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## THE PRO-AMERICAN MILITARY DICTATORSHIP IN TURKEY AND THE BRUTAL REPRESSIONS ON THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

Since September 12 a military junta is ruling in our country. The top army commanders took over the political power and abolished the constitution and the parliament, prohibited the activities of the political parties, closed our trade union center DİSK and all the affiliated unions and all other progressive mass organisations. The junta arrested thousands of workers, trade unionists, intellectuals and students. Most severe tortures are applied on them. During the last two months more than 400 people are killed by the armed forces with the pretext of resisting the authorities and three people are executed. The ruling generals have organised a broad demagoguery campaign in order to mask their antidemocratic and antilabour face. The western bourgeois press is supporting them in this campaign. Therefore we find it useful to offer you some facts and arguments which can help you to show your members what is really going on in Turkey.

### Main supporters of the dictatorship: Imperialism and the monopoly bourgeoisie

The military dictatorship in Turkey is a result of the deep, structural crisis in the country which in the last 3-5 years had won extraordinary dimensions in the economic, political and social spheres. The rate of inflation was 100% , the unemployment had become 20%, all the investments had stopped, production was decreasing. Thus the rate of growth became negative and the country had a foreign debt amounting to 20 billion dollars. No government was able to combat these miseries. In the last 10 years more than 10 governments were formed, but no one could establish a stable situation. The economic and political crisis was accompanied by an uninterruptedly escalating terrorism which was organized by the CIA and the Turkish secret services and which was carried out by the fascist party (MHP) and its para-military organisations. This terrorism which was also joint by small ultra "leftist" groups took in the last two years the lives of about 5000 persons, oriented itself to prominent figures of the civil life with the aim to prepare suitable conditions for a dictatorship and to desorganise the progressive movement. On the other hand the struggle of the toiling masses, first of all that of the working class movement was rising.

Thus the existing political system before the coup was no more able to coexist with the deep crisis. The ruling circles were no more able to achieve their goals with the methods of the parliamentary system.

But the main reason which gave rise to such a deep crisis is that Turkey is dependent in all aspects on imperialism. It is such a capitalism the reproduction mechanism of which cannot function without the imports from imperialist countries. This dependent capitalism created also a local monopoly bourgeoisie which is collaborating with imperialism and which enriched itself in a couple of decades through inflationary high prices. These circles together with the IMF drafted an austerity programme in order to transfer the burdens of the crisis onto the shoulders of the working masses and in order to establish their full control over the economy. But such a programme was not to be realized with the methods of the parliamentary system. The discontent among the masses which could lead to big "social explosions" had to be overcome by force.

On the other hand the strategical position of Turkey makes the country indispensable for imperialism. Situated South of Soviet Union, forming a bridge between Europe and Middle East and having more than 100 American and NATO military bases on its territory, Turkey plays an important role for imperialism in its new policy towards "cold war" and confrontation. A military dictatorship consisting of NATO generals and without any opposition, was the most convenient solution for imperialism. The following fact proves this statement very clearly. After the coup the junta in Turkey approved the so called "Rogers' plan" and allowed Greece to enter to the military flank of NATO. Thus the control over the Aegean Sea went into the hands of NATO and the problems in the South East flank of this imperialist military organisation are "solved" in favour of imperialism. The "Time" magazine, in an article on November 3, says on this issue: "That breakthrough was only possible because Turkey's ruling generals have been able to make unpopular decisions without worrying about any opposition."

The junta is against the vital interests of the working masses, of the majority of the population

After the coup all democratic rights and freedoms are abolished by force. The military junta wants to suppress all the forces which can oppose its unpopular "missions". What are these "missions"? First of all the junta seeks to form a "stable" situation in Turkey, that is it wants to reinforce the bonds with imperialism, to militarize all the spheres of the social life in the country, to realize an austerity programme, to merge the economic power of the state with that of the collaborating monopoly bourgeoisie, and to establish a regime where all possibilities for struggling against exploitation and dependence on imperialism are cut.

The US imperialism and the EC with Federal Germany on top, declared their support for the generals and they are continuing to assist the ruling circles in Turkey financially and politically. The employers' union of Turkey (TİSK) was the first to welcome the junta. The government appointed by the junta consists of top industrialists, ex-NATO and OECD experts, ex-generals and top bureaucrats. Turgut Özal, the former president of the Employers' Union in the Metal Industry (MESS) which represents the most powerful section of the monopoly bourgeoisie, has been appointed as vice prime minister and made responsible for the economic policy of the junta. The junta is now trying to reorganize all the spheres of the national economy in such a way that more foreign capital will be attracted and that all the population will work only for the benefit of the monopoly capital.

In Turkey one third of the state budget is spent on armament. The junta wants now together with foreign monopolies to establish a military industry. The relations of the generals with NATO, their militaristic structure is a very important threat for peace and security in the region. In the "Newsweek" magazine of November 10, a news about the plans of the US is published. Here it is said that the US government wants to settle some contingents of its so called "rapid deployment forces" also in Turkey. After the coup the danger of USA to involve our country in its adventures in the Middle East has increased considerably. All these developments are contradicting with the vital interests of our people.

#### Words and deeds of the junta generals

"Democracy" of tortures

Most brutal repressions and murders, most unpopular attempts go together with a broad demagogy of democracy, national interests and human rights in the policy of the dictatorship.

The junta claims that it will reestablish the democracy which was before in danger. But in reality it has abolished all democratic rights which were left. All parties are closed. All progressive trade unions are closed and their assets have been confiscated. All progressive mass organisations total membership of which amounts to 2 millions are prohibited. In all cities all the authority is given to martial law commanders. The junta consisting of five generals has taken all the legislative and executive power in its hand. It says that every law or statement that it passes is an amendment in the constitution. Press is under censorship. After all the progressive newspapers and magazines last week the junta closed the 50 years old prominent newspaper Cumhuriyet which tried to defend democratic rights and freedoms. The president of the Republican People's Party (CHP), former prime minister Ecevit resigned from party leadership in order to protest the junta. Leaders of the religious party (MSP) are arrested.

The junta organized a wide terror campaign against the progressive forces of the country. Leaders of DİSK and affiliated unions are arrested. Among them there are the president of DİSK, Abdullah Baştürk and its general secretary, Fehmi Işıklar. Many trade union leaders are still in escape and searched by the authorities. The junta arrested thousands of trade union activists. Most of them are members of our trade union. The employers are dismissing all the worker, who in past fought for trade union rights. All big factories and city districts where workers live are searched every night house by house after progressive workers. When the police cannot find the progressives it is looking for it takes their wives and children as hostages. In Istanbul the two months old baby of a shop steward thus died in prison due to lack of medical assistance. On the arrested trade unionists most brutal tortures are applied. In Bursa, many trade unionists are tortured so brutally, that one of them, Ahmet Hilmi Feyzioğlu was thrown out from the fifth floor of the police headquarters and thus killed.

A.H. Feyzioğlu was a trade union lawyer of our union. He was a very militant revolutionary comrade who has given all his possibilities under the service of the working class movement. As a young lawyer he preferred not to serve to the existing system of exploitation but to the trade union movement. After the coup he was arrested with many other trade unionists and tortured to death. The working class of Turkey will always remember him as a distinguished fighter for the ideals of national and social liberation.

Other trade unionists, like Özcan Pekşen and Günay Onayman, presidents of the local organisations of Maden-İş and Tekstil to Bursa, Mehmet İçin, also a functionary of our branch organisation to Bursa and Ahmet Sarıcan, president of the trade union organisation of the factory Mako are reported to be under continuous tortures in the police headquarters of Bursa. These are only a few examples of the tortures of the military dictatorship which are going on all over Turkey. Many progressive people are killed on streets. The authorities want to give the impression that it is impossible to resist them. Thus they kill people openly and then claim that "these are killed in armed confrontations with the police", that "they were suspicious", that "they tried to escape the security forces." During the last two months such murders have amounted up to 400. The junta opened again a period of executions in the country. In order to show itself powerful it has executed three young people who in the past had taken part in terroristic actions. Repressions in the Eastern Anatolia where Kurdish citizens live are especially brutal. In order to suppress the struggle of the Kurds against national oppressions, the armed forces apply here village by village tortures and repressions. The torturers ask the people : "Are you a Kurd or a Turk?" When they get the answer : "Everyone knows that I am a Kurd", they begin to torture. Lately the president of the petroleum workers' union (Petrol-İş) affiliated to Türk-İş is arrested and his union is also closed with the pretext that he has criticised the junta.

The junta sees the working class movement as its most important enemy. The class and mass trade unionism, which was embodied in DİSK and which got root most of all through the consistent struggle of our trade union Maden-İş is the frontmost target the attacks of the dictatorship. All the members of the executive committee as well as all other leading functionaries of our union are now searched by the police, hundreds of shop stewards are arrested, thousands of them are dismissed from their works, and our members are forced to resign from Maden-İş and to join unions with reactionary, fascist leadership.

"Democracy" of exploitation

The military junta in Turkey claims that it is equally against "right" and "left", that it is representing the interests of the whole nation and that it is not hostile to the working class.

But the first day the junta came to power it forbid all the continuing strikes and abolished the right to strike. Before the coup about 60 thousand workers were in strike, 23 thousand of which were our members. 55 thousand of the striking workers were members of DİSK and they were continuing their strikes for six months, as the employers in the metal, textile and glass industries were not willing to accept our right demands. The junta after prohibiting the strikes, said that these workers will get wage rises up to 70%. But in the corresponding period the rate of inflation had been more than 200%. Many employers who now feel themselves secure under the dictatorship didn't give the workers even these 70%.

Now the collective bargainings for about 250 thousand workers in the state sector are continuing. But the junta formed a government commission and this one fixed that here also wage rises of only 70% will be applied. This means that the real wages are cut down drastically.

On the other had the junta passed a law and limited the seniority compensations of the workers. In Turkey every worker gets as a kind of unemployment payment when he is dismissed or when he retires a certain amount of money from his employer. Before, this money was proportional to the number of years worked and to wage. Now the junta limited the sum of these compensations by the 7,5 multiple of the minimum wage. But nearly half of the workers in Turkey were in position to get compensation payments exceeding this limit by far. Thus the junta has given billions of pounds as a present to the employers. The employers are now in a position to expell the workers very easily. The government itself is now preparing a large dismissal from the state enterprises. 10 thousands of workers will be dismissed with the pretext "to modernize" these enterprises, "to make them work according to the market conditions". The junta plans also to give many profitable state enterprises to the private sector. Half of the production in Turkey is realized in these enterprises which form a stable base for an independent national development. Now the junta will offer these enterprises of the people to the private monopolies which will so become more rich.

During the first two months after the coup the Turkish currency have been devaluated twice. The junta has increased the prices of many primary goods like sugar, tea, tobacco, petroleum, fertilizers, cement, iron and steel drastically. The rate of inflation this year will be higher than 100%.

A new tax law is on preparation. This law will increase the portion of the taxes paid by workers. Even small slums which are inhabited mostly by workers and poor people will undergo taxes. Indirect taxes will be increased very much. All these steps are carried out according to the austerity programme drafted by the IMF last year.

### Plans of the dictatorship and the trade unions

The international and national conditions force the junta to mask its dictatorship. Therefore the generals are now saying that they will form a constitution assembly in order to draft a new constitution, that they will allow new parties to be established and that elections will take place. Therefore they are preparing new laws on parties and elections. These laws will enable that only two parties can exist in fact and only such parties which will cooperate with the junta. The real power will continue to remain in the hands of the militaristic clique. In the so called new "constitution" all mass organisations will be to some extent organs of the junta helping it to continue and mask its dictatorship. In short the junta wants to have a "constitutional" dictatorship.

According to this plan trade unions will continue to exist. But how? The junta while closing our confederation DİSK, didn't close the other center Türk-İş which has a reactionary leadership collaborating with the junta. Although some of the affiliated unions of Türk-İş, like Petrol-İş are closed, the center still exists. But as the strikes are forbidden and the wage rises are fixed by the government these unions cannot function at all. On the other hand the government is preparing a new trade union and labour law. These preparations foresee that only one trade union in each industry can exist and also only one trade union center. Thus a trade union organization will be created in form of Türk-İş which will be under state control and all other possibilities for a trade union struggle on class basis will be impossible. Also appositions in these semi-official unions will be prohibited by law. Thus trade unions won't be means of the working class to struggle against the employers but means of the ruling circles to control the working class. All these steps are in full conformity with the demands of the employers' union (TİSK) which were brought during the last years again and again. Now the military junta which is itself an employer is realizing these antilabour demands. The generals are also employers because the army in Turkey possesses a big holding corporation (OYAK) the huge capital of which was raised from the officers in form of monthly fees. Through this corporation the army chiefs are connected with foreign and local monopolies.

We can say that the trade union rights in Turkey today only exist on paper and in a near future they won't exist even there.

### The leaders of Türk-İş: active collaborators of the junta

The junta is able to realize all these antilabour steps as the leaders of Türk-İş, the biggest trade union center of Turkey are actively supporting the generals. Türk-İş with about 1 million members is organized mostly in the state sector and used always to follow a policy of collaboration with the governments. It is member of the ICFTU but its policy is always openly reactionary and keeps in tact with AFL-CIO and its branch AAFLI, which is nothing else but an organ of neocolonialism.

Although the ICFTU and many of its national affiliates like the DGB of Federal Germany have openly protested the military coup in Turkey, the leaders of Türk-İş are supporting the junta. As a demagogical trick the junta appointed the general secretary of Türk-İş, the outstanding reactionary figure in the Turkish trade union movement as minister of social security. He is now the head of the government commission fixing the wages of the workers. This open collaboration aims to hide the antilabour face of the generals. The leaders of Türk-İş are openly defending the junta. They make declarations saying that the workers are found of the new rulers. Even on limiting the compensation payments, they said that these were really too much for the workers. This traitorous policy is protested broadly among the membership of Türk-İş. But as in the case of the arrest of the president of Petrol-İş, every protest is repressed brutally. The leaders of Türk-İş think, that as DİSK is closed they are free now of any opponent and they can serve the ruling class openly. We believe that they are mistaken and the workers of Turkey won't allow that their trade unions and trade union rights is turned into vehicles of the exploiters.

But in order to show to what extent the treason of the Türk-İş leaders has developed we want to give here some passages from a letter which they have sent to the ICFTU with the aim of deceiving this international organization and enabling that its organisations won't take part in the international solidarity against the dictatorship in Turkey. The letter which is dated September 18 and signed by the president of Türk-İş, Denizcier, says among others:

"The military intervention is not like the military coups or the military revolutions that is frequently seen in Latin American, African and Middle East countries. On the contrary the intervention has been made to save the Turkish Democracy and to put it on more strong, sound and efficient foundations"

"There are some restrictions and limitations, but it has been indicated by the most responsible person that

there are for a short, temporary time. Türk-İş is determined to withstand these limitations in common sense".

"On the trade union scene, the confederations which are suspended from operation are the three organisations, which in many previous correspondances we have indicated their non-union activities. First one is DİSK, and this organisation, especially in the last years, in their policies and actions have closely co-operated with some illegal organisations parallel to their tendencies. In these activities, DİSK used the pretext of trade union activities, making use of the rights and liberties granted to the unions. The relationship of DİSK with the WFTU is also well known to you".

"You should evaluate the events in Turkey under the light of the National Security Council and be cautious of the information and wrong propaganda that is distributed in Europe from the sources having political aims."

As you see the Türk-İş leaders try to legalize the suspension of trade union rights with the pretext that DİSK has used them. These sentences show also how the junta and its collaborators are afraid of the development of a solidarity movement in Europe.

### Trade union struggle will continue

Today DİSK and Maden-İş are closed. DİSK had a membership of half a million, one fifth of which were our members. Although many leaders and thousands of union activists are either arrested or necessarily in underground, the junta was not able to crush our class based movement. Even if the possibilities to continue the trade union movement are diminished to a minimum, our struggle will continue. The militant traditions of DİSK have rooted deeply among the working class. The first day the junta came to power it prohibited the strikes and ordered the workers to take their work on September 15. All factories were full of soldiers. But the members of Maden-İş who were on strike began to work on September 16, thus continuing the strikes for one more day as a protest. We were able to organize this action. Similar protes actions and actions against the employers who try to cut some rights of the workers are still carried out in many factories. We will use every possibility to organize the workers for trade union rights and liberties, for better living and working conditions.

### Task of the day: Active solidarity with the working class and progressive forces of Turkey

Our trade union believes that the trade union rights and liberties can only be achieved and guaranteed, that the living and working conditions of workers can only be improved if the military dictatorship is overthrown by the popular masses, by the joint struggle of all the democratic forces. In this difficult struggle the progressive trade union movement has a very important role to play. We are determined to do our best for this goal.

There is no need to show how great the importance of the international solidarity for us in this struggle is. Already in the first days after the coup the international working class has reacted against the antidemocratic developments in Turkey. The three international trade union centers ICFTU, WCL and WFTU made separately public announcements condemning the dictatorship and calling for active solidarity with the workers of Turkey. In a resolution of the 32. session of the WFTU Administrative Committee, on October 5, it is said: "Very recently in Turkey the pro-American military coup resulted in the complete suppression of trade union rights and democratic liberties, the closing down of DİSK, the arrest and torture of thousands of workers, trade union leaders and democrats". In a press communique of the WFTU secretariat it is said that a world wide campaign will be organized with the demands: The martial law must be ended. All trade union rights and liberties must be reestablished in full. DİSK and all affiliated unions must be reop. All arrested workers, trade unionists and democrats must be set free.

The readiness of fraternal trade union centers to support the struggle for these demands is also stated in the joint communiques of our union Maden-İş with ESAK (Greece) and PEO (Cyprus) of October 5 and with the French CGT of November 7.

The general secretaries of all the 12 trade union internationals in different industries made a common declaration in the beginning of October calling all the workers and trade unions to be in solidarity with the workers of Turkey. Many trade union centers, DGB (Germany), CGT (France), CGIL, CISL, UIL (Italy), Intersindical (Portugal) among them, declared their solidarity with the working class of Turkey. The European Committee of Immigrant Workers condemned the junta in its convention in Rome in October 25-26 and demanded the return to democracy and freedom of all antifascist prisoners.

Hundreds of peace forces attending the "World Parliament of the Peoples for Peace", including representatives of national liberation movements like PLO, SWAPO, ANC and POLISARIO signed a solidarity message with the people of Turkey.

We believe that these important solidarity actions have to be continued and developed. The junta must be isolated in the world public opinion. We have to show every honest man in the world that this pro-American, pro-NATO dictatorship is firstly, a big threat for peace and security in the Middle East, the part of the world which is now "the hottest bed", secondly that it is a big threat for democracy opening the doors for an aggressive fascism, and thirdly that it is a hostile force to workers and trade unions.

The successes we will achieve in our struggle will be directly proportional to the degree of the isolation of the generals in the international public opinion.

### DİSK and Maden-İş in the class struggles of the last years

The progressive trade union center DİSK was founded in 1967 as a historical response to the collaborationist and anti-trade union democracy policy of the Türk-İş leadership. Our trade union played during these 13 years always a leading role in the struggle of DİSK. DİSK increased in ten years its membership ten fold as a result of its consistent struggle for the workers' rights.

The primary principle of DİSK is to struggle not only for the economic and social rights of the workers, but also for achieving such rights for the working class, which will enable it to have more influence on the political developments in the country. Therefore the struggle for democratic rights and freedoms has been always on our agenda. DİSK as well as Maden-İş reminded the working class and all the democratic forces of the country many times during the last five years of the danger of fascism and of antidemocratic developments.

The sixth congress of DİSK (December 1977) and the 22nd congress of Maden-İş (September 1977) called all the democratic forces to unite in a national democratic front. The unity of action of all the democratic forces, especially of the working class, trade union unity, these were the principal goals of our work in the last years. May Day demonstrations of half a million people, political general strikes against the extraordinary state security courts, against the prohibitions of May Day celebrations and lastly the nationwide general strike of one million workers to protest the brutal murder of our president Kemal Türkler by fascists were examples of big mass actions which united all progressive forces and in which our union played very constructive roles.

Our trade union reacted upon each fascist, antidemocratic development in the country, showed to its members the real aims of the ruling class and enabled them to take an active part in the struggle for democracy and national independence. In these struggles more than 25 of our members are killed by fascists. The fascists also killed two months before the coup our president. Comrade Türkler was the most prominent figure in the trade union movement of Turkey. In spite of all the repressions of the martial law authorities his funeral turned into a big antifascist demonstration of 300 thousand people. We will always keep his memory fresh and fight for the victory of the trade union movement, the foundations of which were laid down by comrade Türkler.

The last congress of DİSK (June 1980) resulted with the reinforcement of its unity, for which our trade union congress was also important for the success of the continuing strikes in metal, textile and glass industries. These strikes of the three DİSK unions had begun in March-May this year, after the employers' unions had refuted all the demands of the unions. The first time in the history of our trade union movement we achieved a coordinated struggle of the three unions against the employers. This was possible only due to the constructive work of our union. Moreover in this struggle of 60 thousand workers, for the first time a unity of action between member unions of Türk-İş and DİSK have been achieved. The corresponding unions in the glass and petroleum industries of both centers coordinated their demands and targets. Our union while continuing the strike of 23 thousand workers supported these unions materially and morally. These strikes were of vital importance, because they were going to prove that even during periods of deep crisis it is possible to achieve by struggle improvements in the living and working conditions and thus become a positive example for the whole working class. After six months of strike, which was continued in spite of all the repressions of the police and all kinds of provocations, the employers were almost finished, if the coup didn't take place.

Our trade union had a membership of about 100 thousand workers and 25 local branches all over the country. All big enterprises in the metal industry were affiliated to our union. These 100 thousand workers form the most conscious and combattant part of the working class of Turkey. They have proved this in the past years many times. And they will prove this also in the future. DİSK and Maden-İş live and struggle.