

The 5 main arguments against sanctions

1. No war on Iran ... and no sanctions

Sanctions are not a 'peaceful' method to deal with the clerical regime or fraudulent elections. In truth, sanctions are an integral part of a covert war on Iran being pursued particularly by Israel and the US. They impose hunger, demoralisation and desperation onto the 'besieged community' - the supposed intention is to soften up the regime either for external military attack or overthrow from within.

2. Sanctions hurt ordinary people, not the rich and powerful

The sanctions - and the ongoing threat of a military attack - have actually helped the theocratic regime whip the people into line. They have little or no effect on the elite of society. The rich and powerful have no problem getting around them. It is the working people, the poor and unemployed who suffer.

3. They prepare the way for 'regime change from above'

US-led imperialism's 'best case scenario' would be a reliable, pro-Western regime like that of the ex-Shah. Failing that, they would accept a less strident trend in the theocracy: the so-called 'reformists'. But when this layer was last in power, they introduced many of the neo-liberal and capitalist measures that impoverish the people of Iran today. Under their rule, Iran would remain a reactionary theocracy.

4. Iraq shows: Democracy cannot be delivered from above

The horror in Iraq is not just a result of the 2003 invasion and the attempts to deliver US-style democracy with bombs. Prior to it, the 1990 UN-imposed sanctions on the Saddam regime caused the death of up to a million Iraqis. The once strong democratic movements in Iraq were crippled by two enemies: the dictator Saddam and the sanctions imposed on their country.

5. Sanctions are a disaster for the cause of democracy

Sanctions disorganise the recently re-politicised working class as people squander their fighting energies on day-to-day struggles to simply survive. Sanctions dramatically degrade the ability of the working people to organise and fight. This is why Hopi encourages direct international working class solidarity with the aim of building the fighting capacity of the movement in Iran. This stands in stark contrast to the funds set up by the US administration to support those Iranian NGOs who follow US policy in the region.

Hopi supporters include: **Diane Abbott MP**, **Harry Cohen MP**, **John McDonnell MP**, **Caroline Lucas MEP**, **ASLEF** – train drivers union, **PCS** – civil servants union, **Labour Representation Committee**, the **Green Party**, **Tony Benn**, **Bill Bailey** - comedian, **Haifa Zangana** - writer, **Ken Loach** - film maker, **Naomi Klein** - author, **John Pilger** - journalist, **Professor Moshé Machover** - King's College, London and hundreds more.

