

# *Against the Current*

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# AN EVALUATION OF THE SIXTH MAJLES BY ADMIRERS AND CRITICS AND THE HIDDEN TRUTHS

During the last few days, the regime's press and Persian Radios have focused mainly on an evaluation about the conducts of the Sixth reactionary Majles (parliament). They talk in a way as if the sixth Majles was a reformist one and now the rival fraction, conservatives, have gained the majority in the seventh Majles.

In those evaluations, a group of journalists, University lecturers and bourgeois political analysts considered the performances of the sixth Majles generally admirable and stressed on the services it provided. In case they had some critics or some shortages being pointed out, they related all of them to sabotage by the rival conservative faction. Another group criticised hardly all the actions taken by Majles and considered the sixth Majles as weak and invalid.

Evaluation by the first group is based on bills ratified by Majles covering economical plans of the Government. They believed that none of the previous Majleses could ever match the Sixth Majles practically. The second group based its evaluation on the political reforms which were promised but none enacted, therefore they state that the sixth Majles has done nothing. The fact is neither the group who believe that the Sixth Majles done nothing nor the group who admire the Majles and the "reformist" Government are telling the truth! You are asking why?

By evaluating what was the true task of Sixth Majles, what it should and could have done which in practice did not do, the questioned will be answered.

The first thing that should be stressed on is the class- belonging of the groups called reformists who held the majority in Sixth Majles. Those groups as a whole are one of the factions within the regime and therefore support the capitalist class and the current system. Those groups appeared as "reformists" on the political scene when the economical and political crises deepened and the Islamic Republics policies failed and the mass movements were spreading widely. Therefore, the ruling class chose a new tactic, namely "reformism", in order to get ride of movements and take control of crises. Bourgeois propaganda bombardment began in favour of "reforms" and "reformism" by international and national means. This bombardment was so wide and intensive that a large group of working people were influenced by it. They believed something was happening in Iran and it seemed some reforms were going to be implemented to fulfil masses' interests.

Khatmai's victory and later on the victory of his supporters in reactionary Majles proved that. Along with supporters of the regime, a large group of masses voted in favour of "reformists" either due to believing in changes propounded by them or due to choice between bad and worse. All that in a country where everyone knows election in the Islamic Republic is nothing but a fake and stage managed show. Then, masses were told they had nothing else to do other than wait for "reformists" to get the opportunity, by means of taking control of legal facilities and ruling organs, to fulfil their demands as promised.

The process in which the masses understood again why the "reforms" couldn't be conducted within the frame of the Islamic Republic is not our consideration in this article. The fact that should be mentioned here is, the so called reformist faction, could for a period slow down people's struggle and thereby postpone the overthrow of the Islamic Republic. That conduct had the most value for the capitalist class in guarding the ruling economical, social and political system in Iran.

Both groups of admirers and criticisers did not mention that truth and even tried to cover it. The main task of that faction was to create obstacles to divert people's struggle and direct them to another way, i.e. legal struggle within the framework of current organs and not the way towards the revolution.

But contrary to the view of those who think the Sixth Majles did nothing, we should say it did a lot of things. While the Majles tried to engage people with promises for political reforms, it also did so much in favour of capitalists and against the interests of working class and other hard working people.

One of the most important tasks for the "reformists" was to get results for economical plans demanded by international and domestic bourgeois which could not be completed during Rafsanjani's presidency due to crises. That task was promised to be fulfilled by that faction before they won the election. After victory, they announced the failed plan as reforms and tried to convince every one that those plans should be implemented.

Sixth Majles tried it's best to give all means to Khatami to implement that economical policy by ratifying suitable bills.

"Reformists", both Majles and the Government, seriously continued privatisation. A large number of factories and public production units, which were the product of hard work of workers, were handed over to capitalists in private sector. It is obvious that the most productive and profitable units were handed over to individuals belonging to the government factions.

The "reformists" facilitated greater profits for the international and domestic capitalist by ratifying new laws and regulations and by either reducing or eliminating various taxes.

Billions of Dollars profited from Oil sales went to capitalists in private sector as loans and credits. Equating the rate of currency and free pricing were achieved. So many of subsidiaries for basic needs of masses eliminated and?.

These are the truths that the admirers of Sixth Majles mention against the rival faction but what they forget to say is; all those were in favour of capitalists and against working class. They cover up the fact that as a result of privatisation, hundreds of thousands of workers lost their job and with so many years of work experience they got nothing in return than poverty and starvation. The result of economical policy of the "reformists" is doubling up the number of unemployed. Who says that the Sixth Majles done nothing? These are the results of their conducts! It was the Sixth Majles that withdraw millions of workers from protection by Labour Law in order to give the capitalists a freer hand to exploit them much easier. The result of the new mentioned favours for capitalists was soaring prices on daily bases and reduction of the buying

power of people which resulted in nothing but more poverty. It is the result of "reformists" policy that today, many of products cost as much as they cost in the European countries. This is while the majority of Iranian workers have an income equal to one tenth of European workers. It is worth mentioning that even by statistics from bourgeois sources, European workers live under the threshold of poverty.

The result of the entire task completed by the Majles and Government of "reform" is that 70% of Iranian population live under threshold of poverty. Millions of young generation have no future and are unemployed and have drug addiction. Prostitution is so wide spread that cannot be seen during the last hundred years. Tens of thousands of children are on the streets. They spend their life day and night by begging for money and suffer from starvation in large cities. These are the facts that admirers of the Sixth Majles state as positive conducts.

It is very much obvious that the Sixth Majles did its best in working in favour of capitalists and they did it very seriously and with determination. When it comes to the class interests all the fractions are united. It does not matter who push forwards the policy. The main matter is to get more profits. It does not matter if it is the conservative Fifth Majles and Rafsanjani or it is "reformist" Sixth Majles and Khatami. Therefore in this matter there will be no different between Sixth and seventh.

The criticisers did not either say any thing about this matter even though they seemed to criticise radically. Even when it came to their base for critics about political reforms, they openly proved that after seven years of Khatami's presidency and four years of his Majles, they are still trying to fool people.

They either still fooling people or with the most positive attitude we can say they make fool of them selves by not being capable to understand political reality of the situation. They still trying to convince people that Iranian bourgeois have the potential to fulfil the task of bourgeois-democratic, that the Islamic Republic is capable to change itself to a parliamentarian system similar to Europe and that Iranian workers' and hard working people's demands can be answered within the political framework of the current regime.

After all these years and disclosure of reality about reforms and reformism, this group keeping same excuse that the only reason of failure is that "reformists" did not act strongly. They mean the "reformists" did not react in time and did not put an offensive line against the rival faction; they had not any correct and adjusted strategy and tactics and did not lean to people. By these excuses they want to say that they had the potential for reforms but had wrong tactics. It seems that it is very likely, they wanted to lean to people, they wanted to be offensive against the rival fraction and they really wanted to put forward political reforms. It is while, even the "reformist" fraction has never said that they wanted all these and they have never said that they are for a bourgeois- democratic changes. What they have wanted is to make some small political changes within the framework of the current regime. Their conflict with the rival fraction was not about existence of the Islamic Republic as a religious state, it was not either about democracy, political freedom and democratic rights of people. It was all about the responsibility field and length of authority of Supreme leader (valiye Faghih) and his organs as Guardian Council. They did not want political freedom for all the people but just for "their own", those who are supporting the regime. They did not want political and social equality for men and women or compulsory Hejab. They

just want to reduce unnecessary harshness of it. In summary, we can say what they meant by "reform" was some small changes in order to calm down people and rescue the regime.

But the "reformists" could not even conduct this limited program for political reforms. It was so obvious from very beginning and our organization mentioned it as Khatami won the presidency election. Today, all the facts and the truth is so obvious that no one can explain or deny the facts by excuses such as tactics and strategies and this way fooling people. Boycotting the Seventh election by a majority of people proves it. Workers and masses have shown, by boycotting, that they have learnt a lot of so called reformism during the last few years.

Masses are so well aware of the fact that no matter which fraction it is and no matter what they call themselves, they are against the interest of working class and they only consider the interests of capitalists. It does not matter if there is a "reformist" or conservative Majles.

The working class of Iran have learnt more than before during the last few days that they cannot trust any one rather than their own class. At present, the working class and hard working masses struggle toward the real reform, overthrow of the regime and revolution. This is the only way by which the working class can take the political power and establish a state with soviets as base and thereby fulfill their demands and reach their goals.

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## US Government's Political and Diplomatic Manoeuvres

In spite of secret compromises made by the eight Imperialist powers of the world and ratification of the US government resolution in respect of the so called transfer of power from the occupying forces in Iraq to an Iraqi government in June at the UN Security Council, the political situation in Iraq has reached such a degree of crisis that only in period of last few days, tens of military actions have taken place in various cities of Iraq and tens of police personnel of the American puppet government of Iraq and other military personnel have been killed. At the same time two high ranking officials connected to the governing council were also assassinated.

The incidents that have occurred in Iraq in the past few days demonstrate the reality that the US Government's political/diplomatic manoeuvres on the international arena and behind closed-doors-deals of the world powers can not alter the internal situation in Iraq in the interest of the occupying forces. The reasons for that are also clear. The masses of Iraqi people hate the occupying forces and at their head the US. US and UK military expedition to Iraq and occupation of that country has produced no benefits for the masses of toiling people other than destruction, ruin, lack of security, unemployment, poverty and hunger, slaughter and imprisonment. The masses of Iraqi people were under open oppression during Saddam's regime. US and UK imperialists were claiming they would bring freedom and democracy to the Iraqi people. But now the masses of Iraqi people see rifles aimed at them on the alleyways and streets of their own cities day and night instead of democracy and freedom. Should anyone

make a meagre protest, no longer there is need for even the kangaroo courts of Saddam, the occupying forces issue their death penalty on the spot and murder the protestor. Saddam's military and security officials use to attack regime's opponents, but now the soldiers of the occupying forces when attacking a house create fear and terror. They surround areas of towns and cities and attack people's houses with cannon, tanks and helicopters. US imperialism has also demonstrated the peak of democracy and freedom! in Abu Gharib prison and displayed the beastly nature of imperialism to even most gullible people. Therefore, it is obvious that the toiling masses of Iraqi people hate the imperialists who have occupied their country and created so much oppression, suppression and ruin to the highest degree and fight to drive them out. As a result of those fights enjoying the support of the world public opinion, US defeat in Iraq is realised from now.

To compensate that defeat, US imperialism has resorted to certain tactics to rescue itself from that tight corner and at the same time pursues by other methods the aims and objective for which it created the war.

Seeking help from the UN, ratification of a resolution in the Security Council and making so much noise about transfer of power are in the direction of those objectives. But those measures are also so unskilled that right from now their nature are completely exposed to the Iraqi people. US imperialism itself has appointed a government and now wants, in the name of transferring power to the Iraqi people, transfer power to its puppet government. That puppet government asks US to allow the occupying forces to remain in Iraq and do their duty in order to look after the interests of Iraqi people and secure freedom and democracy. This comical puppet show has fanned the anger of Iraqi people so much that the ratification of the resolution at the UN Security Council too, did not help to improve the situation of occupiers in Iraq. ON the contrary, it resulted in the intensification of Iraqi people's struggle against the occupying forces and their puppet government. At the same time the internal contradictions of the internal allies of imperialism have also intensified. With the ratification of the UN Security Council resolution, the political heads of the Kurdish bourgeoisie, under the leadership of Talebani and Barezani, that during this period had done everything in their power to serve US imperialism, express dissatisfaction with US who has reneged on its promises. US applying the recommendations of Sistani (one of the reactionary Islamist leaders in Iraq) has deleted federalism from the resolution and has not even replied to the Kurdish leaders' letter. This has created another rift which results would emerge in the near future.

All those realities show that recent US political and diplomatic manoeuvres in respect of occupation of Iraq have not and would not help solve the problems in that country. In spite of secret deals of the world great powers on the ratification of the Security Council resolution, it seems unlikely that the contradictions of imperialist powers over that problem would be seriously reduced and hence profit the US.

Only one thing remains and that is the internal consumption of those manoeuvres in US itself and during the election campaigns in which Bush is trying to check the growth of American people's opposition, cover the defeat of his policies and improve his standing against his Democratic rival.

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## Iran News

\*-170 workers at Tehran's new international airport picketed in front of the main entrance of the airport. Construction is about to be finished and those 170 workers will soon be laid off. They have been employed on temporary contracts and therefore not eligible for unemployment benefit. The workers are demanding permanent employment rights.

\*-Workers at Rasht Electric have again protested. On May 3rd they picketed in front of city of Rasht government offices demanding job security and unemployment benefits.

\*-Gilan Kashi workers have lost their jobs as a direct consequence of the so called restructuring the plant. Now, after 8 months they are still waiting for delayed wages and unemployment benefits. For those reasons the workers picketed in front of city of Rasht government offices. They also demanded their miserable condition to be improved.

\*-In a letter, miners at Ghoghat Mine explaining their miserable economical and social conditions protested against the pressures on the 1,400 workers and demanded payment of 4 months delayed wages and benefits. Miners have been threatened by employers' henchmen to stop their actions. Employers using temporary contracts have imposed miserable working conditions.

\*-According to Iranian labour News Agency, Ina, all the 80 workers with more than 10 years experiences at the Techno-Yaragh plant have been sacked. After 8 months, for which workers hadn't been paid, management chose to close the whole plant down because of series of economical difficulties.

\*-According to Iranian labour News Agency, Ina, implementation of the so called "Renovation and Restructuring of Textile Industry" policy has resulted in job loss for many workers at different plants in the city of Ray. For instance Chit -e- Momtaz has reduced the number of its workers from 2,700 to 300, "Chit -e- Ray" from 3,000 to 1000 and finally Tehran Chit from 3,000 to 700.

\*-Workers at Jongiye Brick Works have not received wages for the last 4 months. Additionally, social benefits haven't paid for more than a year. Hence all the 120 workers have no right to unemployment benefit. They have protested several times without any results.

\*-More than 600 workers who have travelled to South Korea as "guest workers" have returned home. Lack of a program to assist those workers abroad is the main reason for their return home.

\*-One of the compulsorily retired workers at Miandoab sugar plant has gunned down the plant's manager and personal manager. After killing them he shot himself. Once more, the unjust capitalist order has taken another victim and forced a young worker to commit suicide.

\*-According to Iran's deputy social minister, in the last year (2003) the number of suicides, especially among women has increased considerably. The largest number of

those unlucky women was under age of 20. The number of suicides among women was twice the men. More than 250 persons, who ended their lives, were students.