Leninism to the concrete conditions of our country.

“We came to today by passing through very different processes. And naturally, the organisations and struggle of these processes were not repetitions of one another. Without understanding these processes, the tactics we proposed and applied and the forms of organisation we used, it is impossible to understand our history and the originality and distinctive style of work of the Revolutionary Movement. They must be learned. But not in order to repeat them today in a crude way detached from conditions.” (December 1995, Revolutionary Left, Issue 7)

The creation on the Turkish left of a revolutionary movement possessing the claim and perspective of power became possible only at the end of a difficult process. Despite partial interruptions in organisational terms, this history expresses political continuity from Mahir and his comrades to today. Such political continuity is rare on the Turkish left. At the beginning of this continuity lies a great and deep-rooted rupture. As the end of the 1960s approached, in the ideological struggle conducted under Mahir Çayan’s leadership to clarify the road of the Turkish revolution, they came face to face many times with turning points. The decisions to be taken and choices to be made at those turning points would determine revolutionary history. At these turning points Mahir and his comrades made the correct revolutionary decisions.

This difficult ideological struggle producing many turning points was being waged between Marxism-Leninism and reformism, revisionism, coupism and opportunism. Despite their youth and inadequacies, it was they who represented Marxism-Leninism.

Once they had set out with the claim to revolution. They possessed the daring, determination and belief required to realise this claim. This was a quality absent from the revisionist and reformist tradition that had dominated the left until then. Because they possessed this claim, they approached Marxism-Leninism as a guide to action. Under the guidance of this guide, a strategic line appropriate to the conditions of our country was determined. This strategy determined the road of revolution of a country that was a neo-colony of imperialism and under the hidden occupation of fascism.

Mahir determined that the road to liberation passed through armed struggle. He saw that revolutionary people’s power could be reached only through overthrowing the existing power by armed struggle.

To put it in Dayı’s words at the Congress: “The THKP-C means defending, whatever the price, that the road to overthrowing oligarchic states and establishing revolutionary people’s power passes through armed struggle.” But although armed struggle is fundamental, there are other aspects that complete it. The THKP-C’s rupture from a fifty-year revisionist tradition was certainly not merely a matter of “strategy”: “The fact that the THKP-C was a rupture, the destruction of a fifty-year revisionist tradition, is not limited merely to replacing parliamentary struggle with armed struggle. This is an extremely distinguishing aspect. Yet it is also known that armed struggle alone does not determine the character of a struggle. What kind of organisation conducts that struggle, with what objective and with what understanding of revolutionism are at least as important as armed struggle itself.” (Revolutionary Left, Special Issue 9)

In this sense, the movement shaped under the leadership of Mahir and his comrades was turning towards becoming a new movement in every respect.

The ideological struggle of Mahir and the militant cadres who would take part in founding the movement began inside the Workers’ Party of Turkey (TİP), of which they were members. Despite

their youth, they took a stand against the “old hands” in TİP and waged a tooth-and-nail ideological struggle. Within this struggle Mahir came to the fore step by step. This daring departure of the young leaders was the first step in their ideological separation from the parliamentary-revisionist left.

This separation first led them to defend armed struggle against parliamentarism and coupism, and to defend the National Democratic Revolution against the theory of “socialist revolution”. But the search, clarification and ideological struggle had not yet ended.

Mahir Çayan stated that without armed struggle against imperialism and the oligarchy, revolution was impossible. Revolution was not something that could be achieved through parliamentary struggle. Existing tendencies on the left, from TİP to YÖN and National Democratic Revolutionism, did not go beyond lines content with changes within the system through parliamentary struggle or coupist methods rather than overthrowing the oligarchy. Although in words they spoke of revolution, neither organisationally nor strategically was there a struggle directed towards realising it. They had no objective called revolution. The breakthrough of the THKP-C carries fundamental importance precisely at this point through its aspect of aiming at power.

“A struggle directed straight at the power of the oligarchy emerged at the beginning of the 1970s through armed war, and specifically in the person of the THKP-C. Because the THKP-C is a Party aiming at people’s power... What distinguishes the THKP-C from all the others is the road it chose for people’s power and socialism. Beyond determining the objective of power, the strategic line possessed by the THKP-C is also a line capable of making this objective possible. This road took socialism and people’s power out of being merely theoretical objectives and made them practical objectives. This is a road on which aiming at socialism means open war against the system. This is the road of the Anatolian revolution.” (Revolutionary Left, Issue 9)

The THKP-C is the point of separation between the left within the system defending parliamentary struggle and the revolutionary left aiming to take power through armed struggle. The only road capable of making the objective of power possible is armed struggle. In this sense, “from the point of view of the Turkish revolution, the beginning of a struggle aimed at power is the beginning of the 1970s.”

They needed a strategy and an organisation that would put the strategy into practice. Against a left that for fifty years had struggled within boundaries drawn by the system and stayed away from paying prices, there had now emerged a left defending a militant line of struggle, ready to die and kill. Mahir Çayan was the architect of this process. This process was shaped through intense ideological struggle and many ruptures. When Mahir Çayan broke from the MDD (National Democratic Revolution) line because of Mihri Belli’s rightist views, he wrote in his “Open Letter to Aydınlık Socialist Magazine”: “The road of revolution is rugged, winding and steep. Some fall and remain behind. Some comrades with whom until yesterday we walked shoulder to shoulder are no longer with us. We cannot stop any longer for them. Because they made their choice backwards. They chose the swamp. And unfortunately they turned their barrels towards us. This struggle is class struggle. There is no room here for a trembling hand, hesitation or indecision.” (Collected Writings, p. 239, Boran Publications)[26]

26 Aydınlık: Turkish for “Enlightenment” or “Light”; here part of the title Aydınlık Socialist Magazine.

The “Open Letter to Aydınlık Socialist Magazine” is one of the historical texts of the left. Here Mahir sets out the reasons for the separation from the MDD supporters. He explains his views on revolution, style of work and organisation. A new revolutionary line is taking shape step by step. In Mahir, the phenomenon of revolution is formulated very concretely.

“The Marxist conception of revolution envisages a continuous and uninterrupted revolutionary process. Revolution is, through the revolutionary initiative of the people from below upwards, smashing the existing state apparatus, seizing political power and, through this power, organising from above downwards a more advanced system of production.” (Collected Writings, p. 292, Boran Publications)

While ideological struggle continued against TİP parliamentarism, coupist tendencies and the schematic understanding of the MDD supporters, it should not be thought that they dealt only with the theoretical dimensions of the work. On the contrary, Mahir and his comrades were also the ones organising the struggle in every sphere of life. They were the ones leading existing organisations. Just as they stood at the front of ideological struggle, they were also inside and at the front of boycotts, occupations, marches, strikes and land occupations. In their own words, “in parallel with theoretical clarification, they intervened in practice as well”.

After a time the clarification had largely been completed. The objective of anti-imperialist, anti-oligarchic revolution and the “Politicised Military War Strategy” to be followed to reach this objective expressed the fact that the process of clarifying the road of revolution had to a great extent been completed. But this was not enough.

Another conclusion produced by all these developments was the necessity of creating the steel core of the proletariat, that is, the Party. Without a Party organisation, reaching the objective would not be possible.

At that time there was a Dev-Genç organisation that, just as it led the struggle of student youth, also led strikes and peasant struggles. Although Dev-Genç was the first mass organisation to organise a militant and mass struggle from the point of view of the Turkish left, in essence it was a youth organisation. Revolution could not be made with such an organisation. A Party was needed.

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Theirs Was Not an Adventure,

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But a Historical Mission

At the beginning of 1969, Mahir Çayan, Yusuf Küpeli, Hüseyin Cevahir, Münir Ramazan Aktolga, Ulaş Bardakçı, Necmettin Giritlioğlu and some other youth cadres reached agreement on the organisation of an illegal Party possessing the objective of power. In one respect, 1969, lived through amid intense practice, was a preparatory period in which they took steps to put this thought into practice.

In December 1970 the leading cadres met in a house in Küçükesat. It was here that the organisation that would enter the history of our country as the THKP-C, in full the People’s Liberation Party-Front of Turkey, was founded. A three-person Central Committee and an eleven-person

Provisional General Committee were determined. The peoples of Turkey now had a Marxist-Leninist Party and, under its leadership, a Front.

Thus the THKP-C set out as the Marxist-Leninist Party of the Turkish revolution defending armed struggle, in order to make revolution, establish the revolutionary power of the people and uninterruptedly build socialism.

Mahir Çayan and his comrades did not enter armed struggle because of dreams of an early revolution or for the sake of adventurism. They knew very well under what conditions they were beginning an armed struggle.

In the statement The Road of Revolution they explain it like this: “At present our Party, which is waging the struggle for power, is not at the strength and stage capable of taking power. It is only at the stage of war between regular armies that one can speak of taking power throughout the country. And we never claim that we are living through this stage today. We only assert that guerrilla war is necessary FOR OUR PEOPLE’S REVOLUTIONARY WAR TO REACH THIS STAGE, and we fight for this purpose.”

Both from the front of the oligarchy and from the revisionist-reformist front, many accusations such as “anarchist” and “adventurist” were directed at them. Yet they had assumed a very great mission for the liberation of the peoples and the independence of the homeland. In order to fulfil that mission they educated and equipped themselves, and with this accumulation drew the strategy of revolution, entered the war in the light of this strategy and, in addition to all this, put their own lives on the line.

What adventurer could do these things? And in the statute of what organisation founded by adventurers would the following be written:

“The principal aim of the THKP-C is the establishment in the world of a social order in which human beings are not exploited by human beings and every kind of oppression and exploitation has been abolished.”

(*) This article was published in Halk Gerçeği magazine, dated 22 March 2009.

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From Mahir to Dayı

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39 Years on the Road of Revolution - 2

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Deviations, Manifesto, Unity and Separation

This road was difficult. While trying to show the way to those walking on the road of revolution, they became masters at overcoming difficulties. As they became masters, they gained confidence in themselves. Step by step, their self-confidence was reflected in all Party-Front cadres, militants and the people. Mahir’s claim, “We set out to make revolution in the Turkey of the world,” was completed by Dayı’s claim, “We Will Shake the World Once Again, This Time from Turkey.” It was they who gave flesh and bone to the claim to revolution and power in the Turkish revolution. We continue our series from the stages, beginning in 1971, through which this claim was given flesh and bone.

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At a meeting held in April 1971, the decision was taken to organise the armed struggle throughout the country. The General Committee was reconstituted. Mahir Çayan, Yusuf Küpeli, Münir Aktolga, Hüseyin Cevahir, Ulaş Bardakçı, Ertuğrul Kürkçü, Ziya Yılmaz, İrfan Uçar, Bingöl Erdumlu, Orhan Savaşçı and Sina Çıladır were elected members of the General Committee. What mattered was that they had set out for revolution.

Trusting in their own strength and in their people, the THKP-C members set out for the Turkish revolution without trying to imitate any country or follow behind any socialist country. For them Marxism-Leninism was a guide to action from which they could draw the necessary strength. The Turkish revolution had to be a revolution appropriate to these lands. In their ideological research and struggles they reached the following conclusion: in a country that was a neo-colony of imperialism and under the hidden occupation of fascism, revolution could be reached only through the Politicised Military War Strategy.

The armed struggle they had decided to develop was determined through this outlook. The struggle was begun in line with this objective. Expropriation actions were carried out. These were followed by the taking of Mete Has as a hostage and the kidnapping and punishment of Efraim Elrom, Israel's Consul General in Istanbul. These were very new and shattering events for the country.

The 12 March 1971 junta attacked, revealing its entire fascist face in order to prevent the armed struggle from being raised. In May 1971, THKC Bulletin No. 1 called for struggle against the junta and showed the road to liberation:

"The Americanist fascist dogs... under the cover of securing public order, have now declared martial law...

"On our own soil we have been turned into an enslaved people. ... This situation cannot continue like this; the time has now come to rebel, take up arms and move to overthrow the occupying enemy.

"1- The only road to overthrowing the domination of American imperialism and the power of the exploiting classes that are its local servants, and to winning independence, is armed war of liberation...

"2- The People's Liberation Front of Turkey is determined to struggle until American imperialism and its dogs are driven from the country and, under every condition... to continue its war..." (Collected Writings, Mahir Çayan)

Armed actions continued with this understanding despite the junta.

In June 1971, Hüseyin Cevahir and Mahir Çayan were surrounded in a house in Maltepe, Istanbul. They answered calls to surrender with weapons. The resistance, which lasted fifty-one hours, was a first in the Turkish revolution. Fifty years of compromising, reformist traditions and conduct were now giving way to new traditions shaped according to the line of armed struggle. In this siege Cevahir was martyred and Mahir was taken prisoner.

The 12 March junta primarily targeted the cadres and militants of the armed revolutionary front, and especially the THKP-C members. Many Party-Front members were taken prisoner. But captivity could not stand in the way of the Front members' determination to struggle. On 29 November 1971,

Mahir Çayan, Ulaş Bardakçı and Ziya Yılmaz, together with Cihan Alptekin and Ömer Ayna from the THKO, escaped. Another first was experienced on the Turkish left. A Party with a claim to power would act with the same insurrectionary understanding wherever it was, outside or in prison.

During the period when Mahir and his comrades were prisoners, some of the Party's leaders outside deviated onto a rightist line and betrayed the movement. After the escape, a reckoning was made with the betrayal and the struggle resumed from where it had left off. The THKP-C decision expelling the right deviation stated: "The line of our Party is the line of the international revolutionary movement that has emerged as a result of applying Marxism-Leninism to the conditions of the world and Turkey."... This line would continue on its road.

Under Mahir's leadership, the revolutionary movement emerged with honour from this first great historical test concerning deviations and betrayals; it showed no wavering. There was not a moment's hesitation in cutting out and casting aside the rotten part. The attitude Mahir displayed in this historical experience would become an example in later years for all the leading and administrative cadres of the movement, first and foremost Dayı.

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Towards the Final Clash That Was Not the End

Mahir Çayan's leadership was a leadership created through patiently sustained ideological struggle and practical struggle. However much they try to smear Mahir and make him forgotten, they cannot abolish this reality.

Under the conditions of intense repression, pursuit and annihilation imposed by the 12 March junta, ideological clarification and armed war would continue. Mahir's leadership mission in that difficult period was to ensure this. His writing Uninterrupted Revolution II and III and organising Kızıldere during this period formed a new stage of his test of leadership before history.

The determination to prevent the execution of Deniz and his comrades, and not to abandon the action to be carried out despite the difficulties, were fundamentally an indication that armed struggle would be continued under every condition and despite everything, and a result of the claim to revolution: "The personality, actions, ideological-political line and system of thought of Mahir Çayan form a whole. To define him is to define revolutionism. He ceased to be merely an individual and became the symbol of the political line showing the road to liberation to the peoples of our country." (Kurtuluş, Special Issue 1) On 19 February 1972, Ulaş Bardakçı, one of the movement's leading cadres, was killed in the house where he was staying in Arnavutköy, Istanbul. History had now begun to be written in blood. Despite giving martyrs and being sought throughout Turkey, they did not abandon persistence in armed struggle. To prevent the execution of Deniz and his comrades, three British personnel were kidnapped from the Ünye Radar Base on 26 March 1972. On 30 March, the house where they were staying in KIZILDERE was surrounded. Either they would surrender and everything would end, or they would resist and the war would continue. The TEN chose resistance. The determination in the words "We came here not to return, but to die" was not merely personal heroism, but determination to walk on the road of revolution. The political meaning of the self-sacrifice there must be seen correctly: because they had set out with this claim, they did not hesitate to sacrifice themselves.

The future of the peoples of Turkey was determined at Kızıldere. The manifesto of the Turkish revolution was written there; the road of revolution was sealed there in blood. This is a line in which armed propaganda is fundamental and the other forms of struggle are subordinate to it. On this line political mass struggle and armed propaganda are connected and intertwined. Despite the physical defeat suffered in 1972, “The Breakthrough of ’71 showed the peoples of Turkey how to struggle against imperialism and the oligarchy, against repression and tyranny, and illuminated the road of revolution.” (Revolutionary Left, Issue 9)

The Legacy of Mahir and His Comrades

In the Dayıs, Niyazis, İbrahims and Sinans

Kızıldere was a challenge to imperialism and the oligarchy with the claim of being an alternative power. At the same time it was an answer to how revolutionism should be practised. Dayı assessed the resistance at Kızıldere as follows: “On 30 March 1972, while the THKP-C was physically destroyed after once again engraving its name upon history in a very striking way through resistance, the armed war, even though it had been conducted only for a very short time, created a great potential, and this potential had spread among youth, workers, peasants and various classes and strata. Within this potential the THKP-C was, on one side, a legend and, on the other, a living force that had never been and could never be destroyed.” (Congress Documents 1, p. 11)

The fact that Dayı and his comrades embraced Kızıldere as early as 1973-74 was on this foundation. Yet many of the cadres who remained from the THKP-C had sunk into the swamp of denialism, while some continued wavering between denial and embracing it. The old cadres were far from leading the process.

The potential revealed by Kızıldere was, in this period, virtually searching for its leadership. Life would not wait. The youth, becoming increasingly militant, founded İYÖKD (Istanbul Higher Education Culture Association) in November 1973. Dayı had a major role in this new formation. Under İYÖKD’s leadership, the “Campaign to Protest NATO”, the “Campaign for Unconditional Political Amnesty for All Political Prisoners”, the “Campaign in Solidarity with the People of the East” and the “No to Paid Education Campaign” were organised. A position was taken against the occupation of Cyprus with the slogan “Independent United Cyprus”. Dayı personally organised these campaigns. Niyazi Aydın, Sabahat Karataş, Sinan Kukul, İbrahim Erdoğan and Ahmet Fazıl Özdemir were also both in the association’s leadership and active in the work.

The great street clash carried out in Kocamustafapaşa in December 1975 was a resistance in which Dayı and İbrahim Erdoğan personally participated and gave direction, and in which the initiative, leadership ability and daring of the revolutionary movement began to reveal themselves.

The defenders and deniers of the THKP-C were becoming clear and separating within this practice. The young sympathisers of the Front embraced Kızıldere and the revolutionary strategy it pointed to: “We were young and inexperienced, surrounded in hostility by political merchants, and our inadequacies made us weak. Taking our strength from our past, renewing ourselves a little more each day in the struggle against opportunism, liquidationism and the enemy, and learning war within war, we had to embrace the legacy of our martyrs. This legacy was our greatest strength... As we

learned and came to know war, the realities of revolution and our own reality, we began to internalise the greatness of the THKP-C and its leadership under those historical conditions, and their self-sacrifice for revolution." (Congress Documents 1, p. 14)

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A Nucleus;

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The Kurtuluş Group and the Great Claim

By 1975, the young Front sympathisers went towards a minimum level of organisation in order to keep the Party-Front alive, or more accurately to recreate it. In this process Dayı and his comrades began to define themselves as the Kurtuluş Group. Dayı assessed the Kurtuluş Group as "the first step in which our Marxist-Leninist movement took shape". For the first time since Kızıldere, a central organisation had been created. On one side were the "old" cadres occupied with consuming the THKP-C legacy; on the other were the young leaders and militants who embraced the Front's legacy with both hands.

All of Mahir Çayan's writings, Uninterrupted Revolution I, II and III, were printed and distributed throughout the country. In this way younger generations obtained the opportunity to learn the Party-Front line directly from its own sources. Under conditions in which interpretations of the THKP-C from the right and the left were, in essence, aimed at liquidating Party-Front ideology, the political importance of being able to do this was great. "The young Party-Front defenders were not 'theoreticians' or 'Marxologists'... But through their devotion to the people and revolution, their enthusiasm and militant practice, they showed that the legacy and ideology of the THKP-C were not without owners, and they built a barricade against denialism, discouragement and apostasy." (Revolutionary Left, Issue 7)

There were Front members in almost every region of the country, and this potential was scattered. Embracing the legacy also meant gathering this potential. In this direction, Party-Front members in Ankara and Istanbul came together and began publishing the magazine Devrimci Gençlik in 1975.

The years 1975-76 were also years in which fascist terror went onto the attack. This was a new situation for the left. The question of what kind of struggle should be waged against fascist terror was on the agenda. The answer to this question would once again distinguish defending the THKP-C from denying it. Dayı's outlook on this question brought him to the fore in practical terms. Through correct policies appropriate to the Party-Front line, Dayı became a militant organiser and leader of the rising anti-fascist struggle in neighbourhoods and schools. In those years the revolutionary movement was the first and only movement to answer fascist terror in the language it understood.

Dayı was the one who led this process. This daring of Dayı was a daring deriving its strength from the claim to power and nourished by the strategic line. Step by step, a new organisation took shape within this militant anti-fascist practice. Meanwhile, after the magazine Devrimci Gençlik began publication, in 1976 the Federation of Revolutionary Youth Associations (Dev-Genç) was founded through the coming together of the Higher Education Associations in Istanbul, Ankara and Erzurum. Creating the unity of the Party-Front members and securing ideological unity were defined as fundamental tasks. Yet the cadres of Devrimci Gençlik magazine in Ankara were far from a

publishing line that would secure ideological unity. Because of the rightist outlook in Ankara, an active line of struggle against fascism could not be realised either.

In contrast to the passivity in places where the Ankara faction was influential, the understanding of struggle shaped under the leadership of the Party-Front members developed in provinces such as Istanbul, Bursa, Edirne, Konya and Tekirdağ by forcing fascist terror to retreat. On one side were the "old" cadres, and on the other the young militants led by Dayı. The old cadres followed a bureaucratic, legalistic and spontaneous right line and belittled the young. In April 1977 the Devrimci Yol Declaration was issued with the aim of reaching a central organisation; but problems began even as it was being issued, because the rightist Ankara faction was slyly beginning to put forward its denialism. The egocentric structure of the Ankara group was beginning to reveal itself.

Political Daring and a Revolutionary Separation

In the course of the process, ideological differentiation began to reveal itself more clearly. These years were a turning point in the question of whether the ideology of the THKP-C would be kept alive. Dayı's historical role emerged precisely at this point.

In February 1978, Dayı and the other leading cadres went to Ankara and discussed the problems one final time.

Then a meeting attended by forty leading cadres was held at the İTÜ-DER premises. At this meeting it was decided to keep the ideology of the THKP-C alive. On 1 May 1978 they marched against denialism and liquidationism behind the banner "Our Road Is the Road of the Çayans"; the THKP-C legacy was embraced with a mass force. Separation from the denialist-liquidationist faction was now unavoidable.

Dayı's leadership also revealed itself in a principled separation whose feet were on the ground. Dayı describes this process as follows: "Despite all the disadvantages and situations that were difficult to endure, the maximum patience and flexibility that had to be shown were shown; conduct was always principled and open; and when the point had been reached where no one could any longer say 'this too should have been done'... the separation was brought onto the agenda at the correct moment, without ever resorting to conspiracies or traps, in a completely revolutionary manner."

Dayı's daring to be able to stand alone opened the road to a new movement: a brochure entitled Liquidationism in the Devrimci Yol Movement and the Revolutionary Line was prepared. The separation was discussed in meetings held province by province. These discussion meetings too were a first. They were the practical reflection of the self-confidence of Dayı and the revolutionary movement. A powerful ideological struggle was waged against Devrimci Yol liquidationism. In this process Dayı was the determining figure who embraced the ideology of the THKP-C.

(*) This article was published in YÜRÜYÜŞ for Independence, Democracy and Socialism, dated 29 March 2009.

From Mahir to Dayı

39 Years on the Road of Revolution - 3

Test, Resistance, Offensive

At a meeting held in December 1978, decisions were taken concerning the new organisation. The 20 December Decisions determined the development of the movement. A new organisation was now entering the stage of history. The name of this organisation was REVOLUTIONARY LEFT. There were inadequacies, of course, but the struggle against fascism would be developed through the understanding of learning war within war.

This daring departure took place under Dayı's leadership. Dayı took the THKP-C potential out from under the control of the liquidationists and directed it into a new organisation. A practice aimed at rapidly answering the needs of the struggle against fascism was developed.

Gültepe Centre in Istanbul, which the fascists held under occupation, was raided in what until then was the most comprehensive military action on the left and the one involving the largest number of cadres. Many fascist targets in the neighbourhood were struck and destroyed simultaneously. This action also showed how the line to be followed in the struggle against fascism would take shape. Yet, interestingly, while the revolutionary movement was turning towards such a process, this was also a period in which DY attacks took place and DY members tried to obstruct the activity of the revolutionary movement. Dayı, meanwhile, took an absolutely clear position against violence within the left. He rejected proposals for "responding to the attacks" and turned this situation into education on violence within the left. Indeed, years later it would be seen much more clearly how right Dayı had been on this point.

REVOLUTIONARY LEFT IS THE INVINCIBILITY OF THE PARTY-FRONT. It is the uninterrupted continuation of the determination for revolution and claim to power embodied in the THKP-C. "The naked objective is to make revolution. There is no obligation for this to fit one mould or another. On the contrary, every revolution flows in its own riverbed and creates its own form. This is what we mean when we say the struggle does not proceed through prescriptions." (Revolutionary Left, Issue 7)

At this point, Mahir's words "We set out to make revolution in the Turkey of the world" and the words of the Defence, "We will shake the world once again, this time from Turkey," reflect the same objective and claim.

The objective is simple and clear. The objective is TO MAKE REVOLUTION. Strategy, tactics, organisation and forms of struggle - everything is shaped according to the objective of revolution. Thanks to the leadership of Mahir and Dayı, the axis of the revolutionary course never deviated. Organisations that deviated from this axis could not become permanent, however great a mass force or armed-struggle practice they may have possessed at one stage or another. The ideological continuity of the Party-Front line is due to not deviating from this objective and this direction.

With the founding of Revolutionary Left, the THKP-C became “indestructible” in material and organisational terms as well. The legacy had now fused with an organisation that would carry it under every condition. In the Congress Documents Dayı describes the relationship between Revolutionary Left and the THKP-C as follows: “The relationship between Revolutionary Left and the THKP-C is not a simple phenomenon that can be taken up merely through similarities in ideology and discourse. The unity of Revolutionary Left and the THKP-C finds expression in ideology, practice and politics, but above all in the responsibility felt towards our people and the peoples of the world, in the spiritual formation created by this responsibility, in self-sacrifice, determination, consciousness of power and, when necessary, not hesitating to sacrifice one’s life.”

The THKP-C was a first in taking armed struggle as the foundation of strategy. Revolutionary Left followed it. Because taking power is not possible without armed struggle. The relationship between armed struggle and power was set out in a publication of the revolutionary movement as follows: “Whether armed struggle is taken as fundamental was then, and remained afterwards, the basic point of separation. It is a point of separation because the only revolutionary line capable of making the objective of power possible is taking armed struggle as fundamental. Those who do not take it as fundamental, whatever they may say in words, are outside and distant from the struggle for power. In this sense it can be said that, from the point of view of the Turkish revolution, the beginning of a struggle aimed at power is the beginning of the 1970s.” (Revolutionary Left, Issue 9)

The THKP-C, physically destroyed at Kızıldere, had not been defeated. Revolutionary Left, which represented its invincibility within history, embraced the legacy of Mahir and his comrades at every level; the revolutionary march under the leadership of Dayı and Revolutionary Left took shape upon this legacy.

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In the Footsteps of Our Leaders Who Rejected Dogmatism...

The period from the founding of Revolutionary Left to the 12 September junta was a little over two years. It was an extremely intense period. In such a short time Revolutionary Left became one of the principal movements on the left. Here we will not go into the practical actions of this period; rather, we will set out the understanding with which the process was approached.

Dayı, a student of Mahir, who taught that Marxism-Leninism had to be regarded as a guide to action, likewise analysed the concrete situation and brought forward new organisations appropriate to the process. In organising the struggle there was never schematism or imitation. Things that did not exist in Mahir’s period existed in Dayı’s. Because what determined the character of organisations was whether or not they answered the needs of the process. Neither Mahir nor Dayı treated Marxism-Leninism as a template or dogma. Mahir had expressed his approach to this question at the time as follows: “Marxism is a doctrine that continuously deepens, enriches itself and surpasses itself in the face of the new realities of life. In Marxism what is essential is not the words but the content. The only unchanging thing in Marxism is, in Lenin’s words, its living soul, the dialectical method. If the concepts of time and place, the two most elementary elements of dialectics, are not taken into account, it becomes possible to speak of Lenin’s revisionism according to Marx and Engels, of Mao Tse-tung’s according to Lenin and Stalin, and, according to Mao, of the revisionism of the victorious proletarian revolutionaries of imperialism’s third crisis period.” (Collected Writings, p. 288)

Following the same understanding, Dayı emphasised: “In the development of revolution, plans, programmes, tactics and forms of organisation cannot remain unchanged from the beginning of the process to the end. To insist that they remain so means sterilising Marxism-Leninism... directly rejecting dialectical change and development in society and the system. The development of revolutionary war adopts new tactics according to every changing situation and, without changing its fundamental-strategic organisational perspectives and aims, rapidly changes everything in order to reach this strategic objective and aim. (...) Since our revolutionary movement entered the political arena, by correctly analysing concrete conditions and our specific situation, while preserving its strategic-fundamental views it has resorted to many different policies at the level of tactics, objectives and organisation.” (Kurtuluş, Issue 16, 27 May 1995)

As a result of this understanding, for example, against civilian fascist terror that came onto the agenda on a scale not present in the period of Mahir and his comrades, new forms of struggle and organisation were developed; at the end of the 1970s new organisations such as Armed Struggle Teams Against Fascist Terror (FTKSMEs) and Armed Revolutionary Units (SDBs) were established. (This creative line would continue in the 1990s too; new forms would be developed in armed struggle and mass organisation, new traditions would be added to the struggle in the prisons and in every field, and the ideological and theoretical determinations of the THKP-C would be developed and elaborated.)

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12 September and New Tests Overcome Through the Movement’s Leadership...

The development of the movement was interrupted by the 12 September Junta. While the objective of revolution and the obligatory tasks of difficult periods were forgotten by a large part of the left, the revolutionary movement was essentially alone in this process.

Against 12 September, the campaign “The Junta Cannot Force 45 Million People to Surrender” was launched. For around six months, armed struggle against the junta was conducted at a high level. In this process, remaining in the country and organising resistance were taken as fundamental.

Dayı was taken prisoner at the very beginning of the resistance process against the junta. While the struggle continued under Niyazi Aydın’s responsibility, he increasingly came to the fore in the struggle in the prisons. An uncompromising line of resistance was created in the prisons too against the attacks aimed at forcing the prisoners to surrender.

The Turkish left had experienced its first intense, mass resistance practice in prisons in the period of Mahir and his comrades. Although there were inadequacies in questions such as resistance, escape and political defence, the seeds of the first traditions had been planted then. Now it was time to develop those traditions. The legacy of the THKP-C would be taken over in this field too and developed on a much higher level.

This line of resistance was once again shaped politically and practically under Dayı’s leadership.

When the Revolutionary Left Main Case began on 15 March 1982, the campaign “The Junta Cannot Put Revolutionaries on Trial” was also launched outside. At the first hearing it was declared very clearly to the junta that they could not force revolutionaries to surrender. In 1982, the “No to the Fascist Constitution” campaign answered the junta in the country and abroad. In November 1983,

while the junta's manoeuvres of civilianisation continued, the attacks of the "civilian" ANAP government in the prisons were increasing. The Death Fast came onto the agenda in such a process.

On 12 April 1984, the resistance was begun in Metris by Revolutionary Left and TİKB prisoners. When the hunger strike was turned into a Death Fast from its forty-fifth day, Dayı was among the Death Fast resisters announced to the masses. Dayı's attitude was a historical answer to the distorted understandings that had created a status quo in the prisons, such as "what matters is the struggle outside" and "we must protect the cadres". Concerning this period Dayı stated: "This resistance was also a process in which almost everyone, the masses, cadres and leadership, passed through a new test and our ideological soundness was tested." (Congress Documents 1)

The movement passed this test with honour in every respect. This was a process in which Dayı's leadership mission was reinforced. This resistance was an expression of Dayı's confidence and belief in the cadres who would remain behind if he were martyred. This process was indisputable proof that the revolutionary movement could not be diverted from its line... Under Dayı's leadership, and with the four martyrs given, the Death Fast resistance demolished the oligarchy's policy of forcing surrender in the prisons, while above all becoming a new tradition of struggle for the left and a call to rise up against the silence continuing outside.

The Claim to Represent Marxism-Leninism

on a World Scale

The results of the resistances created in the prisons and of persistence in continuing organisation outside however difficult the conditions began to be obtained in the second half of the 1980s. The movement began to develop rapidly among workers, students, civil servants, prisoners' relatives and gecekondu residents.

In fact, the period in which this development took place was also a period when the movement had taken a decision to "retreat". A decision to retreat was taken after 1985. But the movement's understanding that broke status quos showed itself here too; the retreat would not be implemented as "suspending the struggle", as opportunism and revisionists treated it. On the contrary, while the tasks of retreat were being fulfilled, attempts would also be made to answer the needs of the struggle. Dayı described the retreat process as one that "had to be shaped principally in a manner that would enable us to regroup, accumulate strength, restart the armed struggle in a stable way and accelerate our process of becoming a Party." (Congress Documents 1)

In 1988, prisoners in the Revolutionary Left Case began reading a defence entitled We Are Right, We Will Win in the Main Case. This Defence was a first in terms of its political scope. It was a first in terms of the collectivism of its preparation. While turning the courtroom into a position of resistance, the Defence also opened the way ideologically for the movement.

In October 1989, Dayı ended his captivity through an action for freedom. The escape was also the herald of a new period in organisational and political terms.

Just as Mahir and his comrades had run into the struggle through escape, the cadres and militants of the revolutionary movement who came outside through actions for freedom did the same. In

resistance, defence, escape, Kızıldere and the Death Fasts, the objective was always the same: to continue the revolution. The fact that Mahir and Dayı developed the same or similar attitudes in many processes derived from the same ideological clarity and understanding of revolutionism.

After regaining his freedom, Dayı again broke new ground by asking the cadres for “approval for the leadership”. With the approval given by all the movement’s advanced cadres, he once again continued his mission at the head of the movement.

Dayı rejected the proposal that he go abroad. He would later say on this question: “Until our movement had risen to its feet again and planted itself firmly in the soil, raised the banner of armed struggle again and revived the hopes of our people, our martyrs and our prisoners, securing my personal safety and my being abroad would have no meaning.” (Congress Documents, p. 103)

After the escape, Mahir and Dayı had the same concern: reorganising the armed struggle.

What made them think this way was the strategy of revolution they defended. Raising the armed struggle was taken up not merely through an understanding of resistance but with the objective of power.

In August 1990, as a result of assessments conducted under Dayı’s leadership, the brochure Where Are We on the Road? was published. The brochure drew attention to the importance of not surrendering to objective conditions, not deviating from the strategic objective, and to wrong tendencies and weaknesses among cadres; it answered where the process of becoming a Party stood and showed how the road would be continued.

The Offensive was carried out upon these assessments. The Offensive was necessary and important, because, as Dayı said: “Revolution is not a phenomenon that appears through a fait accompli... it is formed as a result of phenomena we can call dozens of small revolutions, breaking down the objectivities and status quos of the system.”

While demoralisation and surrender were being experienced on the left with the collapse of the socialist system, the revolutionary movement was beginning a period in which the struggle would be raised. What made it possible to succeed in this process was “daring and initiative”. Above all, Dayı’s daring and claim stamped themselves upon the movement.

Rapid development was experienced in every field, mass and armed. Actions expressing the people’s justice developed. The rise of armed struggle in our country also drew the attention of imperialism. At the same time this meant the beginning of a policy of attack against the revolutionary movement. This had already been taken into account.

Even if alone, Revolutionary Left possessed the honour of insisting on defending socialism and armed struggle. Dayı was ambitious and expressed this claim by saying: “We had to be among the representatives of Marxism-Leninism not only in our country but in the world.” And so it was.

Amid the rapidly developing and spreading war, the movement was subjected to a major operation; on 12 July 1991, ten Revolutionary Leftists, including leading cadres of the movement, were massacred: “12 July is not an isolated attack. It is the result of a definite policy and... the reality of war reaching its clearest form. ... This date is, in the history of the Turkish Revolution, the

oligarchy's attack to destroy the Turkish Revolution so that it will never rise again." (Revolutionary Left, Issue 9)

The continuers of the Party-Front tradition, "by risking physical destruction, in reality built the future of the revolutionary movement." The losses of 12 July were great, but they were compensated for in a short time and the struggle continued. The policy of annihilation continued with the 16-17 April operation. But the oligarchy did not succeed in destroying the movement. Twenty years after Kızıldere, the flag waving at Çiftehavuzlar was also proof that revolutionaries could not be finished through massacres. The echo of the daring of Kızıldere, "We came here not to return, but to die," became at Çiftehavuzlar the cry, "our flag will wave in every part of the country."

(*) This article was published in YÜRÜYÜŞ for Independence, Democracy and Socialism, dated 5 April 2009.

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From Mahir to Dayı

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39 Years on the Road of Revolution - 4

The Revolutionary Movement will now continue marching to power with the strength it draws from Mahir and Dayı, whose names are now counted in the caravan of martyrs, and from its history.

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The Party, Hope and the March to Victory

The revolutionary movement lost its leading cadres on 12 July and then on 16-17 April. The slogan "Comrades, Surpass Us" became the fundamental slogan of all Revolutionary Leftists. By turning every blow into internal education, the leadership ensured that the movement continued from where it had left off. Dayı's leadership gave strength to all cadres at such difficult times and enabled them to trust themselves. This was also the case after 12 July and 16-17 April: "This period has been a process in the history of our movement filled with very great lessons, educating all of us, compressing into a short period experiences that could have taken years to learn, maturing everyone a little more, sharpening our hatred and anger against the enemy, making us trust ourselves much more, and teaching us that we must persistently renew ourselves."

The struggle never advances along a straight line. Mahir's words "the road of revolution is rugged, winding and steep" are virtually proved anew every day in the Turkish revolution. While the movement was healing the wounds of 12 July and 16-17 April, it faced a new "blow". But this time the blow came from "inside". The one seeking to strike at our future was not the external enemy but the internal enemy.

On 13 September 1992, the betrayal that emerged by taking the Leader of the movement prisoner at the central base seized the movement's administration, archives and money and caused extensive exposure. Like almost all betrayals in history, it occurred after great attacks, losses and difficult turning points.

The political end awaiting those frightened by the prices brought by the reality of war is reformism or betrayal and desertion from war: "The reason why people such as Münir Aktolga and Yusuf Küpeli,

who had occupied the highest levels of the THKP-C, turned into worms gnawing at the Party from within; why a movement such as Devrimci Yol, which in one form or another had been inside armed struggle and had given hundreds of martyrs, turned into the ÖDP; and why those who, like the ones who carried out the 13 September coup, had occupied one position or another within the revolutionary movement were dragged into betrayal, is nothing other than this."

Just as the betrayal of Münir and the others in the THKP-C appeared after the first martyrdoms and imprisonments, the betrayal of 13 September appeared after 12 July and 16-17 April. Although Dayı had been taken prisoner by the coup plotters, his sole concern was the movement. When the coup was made public, the overwhelming majority of the movement's cadres and supporters condemned it. This period, in which an attempt was made to destroy the leadership, turned into a process in which consciousness of leadership developed and the cadres embraced the leadership even more strongly.

The March Reaches Its First Objective:

The Party Is Recreated

The leadership had emerged with honour from another test before history. The master of creating victories from defeats and offensives from blows, after three events experienced at short intervals that had caused the movement serious losses, once again persistently and determinedly directed the movement towards the objective of becoming a Party.

When the Kurtuluş Group was formed as the first organisation after Kızıldere, and when Revolutionary Left was founded against Devrimci Yol denialism, recreating the Party had always been the foremost objective. Now, after travelling difficult roads, they had reached that point. The Party Founding Congress convened under Dayı's leadership. Through collective discussions, assessments and one-to-one conversations, the Congress took shape within its own originality. In Dayı's words, nothing under the vault of heaven was left undiscussed. The Congress realised what the peoples and revolutionaries of Turkey had been waiting for. On 30 March 1994, the foundation of the Revolutionary People's Liberation Party-Front was proclaimed.

The sixteen-year dream had now been realised. It had not been easy. As Dayı said when describing how the Congress was reached: "While creating history, we learned to fight and organise. We came to know our internal and external enemies better. We learned that almost everything had to be torn away from the enemy through labour, self-sacrifice and force. Without living this history, without completing this process of learning, without passing through tests in many fields of struggle, this congress could not have taken place."

To become a Party, to recreate the Party, was to reach one of the first objectives and to fulfil a promise given to the peoples of Turkey. The Party meant power drawing still closer. It meant "being Party members, living as Party members, fighting as Party members and marching to revolution". But this would now make the duties still heavier. As stated in the Congress Report: "To be a Party member meant a higher consciousness of power, a more developed war. ... The Party means greater ideological confidence and, with this confidence, raising the war still further, enlarging the hopes of the masses of the people and bringing power closer." "All our effort, all our activities, the essentials of

our style of work, the programmes of every field, region and unit, of individual cadres and special-task units, have to be locked onto this strategic objective."

The revolutionary march would now continue with the Party. By the Party, meanwhile, "we understand an organisation equipped with Marxist-Leninist theory, capable of taking power, carrying the anti-imperialist, anti-oligarchic people's revolution through the strategy of uninterrupted revolution to classless society (...), capable of leading the masses under every condition and securing social transformations." The Party-Front was founded with this understanding, and on the rugged and winding roads of revolution the march would now proceed under its strategic command.

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This Time Dayı Is a Prisoner in the Hands of Imperialism

Kızıldere is the road to power. The DHKP-C too was determination to walk with faster steps on the road to power. The dream of the Party had been realised under Dayı's leadership. But on 9 September 1994, before the foundation of the Party had yet been proclaimed, Dayı was taken prisoner by French imperialism. Dayı, the Leader of Revolutionary Left, now carried the title General Secretary of the DHKP. But this had not yet been announced to the people. The founding of the Party-Front was announced while Dayı was a prisoner, on 29 September 1994, through the action carried out against former Justice Minister Mehmet Topaç.

In this process, in the struggle conducted under the slogan "Freedom for Dursun Karataş" and with the determination "We will win this war too", what was now being demanded was not the freedom of the "Leader of Revolutionary Left" but of the "General Secretary of the DHKP-C". As a result of the campaign conducted, French imperialism was forced to release Dayı, and Dayı once again practically assumed his duties under conditions of illegality.

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Hope Has Been Named Again

The founding of the Party-Front created great enthusiasm in revolutionary ranks and among the people who had placed their Hope in revolution. Before long this enthusiasm would reveal itself in all its splendour in Gazi and on 1 May.

Dayı had foreseen this development in his Congress speech: "The weapon of the Party-Front is now in our hands. When we know how to use this weapon professionally, we will see ourselves growing and developing very rapidly every day in armed action, guerrilla war, mass character, democratic positions, ideological struggle and the art of management, and we will see that we are the masses' Hope of liberation, the only alternative to the system."

The Gazi Uprising of March 1995 was an expression of such a development. The will and power of the Party revealed themselves in Gazi. The Party leadership and Party cadres lived through a new process in Gazi and gained new experiences in leading the masses towards revolution against fascism.

The emergence of the Party-Front with all its strength showed itself most magnificently on 1 May. Fifteen thousand people in 1995 and thirty thousand in 1996 marched behind banners bearing the name of Hope. This picture showed the strength of the revolutionary dynamics in our country. Despite all the attacks and manipulation of the oligarchy, the poor people were marching not in the ranks of

“risk-free” reformist parties but in the ranks of revolution. “The Name of Hope Is DHKP-C” was the slogan shouted most often and most powerfully in the squares. The picture showed how determination, daring and their expression, the Party-Front, had become a centre of attraction for the masses. Despite betrayals, coups, all policies of annihilation and the operations experienced, the Party-Front had succeeded in becoming the organised strength of the people.

After the founding of the Party, the oligarchy further intensified its attacks on the revolutionary movement. Dayı explained these attacks as follows: “The fact that enemy attacks are directed especially at the Party-Front and that they show the Party-Front as almost the single target for all enemy forces is because in the Party-Front they see the great power and consciousness of power that are dangerous to them.”

Despite all attacks, Dayı emphasised that there was no road other than growing the armed struggle, organising the people, increasing the people’s organisations, and being planned and persistent.

What had to be done was patiently to go to the masses and organise the people. People’s Committees, People’s Assemblies, Struggle and Defence Committees were brought onto the agenda as organisations capable of opening the way in this process.

This process was at the same time one in which armed struggle was developed. Guerrilla war was raised again in the countryside and the cities. More cadres, more actions and more organisation were targeted.

The resistance in June 1995 of eighteen-year-old Commander Sibel (Sibel Yalçın), the calling to account in 1996 of monopoly capitalist Sabancı in his own headquarters for what he had done, and the taking of steps to organise guerrilla warfare in rural areas from the Aegean to the Mediterranean and Black Sea were expressions of persistence in an armed struggle aimed at power.

As Mahir had said years before, the Turkish revolution needed a war organisation, and this was what Dayı was trying to develop. In every period, every organisation and every action was always shaped according to the objective of power. This claim and this spirit were continuously spread from top to bottom, and cadres were educated on this basis.

The Leadership of the Party and the Attacks Directed at the Party

The 1996 Death Fast resistance was an expression, as in many areas of life, of the Party’s strategic policies and unifying role on the prison front.

The struggle against Susurluk was another important process in which the Party’s policies, its leadership in struggle and its influence over the masses were concretely seen. The “one minute of darkness” actions were transformed under the leadership of the Party-Front into actions in which the poor people of the gecekondu neighbourhoods came into the squares, called the state to account and demanded justice. In order to limit the revolutionary movement’s influence, the oligarchy tried to create the ground for attack with rhetoric such as “DHKP-C came out from under the candle”, but did not succeed. Because the rhetoric “DHKP-C came out from under the candle” did not cause the actions to narrow in any way. Politically, meanwhile, the determination that most correctly explained the process was the slogan “Susurluk Is the State”. From that day until today this slogan has had

special importance as an expression of the clarity of the Party's policies and determinations. Despite all speculation and all information pollution aimed at confusing the minds of the people and the left, let us emphasise Dayı's role in the persistence in this clarity. He continuously insisted that this determination be repeated and elaborated on every occasion. The correctness and justification of this persistence are being seen once again today.

During the few years following the founding of the Party, while the oligarchy intensified its attacks against all the people, one of its priority targets, especially in its policies of execution, torture and disappearance, was the DHKP-C. Party-Front Sivas-Kayseri-Tokat Responsible Ayşenur Şimşek, Central Anatolia Regional Responsible Mustafa Selçuk and Kemal Askeri, one of the commanders of the İbrahim Erdoğan Rural Guerrilla Units, were killed in this process. Likewise, massacres were carried out in Buca and Ümraniye prisons openly targeting Party-Front prisoners.

From Terror Lists to Isolation;

History Was Written with the Party-Front Tradition and Will

The end of the 1990s and the 2000s were a period in which imperialism and the oligarchy launched a comprehensive attack against all opposition movements and specifically against revolutionaries, aimed both at ideological liquidation and physical liquidation.

The attack was many-sided. Terror demagogy and terror lists were one aspect. For a long period, the oligarchy made endless efforts to have the DHKP-C banned outside Turkey and placed on "terror lists". So much so that this became one of the central questions in its relations and bargaining with Europe.

The DHKP-C, which had already been on the United States' "terror list" for years, was also placed on the European Union's "list of terrorist organisations" at the request of the oligarchy and the United States. Its activities were sought to be obstructed. The United States declared the DHKP-C one of five organisations it regarded as "priority targets" throughout the world. As a continuation of this, DHKP-C Leader Dursun Karataş was also a target throughout this entire process. Dayı was both a target of psychological warfare and of the oligarchy's counter-guerrilla forces. But they did not have the power to "strike" him politically or physically.

The placing of the revolutionary movement on "terror lists" by the United States and the EU essentially meant nothing to the revolutionary movement. Because this movement was on these lands.

The most important dimension of this attack to liquidate and destroy revolutionary organisations and revolutionary ideology came onto the agenda in the prisons. With the F-Type prisons a new attack aimed at forcing revolutionary prisoners to surrender was put into operation. Physically, cells and isolation stood at the centre of this attack.

Against this attack, a resistance without equal in the history of our country and the world was carried out. It would not be wrong to say that the strategist, fighter and everything of this resistance was the Party-Front.

The 2000-2007 Great Resistance can be described as a great test for the Party-Front. All the policies and traditions that had brought the Revolutionary Movement into being since Kızıldere grew and were reinforced still further in this resistance. A process was lived through in which self-sacrifice became a mass phenomenon and resistance became of the people. Every moment and every step of the Great Resistance was shaped under Dayı's leadership. In this resistance the Revolutionary Movement was once again left "alone", yet since 1974 Dayı had become a master at walking with the determination "despite everyone and everything". The movement's cadres, fighters and supporters had for years been shaped with this consciousness. With this consciousness and mastery, the oligarchy's attack of "isolation" was repelled inside and outside. An epic was written in which 122 martyrs were given. Under the leadership of the Party-Front and its Leader Dayı, an unprecedented new page was added to the resistance tradition of the peoples of Turkey and the world.

And of course the struggle did not end there. From keeping alive the anti-imperialist tradition of the Turkish people to winning 1 May Square, and from defending Marxism-Leninism against civil-societyism and EUism, developments in many fields continue to be shaped by Party-Front policies and traditions.

As we end with this section our series in which we have tried to summarise the history of Hope written under the leadership of Mahir and Dayı, let us state in conclusion:

There is no doubt that imperialism and the oligarchy will continue to attack this Hope created by thirty-nine years of history. Because the movement we are speaking of is a real alternative; it possesses "the rich experience and accumulation of a difficult, rich process, one in which prices were paid and made to be paid, and every day passed in great struggles", which could only be summarised very briefly in this series. This is why imperialism and the oligarchy attack. They see an alternative before them, and "No ruling-class power can tolerate an alternative that has emerged to change its system fundamentally. They do not tolerate it; they try to destroy it."

This is also what accords with the nature of the class struggle. And equally in accordance with the nature of the class struggle, the Revolutionary Movement will emerge victorious from this war. The Revolutionary Movement will continue marching to power with the strength it draws from Mahir and Dayı, whose names are now counted in the caravan of martyrs, and from its history.

(*) This article was published in YÜRÜYÜŞ for Independence, Democracy and Socialism, dated 12 April 2009.

in photographs

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We grew with HIM,
we became healthy with HIM,
we marched with HIM in the revolution,
we broke through the barriers imposed by our
internal and external enemies with HIM,
we will shatter the traps laid against HIM,
we accept the destruction brought by betrayal and
we will no longer let our hope be extinguished.
The value and traditions HE created have always been
by our side, in our work and in our future.
We will never forget HIS determination and persistence.
For this reason, we are not only grieving for HIM,
we are also drawing strength from HIM.
His ideas in morality, culture, ideology, thought, practice,
among the people, in the revolution, in self-confidence,
and in the struggle between revolutionaries and counter-revolutionaries
have left deep traces in us.
He was our greatest strength, the greatest weapon.
A strength in this world that no power can overcome.
It was Marxism–Leninism.
With HIM we will carry our revolutionary march to victory.
This book contains the accounts of those who knew HIM.
This book contains the feelings and thoughts of the fighters
who stood under HIS leadership.