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Turkey

Party-state and mafia state

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"Is Turkey ready for the post-Erdogan era?" With the next parliamentary and presidential elections - normally - two years away, this question is already starting to be debated by various commentators and political analysts.

Leaving aside the wishful thinking, it is true that the Erdogan regime, in the eyes of a growing proportion of the population, is dragging the economy, society and the country towards an unprecedented bankruptcy that will spare no one. Starting with the management of the health crisis, which is a real disaster. The "strict" curfew, declared for 17 days until the end of Ramadan, has only been the arbitrary prohibition of any sale of alcohol and the closure of shops, bars and restaurants (the latter having opened only a month and a half before). The so-called "total" curfew does not concern a very large part of the workers since all factories, building sites, public transport, hotels, businesses... in short, almost everything works. So in order to reduce the number of cases - fourth worldwide in April after India, Brazil and the United States - and to prepare for the tourist season (essential for the economy), the lockdown is accompanied by a drop in... PCR tests! The number of tests dropped from 318,000 to 204,000 in one month without any plausible explanation; the number of cases from 60,000 to 15,000 and the number of deaths, after having stagnated for a long time at around 350 per day, finally fell to 250. But the regime, which sees its hegemonic capacity weakening day after day and has no other perspective than to prolong its power, is no longer close to being inconsistent.

Revelations of the mafia

As corruption within Erdogan's party-state becomes more and more blatant, notably with the disappearance of \$128 billion from the Central Bank, the confession of a mafia boss on the run reveals the regime's level of interpenetration with organised crime. Sedat Peker, one of the main sponsors of the ultranationalist Turkish mafia, had been a vocal supporter of Erdogan for several years. Among his most conspicuous acts were the meetings he organised in support of Reis and the sending of military equipment (drones, bullet-proof waistcoats, etc.) and dozens of 4x4 vehicles to jihadists linked to the Free Syrian Army, which could not be carried out without the authorization of the state. But following the release of another Turkish mobster, Alaattin Cakici, Peker had to leave the country in February 2020. After several months on the run in the Balkans and a stay in Morocco, Peker, from his new home - apparently - in Dubai, has been broadcasting videos on YouTube for the past ten days or so in which he has begun to settle scores with the Turkish state-mafia circles that have abandoned him.

Among his main targets - from which Erdogan is excluded for the moment, probably with a view to a bargain - is Mehmet Agar, Interior Minister in the 1990s and the main figure of the "deep state" with whom the regime had to renew an alliance after the ousting of the Gülenists from the state apparatus following the failed putsch of 2016. Citing various facts, Peker argues that Agar has an important role in international cocaine trafficking and highlights its undisputed hold in the police and among the military.

The "post-Erdogan" era?

Another important target of Peker's is the current Interior Minister Süleyman Soylu. Having adopted a hyper-aggressive posture and not disdaining to go on the counter-attack against any criticism of the regime, he undoubtedly has plans to gain Erdogan's trust and replace him as head of the party (and the state?) in the future.

Peker explains, among other things, that it was Soylu who had informed him of the investigation prepared on him, suggested that he leave the country and promised to bring him back in April 2021. The mafioso, however, points out that he has a lot more information to reveal and that he will destroy all those who brought him down even if it costs him his life...

The "post-Erdogan" will not happen mechanically. It is important to mobilise and demand justice and democracy against this corrupt state. But for a post-Erdogan period where the oppressed will have their say, for the working class to be able to weigh in the balance of power, it is also important to support and win the various workers' struggles that are going on in the country, such as that of the peasants of Rize-Okizdere who are fighting against the opening of a mine under their village, of the metalworkers of Baldur who have been on strike for the last five months against the Spanish boss, and to raise our voices against the ordinary massacres of Turkish capitalism, which has killed 735 workers in the last four months.

PS:

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