

WORKERS' PARTY OF TURKEY



"No to trustee rector" "Academicians will not surrender"

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Agenda in Turkey

Struggle against Crisis, Revolution against Capitalism

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Turkey entered 2020 with visible problems: Deepening economic crisis and increasing poverty, unemployment, workplace fatalities; attempts of the AKP regime to establish fascism and inability to overcome the governmental crisis ; all kinds of lawless attempts and oppression against the opposition, especially the socialist movement and Kurdish politics. What needs to be added to this is the Covid-19 pandemic. Pandemic did not create the problems of Turkey, but it deepened them.

Turkey has entered 2021 in the same way, but economic crisis, attempts to build fascism and oppression against the opposition have increased this time. In other words, Turkey has taken over the account yet to be settled in 2021.

AKP in an unstable country

Political sphere in Turkey has always been full of crises. The difference in AKP era is that AKP has successfully handled the crises that they have faced with the support of national and transnational capitalist class, imperialism and by winning elections with a comfortable margin. However, there have been changes as to these fields recently. The support from imperialism has been continuing, but it is not as direct and constant as before. Especially because of the uneven distribution of wealth in favour of the pro-government capitalist groups, Turkish capitalists have been opposing the tendencies and decisions of the govern-

ment. Most importantly, AKP's electoral hegemony has been declining radically and it has become less and less possible for the AKP-MHP alliance to win the elections in a new challenge.

To draw an analogy, AKP was a party with the mission to progress the neoliberal transformation of Turkey for a long time; however, in recent years this mission has lost its priority and AKP has been turned into a private firm whose utmost priority is to protect its power.

As an organisation whose sole aim is to retain its power at any rate, AKP has seen that the only way to do this is to terrorise the citizens, neutralise the opposition by means of jurisdiction, oppression, violence and censorship. In recent years, almost all of the regulations implemented by presidential decrees have been attacking the opposition and the citizens, restricting their rights to protest and organisation, making judicial proceedings more arbitrary.

In spite of the oppression and violence that can be compared to the military dictatorship of 12 September Junta, the AKP regime does not seem to have come over the problems it faces. In fact, Turkey has been effectively bankrupt with the deepening economic crisis and Covid-19 pandemic. Millions of workers continue to work precariously and get treated as if they were prisoners in a concentration camp. Nonetheless, a solution does not seem to have been found to prevent the decline of the electoral hegemony.

The political and governmental crisis in Turkey is deepening. In spite of having implemented fascistic laws and regulations with its ally, MHP, AKP continues to fear the power resistance of the opposition. Socialists, Kurdish politicians, dissident journalists, students, intellectuals and artists get imprisoned and stay in prison for years without standing trial. What is at hand in recent days is the possible changes in the electoral system and the act on political parties.



If these changes get implemented, Turkey will lose the last bits of free elections and democratic rule since AKP will remain in power despite its decreasing votes and political parties that hitherto have the right to participate in the elections will be deprived of this right according to the proposed regulations. This legislative proposal undoubtedly targets the socialist parties like TIP and representatives of Kurdish politics like HDP.

Search for a smooth transition by the establishment

The solution proposed by establishment parties, CHP and İYİ Party, against these moves of the regime and AKP-MHP alliance is based on a smooth transition. Former prime minister, minister of foreign affairs and minister of financial affairs during the AKP era, Ahmet Davutoğlu's and Ali Babacan's new parties, Gelecek Party and Deva Party, are also involved in the opposition camp whose aim is to continue the current regime without Erdoğan's excessive behaviour.

Since 12 September Junta, the neoliberal transformation of capitalism in Turkey has been massively progressed by AKP. In this sense, capitalist class in Turkey is satisfied by the social, political and governmental transformation implemented by AKP. However, having seen that the achievements of the capitalist class under the current regime are in danger as well as the whole system, the establishment politics have been in search for a smooth transition. The formula for this transition is to retain what has been offered to the capitalist class by the regime while making the system comparatively reasonable, re-establishing the



parliamentary system after Erdoğan and rechanelling the public dissent into a more moderate path. This search is not a restoration, it is rather a rehabilitation.

However, the establishment parties who are representatives of this search are not far from AKP in their basic approach to the political and social issues in Turkey. It does not seem possible to expect them to have a different agenda than AKP regarding the issues of improving the working and living conditions of the working class, islamisation of social relations, transferring funds to capitalists, further proceeding pro-market policies, promoting international violence and such. This approach of the establishment parties harms their credibility against AKP as well as preventing millions who can unite against AKP from coming together.

Socialists are on duty

In these circumstances, duties of the socialists are both more difficult and more immediate. The principle task of the Workers' Party of Turkey is to represent the working class in public and political sphere, develop a

massive radical opposition force and to channel this force into the goal of overthrowing the regime once and for all.

The goal of the revolutionaries today is to promote the socialist option against the bourgeois regime as it has always been in history. In order to achieve this, it is a must not to leave the workers, who are struggling to free themselves from the capitalist violence, alone with the dichotomies developed by the establishment. To make the crisis, which has been laid on the shoulders of the people, the crisis of the capitalist class and its government; to overthrow the AKP regime with the help of a radical social movement and to take the socialist revolutionary struggle a step further; Workers's Party of Turkey exists for these.

Translator: **METEHAN AKMAN**

CHANGE IN THE US: BEYOND TRUMP AND BIDEN



HAKAN GÜNEŞ

The events happened in the United States of America, the leader of the last 75 years of imperialist-capitalism, naturally concerns its opponents as much as its supporters, the people of the world as much as the American people. What does the new president mean inside and outside the country? Are the Congress Raid of Trump supporters a preview of a right-wing wave in the US from right populism to fascism? Is Trump's loss or Biden's victory more important for the US and the left wing of the world? What does the new president mean inside and outside the country? Are the Congress Raid of Trump supporters a harbinger of a right-wing wave in the US from right populism to fascism? Is Trump's loss or Biden's victory more important for the US and the left wing of the world? How all of these is reflected in the world, Turkey and the Middle East? After a highly controversial election, Biden's election

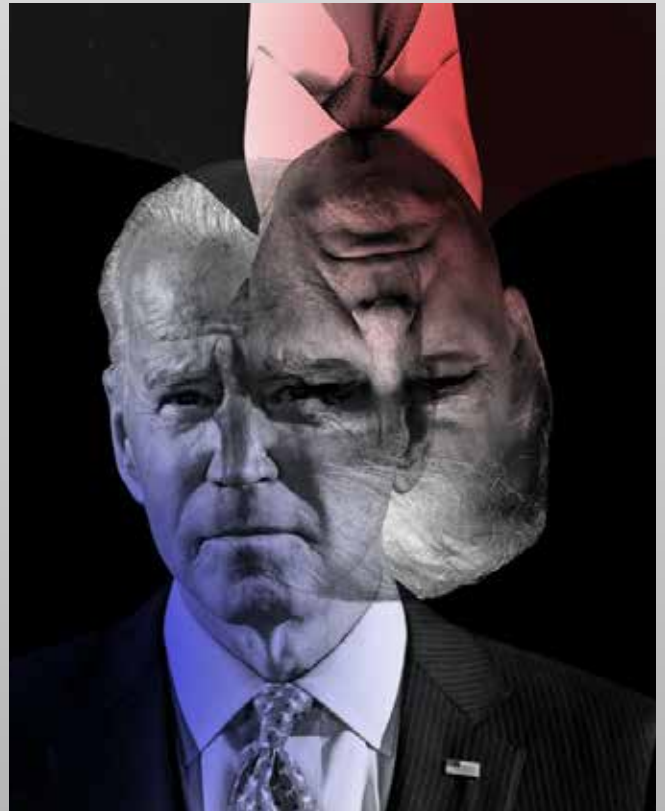
as President, ahead of Trump, despite a small margin, was welcomed by many as a blow to the Trump nightmare. Those most affected by Trump's policies, such as blacks, immigrants, the women's movement, LGBT + activists and environmentalists, celebrated the election of Biden and his deputy Harris in two ways: Biden's celebration of victory and Trump's loss celebration. The difference reflects the discrepancies that should be considered. Those who emphasize the victory of Biden and Harris on the anti-Trump front are very optimistic about the new period. Particularly because of Harris's identity, even liberal leftist circles believe that the 4-year nightmare with Trump will come to an end, and this process will be reflected in other countries. On the other hand, those who emphasize Trump's loss believe that the struggle has achieved a significant success, but Biden and Harris will only

patch the problems accumulated in the US domestic and foreign policy, with minor reforms, that is, they cannot solve the problems. The socialist left, anarchists, anarcho-ecologists, anti-fascists emphasize that the situation that emerged in the Congress raid is only a reflection of the established order in the USA. For them Trump is a symptom, a reflection of the deep social, economic, and political problems in the American system, in short, Trump is not the cause but the result of these events. In this respect, the struggle is just beginning.

Indeed, Biden's first statements, his first appointments and the first decrees he signed will give a certain sigh of relief to the Trump nightmare. However, they say nothing yet on fundamental and profound matters equally. It is highly probable that at the end of 4 years they still will not have said it. For this reason, both the left opposition within the Democratic Party and unparliamentary left groups, notably right conservative politics, especially the danger of fascism will make the discrimination faced by black people, the problem that health and education does not become a free public service, and the militarist-imperialist attitude in foreign policy a current issue in the period of Biden and Harris, this time against Biden and Harris.

It is not hard to guess that the American socialist left will not oppose Biden's efforts to put a certain end to the anti-immigrant, black, women and anti-lgbti + policies enacted under Trump. However, they express that they will not limit themselves to this, in a much louder voice than in the past. Especially among the younger generation of urban working people, the advocacy of social policy, which has been embodied in the demand for anti-fascist ideas on the one hand and the right to public health and education, is gaining strength. Just as England, Russia, as in Iran and Turkey. The US left seems to have blown the cobwebs away its 50-year-old dead soil, in a manner of speaking. It

reflects this situation that figures like Cortes or Sanders have gathered more supporters than ever before in the last half century. The organization of the anti-fa movement in all major cities of the USA, large and small, is not something to be ignored. Many different segments of the American socialist left movement are backing the self-confidence of downgrading Trump; however, they have publications stating that a more difficult period is ahead. Fascism debates, which came to the fore especially with the raid on the Congress, are a central common agenda here. The discussion highlights the distinction between fascism as a regime and fascism as a movement. The Trump era is not called a fascist era, according to popular argument, rather, it has the characteristics of being a right conservative populist period. However, finding its expression in Trump has gained strength both for the right-wing populist coalition and the fascist vein as never before. The debate on how to concretize a pragmatic, sustainable, continuing, and widespread anti-fascist struggle in the face of





this danger started before Biden took the oath ceremony and still continues. While those who see Biden and Harris as a solution express the view that danger has been avoided and removed, the socialist left have already begun to propagate that a fascist movement, which may be organized around a different leadership than Trump and in the future, is an extremely serious danger. Moreover, the working class seeks to bring the demands of the migrant, environment and women's movement to the centre of the anti-fascist struggle. On the other hand, the weakest topic of the left's increasingly massive arguments shows itself in the field of foreign policy. It is difficult to say that the US left has produced a strong enough counter-word to the Biden-Harris administration, which will now patronize militarist and imperialist politics with more "democratic" arguments in almost every corner of the world.

Nevertheless, the opportunity for the struggle against American capitalism to meet with the struggle against American imperialism is entering a much more likely period than it was yesterday. Trumpism's most popular channel, American Fox TV, is constantly broadcasting with asking, where

these young communists came from. It accuses the youth of not remembering the "Gulag" camps and laments the oblivion of "American values". Now, even though they have slightly muted due to the reaction against rightists after the congress raid, the American establishment will begin to flatter the neo-Nazis dressed in bear or deer skin in the face of the growing leftist formations. The liberal left, which sees Biden and Harris as hope, will take the test that Kautsky passed in 1914. Either the socialist revolutionary internationalist front-line or the reactionary militarist, racist imperialist-capitalist order front-line. A period in which socialists are not strong enough and are forced to choose between the right and left wings of the order each time is slowly falling behind. As in many countries of the world, as the anti-capitalist movement gets stronger, the ones who will have to choose will be others. That day has not been reached yet, but we see that it has come closer than it has been in the last 50 years. In this respect, it should be among our primary duties to see and show one step beyond the Biden and Trump debate.

Translator: CEREN BERK



THE RESISTANCE OF THE YOUTH INSPIRES US!

TİLBE AKAN



The AKP and Erdogan's regime has been attacking the universities for a long time. The person chosen by the Palace Regime from outside the university was appointed as the rector of Boğaziçi University. AKP did what the 1982 coup d'etat could not do with the opportunity of 15 July coup attempt; With the Statutory Decrees, he dismissed the opposition, democrat, socialist, leftist academicians from the university. The administration and the youth, whose strong resistance tradition could not be captured in universities such as Boğaziçi, and the youth that could not be silenced, were asked to be realized from the top with the cancellation of the rector elections. Appointments of the rector were linked to the Presidency. As a result of this situation, the rectors have been people who do not think about the benefits of the university and are at odds with university values. The appointed rector even turned him into a political figure who considered the interests of the government that brought him to that seat. Therefore, a democratic and autonomous structure in which university components have a say in both the presidential elections and university administration is essential for both the quality of education and the autonomous-free structure of universities.

It is the project of qualitative transformation in universities drawn from the management level. The governments, who cannot change the spirit of the

university, try to make the university playgrounds dependent on itself and the capital with legal regulations, it is easier by the trustee rectors. The Draft Higher Education Reform Presidency Policy Document published in 2020 is one of the most important signals of this change. This draft, which paves the way for people who have no ties to the university, and representatives of capital groups to take place in the management positions of the university, is a part of the purpose aimed with appointment rectors. It is our responsibility to protect or restore the autonomous and democratic structure of universities. University means science, art. It means an opposing stance against social problems. Not bowing down is the foundation of the university spirit. If we do not uphold these values, there will be nothing more than a few buildings left behind from the university. To recap, universities are the ones that add value there. It forms a whole with its worker, student and academician. Power cannot be an arm of political interests. We are in the field and call to be in the field until the presidential elections are held democratically and the blockade on universities is over. We are aware that no power can stand before an organized, strong and mass struggle. Today, calls for solidarity are rising from all over the world, from Greece to Italy and the USA, from Bogazici alumni and leftists and socialists. Youth struggle is one of the pioneers of hope again.



WORKERS PARTY OF TURKEY (TİP) CALLS FOR SOLIDARITY WITH STUDENTS AND ACADEMICS

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Turkey's Erdoğan Regime continues to undermine the rights and freedoms of individuals as well as the principle of autonomy of universities. On January 1, 2021, President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan used an "emergency decree" to appoint Professor Melih Bulu, a loyal member of the ruling party, rector of Boğaziçi University. Bulu is not a member of the Boğaziçi University faculty, which violates the established rules and practices of University governance.

Erdoğan Regime, seeking to dominate all areas in life, is trying to take over the Academy by violating all universal rules, since Erdoğan Regime cannot conquer Academy through other channels. Erdoğan Regime assigned Melih Bulu as the new rector of Boğaziçi University in Istanbul, who was not member of the university. Since then both students and academics of the university protest this decision of the regime despite all post-truth claims and provocations of the regime.

While the Erdoğan Regime describes students as terrorists, the police do not refrain from attacking students and raiding their homes. The last drop of their

Vandalism was the humiliating directive of the police ordering; "bend your heads" to those students who were peacefully leaving the campus.

Turkey stands up against the new rector appointed to the Boğaziçi University. The protests held yesterday in many cities of the country confronted with the state violence, directed by the Erdoğan Regime.

During those protests police attacked TİP's headquarters in Ankara. Our comrades did not allow police to raid in the headquarters with their resistance. TİP MP Barış Atay was attacked by the police in Istanbul. Many of our comrades were detained.

Despite the aggression of Erdoğan Regime, our call to all our comrades is that, attitude of TİP and the working class is clear: We stand by Boğaziçi students and "we will not bend our heads."

Workers Party of Turkey (TİP) calls for solidarity with students and academics.

#AŞAĞIBAKMAYACAĞIZ

#WEWONTLOOKDOWN

#WEWONTBOWDOWN

**Workers Party of Turkey (TİP)
International Committee**



After 600 years: BEDREDDİN AND HIS COMRADES WITHIN HISTORICAL AND ACTUAL CONTEXT

**Wish for socialism, justice and
equality and freedom for all has
deeper roots in this country**

ÖZGÜR DİRİM ÖZKAN

Workers' Party of Turkey have organized an online symposium in memory of Bedreddin and his comrades on the 600th anniversary of their execution by the Ottoman administration. Assoc. Prof. Attila Aytekin from Middle East Technical University / Ankara presented his paper on "Academic Discussions on Bedreddin and his Comrades", Nurdan Arca, documentary film director and writer made her presentation on "The Enlightenment Era of Bedreddin", Assoc. Prof. Hakan Güneş, from Istanbul University presented a paper on "Bedreddin from Simavne from a Historical Comparative and Actual Context" while Hüseyin Ağçal, representative of Pir Sultan Abdal Cultural Association made a presentation on reflections of Sheikh Bedreddin's opinions for Alawi society.

History of Ottoman Empire is not only comprised of mighty conquests and magnificent victories. Indeed more prominent feature of Ottoman rule is the bloody heritage that is left behind centuries old rule of oppression. Today, the oppressive nature of the Ottoman rule is basically discussed by the nationalist historians from the nations who have been under Ottoman rule for centuries. However, what is usually ignored in interna-

tional historical realm is the Ottoman oppression in the main heartland, in Anatolia, not only directed against many nations, but also directed against Turkish people, Turkomans, or Yoruks.

History of Anatolia is also the history of public uprisings against Ottomans and one of the most significant ones is the uprising of Sheikh Bedreddin and his comrades in 1416.

Following the defeat of Ottoman army against Timurid Empire in Ankara in 1402, the Ottoman lands were set in turmoil and became a scene of an ongoing civil war between sons of Yıldırım Bayezid, the last Ottoman Sultan who died after defeat. Bedreddin uprising took place in that historic setting.

Sheikh Bedreddin was an important figure in Ottoman law system, who had a solid training on Sharia Law (code of law based on Quran) and had certain official responsibilities in Ottoman bureaucracy. However, his search for "justice for all" brought him to a point to rebel against Ottoman rule, with two of his comrades: Börklüce Mustafa and Torlak Kemal.

The uprising started in 1416 in Western Turkey, around İzmir, on Aegean Coast and in central Bulgaria, in the

Balkans simultaneously. Uprising had a remarkable public support among villagers, nomadic tribes, from different social groups with various ethnic and religious background who were under devastating effect of ongoing civil war and who were already oppressed under Ottoman feudal rule for a century. The uprising leaded by Bedreddin and his comrades had a certain claim for public property of the means of production with the motto: "Sharing everything except the cheek of the beloved one". Since the beginning of the uprising, masses followed Bedreddin's question: "Moon and sun are the candles of

everyone, air is everybody's, water is owned by everybody, why not bread is not everybody's bread?"

His philosophical views on public property were not only based on a bunch of romantic expressions, but having background in the already existing social movements in Anatolia and early forms of enlightenment thinking amid various religious groups forming syncretic religious patterns or heterodox beliefs, which were all oppressed by the conservative rule of either Byzantine Empire or Ottoman rule. As a matter of fact early socialist claims were not based on a simple romantic stance, but originated from social structure of rural population.

Uprising was partly successful at the beginning. However, Ottomans were victorious in suppressing the uprising resulting in mass murder of the rebellions and execution of Bedreddin and his comrades.



The Scientific Committee of TİP organized a symposium on December 18, 2020 at the 600th anniversary of execution of Sheikh Bedreddin. By this, we wanted to show that, the struggle for a just world where everybody, regardless of his/her ethnic and religious background will be free and equal, have always been a demand in this region. On the contrary to what right wing demagogues claim; struggle for socialism, struggle for freedom and equality had always its roots in this soil and as a matter of fact, the actual wish for a socialist Turkey relies on the very essence of the culture of this society.

NEWS FROM THE PARTY

In İzmir Nak Kargo, Nak Kargo workers were forcibly removed from the workplace by signing an unpaid leave report because they objected to working conditions at the workplace. The workers are resisting. We are with our brothers and sisters!



Our Chairman Erkan Baş visited the dismissed workers of the Ekmekçioğulları metal factory in Çorum in the resistance area and participated in the press conference organized by DİSK. We will stand by the righteous resistance of the workers.

The members of our party (TİP) Beyza Buldağ and Anıl Akyüz has been arrested on grounds that they gave support to the Bogazici Resistance. During the Bogazici Resistance, 10 students have been arrested, 24 people have been in house arrest, and many students are given a ban on living the country. We want everyone back



Our TİP Chairman, Erkan Baş, was in courthouse for the students who were detained after the protests at Boğaziçi University. The detainees brought to the courthouse were released.

NEWS FROM THE PARTY

Our TİP Chairman Erkan Baş and our Sakarya Provincial Organization are following the case for the explosion in the fireworks factory in Hendek. We are with families who lost their relatives. Those responsible will be held accountable.



We visited the PTT Sen workers resistance area, who were dismissed and resisted for days in İzmir

Police attacked the protestors, our party members and MP Barış Atay Mengülluğlu during #WeWillNotBendOurHeads protests in Kadıköy, İstanbul. Such attacks will not hinder our struggle.




Many people including our party members were detained during the solidarity with Bogazici University rally in İzmir. We will not be daunted!





WORKERS' PARTY OF TURKEY

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