



Po Box 54631
London N16 8YE
07792 282830
07950 416 922
office@hopoi.info
www.hopoi.info

Mass Upsurge in Iran: Proletarian Internationalism, not imperialist intervention!

Supporters of Hands Off the People of Iran will be taking part in the day of action on June 26 to highlight the plight of Iranian trade unionists currently languishing in the theocratic regime's prisons. We are for the immediate and unconditional release of these comrades, whose only 'crime' has been to fight for the right to form trade unions in the most adverse of conditions.

Yet in spite of our agreement with the slogans, we cannot politically endorse this protest. It is not so much what these protests say, but what they do not say. As with a similar action on March 6 2008, the statement and demands for this action are shamefully silent on the designs that the US/UK governments have on Iran - particularly in the form of the sanctions programme. Sanctions do not hit the Mullahs - they have an adverse effect on our comrades' ability to organise and fight back. This cannot be a mere oversight on the part of the organisers of this demonstration. In fact, the March 6 2008 action organised by the International Transport Workers' Federation and the International Trade Union Confederation won the backing of the British and Australian governments - forces that not only have a shameful record on trade union rights, but which are some of the leading forces in the 'regime change from above' agenda in the interests of imperialism!

The US is pumping billions of dollars into regime change in its own image - involved in dubious front organisations such as the 'Solidarity Centre' in order to trick the Iranian workers' movement into lining up with the interests of imperialism's rotten project in the Middle East. Such 'solidarity' is the kiss of death for the Iranian workers - it pulls them behind and ties them to this thoroughly anti-working class agenda.

Taking place against the backdrop of the crisis around the Iranian presidential elections, it is vital that the international workers' movement adopts a clear position in favour of independent working class political action in Iran. The action of the bus and car workers - including talk of a general strike to bring down the Islamic Republic from oil workers - can only be welcomed. Similarly, the mass movement of women and students must be supported with our own propaganda, reporting and material solidarity - not that of the British Broadcasting Corporation or US President Barack Obama.

Hopi is unequivocal in its support for the mass protests. They are the true beacon of hope in Iran precisely because trade union rights and democracy spring from below - from the struggles of these forces themselves. We in Hopi harbour no illusions that the main 'reformist' candidate Mir-Hossein Mousaavi would have been any better - he has a shameful record of anti-working class thuggery, presiding over the murder of thousands of working class militants. The success of these protests depends on the working class acting independently in its own interests for genuine democracy and popular control, not tailing faux-democrats like Mousaavi.

While these protests present a great opportunity, as an expression of the anger and frustration of the majority of

Iranians with the government, we must be clear about the dangers implicit in failing to recognise that the Iranian people face two enemies: both the Islamic Republic, be it in the guise of Ahmadinejad or the corrupt and un-democratic 'reformists', and the global enemy of the working class, imperialism.

Opposition to the theocratic regime, and demands for trade union rights, are supportable demands. But without a clear stance in favour of democratic change from below, the danger is that such forces fall into the slipstream of imperialism and its so-called 'democratic' agenda for Iran. Indeed, all the US talk of 'democracy' and 'human rights' is rank hypocrisy. After all both in Iraq and in Afghanistan, the 'democratic' US government is more than willing to collaborate with the Iranian theocracy in deeply hated and anti-democratic occupation governments.

The huge demonstrations we have seen in Iran – the largest since 1979 - raise concretely the question of what sort of solidarity is needed. Hopi says we need principled international solidarity more than ever. Such solidarity must be predicated on direct links of support between the working class in Iran and internationally. Solidarity that is ideologically, politically and materially totally independent of either imperialism or the theocratic regime. In today's world, democracy and progressive social change comes from struggles only from below - whether in the Middle East, in Europe or in the United States itself.

For the latest news from Iran, go to: <http://hopinewsfromiran.wordpress.com>

Our campaign demands:

■ **No to imperialist war! For the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of US/UK troops from Iraq and all the Gulf region!**

■ **No to any imperialist intervention. The immediate and unconditional end to sanctions on Iran!**

■ **No to the theocratic regime! Victory to the Iranian people!**

■ **Opposition to Israeli expansionism and aggression!**

■ **Support to all working class and progressive struggles in Iran against poverty and repression!**

■ **Support for socialism, democracy and workers' control in Iran!**

■ **For a nuclear-free Middle East as a step towards a nuclear-free world!**



If you oppose the war plans of the imperialists - but support the struggle for an Iran free of the oppressive clerical regime - join us! Individuals: £10 or £5 unwaged (organisations see website).

Name _____

Organisation/union _____

Mobile phone _____

Address _____

Email _____

Please return to address above

Supporters include:

- **Diane Abbott** Labour MP
- **John McDonnell** Labour MP
- **Peter Tatchell** OutRage
- **Caroline Lucas** Green Party MEP
- **Tommy Sheridan** Solidarity
- **Ken Loach** filmmaker
- **John Pilger** journalist
- **Naomi Klein** writer and activist
- **Dr Hilary Rose** scientist
- **Haifa Zangana** writer
- Cllr **Rania Khan** Respect
- Cllr **Lufta Begum** Respect
- Iranian Workers Bulletin
- Workers Left Unity - Iran
- Communist Party of Great Britain
- Green Party
- Organization of Revolutionary Workers of Iran (Rahe Kargar)
- Communist Students