AKP, Keep Your Hands off TMMOB (UCTEA)\(^1\) and Our Profession

The Justice and Development Party (AKP) wants to make the Union of Chambers of Turkish Engineers and Architects (TMMOB) pay for the shock that the Taksim Gezi Park resistance has caused it. On the one hand, AKP has taken the TMMOB Istanbul branch directors into custody and, on the other hand, has abolished the professional audit function, the principal task of TMMOB and the chambers by adding an article to an omnibus bill (“bag bill”)\(^2\) that is being discussed a midnight session of the Parliamentary General Assembly.

The function of the professional organizations affiliated with TMMOB of auditing and certifying professionals was abolished by adding a clause to the article 8 of the Zoning Law, No. 3194. It reads: “Mapping, planning, preliminary studies and projects cannot be, and cannot be required to be subjected to the certification and approval of any organization, including the professional organizations, other than those authorized organizations specified in the relevant administrative laws. Registrations of the project owners and their organizations cannot be cancelled or renewal delayed for not having obtained a certification or approval, or for other similar reasons. Any commitment letter that would abolish this provision cannot be required of project owners.” The bill passed without the entire reading of the bill, which is contrary to the parliamentary standing orders.

Through this procedure at midnight last night, the AKP wants to create “a rosary with no thorns” by disqualifying TMMOB, which AKP views as an obstacle for its rent-seeking schemes and dirty ambitions for the cities. By this act, the AKP has:

- Disabled TMMOB and affiliated chambers, which oppose the current plunder of the country’s resources;
- Centralized the plunder of the public resources;
- Rescinded the rights, authorities and duties of the professional organizations and of municipalities as local governments, notwithstanding the provisions of the Constitution;
- Excluded architectural projects from those works recognized under the Law for Literary and Artistic Works.

We declare once again:

Cognizant that no rule of oppression and cruelty can tear patriotism and humanity from its heart, TMMOB remains faithful and determined to sustain all effort to put science and technique to the service of working-class people, but not to service of imperialism and exploiters. TMMOB will never stand with those who shout: “Long live my Sultan” and will continue persistently to say instead: “The emperor has no clothes.”

Mehmet Soğancı  
Chairman of the TMMOB Board  
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Türk Mühendis ve Mimar Odalar Birliği (TMMOB) is the Union of Chambers of Turkish Engineers and Architects (UCTEA).

A bag bill is a piece of legislation that packs together numerous unrelated proposals. A bag bill, or omnibus bill, is a tactical tool for pushing through legislation that otherwise would meet opposition from the public. It combines objectionable laws with those that are welcomed.