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Bombing in Turkey triggers nationwide anger

By Emile Schepers

On Saturday Oct. 10, two bomb blasts hit a rally in Turkey's capital, Ankara, during a non-violent demonstration calling for a peaceful solution of the conflict between the Turkish government and Kurdish nationalist organizations in the East of the Country. It is not yet known who was behind the bombings, but the incident has set off massive anti-government demonstrations both in Ankara and in Istanbul.

About 14,000 demonstrators, organized by labor and civic groups and opposition parties and including a high proportion from Turkey's Kurdish minority, had gathered in front of Ankara's main train station when the blasts went off in quick succession, right in the middle of the massed demonstrators. First reports indicated that 95 people were killed with hundreds injured, many seriously. However, other sources close to the organizers of the demonstration put the death toll at 128.

Either way, this is the bloodiest terrorist attack in the history of the Turkish Republic.

But it is not an isolated incident. Several other attacks have been carried out this year, most of them directed against the Kurdish people and organizations, including another very bloody one in Suruç, across the border from the besieged Syrian



Kurdish town of Kobane.

The left wing and secularist opposition lost several members in Saturday's Ankara attack. The EMEP (Turkish Labor Party), a Marxist group, stated that nine of its members were killed, including a member of its Central Committee. The Communist Party, some of whose members participated as part of labor unions which were involved, reported several injuries.

The government of President Recep Tayyip

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Ordogan and Prime Minister Ahmed Davutoglu, of the AKP (Justice and Development Party) deplored the attack, which they claim was done by two as yet unidentified suicide bombers, and blamed it either on ISIS or on the PKK, the Kurdish Labor Party, with which the government is in-

Some 14,000 demonstrators were victims of a terrorist attack at Ankara's main train station.

volved in armed struggle in the East of the country. Authorities also suggested culpability by an extreme Maoist group, the Revolutionary People's Liberation Party.

But the opposition is not buying this.

Instead, they point their fingers directly at the Erdogan-Davutoglu government. At the very least, they claim that the authorities were criminally negligent in not providing proper security for the demonstration, and in not allowing ambulances quick access to the scene of mayhem.

But many opponents of the government go much further and hint at a much higher level of criminal responsibility.

Erdogan's government had won some praise for its willingness to negotiate with the Kurdish PKK, but in the elections of June 7 of this year, a secular, left-center political party with roots in the Kurdish population, the People's Democratic Party or HDP, did unexpectedly well, and deprived Erdogan's right wing and Islamist AKP of its majority in parliament. Subsequently the AKP was not able to put together a working parliamentary coalition, and Erdogan called for a new

election on November 1. There is every indication that the HDP will do even better this time around.

Turkey also has 2.5 million Syrian refugees on its soil, and is under internal and external pressure to stop its policy of allowing Islamic State fighters to pass back and forth across its southern border in their efforts to topple the government of Syrian president Bashar al Assad. But the United States has also pressured Turkey to allow it to launch air attacks against Islamic State targets in Syria from Turkish soil.

This appears to be the general opinion of the left and secularist opposition: That at some level there is collusion between Erdogan's and Davutoglu's government and violent Islamist and anti Kurdish nationalists that is making these attacks possible.

The PKK announced a unilateral truce so that the November 1 elections can take place peacefully. But the drift toward even higher levels of conflict, even civil war, is evident.



Emile Schepers is international sec'y for CPUSA.

Alabama's new Jim Crow far from subtle

By Jesse Jackson

In Alabama, 50 years after Selma, voting rights are once more under assault. The U.S. Supreme Court's decision in *Shelby County v. Holder* to gut the Voting Rights Act, supported by the five conservative justices alone, opened the floodgates to legislation in over 21 states erecting new obstacles to make voting more difficult. These have included limiting the days for early voting, eliminating Sunday voting, requiring various forms of ID, shutting down voting sites and more.

Alabama passed a bill requiring for the first time a photo ID for voting, hitting African-Americans, the poor, the young and the old disproportionately. Now Alabama is using a budget squeeze to shut down 31 satellite offices that issue driver's licenses, the most popular form of voter ID. This new Jim Crow isn't subtle.

Civil rights activists are asking the Justice Department to intervene. State officials claim that other ways of obtaining photo IDs are available for voters.

Under the original Voting Rights Act, Alabama's measures would have required pre-clearance from the Justice Department. With the bipartisan leadership of Rep. John Conyers, Sen. Pat Leahy, and Rep. Jim Sensenbrenner, a bill to resuscitate the Voting Rights Act is now pending in Congress, although it has yet to get a vote. It revives pre-clearance measures, applying them to states with five violations of federal law to their voting changes over the past 15 years.

We should register citizens automatically. Early voting should be extended and easy. Voting day should be a holiday, so workers have time to cast their votes. American voting rates are scandalously low, largely because we make it difficult.

It is particularly outrageous that 50 years after Selma, when the country celebrates the courage of the civil rights marchers, we still witness efforts to suppress the vote, skewed to discriminate against minorities. Alabama's actions demand a Justice Department investigation. And that demand should be met immediately.

Alabama passed a bill requiring for the first time a photo ID for voting.

Workers take seats at the table at White House summit

By Larry Rubin

At the White House Summit on Worker Voice last week President Obama declared: “If you’re not at the table, you are on the menu.”

He was quoting Lee Saunders, president of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, one of many top union leaders attending the day-long session. Also participating were organizers of low wage workers, researchers, academics, several business leaders, Vice President Joe Biden, Senator Al Franken, D.-Minn., and Representatives Nancy Pelosi, D.-Calif, Gregory Meeks, D.-N.Y., and Frederica Wilson, D.-Fla.

No one mentioned the Trans Pacific Partnership, a trade deal pushed through by Obama and adamantly opposed by organized labor because leaders say it will cost jobs and lower occupational safety and health standards. Many observers here postulated that the President held the Summit now in order to maintain labor support for his administration. Obama acknowledged that workers’ rights have been weakened by anti-union laws and policies, but throughout the Summit he repeated his opinion that the main culprit has been “the combination of globalization and automation” that allows corporations “to do more with less.” He said what’s needed is a “refashioning” of the “social compact so that workers are able to be rewarded properly for the labor



that they put in.”

Obama suggested that employees and employers work together to create a new “culture” on the job that allows workers to have a voice.

He agreed with U.S. Labor Secretary Tom Perez, Summit moderator, who said that “there are many different kinds of worker voice.”

Nevertheless, Summit participants responded with sustained applause when Sarita Gupta, executive director of Jobs with Justice, said “the strongest form of workers’ voice is having a union on the job.” What’s more, the President said, he has no ready-made plans for helping workers as a whole to win a more effective voice. He urged Summit participants to submit ideas to him over the next several months.

The last person to speak from the audience during the “conversation” segment was Gustavo Torres, executive director of Casa de Maryland, an organization that advocates for and provides services to newly arrived immigrant workers.

Torres said, “Having a voice comes from having power. With a voice, we can share the wealth.” President Obama closed the Summit on Worker Voice by saying, “I see this as the beginning of the conversation, not the end.”

**Workers’ rights
have been
weakened by
anti-union laws and
policies.**

“Getting Back”: Is revenge enough?

By Roberta Wood

There’s romance, suspense, even a little humor, but what drives Kelly Sinclair’s new novel *Getting Back* is straight out revenge.

Who among us hasn’t fantasized about getting back at the bullies whose reigns of terror marred our childhoods?

Nichole Wilson, a hip young professional who seems to have it all together pulls up stakes in Houston to return to a small town in Texas that was the scene of horrific and deadly bullying that tore her family apart and ended with the death of her father and brother. One by one, three other women, Nichole’s sister Andi and Nichole’s and Andi’s lovers are drawn in by Nichole’s determination to wreak justice.

Sinclair is a frequent contributor to *People’s World* and whether she’s analyzing the latest political developments or spinning a tale her sensibility to the contradictions and culture of small town Texas adds depth to her writing.

Getting Back is fast reading and slim enough (142 pages) to consume in an all nighter. By morning as I turned the last page I was left wondering: why wasn’t the justice carried out as satisfyingly as the reader longed for? Was it because the bully didn’t suffer enough, or because perhaps, the reader doubted whether after all they had seen and done, the victims would really be able to move on? Maybe that’s the point.

Sinclair dedicates her book “to those who have been bullied, whether the blows arrived by fists or with words. May you find strength and healing you deserve.” The healing and strength the victimized sisters in this story find comes from love and solidarity. The revenge feels almost like an afterthought.

Antarctic meltdown: Continent at risk by 2100, cities to pay price

By Blake Deppe

Antarctic ice is now melting at such a rapid rate, say scientists, that the continent could be at risk by 2100. And as that happens, widespread collapse of ice shelves could cause a dramatic rise in sea level. This could have disastrous consequences, including putting several U.S. cities underwater, and the window of time in which to avert this crisis is quickly shutting.

The new research, conducted by Nature Geoscience and published Oct. 12, predicts that surface melting of ice shelves will double by 2050, and lead to shelf collapse, demolishing the natural barrier against ice flowing from glaciers into the oceans. It found that if greenhouse gas emissions continue at their present rate, those ice shelves could collapse by the end of the century; and that’s not even taking into account the possibility that emissions could increase before that time.

The study’s co-author Karen Frey, from Clark University, Massachusetts, added, “The data presented in this study clearly shows that climate policy, and therefore the trajectory

of greenhouse gas emissions over the coming century, has an enormous control over the future fate of surface melting of Antarctic ice shelves, which we must consider when assessing their long-term stability and potential indirect contributions to sea level rise.”

According to *Scientific American*, the only way to avoid these scenarios is to achieve a worldwide goal of zero carbon emissions - a highly unlikely feat. For some cities, like Miami and

New York, it could mean the difference between surviving and not, while others, like New Orleans, are doomed no matter what happens.

Malcolm Bowman, an oceanography professor from Stony Brook University in Long Island, spoke in particular about New York, and how it will be affected when all that ice melts and the sea levels go up. “We could expect FDR Drive to be underwater. We could expect the water to be lapping around Wall Street. We could see vital infrastructure, hospitals, sewage treatment plants, communication conduits all paralyzed by flooding with seawater, which is very corrosive.”

Essentially, in 200 years, the Big Apple could look a lot like Venice, where storms at certain times of year swell the New York Harbor until water fills the streets. The avenues of the financial district would be canals. “You may have to build bridges or get Venice-style gondolas or your little speed-boats ferrying yourself up to the buildings,” said Klaus Jacob, a Columbia University research scientist.

And New York is just one of example out of many cities that will suffer. Climate Central has made an interactive map, which anyone can use to see how their own city or town will fare a couple hundred years from now. For states including California, Texas, Louisiana, Florida, North Carolina, New Jersey, and New York, the prognosis is not a good one.

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