

Kurdish HDP member brutally murdered in far-right attack on party offices in Turkey

Ula? Ate?çı**18 June 2021**

The *World Socialist Web Site* strongly condemns the political assassination of Deniz Poyraz (38), a female member of the Kurdish nationalist Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) on Thursday. This political murder is clearly a state-backed, pre-planned operation aimed at creating the conditions for a brutal dictatorship targeting above all the working class.

In its first public statement, the HDP declared, “The instigator and abettor of this brutal attack is the AKP-MHP [Justice and Development Party/Nationalist Movement Party] government and the Ministry of Interior which constantly targets our party and our members.”

At 11.05, Onur Gencer (27) entered the HDP provincial office in Izmir on the second floor. Poyraz, a party worker, was the only person present and was taken hostage. Police arrived but did not intervene for at least 15 minutes. Gencer then shot Poyraz to death and gave himself up to the police.

He was given a friendly response. A video shows that the police asked the assailant, “What’s your name, bro?” on his arrest. According to a screenshot on social media, the killer was “liking” comments on Instagram while he was in custody, and he deleted evidential “stories” he had shared on his social media account.

Gencer claimed that he acted alone—“I don’t have any links to anyone. I entered the building because I hate the PKK [the nationalist Kurdistan Workers’ Party]”—and in retaliation for some insults on social media directed against his mother and sister, posted as late as June 16. This is not remotely credible. His was a carefully planned operation that would have claimed many more lives but for an accident of circumstance.

HDP Co-Chair Mithat Sancar told the media after the attack, “This was not a plan to kill one random person. We had a meeting planned that would be attended by 40 of our administrators at the exact time of the attack. This pre-planned meeting was postponed due to urgent reasons. They were planning a massacre.”

HDP officials noted that the attack was carried out under the nose of the police and against a party that is constantly

monitored by state forces and subjected to repeated provocations. HDP İzmir deputy Murat Çepni said, “The attack happened even though the party building is opposite to the police station. It is an organized attack,” before adding, “At this point, the Palace itself and the Ministry of Interior are responsible for the attack.”

According to the Mesopotamia Agency, HDP’s İzmir official Abdulkadir Baydur stated that he argued with the police at least for 15 minutes and no one responded to the hostage situation during that time: “We heard gun shots while I was arguing with the police. Police responded a little bit later and captured the assailant.”

Gencer had already attempted to burn down the building before killing his hostage.

Initially referred to as a “former health worker,” he is a committed fascist who told the authorities, “Since childhood, I have made plans to kill PKK [Kurdish Workers Party] people. The incident happened in an improvised manner.”

On his social media account, he shared photos of himself holding guns and making a far-right Grey Wolves hand-sign, identified with the MHP, while in northern Syria during Turkish-backed Islamist “Free Syrian Army” operations against the PKK-affiliated People’s Defense Units (YPG). In one social media post, the murderer shared a photo of himself with an assault rifle in Manbij on February 21, 2020, captioned, “A souvenir from Syria.” He shared another photo from Gaziantep, Turkey, writing, “Back from duty.”

Gencer explained this away by claiming to have spent the first months of 2020 in Syria/Manbij working as a medical officer, before resigning his profession in April 2021. HDP Istanbul MP Hüda Kaya responded by insisting that he was in fact being trained militarily by the International Defense Consulting Construction Industry and Trade Inc (SADAT). Defining itself as “a company that provides consultancy and military training in the field of defense,” SADAT has long been accused of conducting operations in the interests of the Turkish state.

Gencer confirmed that his attack was planned from as

early as January 2021, when he “carried out some reconnaissance a few times.” He “applied to the Gaziemir District Security Directorate for a license to possess a firearm in May 2021” and “received a temporary license,” after which he purchased “a Ruger Gun for 3 thousand 500 lira” that was used in the attack.

The attack came after President Recep Tayyip Erdo?an declared war against all opposition to his rule at the end of May. He praised an attempted physical attack on far-right Good Party leader Meral Ak?ener and said that they “taught a good lesson to her without going too far... This is only the first one. Many more things will happen, these are the better days.”

The HDP has been the target of ongoing state operations for years, on the grounds that it has “ties” with the banned PKK. HDP members, including former leaders and deputies, were jailed, with trustees appointed to local administrations the party had won in recent elections. In March, the government moved to ban the party, the third largest in the parliament, which received nearly 5 million votes. The HDP noted in a statement that it has “been targeted by the ruling party and the Interior Ministry and some families have been brought in front of the HDP provincial buildings with the aim of provocation for months.”

The attack on the ?zmir offices of the HDP was immediately preceded by the June 14 meeting between Erdo?an and US President Joe Biden at the NATO summit, with the main point of contention being US support for the YPG in Syria as a weapon against the Assad regime, despite Washington’s designation of the PKK as a “terrorist organization.”

Amid a deepening economic crisis and in the face of growing social anger, exacerbated by the AKP’s homicidal response to the pandemic, the government has also been destabilized by the allegations of criminality and corruption levelled by far-right mobster Sedat Peker, including alleged Turkish arms deliveries to Al Nusra, the Al Qaeda branch in Syria, organized by SADAT.

Peker tweeted after the attack on the HDP, “we will experience much bigger attacks ... in the coming days. If you believe in my experience and sincerity, do not take to the streets under any circumstances.” Claiming that “a very big game is being constructed”, he wrote that if the masses take to the streets, former interior minister Mehmet A?ar and his men will “use their operatives in the terrorist organizations to turn things into a bedlam.”

The assassination was condemned by the bourgeois opposition parties, which the HDP calls the “forces of democracy”, but which share responsibility for the development of the current situation. Republican People’s Party (CHP) leader Kemal K?l?çdaro?lu condemned the

attack on Twitter, stating, “We went through this scenario before, our people will not fall for it this time.” He was joined by Good Party leader Ak?ener, DEVA Party Chairman Ali Babacan, and Ahmet Davuto?lu, the leader of the Future Party, whose parties all broke away from the AKP.

In their statements, HDP officials argued that this attack marked a repetition of the period of 7 June-1 November in 2015, calling on the bourgeois opposition parties to unite against the government. However, that was a period in which not only Erdo?an, but also Prime Minister Davuto?lu and Deputy Prime Minister Babacan, now named among the “forces of democracy” by the HDP, were leading the AKP. As the *World Socialist Web Site* explained: “The AKP, unable to form a coalition government after elections in June, has called fresh elections for November 1. However, with opposition to its rule increasing, it is relying on whipping up anti-terror and anti-Kurd, pro-war sentiment to mobilise its own base and legitimise the suppression of its political opponents and the media.”

This was also a period when Washington and the other major imperialist powers increasingly took steps to abandon Islamist militias and adopt Kurdish nationalist militias as their main proxy force inside Syria, escalating tensions between Ankara and its NATO allies. These tensions culminated in the resurgence of the civil war in Turkey’s Kurdish provinces that cost thousands more lives, and ultimately led to the NATO-backed attempted coup against Erdo?an in July 2016.

Amid growing geopolitical and class tensions, the Turkish government is clearly preparing for a war against the working class, using both state and paramilitary forces. The only way forward against this danger is through the mobilization of the working class independently of all factions of the bourgeoisie to take state power as part of the fight for socialism internationally.



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