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The Fascist Judicial Coup Against the CHP

In numerous countries, we are witnessing the erosion of bourgeois state orders, the shattering of illusions about “elections and parliament,” political decay, and the loss of parliamentary functionality. Likewise, the lie of the “separation of powers” and the “independent judiciary” is becoming increasingly apparent. In Turkey, the latest state attack on the bourgeois opposition of the CHP is not a simple “court decision,” but an organized and strategic liquidati-

on attack by the bourgeois state under the fascist chief Erdoğan, who seeks to permanently consolidate his regime.

A court in Ankara has ruled to annul the 38th regular party congress of the CHP, which took place in 2023. On the grounds of “influencing delegates,” the judiciary declared the entire party congress “completely null and void,” thereby removing the party leadership elected at that time, led by current CHP Chairman Özgür Özel. Subsequently, the police attacked those waiting in front of and inside the CHP headquarters with pepper spray and plastic bullets and stormed the building. While Özgür Özel and the party members were forced to leave the building, the CHP headquarters was cleared so that the ousted former chairman Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu, along with the former executive board, could take their former positions.

This attack cannot be viewed as a mere court decision. The decision to enforce the “fascist chieftaincy order” through the judiciary was aimed at taking over the legitimate leadership of the CHP. It is nothing less than a

judicial coup, a strategic purge by the fascist AKP and MHP alliance as it prepares for a new election and constitutional process. For some time now, fascist aggression has been intensifying, as previously manifested in the mass arrests of progressive, revolutionary, and socialist parties and organizations. It was foreseeable that sooner or later this would also extend to the bourgeois opposition.

Kılıçdaroğlu, who once marched from Ankara to Istanbul chanting “Law, order, justice!”, has now found justice in the fascist injustice of the AKP-MHP government. These planned and dirty attacks by the AKP and MHP government, in collaboration with the state bureaucracy, have a long history. Invalid ballots are accepted, local elections are annulled and repeated, the credentials of rival mayors are revoked, and they are removed from office and arrested. Dozens of CHP mayors and staff are subjected to raids, put under massive pressure, blackmailed, or bribed to defect to the AKP. It is no coincidence that the “nullity ruling” comes during a long holiday period and coincides with Erdoğan’s



diplomatic talks with imperialist partners.

The decision of “absolute nullity” not only exposed the farce of bourgeois democratic elections but also sealed the extreme arbitrariness of the fascist regime. Following the defeat in the local elections of March 31, 2024, the AKP and MHP used the negotiation process with PKK founder Abdullah Öcalan, initiated with the states strategic goals of a “terror-free Turkey” and a “terror-free region”, as an opportunity to launch attacks against the CHP and its local administrations. The state stoked democratic expectations with this process, but at the

same time delayed it in order to paralyze the forces of resistance. The process is being used as a threat, particularly against the rapprochement between the DEM Party and the CHP.

For over a decade, the Erdoğan regime has pursued a policy directed against all social dynamics of the oppressed, with the aim of securing the interests of the bourgeoisie and stabilizing the rule of the fascist leadership apparatus. Following its first electoral defeat in 2015, the Gezi uprising, and the Kobanê resistance, the regime attempted to suppress the popular movement. Bombings at rallies in Amed, during the socialist

youth protest in Suruç, in Antep, Istanbul, Ankara, and at the peace rally demonstrate the kind of regime the ruling forces were striving to establish.

Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu ran against Erdoğan in the 2023 presidential election. However, during his thirteen-year tenure, he lost every election, effectively becoming Erdoğan's preferred opponent. He was also a key figure in the regime's earlier fascist measures. With his involvement, parliamentary immunity was lifted, leading to the arrest of the co-chairs and numerous members of the HDP. Kurdish politicians in particular, but also opposition journalists, revolutionaries, socialists, and other opponents of the regime, subsequently came under increased scrutiny by the state.

Even today, Kılıçdaroğlu signals a willingness to collaborate with the fascist regime. The CHP delegation he dispatched made the first official visit to the ruling party during Eid al-Adha, following a three-year hiatus in mutual visits. Representatives from both sides emphasized "unity," "brotherhood," and "cooperation." During the AKP's return visit to CHP

headquarters, it was also stated that they could "come together at the same table at any time for the good of the country." It is clear that Kılıçdaroğlu is willing to be a collaborator of the fascist regime.

As expected, following the announcement of the decision, parties, organizations, unions, institutions, and bodies across a broad political spectrum issued statements one after another, describing the decision as unacceptable. A portion of the CHP's supporters gathered in front of party buildings, primarily in front of the headquarters in Ankara, chanting slogans in support of the current leadership under Özgür Özel. Nevertheless, the CHP leadership's response remained limited. Instead of mobilizing the masses, occupying the squares, and organizing broad political resistance against the attack, Özgür Özel first limited himself to announcing legal steps for the time being. The CHP merely stated that it had filed an appeal against the decision with the Supreme Court and the High Electoral Council. A rally in Izmir was dispersed by police using water cannons and



pepper spray.

As with all current domestic political developments, the aim is to strengthen the regime's "home front." Initially, attempts were made to sideline the Kurdish national democratic movement. At the same time, attacks on social movements, particularly on revolutionary forces, have intensified. The most significant weakness of the current phase, however, lies not in the regime's attacks, but in the lack of a common program of struggle among the oppressed. Therefore, social movements of the oppressed must overcome this weakness and unite the struggle for justice, equality, freedom, peace, and democracy.

A solution cannot be achieved by aligning with the interests

of the bourgeois opposition. Instead, a united front of the oppressed for freedom must be built. The state terror by the ruling regime can only be repelled through general resistance and the united struggle of the working class and all the oppressed. The task of the revolutionary movement is to develop appropriate forms of struggle, slogans, and tactics to steer this development in a revolutionary direction. The path to this goal lies in building a united revolutionary center and a united revolutionary leadership. A common minimum program of struggle is urgently needed. With the demands to end political repression; the release of all political prisoners, particularly Abdullah Öcalan; revocation of all "nullification" and trusteeship decisions; return of municipalities to their elected representatives; revocation of all restrictions on freedom of expression, organization, and action; recognition of the democratic rights of the Kurdish nation and steps toward a just peace; an end to gender, national, and class oppression.

On the Integration Process in Rojava

The revolution in Rojava is currently under massive pressure and faces an existential campaign of annihilation. HTS, backed by the Turkish colonial state and U.S. imperialism, is attempting to gradually dismantle the revolution's remaining achievements. In this context, the so-called integration process with the Syrian central government serves as a political lever to strip the Autonomous Administration of its actual autonomy. Regardless of how this "integration" is officially portrayed, recognition of the hegemony of the Syrian central state inevitably leads to a process of dismantling the existing autonomous structures. At the latest with the transfer of economic resources to the central government, autonomy is effectively reduced to limited local administration.

The integration of the Syrian Democratic Forces

This process is particularly evident in the military sphere. The integration of the SDF into the Syrian central army is currently being implemented. The ba-



sis for this is the agreement of January 29, which was concluded between the Autonomous Administration and the HTS government. The provisions contained therein stipulate that the SDF will be subordinated to three brigades of the 60th Division and, in Kobanê, to an additional brigade of the 72nd Division. Each brigade comprises approximately 1,000 to 1,500 fighters, meaning that within this structure, the SDF will provide a total of no more than 4,500 fighters. The total strength of the divisions in question, however, is around 10,000 to 15,000 soldiers.

Thus, SDF fighters make up only about one-third of the new military structure; the rest con-

sists of HTS forces and former fighters of the Free Syrian Army (FSA). Although the command structure is formally supposed to be composed of equal numbers of representatives, an HTS commander has nevertheless been placed at the head of the division. The entire military hierarchy is also directly subordinate to the General Staff in Damascus. Furthermore, the SDF's heavy and medium weapons have already been handed over to the central government. It is evident that under these conditions, the SDF is neither militarily independent nor capable of guaranteeing Rojava's political autonomy. Rather, developments suggest that the SDF shall gradually be absorbed into the HTS-dominated Syrian central army.

What place do women have in the "new" Syria?

The situation of the Women's Defense Units (YPJ) is even more dire. On April 1, a delegation of YPJ command members met with the HTS Minister of Defense, who stated unequivocally: "The YPJ has no place in the army." The future of the YPJ has thus become a key issue for

the entire future of Rojava.

Ilham Amed continues to maintain the position that the continued existence of the YPJ remains non-negotiable. The central government is accused of failing to bring about real change in Syria if women continue to be systematically discriminated against and equality is not enshrined in the constitution. However, it is entirely illusory to expect a progressive response from the jihadist HTS, which enjoys the full support of Turkish colonialism and U.S. imperialism, and to hope for "democratic change." The HTS considers it sufficient for women of the YPJ to join the Asayiş (local police forces) only "voluntarily"; this emphasis on "voluntariness" is in reality a rejection of official status.

But it is not only the military women's structures that are under threat. All the achievements of the women's revolution in Rojava are at stake. Rojava's social contract is based on the system of co-presidency, equal representation, and gender equality in all areas, as well as the rejection of any form of gender oppression. The laws enacted have

also banned child marriage and polygamy and established equal rights in inheritance law.

The political-Islamist HTS has set its sights on all these achievements. This is particularly evident in the judicial system: the Women's Justice Councils, which deal with issues such as domestic violence, forced marriages, and gender-based discrimination, are to be replaced by religious authorities such as "Sharia scholars" or "sheikhs."

Even though all these attacks on the women's revolution provoke outrage and are rightly regarded as absolute red lines, it seems unlikely that the HTS will agree to any kind of compromise on gender issues. It is here, in particular, that the irreconcilable contradictions between the central government and the Autonomous Administration become apparent.

Integration = Assimilation?

Socially and culturally, too, the pressure on the peoples of Rojava is intensifying. The language issue plays a central role in this. Although Kurdish was formally recognized as the "national language" by Decree No. 13, it was simultaneously included in

the official curriculum only as an elective subject.

The previous model of mother-tongue instruction is thus being replaced by one in which Kurdish is taught for only two hours per week. Until now, Arabic and the Syrian dialect have been equal languages of instruction in Rojava alongside Kurdish. By reintroducing Arabic as the dominant and sole language of instruction, the HTS aims to undo all revolutionary achievements in this area as well, using the integration process as a pretext.

At the same time, in cities such as al-Hasaka and Qamishli, Kurdish-Arabic signs on public buildings were removed and replaced with English-Arabic signage. This blatant attempt at assimilation was met with resistance. In al-Hasaka, young people stormed the courthouse, removed the sign amid protests, and hung the previous Kurdish-Arabic sign in its place. This protest spread to other cities as well, where the Kurdish people insisted on their right to their mother tongue.

The Question of Return

The occupation of Afrîn and

Serêkaniyê by the Turkish colonial state and its armed proxies forced tens of thousands of people to flee. Ensuring the safe return of the refugees was one of the main points in the agreements between the Autonomous Administration and HTS. Although numerous families are now returning to their hometowns, they find catastrophic conditions there. Many houses are destroyed or remain occupied by armed groups. Confiscated land and fields have not been returned, leaving returnees without any economic foundation. At the same time, the Arabization of the education system makes it considerably more difficult for their children to attend school.

Not even the pretense of a bourgeois democracy

On October 5, 2025, "parliamentary elections" took place in Syria. The number of parliamentary members was set at 210; 70 of these individuals were directly appointed by al-Golani. The rest consisted of delegates elected by the appointed local committees. The Kurdish, Alawite, and Druze areas did not participate in the election.

Now, as part of the integration process, elections have also taken place in al-Hasaka and Kobanê. The PYD and numerous Kurdish political parties boycotted the elections because they rejected the Damascus government's approach and protested the fact that Kurds were allocated only four seats in parliament. Since Kurds make up 20 percent of Syria's population, they should be represented by at least 40 members of parliament. In contrast, the PDK-aligned Kurdish National Council (ENKS) agreed to participate in the elections and sent two members to parliament. The other two seats went to independent candidates.

What remains?

Although some revolutionary achievements were effectively preserved, it was clear from the outset that the agreement between the Autonomous Administration and HTS represented a major step backward. What was presented as integration is nothing less than liquidation. Attempts were made to present this reality in a toned-down form. But the facts are as follows: The SDF battali-

ons were placed under the command of an HTS division led by an HTS commander. All heavy and medium weapons were officially handed over to the central army. The YPJ is facing threats of dissolution. Institutions and staff of the Autonomous Administration were handed over to the HTS government. Diplomas issued in the territory of the Autonomous Administration are so far not recognized. There is no instruction in the mother tongue; on the contrary, monolingualism is being imposed. All economic resources have been placed under HTS control. The Kurds are granted only four seats in parliament. Syria defines itself as the "Syrian Arab Republic."

The Autonomous Administration had hoped that these issues could be resolved through diplomatic channels. However, declaring diplomatic negotiations to be the ultimate solution and intensifying efforts toward integration was a fatal mistake. It is clear, of course, that Rojava is facing a multi-pronged encirclement and genocidal attacks, and that this process cannot be overcome without resistance, concessions, and com-

promises. Of course, it may be necessary to reevaluate one's own positions and reach agreements to secure the remaining gains; at times, this may even become unavoidable. But the only way to protect the remaining achievements is the organized resistance of the peoples. The fact that this resistance is far from extinguished is demonstrated by the current stance of Kurdish youth toward the suppression of their language and identity. The struggle for the Kurdish language makes clear how deeply national consciousness is rooted in Rojava. At the same time, this consciousness is under enormous pressure.

As long as Syria continues to define itself exclusively as an "Arab Republic" and the Kurds are not recognized as an independent nation, their collective national rights remain fundamentally at risk. That is why the central political conflict is ultimately directed against precisely this denial of their national identity. The protests in Qamishli, during which young people symbolically crossed out the name "Arab Republic of Syria," bring this contradiction to a head.

Artists in the Crosshairs of Fascism



History is replete with examples of fascists' ruthless attacks on works of art and artists who do not conform to their inhuman ideology. Artists, authors, poets, and musicians have been censored, banned, forced into exile, imprisoned, tortured, sent to concentration camps, or murdered. The Nazis' book burnings in public squares are a striking symbol of this history. The murder of musician Víctor Jara by Pinochet's fascist dictatorship in 1973 is another example of the importance of resistance culture against fascism. By adopting the tradition of religiously motivated oppression from the Ottoman Empire and adapting it to its colonial project of a "single nation," the Turkish bourgeois state developed a boundless hostility toward everything it viewed as a

threat to its existence, including art and artists. Following the Armenian Genocide, the surviving intellectuals and artists were forcibly assimilated as part of the cultural construction of the new republic. Armenian artists were forced to adopt Turkish names. Plays, music, and cultural events were initially made subject to approval and later banned. During the pogrom of September 6 and 7, 1955, numerous cultural centers were attacked and non-Muslim artists were murdered.

Laws and decrees of the 1920s and 1930s banned the Kurdish language, Kurdish publications, and Kurdish music. Performances by Kurdish artists were banned, artists were arrested, and their works were confiscated. Dengbêj, the bearers of Kurdish oral literature and music, as well as Alevi folk singers, came under pressure due to the state's uniform language, religious, and cultural policies. During massacres in Diyarbakır, Dersim, and Koçgiri, numerous artists were brutally murdered.

The persecution of the communist poet Nazım Hikmet exemplifies the fascist state's hostility toward revolutionary and communist art.

He was criminalized, imprisoned, and ultimately forced into exile, which he spent in the Soviet Union. The repression could not break his influence, which continues to shine across generations to this day, but it did separate him from his homeland, for which he longed until the very end.

The second half of the 20th century, including the military coups of 1960, 1971, and 1980, was also marked by the fascist state's attacks on progressive and revolutionary art and artists. In the Sivas massacre of 1993, 35 Alevi intellectuals and artists, including the musicians Hasret Gültekin, Muhlis Akarsu, and Nesimi Çimen; the writers and poets Asım Bezirci and Metin Altıok; and other artists, were burned alive. This was a fascist massacre initiated by the state carried out by a fascist lynch mob.

The fascist state, which has spent the last 50 years preventing any connection between the Kurdish national liberation struggle and the struggles of other oppressed peoples, continues its attacks on oppositional and revolutionary artists without restraint, even under the fascist chieftaincy regime established by the AKP in alliance with the MHP. The regime's political-Islamist character is directed not

only against artists who stand on the side of the oppressed, but also against those identified with the bourgeois opposition or "Kemalist secularism."

These attacks manifest in concert bans, investigations, arrests, censorship measures, and economic repression. Hostility toward works of art and artists perceived as a threat to power or the desired way of life is legitimized with slogans such as "national security," "the fight against terrorism," "social sensitivity," or "public order."

Especially after the Gezi uprising, the regime's cultural and arts policy took on an openly ideological character. Antifascist, revolutionary, socialist, and Kurdish artists who supported the resistance were targeted. Musicians who expressed opposition, danced, or even simply wore clothing that displeased the ruling regime, as well as artists who voiced even the slightest criticism in their works, found themselves in the crosshairs of a fascism that controls all state institutions and large parts of the media. Meanwhile, a separate, state-loyal cultural sector is being established, one that symbolizes the atrophy of society. Artists such as Müjdat Gezen and Metin Akpınar were targeted for their political criticism on televi-

sion programs, and actor Genco Erkal for his posts on social media. Singer Gülşen was attacked at a concert because of her clothing; comedian Tuba Ulu was persecuted for remarks about Sultan Süleyman; musician Mabel Matiz was charged over a song; manager Ayşe Barım was imprisoned; and Mustafa Keser was banned from performing concerts because of a joke. The number of victims of smear campaigns is almost impossible to count.

Although negotiations are currently underway between the Turkish state and the PKK to resolve the Kurdish question, the Kurdish language, culture, and music remain under massive pressure. Festivals and concerts are banned, institutions are closed, plays are defamed as “separatist,” and Kurdish writers, directors, and musicians are still being imprisoned.

Revolutionary and socialist artists and cultural institutions, in particular, are affected by intensified repression, closures, and arrests. The concert bans against Grup Yorum and the imprisonment of its members, including Helin Bölek and İbrahim Gökçek, who fell martyr in prison resistance, are part of this, as is the arrest of musicians and artists from Grup Vardi-



ya and BEKSAV during a raid last February.

Most recently, a Turkish “flag provocation” during a concert by the progressive musician İlkey Akkaya on May 6 at the 37th International Spring Festival of ODTÜ (Middle East Technical University) served as the latest example of the pressure on antifascist events and the organized campaigns against revolutionary music and artists. Provocations by supporters of the Zafer Party, which met with resistance from the students, led to the arrest of antifascist students. Assimilation, repression by the judiciary, prisons, or event bans cannot suppress the longing for freedom, which is reflected in all forms of aesthetic expression. Revolutionary and antifascist artists, in particular, do not bow to the bans, just as the slogan “REVOLUTION” cannot be erased from the ODTÜ campus.

The example of Bilgi University shows: Only resistance can push back against fascism



The resistance of the students at Istanbul Bilgi University was successful. After days of student protests, the decision to close the university was reversed. According to the Official State Gazette, the revocation of the operating license was rescinded. The decree, signed by Erdoğan, was issued on May 24, 2026.

Istanbul Bilgi University, which does not align with the regime's line, had been officially closed by an Erdoğan decree published in the Official State Gazette on May 22, 2026. The complete revocation of its operating license had sparked major protests both in academic circles and among students. The university administration had already

been placed under trusteeship in the preceding months.

In September 2025, the Küçükçekmece Public Prosecutor's Office launched an investigation into Can Holding. The group's executives were accused of forming a criminal organization for the purpose of money laundering and of committing tax evasion. The state-run Trust Fund Administration (TMSF) was appointed as receiver for 121 companies within the group. One of these companies was Doğa Bilgi Okulları İşletmeciliği, which operates Istanbul Bilgi University.

It had previously been announced that the students would be able to continue their studies at the state-run partner university, Mimar Sinan University of Fine Arts.

The example of the resistance at Bilgi University, in which antifascist and socialist student organizations joined, illustrates once again: Only resistance can stop fascism, which ruthlessly enforces its policy of neutralization at all levels.