

**Street protests
over capitalist barbarism
and internationalist positions**



Internationalist Voice

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A wave of street protests that began on December 28th 2017 in Mashhad spread rapidly throughout the country. Latent anger flamed out and thousands of people with the same fate came together and the protests became a roaring river. The unbridled suppression of the police state could not stop the protests, but instead they spread to other cities. The waves of this political earthquake interweaved from North to South, West to East and the political atmosphere was shaken up following the protests. The rebellion of the hungry, the oppressed, the trampled of the community, and to hear them shouting “Death to Khamenei!”, someone who believes that he has the power of God, makes everyone burst with joy . How beautiful is the downfall and burning of the posters of Khamenei. The collective protest to this upside down world and the desire of the other world is definitely very magnificent. There are still no accurate numbers of the dead, wounded and arrested, but at least 10 people were killed and at least four hundred were arrested. According to the Interior Ministry, more than 90 percent of the arrested are young and they are under 25 years old on average.

These protests are the result of the crisis of capitalism. The fact is that capitalism has fallen into one of its deepest historical crises, and the burden of this crisis is carried by the working class. The living standards of the working class, throughout the world, have been subjected to the daily attacks of the bourgeois. But the important thing is that the aftermath of the crisis in the periphery of capital plays a more destructive role than in metropolitan countries. Poverty, unbridled inflation, generalized unemployment, astronomical misuses, environmental problems and air pollution, in a world of decreasing living standards, has created a living hell for the majority of members of the community. In contrast to the parochial minority, with their mythical and aristocratic life, they have created an earthly paradise of the surplus value of the working class.

The demonstrations in Mashhad were to protest against the unbridled inflation with the presence of some of the victims of financial and credit institutes that protested against the widespread corruption. This protest in its process expanded to Tehran, Karaj, Kermanshah, Rasht, Isfahan and other places. There is speculation that the Imam of the Friday Prayer of the town of Mashhad, Ayatollah Alamhoda, along with Ibrahim Raissi, who was the rival in the latest presidential election to Rouhani (the president of Iran), had arranged a controlled meeting to question the state of Rouhani, but the gathering became out of control and the protest process spread to other cities.

In this regard, Ishaq Jahangiri, the first vice president, accused the fundamentalist faction of organizing the protests, and stated: "Economic issues have been the basis of some issues. There are other issues behind the scenes. Those who have been the founder of some actions against the government must know the smoke of their actions goes in their own eyes. When the political movement begins on the street, others embark on it and those who started that movement are not those who end it." [1]

In this regard, some Iranian media quoted Gholamhossein Karbaschi as being close to the Rouhani government and said that the Imam of the Friday Prayer of the town of Mashhad, Alamhoda, due to his role of “his behind-the-scenes action in Mashhad street gatherings” was summoned to the Supreme National Security Council and Ali Shamkhani, secretary of the National Security Council, suggested it was urgent. However, Alamhoda refused this and stated that if Karbaschi did not apologize, he would prosecute him. [2]

The Islamic bourgeoisie, on the one hand, suppresses protests and limits the channels of social communication and the internet to prevent the spread of protests and, on the other hand, tries to ensure the protests follow the legal and governmental forms, until the protesters' wrath is diffused. In this regard, Abdolreza Rahmani Fazli, the interior minister stated that "If the protesters intend to rally, they should ask for permission to check their application at the Ministry of the Interior and the governorates." [3] Also, the parliamentarian Iman Abadi stated that "the message of the gatherings of the people has been received and that the parliament does not have an agenda to increase the price of energy carriers."

According to research by the same parliament of Capital, the poverty index has had an increasing trend in recent years, purchasing power has fallen sharply and there has been a dramatic drop in living standards. The ideologues and professors of the University of Capital have already warned the capitalist government about the insurgent revolt. In this regard, Mohsen Renani, a university professor of the same Islamic bourgeoisie, said two years ago:

"If millions of unemployed, marginalized and poor people are protesting, and the poor people are revolting, they are no longer negotiating and are not leadable. They will not have a clear goal; they do not want the status quo." [4]

The protests of the younger generation, especially the unemployed, who have not even been given the chance and opportunity to enter the system of capital-bondage slavery, indicate that the younger generation is aware that there is no future in this upside down capitalist world. At the same time, the student company in these protests indicates that students see themselves as future proletarians and protest their future exploitation. The unemployment rate among university graduates is 30%. [5]

For the working class, the communists and the internationalists, it is not enough to go on the streets and cry "Death to Khamenei". The working class should not be the sequence of social events, but should be the leading cause of social events. The motto "Death to Khamenei" is the same as the slogan "Death to the Shah". The task of the internationalists is to actively participate in the class struggle by analysing the conditions and providing a clear political orientation to the proletariat. The current protest, although it reflects the rioting of the hungry, is also influenced by the democratic and nationalist spirit and thoughts.

All the political tendencies of capital from the right to the left, from monarchists to the radical phrase of the left of capital (Worker Communists), from nationalist and patriotic movements to the Mujahedin [6], proclaim the progress of the people's movement and all have the same goal. This is that the working class is a supernumerary actor in the populist movements and the repetition of the events of 1979. However, even if something goes according to their plan, it will only lead to regime changes in the framework of the capitalist system. Each of them identifies itself as the only alternative for the successor to the Islamic Republic. The left of capital in a disgusting way removes reactionary slogans from its existing declarations. Nationalists, mujahidins and monarchists also want to be a proper alternative to the imperialist powers of the West and Saudi Arabia and other Arabic countries regarding their imperialist tensions.

This is contrary to the political delusions of the left of capital of 1979, which created from a reactionary like Khomeini the Imam who defended the oppressed and made the clergy anti-imperialist. Yet, in February 1979, the internationalists declared that Khomeini was no more

progressive than the Queen of England or the first emperor Bokassa. Also, in February 1979, the internationalists announced that the proletariat must maintain its class independence and should not involve itself in the people's movements. Furthermore, the internationalists announced that the only revolution on the agenda, both in peripheral countries including Iran and metropolis countries, was the Communist Revolution. [7]

In this protest, the working class is just as observant as the social class, and atomised workers, especially the army of unemployed, are involved. If the material conditions are provided for the social protests, but the protesters do not have a horizon or perspective for their protest, society will explode, and protests will be formed more in the form of a rebellion, uprising or even revolt. The nature of each protest movement is determined by the force that constitutes the movement, the wishes and aims of that movement. So, in order to investigate the protests, we first consider the slogans. The slogans can be classified into three categories:

Monarchist slogans:

- The Iran which does not have a king, has no accountability and stability!
- King of Iran, come back to Iran!
- Reza Shah, bless your soul!
- King of kings, bless your soul!
- We made a revolution, we made a mistake!

Nationalist slogans:

- Leave Syria, think about us!
- Neither Gaza nor Lebanon, my soul is sacrificed to Iran!
- Independence, Freedom, Iranian Republic!

Anti-dictatorship slogans:

- Death to Dictator!
- Death to Rouhani!
- Death to Khamenei!
- Referendum, referendum, this is the slogan of the people!
- Reformists, Hardliner, The Game is Now Over!

The introduction of monarchical slogans indicates that humans have reached such a degree that they are so desperate that desire for the dictatorship of the royal regime and such slogans represent the reactionary demand of such protestors, and on the other hand, it expresses the reactionary monarchist circles are more active, especially after the arrival of the Trump.

The nationalist slogans also make reactionary demands, for example, the slogan "Neither Gaza nor Lebanon, my soul is sacrificed to Iran" cannot understand that the Iranian bourgeoisie is in line with its imperialist interests and in the direction of expanding areas under its influence of imperialist intervention in Gaza, Lebanon, Iraq, Yemen and so on. Imagine generalizing this slogan to America and someone shouting in New York "Neither Afghanistan, nor Iraq, nor Korea, nor Israel, nor... My soul is sacrificed to America." It is only in the destruction of the capitalist system that imperialist interests lose their meaning.

Those who forty years ago, with the cry of "Death to the Shah (King)!" left the royal regime in the dustbin of history and have not forgotten that it was argued that no regime would be more dictatorial than the Shah's regime. This experience is in the historical memory of the Iranian people. The slogan "Death to Khamenei", if it goes beyond the expression of anger, must be followed by "Long live". "Death to Khamenei" can only inspire the pursuit of the class demands of the workers, in other words, the slogans that mark the class system. Bourgeois democracy is on the other side of the same coin of bourgeois dictatorship, so our slogans must be against wage slavery, exploitation, unemployment and inflation, and our goal must be to undermine the whole system of capitalism!

Capitalism is the source of all the turmoil and misery around the world. Our interest is not only to change the ruling class, but also the class struggle. The working class face very difficult conditions, struggling for physical survival. The living standards of the working class and the social conditions of this class have worsened. Today, although the class struggle is in defensive mode, the working class, if it does not want to become the body of the people's movement, must take the initiative and put its stamp on historical events. The working class must bring young people, unemployed people, students and other layers of society together, and, conversely, the working class will be drawn to the movement of democracy.

Everyone's hopes are pinned on the sleeping giant, the proletariat. If the sleeping giant does not wake up, if the protest does not advance on an independent class course, if the working class does not create neighbourhoods, factories, strikes, committee struggles and other independent institutions itself, if the working class does not expand the struggles from the street to the workplace in all sectors, the working class in the form of atomic humans will eventually turn into the black army of the Democratic movement. The pulling of the working class into the democratic movement and extras in the pro-democracy movement will weaken and incapacitate the working class.

Our slogan must be against wage slavery, exploitation, unemployment, etc., in other words, we must orient the capitalist system. We just have to fight for our class interests. Capitalism is the source of all the turmoil and misery around the world. Class struggle in its evolutionary process, due to its anti-capitalist nature, will not only spread to other capitalist countries, but will also challenge the state of capital. Our interest is not just to change the ruling class, as in 1979, but in the class struggle our goal must be to undermine the whole system of capitalism. Our class is the only social class that can end the barbarism and brutality of capitalism. This is only possible from an internationalist horizon. We have nothing to lose, except our chains and the world we get!

Death to capitalism!

Long live the class struggle!

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Notes:

[1] <http://www.alef.ir/news/3961008105.html>

[2] [behind-the-scenes action in Mashhad street gatherings](#)

[3] <https://kalemeh.tv/?q=fa/news/1396/10/13520>

[4] <http://www.kaleme.com/1394/11/13/klm-236475>

[5] [The unemployment rate among university graduates](#)

[6] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/People%27s_Mujahedin_of_Iran

[7] Look at article, Developments of 1979, a view of the positions of the left of capital and internationalists and even the statement of the International Communist Current (1979) published on the website of Internationalist Voice.