

Ten leftists condemned to death in Turkey

Istanbul (Reuter) - Ten leftist militants were sentenced to death yesterday by a military court in Istanbul.

The defendants, from the underground Turkish People's Liberation Front, were accused of forming an armed organization to overthrow the state, murder and robbery. A further 25 of the 197 defendants were sentenced to life imprisonment and 71 were given jail sentences of up to 23 years.

The case dates from the late 1970s when political violence was rife in Turkey. Military authorities began mass trials after their coup in 1980.

Sixty-four defendants were acquitted at the hearings and the case against 27 was adjourned.

Among those given jail terms

was Mr Ismet Imset, until last month Ankara correspondent of the news agency United Press International (UPI). He was sentenced to five years imprisonment reduced immediately by the court to four years and two months, plus a subsequent period of 16 months' internal exile.

The court ordered that he should not be detained until any appeal was heard.

A military court also confirmed jail sentences of up to eight years on 23 leaders of a Turkish peace campaign group but released six on bail

Those freed included a former ambassador, Mr Mahmut Dikerdem, president of the group; and a former head of the Istanbul bar association, Mr Orhan Apaydin.

Turks charged

Istanbul - Forty-eight leading intellectuals were charged yesterday with founding the Turkish Peace Association. The prosecution said they had followed the directives of the illegal Turkish Communist Party "aiming to set up a pro-Moscow Marxist regime in Turkey".

● MASS TRIAL: 48 more leading Turkish peace activists went on trial at an Istanbul military court yesterday, facing prison terms of 5 to 15 years on charges of founding or participating in the activities of a clandestine organization aimed at establishing a Marxist regime.

The members of the Turkish Peace Association, including well-known writers, lawyers, academics, journalists and artists, had been indicated on September 26. The prosecutor said they had been following the orders of the illegal Turkish Communist Party (TKP).