

PEN American Center

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(212) 255-4009 PEN Freedom to Write

April 26, 1984

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Mr. Richard R. Burt
Assistant Secretary for European Affairs
Main State Department Building
2201 C Street, N.W.
Washington D.C. 20520

Dear Mr. Secretary:

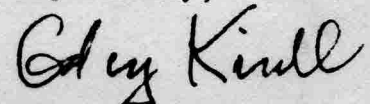
We have recently sent the following cable to Prime Minister Turgut Ozal in Turkey:

1900 writers of American Center, International PEN, are very concerned with the climate for freedom of expression in Turkey. We are seriously worried over the conditions at Metris and Sagmalcilar prisons, where imprisoned students, Peace Association members, and other intellectuals are on the fourteenth day of a hunger strike. We urge you to grant the six published demands of the hunger strikers. These demands allow recognition for them as being imprisoned for their ideas only. These prisoners are not common criminals. They are a credit to all who believe in freedom of expression and we implore you to recognize their fairness before there are deaths as there were at Metris last summer.

We beg to draw this cable to your attention because the writers of PEN American Center are greatly concerned for the conditions necessary for free writing and publishing in Turkey. We have been hopeful that the new civilian government and American support for that government might improve these conditions-- and we are fearful that the prisoner-of-conscience strikes at Metris and Sagmalcilar prisons show that progress may not be occurring.

We therefore appeal to you our concern, and hope for any interventions the American government may secure on behalf of ideals we share.

Respectfully,



Galway Kinnell
President, PEN
American Center

GK/peb

International PEN, an association of writers
—poets, playwrights, essayists, editors, novelists—
with centers in Europe, Asia, Africa, Australia and the Americas.