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Free the total objector Mehmet Tarhan

Turkish gay, anarchist, and total military objector
Mehmet Tarhan taken into custody

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April 14, 2005

Gay, anarchist, and total objector Mehmet Tarhan has been taken into custody by the police force in Izmir, while he was staying in a hotel and has been sent to military bureau. Now Mehmet Tarhan is insisting on continuing his civil disobedience action and if necessary, he will start a hunger strike. At Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir groups have been formed to support Mehmet Tarhan and are working to organise a big campaign. One of the discussion points nowadays is to make total objection announcements totally. The results of our discussions and the content of campaigns will be announced on anarchist and anti-militarist websites.

Military and civic fascist organisations have started to attack Kurds, trying to lynch leftist groups at the streets, even the bureaus of DEHAP (a legal political party for the rights of Kurds) and of leftist groups are shown as places to be attacked. All these reactionary acts are 'legitimised' by news that two children aged 12 have tried to burn the Turkish flag at Mersin.

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Retrieved on 8th August 2021 from www.anarkismo.net

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Anarchists and antimilitarists are also affected by this racist wave. Mehmet Tarhan who is taken into custody will be sent to a military unit in a day (we have just learned that he is at his way), and will be forced to serve as a soldier.

As far as we are informed about the discussions held in the bureau, the Turkish military force is determined to attack all total and conscientious objectors living at Turkey, and make us obey their rules. So, we as antimilitarist people are expecting to confront a very difficult period ahead. It is very likely we will experience mass trials soon.

For this reason we are calling all the anarchist, antiauthoritarian and antimilitarist groups living in other countries to arrange actions and campaigns to oppose the Turkish state. If we can't resist against this wave, the anarchisht and antimilitarist movement of this country will loose its effectiveness.

In order to prevent this danger, all the antimilitarist and antiauthoritarian groups have gathered together as the first step of a long campaign. We expect that our comrades will support and act with us.

We know that they can't stop us by imprisoning, killing or ignoring us.

Revolution is anywhere, and nothing will suppress it!

Update: Mehmet Tarhan was taken to Tokat via Sivas on 9 April 2005, handcuffed with gendarmes [police] next to him. Approximately 20 antimilitarists and anarchists; did not leave him to go alone. We went to the main coach station and found Mehmet by looking one by one into each and every bus, and contrary to the flag-wavering soldier farewells, we saw Mehmet off with applause and slogans like "the best objector is our objector!"(in contrast to the popular "the best soldier is our soldier"), "peace is proud of you" (instead of "this nation is proud of you") . Before the action, we had the chance to chat a

little with Mehmet, but than the atmosphere intensified as he was put into the bus and although it wasn't yet the departure time the bus doors were closed and the police were called.