

Against the Current

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LONG LIVE 1ST MAY, LONG LIVE INDEPENDENT WORKERS STRUGGLE

1st of May the Labor Day has come again. In this day once again, workers all over the world show their untied force against the camp of Capital. In four corners of the world, workers stop the production wheels and hiss the Red flag in gatherings and demonstrations in order to celebrate the unity and solidarity of their own. The working class of the world, once again, shows the capitalists that they won't stop until they story the whole system of capital and all forms of exploitation and suppression.

The working class of Iran, as a part of international army of workers, has no other goals than to destroy the capitalist system and establish socialism. In Iran, due to ruling of the Islamic Republic, workers experiencing the worse situation of suppression and exploitation, they have no rights what so ever. The Islamic Republic, on the pressure of protests and workers struggle, have accepted the 1st of May as a holiday and it has been even mentioned in paragraph 63 of the Labor Law. But still, the capitalists and employers engage workers to works even in their holiday and the ruling class try to stop them to celebrate this day fully as workers desire. Even though there is so much pressure on workers duly and even though the workers has not right to establish any organization and neither to gather or demonstrate, the workers demonstrate their solidarity with workers all over the world by different means.

In lack of political freedom and independent organizations and due to prohibition of arranging independent and free celebration of 1st of May, the Islamic Republic push forward the organization so called Labor House, to arrange the celebration. This organ support the regime and in such occasions attempt to make excuses for the anti-worker policy conducted by the regime. Since last month, the Labor House in city of Tehran applied for permission to Home Ministry for a demonstration in Labor Day. Labor Houses have sent such application even in other cities. In the beginning the ministry tried to do a PR for the Labor House by playing cat-rat and said there are some risks for destruction of peace and there is danger for "national security". The officers of the Labor House in their turn stated that they are not only attempting to not breaking any structure and put the "national security" in danger but indeed attempting to "strengthen national security" and "insure the existence of the regime". They said that they have even taken some measures against "tensions". After this play act, the Ministry and the Commission of Paragraph 10 of Parties issued the permission for demonstration. The Labor House in Tehran got the permission to demonstrate between 9-11 a.m. on 1st of May between Mokhber dolleh Street and Baharestan Square. Tehran Governor Office stressed that the police force is responsible for order and security! The Labor House in his turn not only accepted to keep the mentioned order and security but also promised to give whole program in details, such as slogans, written speeches and name of speakers. They also accepted to "coordinate" and work with " the official organs in charge" (i.e. suppressive organs)!

Even though the regime is well aware of the fact that the Labor House has no longer any place among workers and its legitimacy has been questioned by the workers many times, but still in order to have a Puppet show internationally, issues a permission for demonstrate for two hours in Workers' day. Many times the Labor House has organized different actions in order to diverse workers' actions from being directed against the regime but even then the workers in these actions came with their own

slogans. The workers even loudly stated their own demands and not those that planned by the organizers! All these matters is a well known fact to the regime that the Labor House cannot keep the order and the security the regime demands but on the other hand to show off internationally force them to their only choice at present to tell the world that the Islamic Republic allow workers to demonstrate on 1st of May!

The Islamic regime has its main facility and forces of suppression in the Capital in order to have some control over situation and therefore they gave permit to the Labor House to demonstrate, even though it was just for two hours. In others cities, they either not respond to the requests or they just simply denied the permit, so there will be no risk to lose control over situation. In this way, the whole program of " Workers' Week" organized by the regime and its Labor Ministry contained paying visit to the grave of Khomeini, paying visit to the holy house of Khamenie, paying visit to Khatami and executive directors of different kinds and Pray Imams and two hours controlled demonstration organized by the Labor House. If the Islamic regime and its Labor House are trying so hard to empty 1st of May from its context and make it as just a show off, on the other hand, the progressive workers are preparing some independent actions in order to celebrate this day widely and to show their solidarity with other workers around the world, even though the limitations and obstacles are many. They will surely demonstrate and they will state their own demands. Other groups of workers will organize different gatherings and demonstrations either openly or underground. In these actions, they will have music, speeches and revolutionary songs. In these actions, they will show their desire to struggle against the capitalism and their solidarity to the working class of the world. The regime's attempt to limit workers to the Labor House and its 1st of May showing off demonstration will be in vain. Even in this demonstration, it will not be a surprise if the workers take over and make this anti worker demonstration to an anti regime demonstration. Any way, one thing is clear and it is, workers will organize their own independent actions with their own independent demands.

Working class of Iran has struggled against the Islamic regime and its supportive capitalist system. There is only one way to reach the rights for independent trade union, freedom of strike and other political rights and that is to overthrow the regime and its supportive system. Though they will continue their struggle even in 1st of May and in solidarity with workers around the world will celebrate this day.

Long live 1st of May. Long lives independent struggle of workers.

People of Feraydoonkenar Continue Street Protests

It is three days since the commencement of the brave people of Feraydoonkenar's protest riots and the protests still continue.

The Islamic republic mobilised its mercenaries and dispatched auxiliary forces from other cities of Muzandarun and Gillun and even Tehran to suppress people's uprising. Confronting the barbaric onslaught of forces of suppression, tear gas and bullets fired at the ranks of the protestors, youth full of fervour and other strata of people bravely resorted to resistance. They set tyres alight, barricaded the streets and resisted the special guards and the police. Then the protestors attacked the guards station and

injured a number of those mercenaries. Continuing their protest and responding to the mercenaries' barbarity, the angry people attacked the buildings of Mobilisation, town administration and Court of the Islamic Revolution burning their files. Protestors set on fire several police vehicles, police mast No.110, police kiosk and the house of town's Friday prayers Imam. A bus belonging to Amol City authority disembarking soldiers next to a bridge was attacked by the protestors. Protestors torched the bus as soon as soldiers dispersed.

Intensifying repressive measures and laying siege to the town, the Islamic republic is attempting to prevent people of Feraydoonkenar's flames of anger and uprising spread to surrounding cities and towns.

The latest news indicates that at least 6 persons have been killed, 50 injured and nearly 200 arrested.

Protests were still continuing on the morning of Monday 15th March 2004 and the people assembled in front of the Feraydoonkenar town hall demanding punishment for perpetrators of crimes committed against the people over the past several days.

MIDDEL EAST: A COMPLICATED ISSUE FOR THE WORLD CAPITALISM

Middle East has become an unsolvable and complicated problem for the capitalist world. Stored conflicts in the region emerge one after another. Several attempts by world Superpowers to solve the conflicts have not produced any result; instead they have intensified and deepened crisis and conflicts.

The bomb explosion on passenger trains in Spain perpetrated by the Islamic terrorists has shown how these conflicts spread from Middle East to the centre of Europe. Barbarism of Imperialists is matched by barbarism of Islamic fundamentalists. At present, it is not only the Superpowers that mobilize their military forces to destroy and kill defenceless masses of Middle East; there are also Islamic fundamentalists that target the defenceless people of Europe. Millions of those people demonstrated two years ago against the war declared by their ruling classes and all Imperialist forces, but those people are still being killed as a result of terrorist actions. Fear is spreading all over Europe and USA. All the capitalist Governments of the world feel frustrated and disabled despite all their military, police and intelligent forces. Several meetings and conferences attended by those Government and heads of intelligence organisations have not been able to solve the problem yet. The problem is that the Islamist terrorism has no particular base in any one country and therefore they cannot be arrested or destroyed. They are present not only in Asia or Africa but also in Europe and even US. But the most important fact is fundamentalists and Islamists can easily get new soldier among millions of poor, hungry and unaware human beings who are the products of years of suppression, open dictatorship and exploitation by Imperialism for many years. Therefore it is obvious why the world imperialism is so afraid of Islamic terrorism. Here, the issue is not that they cannot come to any solution but it is in the nature of their policy to strengthen Islamic fundamentalism and Islamic terrorism.

It has been several years now that a racist regime called Israel has violated the rights of Palestinian people by occupying their country and making them refugees. On daily bases, these suppressed people are arrested, jailed, tortured and killed. Even the refugee camps are being bombed and destroyed. At present a racist fascist called Sharon is the head of state who executes the most severe suppression upon Palestinian people. Israel is being fully supported by all the imperialist forces in general and USA in particular. Therefore it is not strange that Islamic fundamentalism grows in the Palestinian People's Movement when religious countries in the region such as Iran and Saudi Arabia support it fully by financial and military means. In some other countries in Asia and even Africa, Islamic fundamentalism is being strengthened by Superpowers. Imperialism does not have any solution to the crisis but due to its nature it continuously intensifies them.

Let's take a look at the reality in Iraq. Today, it is a well known fact that invasion of Iraq had nothing to do with 11th September, Al-Qaida and Taliban, it had nothing to do either with weapons of mass destruction, dictatorship or democracy. It was indeed a well planned operation by Bush administration for invasion of some countries in the region by military force and thereby gaining the exclusive right to Oil and markets of the Middle East. But even if there is still anyone who does not know that fact, we refer that person to the disclosure of various rival factions against each other to win the forthcoming US presidential elections and the book written by Richard Clark, member of National Security Council and former adviser to Bush, on fighting against terrorism and his other later statements.

No matter how the politicians and strategists in US planned to gain exclusive rights in the region, it was so obvious that a military invasion of a country such as Iraq, will get serious reaction from the people and it will strengthen Islamic fundamentalist supported by the Islamic Republic of Iran and it will even intensify the conflicts based on issues related to religion, nationality and nations.

The process, a year after invasion of Afghanistan by the common effort of imperialists, shows that overthrowing a reactionary regime has not been able to stabilize the situation. In Iraq, with all the conflicts among the imperialists, a better result could not be expected.

US and British armies seem to have won and conquered Iraq. But that is just a superficial victory. US is in a very critical situation even from a military point of view. During the one year since the invasion, at least 500 American soldiers have been killed and hundreds injured who have been transported back to US. Mental status of American soldiers is so acute that tens of them have committed suicide over the past few months. There is no security for Iraqi people or for the invading soldiers.

In such a country no one can rule just now. US has put all its efforts to administer a solution in form of establishing a pro-American regime, even though it is just a show for stabilizing the situation. Military invasion of Iraq has caused so many conflicts in the country that we can easily say what is happening in Iraq right now is just the beginning. US has prepared Iraq for a civil war. With these conflicts caused by US, there will be religious, national and tribal conflicts in the future. The same thing happened in Afghanistan. Even there the military forces of NATO were not enough and US is sending several thousands of troops to Afghanistan. This is while war and conflicts are spreading to some regions in Pakistan.

The issue between Israelis and Palestinians not only remains unsolved but due to Sharon's policy, it is getting more complicated.

All these facts show clearly that the Imperialists are not able to solve the conflicts in the Middle East; they only intensify them through each step they take. Thus the current political situation in the region is moving towards getting worse. Iranian masses have still the chance to solve the problems on their own and in a revolutionary manner and thereby influence the neighbouring countries positively.

Street Children, Victims of the Ruling System

Street children are also victims of the injustices that the capitalist system has imposed on the human society. Statistics published by international organisations estimate the number of street children to be 100 million across the world. Forty million in Latin America, thirty five million in Asia, ten million in Africa and the rest live in the "advanced" capitalist countries. Street children are those who are younger than 18, live and some times work in the streets. They are exploited in the most barbaric way and are exposed to various forms of violence, sexual abuse and absolute lack of rights.

The phenomenon of street children in Iran is so wide spread that the Islamic republic's mass media are compelled to publish some news about them. Nevertheless, the published news cover up many of the main aspects concerning the phenomenon of street children, including the number of street children in Iran that have no place on the official statistics and the government has no serious programme for them.

Since 1998 the Islamic republic has placed a plan to "collect" the street children on its agenda. The so called plan is over six years old but all evidence indicates that the Islamic republic has not taken any serious measures in that respect due to its reactionary nature. Moatamedi, the chief executive of the office of the Injured of the Health Authority, in an interview with the news agencies of the Islamic republic last September said that in Tehran two "children's shelters" have been established. He said 10 thousand "work children" and 7 to 8 thousand "street children" have been taken of the streets. It is obvious they have not sheltered the total of 18 thousand children in merely two shelters and many are left to their own devices again. Mr Moatamedi was reporting the "collection" of thousands of children in September whilst Mr Elsagh, the chief executive of the State of Tehran Health Authority, in an interview with another news agency on the last day of September said: "from December 1992 to September 1993 fifteen thousand children under 18 have entered Tehran from various cities". In March 2004, Mr Elsagh said: "the number of street patrols to collect the street children would be doubled". In other words the street children have compelled the officials of the Islamic republic to increase the number of their patrols.

According to an independent research published in 1998 the number of street children in Iran is at least one million, of which forty one percent are aged thirteen to sixteen. Another research published last year by Fatemeh -e- Ghasemzadeh, a member of the Society for the Protection of Children's Rights, indicates the largest number of street children are aged six to twelve and one fifth of them are girls.

Another problem that can be propounded in respect of street children in Iran is the reactionary laws of the Islamic republic. Clause 1210 of the civil law of the Islamic republic has determined the adult age for girls to be eight years and nine months and for boys fourteen years and six months. This is while the Islamic republic has signed the Children's Rights Convention in 1994. The clause number one of the convention states a child is a person who is below age of eighteen.

Other studies have shown that eighty percent of the families of the street children in Iran have incomes less than seventy thousand Tomans (£50) a month and are in fact living in absolute poverty. These families are not able to provide for their children and are compelled to leave them in the streets or send them onto the streets to do false jobs and even begging.

Street children are the victims of the capitalist system that rules the world. In Iran the capitalist class and the government protecting their interests, by legislating reactionary laws that are not unrelated to the religious nature of the system, have increased the dimensions of this phenomenon to a horrific extent. A serious struggle to uproot the phenomenon of street children, without fighting against the political and economic system ruling Iran, has not much of chance for victory.