

KOMONIST COMMUNIST

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A calamity is knocking, we can't effort to wait!

Fateh Shaix

The tragedy in Iraq is deepening by the day and with it a catastrophe is threatening Iran and the "Greater Middle East"; a calamity more devastating than what the region has seen so far is in the making. The danger is very real and any complacency in this regard is both dangerous and plainly irresponsible. The consequences of inaction and vacillation both for the Iranian society and the people of Iran would be inconceivable and catastrophic.

One of the consequences of the current situation in the Middle East is the confrontation and the stand off between the US and the Islamic Republic on the back of the US strategy failure in Iraq. The dispatch of more troops and all other latest developments, ten days after the launch of the US's "New Strategy" in Iraq, indicate that the Bush administration is stubbornly continuing with its militaristic strategy, with minor changes in diplomacy and tactics.

Predictably there is no particular mention of negotiation with Iran in Bush's new strategy in Iraq. On the contrary it seems that the US forces have been deliberately targeting the Iran-backed networks of weapon supply and training for the insurgents. It is widely acknowledged, even by some of the reputable US think tanks, that 2006 ► **Page 3**

The statement of the Worker-communist Party of Iran -Hekmatist on the United Nations Security Council's resolution to impose sanctions against Iran

Diplomacy or Weapons of Mass Destruction!

The United Nations Security Council on December 23 unanimously adopted a resolution against the Islamic Republic for failure to halt its uranium enrichment programme and has imposed a number of economic and commercial sanctions. This resolution is apparently a diplomatic attempt to limit the Iranian government's ability to acquire nuclear weapons.

At the same time the UK government openly and officially outlined its plan to spend over £20bn in the next 30 years to upgrade and expand its nuclear capabilities and develop a new generations of ► **Page 2**

The first congress of the Worker-communist Party of Iran-Hekmatist
21 – 22 October 2006

Resolution on:

The situation in Iran and the challenges facing the Worker-communist Party of Iran – Hekmatist

1- The inherent inability of the Islamic Republic in dealing with the political and economic issues facing the Iranian society coupled with deep seated and widespread resentment towards the regime is a constant source of political crises and the main causes of the continued political turmoil in Iran.. ► **Page 4**

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◀ *page 1 Diplomacy or Weapons*

submarines for Trident missiles. The excuse for this vast and public investment to build nuclear weapons by the British government was given as insecurity and the threat of terrorism!

The UN resolution has nothing to do neither with global security nor with combating the threat of the Islamic terrorism. The proposed economic sanction can not serve as a weapon against the reactionaries and the UN and its security council are appropriate agencies to preserve the world peace. The UN and the Security Council in the past two decades have only served to rubber stamp the US and UK governments' policies. The recent resolution to impose economic sanction against Iran is an extension of Bush and Blair's policies to impose their inhumane order and exercise their military bullying in the world; the same policy that through its economic sanction condemned millions of Iraqi children to death for the lack of food, water and medicine. The same policy that has led to the complete destruction of the Iraqi society and has plunged that country into a quagmire of mass killings and miseries. Thanks to this policy the only development in Iraq has been the resurgence and the growth of the Islamic reaction and the sectarian and tribal killings.

The economic sanction against Iran, whether real or nominal is yet another Weapon of Mass Destruction and will only bring deprivation and destitution to the people of Iran and must categorically be condemned by all the progressive people, organisations and political parties around the world. The mere news of this sanction has already exacerbated the hardship, poverty and cost of living. Furthermore, this sanction will undermine the efforts of the vast majority of people

in Iran who have been trying to get themselves rid of

the Islamic regime and plays into the hands of the authorities to intensify their suppression. The economic sanction is a Weapon of Mass Destruction against the people of Iran and serves to prolong the rule of the Islamic Republic and as such must strongly be condemned by all.

Such a filthy and hypocritical policy of the United Nations, the Security Council, Bush and Blair which under the pretext of fighting terrorism and dictatorship deprive millions of people from their livelihoods and drop tons of bombs on defenceless people and at the same time shamelessly spend billions of pounds to expand their nuclear arsenal must be unequivocally condemned. This inhumane and immoral policy has nothing to do with people's struggle for liberty and equality. This is not diplomacy; this is an open war against the defenceless people. People of Iran and indeed the world do not need these self appointed gendarmes and bullies of Bush and Blair kind. The people of Iran do also do not need criminals like Ahmadinejad and Khameneh who thrive on such diplomacies. This world order needs an overhaul in order to emancipate the humanity from the yoke of reactionaries.

Worker-communist Party of Iran-Hekmatist

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◀ *Page 1 A calamity is knocking....*

has been a year marred by setbacks and defeats for the US and at the same time a year of encroachment and advances of the Iranian regime in Iraq. Iraq has now become a battleground for direct confrontation between the US and Iran. The escalating tension between the Democrats and elements of the Republicans with the Bush administration over the dispatch of more troops to Iraq and the ever widening differing views of the US rivals- Europe, Russia and China over Iraq and the vulnerability and diminishing US position in the world have tilted the balance of power in favour of the Islamic Republic to challenge the US in Iraq.

The Islamic Republic's foothold in large parts of Iraq, especially in two strategic regions of Baghdad and Basra, through relatively powerful militia forces, has helped Iran to exercise a greater influence in Iraq than the US. There is even the talk of a joint attempt by the Islamic Republic and its proxies in Iraq to almost clear Baghdad of its Sunni militias population and impose their own rule over Baghdad. Having said this, the "Iraqi Government" is in the main controlled by the Islamic Republic. The constant pressure put on Maliki, the Iraqi Prime Minister, by Bush, Rice and Gates is a reminder that the Islamic Republic is calling the shots in Iraq. Even any attempts by Bush to sideline Maliki will further undermine the US position. The outcome of such an approach will only lead to further deterioration of the situation in Iraq.

The US assault on an office run by the Iranian government in the city of Arbil and the arrest of its staff on the same day that the "New Strategy" was announced, was more than just flexing of muscles. This incident was followed by a series of diplomatic trips and meetings by the US Secretary of State and the Defence Secretary to seek the support of the Gulf

states, Egypt and Jordan in some kind of coalition

against the Islamic regime. All these and the dispatch of another warship to the Persian Gulf is a further indication that the Bush administration in its attempts to stage a less costly escape from the Iraq quagmire is capable of playing with fire and enter into a new adventure.

George Bush's desperate attempt to salvage some kind of "victory" in his remaining years in office has given the current Middle East crisis and the failure of US policy in the region a very serious and dangerous dimension. The growing differences within the US ruling establishment and the insistence of the New Conservatives on perusing their extremist and militaristic adventure has increased the possibility of even more wars and bloodsheds in the next two years. To make the situation even worse, the rivalries of the Imperialist countries of Europe, China and Russia with the US has escalated and has focused on the Middle East. These developments have brought the US and Islamic Regime's confrontation over Iraq and the Middle East to a head. The next two years will be crucial.

As far as the people of Iran are concerned whatever direction these conflicts will take one thing is clear: the calamity is knocking and we can not effort to wait. Workers and people should unite their ranks in work places and in the neighbourhoods and by challenging the ideas and politics of waiting in anticipation for an opening, take the matters into their own hands and put an end to the reign of the Islamic regime. This is the only way to seize the initiative and resolve the current conflicts in the Middle East to the advantage of all the people of the region and towards a permanent peace. This is not only possible but the only effective way of preventing a catastrophe much greater than what is happening in Iraq. Our unity and the overthrow of the Islamic Republic is the only way forward.

▶ *Page 12 Students Day*

socialist messages. "Freedom and Equality", "Socialism or Barbarism", "Universities are not Garri-sons", "Workers and Students Unite" Security Forces out of Universities" "Free All Political Prisoners" "Free Ossanlou", "US Stop Interfering in our Affairs",

The days of dogma and reactions in the universities are numbered. Universities belong to the camp of progress and advancement and the communist students must be at the forefront of the student movement for freedom, equality and progress.

◀ *Page 1 Resolution on the situation in Iran*

- 2 Despite the failure of the communists to assume the leadership of the opposition to the regime following the demise of the so called reformist opposition, 2nd Khordad , and the inability of the right wing opposition (pro-West conservatives, i.e. Monarchists, Constitutionalists, Republicans etc) in leading a credible and militant opposition to the regime, combined with its deep political and ideological crises, an opportunity has presented itself to us and the working class to rebuild and lead the movement for the overthrow of the Islamic Republic from a communist and worker perspective.
- 3 The efforts of the US to dominate the world under the “New World Order” and the “Pre-emptive Strike” strategies, and the prospect of US attack against Iran, which will have catastrophic consequences for the people of Iran and the entire region, has further complicated the whole situation for the working class, our party and the movement to overthrow the Islamic regime. The people of Iran and the working class in approaching this virulent situation need a determined, clearheaded and powerful guidance to steer them to victory.
- 4 The first congress of the Worker-communist Party of Iran-Hekmatist is fully aware that for a political Party winning such an historic opportunity to assume the leadership of a movement for the second time in a political turmoil is rare. At the same time the congress is also aware of the enormous difficulties and the barriers facing the working class and our Party to fulfil this task. This is an opportunity for the working class and our Party to bring about freedom and the equality of human beings in enjoying the wealth of our society and turn the workers communism into a reality in our life time and shape the fate of the contemporary humanity in this direction.
- 5 The congress is adamant that the most important and the most essential element for achieving victory under these circumstances is the existence of a mass, social and modern political Party capable of uniting, organising, leading and instilling confidence in the ranks of people and especially the working class to lead this movement to victory.
- 6 The first congress of the Worker-communist Party of Iran-Hekmatist draws the attention of all sections of the Party and its leadership to adopt and expand the ideas and concepts developed by Mansoor Hekmat under the “Party and the Society” and “Party and the Political Power”.
- 7 In particular, The first congress calls on the Party for the urgent adoption of the followings:
 - i. The Party must become the leader of the struggles of the people and the working class. In this context it is imperative for the Party to move beyond operating as an agitation and propaganda machinery and operate as a means of uniting, organising and empowering people, the working class and their leaders. Therefore the Party’s presence and influence must be tantamount to a more organised opposition to the Islamic Republic and the increase in influence and expansion of the humanistic ideals of the working class’s communism.
 - ii. The basis of any Party policy, action and methods of work for us is the society. The Party leadership must emphatically endeavour to move the Party away from the politics, methods of work and the traditions of marginalised and un-social sectarian left. The Party’s publicity and organisational culture and traditions must be re-evaluated and overhauled immediately.
 - iii. The Party is adamant to assess and appraise its progress objectively and based on the degree of its influence in the society; its ability to put up a defence against the Islamic Republic and the reactionary forces in the country; and in the number of the progressive and libertarian people and especially the socialist and communist leaders of the workers joining its ranks.
 - iv. The congress re-emphasises the importance of placing the working class and in particular those in the key industries as the basis of its political and organisational influence. Our Party prior to anything else must become the Party of the communist leaders and agitators of the working class.
 - v. The Party’s presence and influence in the society, and wherever prevalent, must be measured against the ability of the workers and the people in pushing back the regime’s oppression and the interference of the reactionary and ethnocentric

Bring Back the Troops

Call on members and activists of the Hekmatist Party on anti war campaigns

Four years after the historic anti-war demonstration of February 14, 2003 in London, a mass demonstration on January 27 in Washington, USA, signalled a heartening way forward for the humanity. Thousands of people poured into the streets of Washington to express their opposition to the ongoing war in Iraq and the protested against the warmongering policies of the Bush administration. Once again, following the series of demonstrations of February 2003, protestors in Washington, in a magnificent show of defiance, exposed the criminal policies of the Bush administration. This new round of protest has attracted people from all walks of life including many of the veterans of the anti Vietnam War.

After four years of bloodshed and carnage in Iraq the ruling administration in the US are bent on further deepening the war in the region. It seems that the warmongers in Washington are determined to create further crises to cover their failures in Iraq and by escalating the tension with the Iranian government are trying to instigate another war. This would be a dangerous development with unforeseen consequences.

The collapse of US strategy in Iraq and the emerging division within the ruling class in the US has provided an opportunity for a consorted, widespread and effective

campaign to force the warmongers to abandon their plans to continue with the current war and prevent them from embarking on new ones.

The Worker-communist Party of Iran – Hekmatist while continues with its efforts to end the occupation of Iraq redoubles its efforts to stop the US inflicting a war against Iran and puts the following initiatives on its plan of action to achieve this objectives.

- 1- Our Party organisation outside Iran strives, alongside the progressive forces in each country, to organise the largest possible mass protests against the US war mongering;
- 2- Explain and expose the truth and the politics behind the current war and the US war mongering ;
- 3- To mobilise the support and sympathy of people of the world for the struggles of the people of Iran against the Islamic Republic and the political Islam;
- 4- Our main demands and slogans in these campaigns would be “No to US Warmongering” and “ No to US interference in people’s lives around the world”;
- 5- We do our utmost to mobilise the largest possible masses of people to join these campaigns;

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► Page 4 Resolution

forces and finally in the ability and the readiness and the readiness of the people and workers in combating the forces of destruction and defending their livelihood and the society against the kinds of the future that the US, the political Islam and the political gangsters might bring about.

- vi. The congress emphasises that the relationship between the Party and the political power should been seen at a social level. First and foremost this relationship must be measured against the change in the balance of power between the people and the working class versus the Islamic Republic, the capitalists and the reactionaries.
- vii. The Worker-communist Party of Iran-Hekmatist must utilise its power and the influence in Kurdistan as a means of expanding the Party’s influence and power in other parts of the country.
- viii. The Worker-communist Party-Hekmatist must overhaul all its organisational, political and methods of work in order to build a modern communist organisation. The Party leadership must undertake to accomplish the historic task of building a mass, social and political communist party. The leadership of the Hekmatist Party must, for the first time in the contemporary history, put a modern mass communist party before the workers of the world.
- ix. The first congress while insists on full transparency at all levels and in adopting all the policies, rules and procedure and promoting openness and tolerance in dealing with different views and opinions in the party, it insists that the party should not tolerate any actions that undermines the collective will and the discipline in implementation of the ratified policies and decisions.



An introduction to Worker-communism

*The following is the transcript of a speech, delivered in English, by Koorosh Modaressi, the leader of the Worker-communist Party of Iran – Hekmatist at a gathering of communist and leftists activists in Lille, France on 11th and 12th November 2006. KOMONIST accepts responsibility for transcribing and editing the speech. **KOMONIST***

Thank you for inviting me.

The topic that I want to talk about today is the Worker-communism. It is obviously very difficult to talk about such a subject in such a short period of time. It is as if one has been asked to talk about communism in an hour or an hour and half. Worker communism is synonymous with Communism, not a word less and not a word more. We had to use the term Worker-communism because we wanted to distinguish our communism from other movements, other ideologies and other systems of thoughts which call themselves communism.

As I mentioned, this discussion will be brief. For further details I will refer you to Marx and Engels works especially the German Ideology. I will use the concepts that were first developed by Marx and Engels in that piece of work during their self clarification. I will also refer you to Mansoor Hekmat's works, which I am afraid there are not many in French. Some of his works are available in English. These works can be accessed on Mansoor Hekmat's public archives on the internet (www.hekmat-archive.com) I will specially refer to three of his works that are available in English:

- 1- The experience of the workers revolution in the soviet union;
- 2- Our differences; and
- 3- The Fundamental Characterises of Worker-communism.

When talking about the Worker-communism one can describe it in two ways. First the way it was developed and how it came about; its historical perspective

and what questions it had to answer and formulate itself by. And the other way is to describe the Worker-communism as a system. It is in indeed a system. We can talk about its philosophical and economical bases, its methods, and its critics of the capitalist society and so on.

Let me start from the first view. I am sure you know that all the major philosophical, political and social movements and ideas were basically influenced by major social events or revolutions. The development of these ideas and systems are not an abstract academic process. The carrier of good ideas is the social events which brings issues to the forth.

For example Hegel is deeply influenced by the French revolution, Marx is basically formulating the experience and the outcome of the events around 1848 revolutions. With the "German Ideology" and the Manifesto in place, the basic ideas of Marxism are there by 1848. After this Marx and Engels start to build on it. Both Hegel and Marx project their views in the light of given huge social events, i.e. revolutions.

Take Lenin for example. If there was not for the October revolution Lenin would have been forgotten and would have probably been less known than Rosa Luxemburg. Lenin, prior to the October revolution was not very well known. Not many people had heard of him. Trotsky was better known than Lenin. The close link between revolutions with a specific system of thoughts or political movement is the key issue here.

Hence, without knowing the French revolution and the 1848 revolutions one does not quite understand what Marx says in works like "The Eighteenth Brumaire of Luis Bonaparte".

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Freedom, Equality, Workers' Rule!

► *Page 6 An Introduction*

Similarly to better understand what Worker-communism literatures are talking about we must know the context in which these ideas have been formulated.

Worker-communism was formulated under the influence of two major events. Events that raised many essential questions in our minds; put many dilemmas and inconsistencies between our practice and our theory. We were faced with huge challenges and problems to tackle.

The two experiences are first the Iranian revolution of 1979 or rather its defeat in early 80s and second the collapse of the Eastern Block in the late 1980s and early 90s.

The Iranian revolution of 1979 was very special and particular in the sense that it was a revolution which occurred in a capitalist society. Iran was not a “semi-feudal” society, it was not a backward or colonial society; it was an industrial and modern capitalist society. Iran was a “mature” society with a capitalist system. It was probably the most industrialised country in the region. The revolution occurred in a country which had been through two previous bourgeois – democratic revolutions in early 20th century. Neither Turkey nor any of the Arab countries had had that kind of revolution. Nasser in Egypt, Ataturk in Turkey, like all of other leaders in the Middle Eastern countries rose by coup d’état or during an anti-colonial struggle.

The 1979 Revolution also was special because it was an urban revolution in which the working class was the major player. This was not the case in the Nicaraguan or Cuban Revolutions. Iranian revolution was a rare event. It was a rare and valuable experience for us as communists.

In 1997 the backbone of the Iranian regime broke when the oil workers stopped working and the people came out onto the streets with the slogans like “Our Oil Workers, Our Staunch Leaders” and this was not the slogan of a fraction of the population. This was the slogan of probably a million people marching in the streets. And yet we were defeated. The working class was defeated.

I think it was Lenin who said that the experience of one day in the revolutionary period is equivalent to 1000 days in regular life. This was the case for us. The only difference that we may have from the activists of our generation in other part of the world is that we have been through that experience; we have par-

ticipated in an uprising, we have participated in organising workers, we have tried to capture the political power and unfortunately we were defeated by the most obscure political force, i.e., the political Islam.

It is hard to imagine but during a period lasting a year or a year and half the following questions were placed before the working class and the communist groups and organisations.

What is the relationship between the major classes in the political arena? How to distinguish between the capitalist interests and the working class interests? For example the Islamic Republic came to power with the slogan of the “Nationalisation of all Industries”, We had to clarify ourselves about the idea of progressive national bourgeoisie and if such a thing existed. And it meant to engage in discussions on the streets and factories not just in terms political and theoretical analysis.

I will give you an example. There was a strike in a factory close to Tehran. We were a bunch of youth and students and went to support the workers in that factory. The revolutionary guards were around to suppress the workers. The owner of the factory who claimed to be a leftist started addressing the workers. He turned to the workers and said something to this effect “look Iran is a country under the influence of imperialism and I am a national bourgeois, an anti-imperialist and progressive at this stage of revolution. Please go back to your work and let me do my job.” One did not need to have read Marx to realise what he was saying was rubbish. Bourgeoisie is bourgeoisie that is all. This was an example of the kind of situations we were in. Another example, at the early stages of the Iranian revolution workers had set up councils or soviets in many workplaces to fight for better wages, for pensions, for unemployment benefits and other similar demands. The workers council in a company called General- a subsidiary of General Electric had organised a sit in inside the factory. I think they were protesting for unemployment benefit. At the same time in the vicinity of the General Electric compound a group of people had clashed with the security forces and it seemed like the uprising against the regime was taking place. Through our contacts amongst the General Electric workers we called on them and ask them to come out and join the uprising and let us defend and fight for our rights. We were attacked by the organisers of the sit in and accused of being agents of the bourgeoisie who wanted to break up their sit in saying something to the effect of “the hell with uprising we want our unemployment benefit” .

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◀ *Page 7 An Introduction to.....*

We were also faced with attacks on freedom, all aspects of freedom. Attacks on freedom of speech; attacks on women and the imposition of the veil. And when we approached the oil workers to do something about it they returned all the classical definitions of the working class's struggles which means only the economic struggles. Struggles to defend freedom had nothing to do with their struggles and they left women- half of the population and half of the working class- alone on the streets. And when the government clamped down on the freedom of speech nobody did anything about it.

That short revolutionary period threw up the question of what is the relationship between the political and economic demands of the working class. And in search of answers we had to go back to Marx and read hundreds of pages of Marx and Lenin to find an answer to these questions. We had to find an answer because our daily lives depended on it.

I do not know how familiar are you with the Iraq – Iran war. Iraq attacked Iran in 1980 and the war broke out. Again we were faced with the question of what should we do? Should we defend the “motherland”? Should we take up arms against the Islamic regime and side with Iraq? Should we do nothing? The regime started mobilising the whole country against the war and with it started to suppress all aspects of social life in that country. The question that presented itself at this time was not just a matter of taking a position. It was the matter of what to do because the aeroplanes were bombing us and we were sent to the fronts and we had to do something, not just say something. We had to organise a movement and raise a banner. We were under the bombings and were being caught on the streets and sent to the fronts. These were some of the simpler questions. We were faced with thousands of questions everyday and we had to decide what to do.

Kurdistan, the region in the western Iran, for some historical reasons was outside the control of the central government. In this region semi-leftist and semi-nationalist groups were enjoying more influence. The Islamic regime attacked Kurdistan to suppress freedom and exert its authority. There were couple of interesting developments in this situation. For one there was no communist organisation or party. There was this semi leftist organisation called Komala which called itself Marxist but it was more a Maoist kind of organisation and there was the traditional nationalist party,- Kurdistan Democratic Party of Iran (KDP). And when the regime attacked Kurdistan the first

question that was thrown in front us in Tehran (I was in Tehran in those days) was what should we do? Should we support the movement against the Islamic regime that was organised by this kind of leftist or by the nationalist movement? What should we do? By this we meant not what is right or wrong. We were there we had to either pick up the arms or just leave.

Some people decided to pick up arms and some people left. As vital as that. And some political groups in Iran either supported the movement which resisted the Islamic Republic or sided with the Islamic Republic itself under the pretext of the regime being anti-imperialist.

Can you see the line of reasoning? I remember discussing this issue with a friend of mine in Tehran who was on the side of the Iranian government and advocated that the Iranian government was an anti-imperialist force and we should support it. He referred me to Lenin and what he had said about anti-imperialism and also referred me to what Stalin had said. He was a Maoist and reminded me of what Mao has said. I did not believe in Maoism in those days either, it was not attractive for me. But Marx and Lenin were quite attractive to me. This is what I said. If Marx has said that we should support Khomeini then I am not a Marxist. If Lenin has said we should support Khomeini then I am not a Leninist. I am standing for my own values.

What I am trying to say is in a revolutionary period you have to clarify yourself. Thirty years ago we had to deal with and discuss some of the essential issues of class struggles head on.

Another interesting observation during this period was the situation in Kurdistan. Kurdistan at the beginning of the Iranian was not under the control of the central government. A period of openness and relative freedom existed lasting about six months. During this period working within the labour movement and organising workers was free. Labour activists started to organise workers. In the city of Sanandaj- the provincial capital of Kurdistan- a big union had been set up by the leftist groups working in the urban areas. This union organised frequent streets protests, with large number of workers marching on the streets and calling for jobs and unemployment benefit, asking for a better working condition and things like that. Komala, the Maoist leftist organisation which was active in the area had nothing to do with this union and its activities. When the Islamic regime attacked Kurdistan all the workers left their unions and took up arms and joined either the nationalists parties or Komala.

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This situation paused the question that in the revolutionary period which one is more important, the political agenda or working for just a kind of trade union organisation? Why a trade union type organisation snaps and breaks up totally and the other, the political organisations expands? Those leftists groups that had organised those unions had their own armed forces but nobody joined them. The reason was that in the political arena they were not a credible force. They were not the kind of forces that people could say I will join those people and we can do something.

During this period, from the theoretical point of view, was a period in which a Marxist trend of thinking, an orthodox Marxist kind of thing entered into the Iranian left arena which was primarily represented by Mansoor Hekmat. It called itself "Revolutionary Marxism". And it was based on couple of basic ideas. One was that there was no progressive bourgeoisie and the bourgeois class, either national or international; all of them have a common interest in suppressing the working class to access cheap labour. All of them have vested interest in the dictatorship or despotism of the system because it is securing cheap labour. They need a guaranteed pool of cheap labour, all of them benefit from this situation. So there is no freedom loving democratic bourgeoisie in that country.

The other idea was that Iran was a capitalist society and the working class should form its own political party and the political side of the Iranian working class's struggle is as important as the economic demands. And also the working class should actively enter into the political arena through its own party.

The Revolutionary Marxism started to criticise the Iranian left and the Iranian mainstream communisms. The Revolutionary Marxism at that time identified populism as dominant trend within the Iranian radical left and started to criticise not only their theoretical foundation but their answers to the questions that I mentioned earlier on. The Revolutionary Marxism while criticising the traditional left's answers to the questions that I referred to started to formulate its own answers to those questions. A group led by Mansoor Hekmat, the "Unity of Communist Militants" (UCM), was driving these struggles ahead and again because of the revolutionary period and in which everything is moving fast, this group polarised the Iranian leftist's arguments. Leftist organisations and communist organisations very sharply and

very quickly polarised and the whole system was divided into two sections; one called themselves the Revolutionary Marxism and sided with the UCM and the other section were either dissolved under pressure from the Islamic regime like "Peykar", "Razmandeghan" and so many others which suffered splits and disintegration or disappeared altogether.

At the end of this process in 1983, the Communist Party of Iran was founded. Right from the beginning it was a major force in the Iranian politics. I had the honour of being a member of its founding congress. Komala the leftist organisation in Kurdistan that I mentioned earlier joined the Party right from the beginning. Most of the leftist organisations or left activists and communists outside Kurdistan also affiliated to this Party. The Communist Party right from the beginning started to organise and continued to re-organise in different areas. For example at that time a war was going on in Kurdistan and we organised a huge military campaign and armed struggle against the Islamic Republic in Kurdistan. Also right from the beginning we tried to work and organise within the working class and both in Kurdistan and in the rest of Iran and Tehran. We organised major events and set up organisations and were very active in the working class movement in those desperate and dark times. For example for a few years after the formation of the Communist Party we organised mass May Day rallies in Sanandaj and organised different kinds of local organisations and co-operatives in Tehran and other places.

We ran into different kinds of problems. We were attacked by the Kurdish nationalist Party, Kurdistan Democratic Party of Iran- and we were dragged into fighting for a couple of years. These were the kind of questions we faced in those days.

As I mentioned earlier, with all our efforts, from early 80s it was clear that the revolution was defeated by the most obscure political force, i.e., the political Islam. Obviously we had to ask ourselves why this had happened.

By 1987 the Islamic Republic intensified its military campaign in Kurdistan and we had to completely withdraw from Kurdistan. Our armed forces were forced out of Kurdistan and into Iraq and Kurdistan was completely occupied by the Islamic Republic. And in Tehran our organisation was suppressed. Many of our activists were executed and most of the working class and leftist organisations were completely dismantled, suppressed and most of their activists were killed by the regime. ▶ page 10

Freedom Guards Step up their presence in the cities and towns in Iranian Kurdistan



Javad Aslani

The Hekmatist Party's Freedom Guards have stepped up their activities in the recent months. This initiative has stuck a cord with the revolutionary young men and women in the neighbourhoods of the urban areas. Freedom Guards in contrast to the established traditional nationalist armed struggles have offered a new way of organising, protecting and safeguarding the struggle of people against the Islamic forces in the neighbourhoods and districts. The Freedom Guards offer protection to people to carry out their struggle and make sure their achievements and gains are sustained. The expansion and growth of the Freedom Guards will empower people in their neighbourhood to establish their own control and cut off the interferences of the government oppressive forces from their daily activities.

Freedom Guards are made of gross root activists advocating revolutionary politics and offering a revolutionary alternative to the Islamic reaction in

neighbourhoods and districts.

In recent months major cities and towns in Iranian Kurdistan witnessed the emergence of units of the Freedom Guards and staging high profile armed presence and incursions into the heart of major centres of population. In the cities of Sanandaj, Mahabad, Marivan, Kamiaran, Sardasht and Naghadeh local units of Freedom Guards have taken over strategic locations and whole neighbourhoods and staged rallies and propaganda campaigns. Agitators within the units of the Freedom Guards address gatherings and distribute party literatures and invite people to intensify their struggle against the Islamic Republic.

Such appearances have proven very popular with local people and have been very successful in raising the morale of the local people and deterring the regime's mercenaries from intimidating and harassing citizens.

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By this time it was quite clear to us, especially to Hekmat that it is the end of the Eastern Block. He had written about it many years before it happened and he predicted that this block and the wall will come down. And he said, rightly, that although we have never approved of the Soviet Union, although we never accepted the Soviet Union and China to be communist or socialist societies and although we have always been a critic of the Eastern Blocks nevertheless, "the wall" will come down on us and on

all aspects of egalitarianism including socialism. He said "then for each single remaining Marxist you will find one thousand ex-Marxists." And it happened.

The remaining part of this speech will be printed in the next issue of KOMONIST

The statement of the Worker-communist Party of Iran – Hekmatist on:

Saddam's Execution Verdict

On Tuesday December 26 the Appeal Court in Iraq upheld Saddam's death sentence. According to this verdict the execution must be carried out within thirty days. It is claimed that Saddam's sentence has been issued for his crimes against humanity. This is a big lie and an absolute hypocrisy. Saddam's death sentence has got nothing to do with serving justice in Iraq. This verdict does not address the grievances of the people of Iraq and thousands of people who were murdered by Saddam.

Those issuing this verdict and those carrying it out are by no means less criminal than Saddam. If those implicated in crimes against humanity are to be tried and hanged then likes of George Bush and Blair ought to be first in line. These criminals and their policies have so far killed far more Iraqis than Saddam Hussein. These guys are perpetrators of murders and crimes against humanity. Those who today shed tears for the people of Iraq and those who cry for "justice" and have risen in support of justice for the victims of Saddam's crimes are themselves responsible for mass murdering Iraqi children and the total destruction and disintegration of the Iraqi society. Thanks to the policies of the Western imperialist world order led by Bush and Blair Iraq has now become a derelict site. And again thanks to their policies the Palestine question has become the most tangled issue and the Islamist and ethnic terrorists take the lives of hundreds of people on the daily basis all over the world. If the question is about trying the murderers then one ought to know where do Bush, Blair, Sharon and tens of other mass murderers stand.

The execution of the former dictator of Iraq is neither about serving justice nor about trying the killers of Iraqi people. This verdict is meant to mark a turning point in the battle of the US militarism in Iraq and mark the "victory" of the US in Iraq. This verdict is not intended to mark people's victory but is meant to mark the victory of rulers that have a criminal dossier thicker than Saddam's. This verdict is indented to silence anyone who dares to "oppose" the US.

With the execution of Saddam the killings and murders in Iraq and the region will not diminish. This verdict is part and parcel of a consorted attempt by the murderers of Iraqi people to terrorise and subdue them. Putting an end to killings and murders in Iraq and in the region will only come about by an all sided and serious confrontation against all the perpetrators of death and destruction; against the gory new imperialist order and agents of ethnic and religious wars. This can only be achieved through the civilised humanity and those opposing all kinds of killings and executions.

Ending this barbarism is the task of a humanity that wants to relinquish the fate of human beings from the likes of Bush, Blair, Saddam and Sharon. This can only be achieved through the organised and conscious will of the working class determined to put an end, once and for all, to this injustice and barbarism.

Worker-communist Party of Iran – Hekmatist

December 27, 2006

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6- We at the same time oppose any anti war campaign that appeases the political Islam and plays into their hands. We will not engage and participate in such demonstrations.

7- We, reserve our right to participate in any meetings or gatherings to advocate and advance our aims listed in items 2,3 and 4 above.

Nasan Nodinian

Secretary of the Abroad Organisation of—WPI-Hekmatist

January 28, 2007

Students Day 2006: Left and Radical students seize the initiative

Javad Aslani

December 7 (16th Azar Solar Calendar) marks the Students Day in Iran. On this day in 1953 three student activists were shot dead at the hands of the deposed monarchist regime. This day has since then been remembered by the students as a day of defiance against oppression. Universities in Iran, like many other despotic societies, have been the bastion of anti-oppression and anti-despotism activities. It was not surprising that the Islamic regime, soon after coming to power, embarked on a ruthless and bloody purge of the universities and academic institutions. Thousands of communists, socialists and radical students were murdered, imprisoned and expelled from universities. In their infamous campaign of “cultural revolution” the authorities called in the armed forces and the revolutionary guards to physically remove the communist and leftist students from the universities and campuses. The progressive and communist tradition amongst the students was so strong that the authorities were forced to shut down the entire higher education system for couple of years and put very restrictive entrance criteria, including ideological and religious tests and reference from local mosques, to filter out “non-Muslim” students.

The leftist tradition within the student movement in Iran was much more deep rooted than the Islamic authorities had envisaged. Clandestine activities and formal channels were exploited to advocate socialist ideas. The government was opposed in every step of the way to reclaim the universities from the leftist activists.

With the rise of popular resentment and opposition against the regime and the subsequent disagreement and division amongst the ruling clique within the Islamic regime a number of student associations emerged in the universities affiliated to the so called “moderate” elements within the establishment. With the intensification of division within the different sections of the Iranian government and the formation



Photo : Behnam Sadighi

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of an internal opposition block around the former president, Khatami, an opportunity arose for the leftist students to exploit this situation and promote and advocate socialist ideas and engage in debates, discussions.

For a number of years fear of persecution and fear of the Islamic justice had forced the leftist students to go through a great deal of difficulties to hide their identities from the heavily infiltrated and watched university environment and resort to creative methods to propagate their views.

The radical and progressive students have been in the forefront of a growing resentment and opposition towards the regime in the past few years. Adapting to the new situation the students have deployed bold and brave tactics to lead a radical and progressive campaign against the authorities. Oppressive measures inside the universities and dormitories have been constantly challenged. Efforts have been made to tackle female and male segregation in the universities and staunch fights were put up to free detained fellow students. More importantly the students have expressed clear and radical stance against nearly all social and political issue. Support for workers movement and defence of political prisoners have been high on their agenda.

Student Day of 2006 marked a turning point for the students movement under the Islamic regime. For the first time the leftist students seized the initiative and called and organised rallies in a number of universities up and down the country. For the first time red banners and communist placards dominated the rallies. Speaker after speaker took to the podiums and delivered political speeches highlighting the most pressing issues facing the society including issues facing workers and international affairs. During these rallies students carried banners, in the full glare of the security forces, with clear and direct

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