

Tudeh News

International Bulletin of the Tudeh Party of Iran—March, 2008 - No. 251

International Dept. Address: BM Box 1686 London WC1N 3XX

Fax: (Berlin: 324-1627) (London: 208 -392 2653)

e-mail: mardom@tudehpartyiran.org - **URL:** <http://www.tudehpartyiran.org>



Participation in the “Elections” puppet show of tyrant regime, is against the interests of popular movement, and only benefits ruling reaction

(Abridged from "Nameh Mardom", Central Organ of the Tudeh Party of Iran No. 785, 1st Mar. 2008)

In the weeks prior to the qualification review of the election candidates for the 8th Islamic parliament, Tudeh Party of Iran predicted that the ruling reaction was determined to prevent the recurrence of what happened during the elections of the 6th parliament in which the state reformists took over the parliament. As predicted, the plan was to pursue the policy of “offer nothing, to settle for the least”. We have been witnessing the implementation of the various aspects of these plans of the reaction in the recent days.

Mustafa Taajzaadeh, the chief electoral officer in reformist administration, said in an interview that: “what the Guardian Council [the body controlling election nominations] did in the past 10 days is a revealed trap; first the Executive Boards [of elections], appointed by the 9th administration [of Ahmadi-Nejad], disqualified a great percentage of the reformist and independent candidates such that the alliance of reformists was left with only 96 seats outside of Tehran to compete for. In the second stage, the Central Review Board, headed by Mr. Jannatti disqualified even more reformist and independent candidates who were qualified by the Executive Boards, such that we were left with only 24 seats outside of Tehran to compete for...In the third stage, and under broad publicity coverage by radio and TV, Mr. Jannatti qualified a great number of low profile candidates and a limited number of renowned candidates, and reinstated the status of reformists back to where they were in the first stage, i.e. back to the pool

of candidates qualified by the Executive Boards. Therefore, in the 2nd stage (Central Review Board) Mr. Jannatti extensively disqualified the candidates, and then in the 3rd stage qualified a few of the prominent candidates that had previously been disqualified...this way the elections remained uncompetitive, and fundamentalists would call the Guardian Council a savior.”

It was not only the fundamentalists who welcomed these maneuvers of the Guardian Council. Hashemi Rafsanjani...said: “with its recent move, for which I thank them, the Guardian Council ... would certainly finalize the elections process with its actions...”

When there is no real chance and opportunity for the reformist forces to change the current balance in the parliament...participating in the elections process is submitting to the plots of the reaction

Contrary to the theory that sees the conflict between the reformist groups and fundamentalists as a “phony contention”, all the events of the recent years, and particularly the period after Khatami’s term is office and after coming to power of Ahmadi-Nejad administration, indicate that the ruling reactionaries are determined to do all in their power to prevent the recurrence of another reformist governance. In recent years, the reaction leaders have repeatedly called the events of May 23rd [when reformist Khatami won the presidential elections] as a grave historical mistake and believed that this reform process had posed serious risks to the very existence of the “system”. The events of the 9th presidential elections, in which [Supreme Leader] Khamenei’s office (and even his son) along with Guards Corps [Sepah] and security forces openly intervened and staged extensive fraud and vote rigging to pull Ahmadi-Nejad as the winner of the elections out of the ballot boxes, all indicate the firm determination of reaction to monopolize the power and to firmly deprive the state reformist of any say in legislative or executive (state) powers.

In recent weeks we have been witnessing the same trend again. What is certain is that the

ruling reaction, led by the regime's Supreme Leader, would not settle for anything less than "recanting" of state reformists for their past deeds. Leaking the news about some of the disqualified candidates contacting Khamenei's office, and the demand by this office and other reactionaries that disqualified candidates "recant" their past deeds, and particularly their "sitting-in at the parliament", is self explanatory enough.

Furthermore, in recent days Khamenei and Jafari, the chief commander of Guards Corps [Sepah], have openly intervened in the election process and not only have expressed their support for the monopolistic actions of the Guardian Council but also have warned state reformists to either submit to the demands of the reaction or would be completely wiped out of the political scene of the country.

Sarmaayeh [Capital] paper quoted Jafari as saying: "Sepah is categorically fundamentalist and will be on the side of fundamentalists..." These words...and Khamenei's silence followed by his concrete support for Ahmadi-Nejad's administration and Sepah and the 7th parliament, all indicate the firm determination of the regime to stabilize and reinforce the pillars of the uncontested dominance of the ruling reaction.

Therefore, it is clear that the ruling reaction desires only a superficial presence of reformists in the elections. When there is no real chance and opportunity for the reformist forces to change the current balance of power in the parliament – which is under full control of the reaction and the obscurantist – participating in the elections process is submitting to the plots of the reaction. We had previously warned about taking compromising and conceding policies to win a number of seats in the parliament, and reiterate here that pursuing such policy would severely damage the political record and credibility of state reformists and their affiliates.

In recent years, whenever the people of our nation sensed that they could make a difference in and impact the political developments of the country through their presence in elections, they have intelligently and smartly utilized this opportunity to do so. Today, the people would not participate in a puppet show in which in a great majority of electoral districts the only choice is between the hand-picked candidates of the reactionary Guardian Council.



Privatization, Globalization, and the Iranian Regime

(Abridged from "Nameh Mardom", Central Organ of the Tudeh Party of Iran No. 785, 1st Mar. 2008)

On Monday January 7, Iranian president Mahmud Ahmadi-Nejad presented the budget for the upcoming year to "Majlis" (the Parliament). The new budget was presented as a single clause and without any amendments. In presenting the budget Ahmadi-Nejad articulated that the reason for such a budget is that the members of parliament would be able to review and examine its details easily! Submission of such a budget by the reactionary government in the midst of growing tensions and face-off among various factions of the government over how to execute the plans for economic reforms has in turn deepened the conflict among the factions and escalated extreme frictions internally among the ruling reactionaries. Before presenting the new budget to the parliament, the deputy minister of Economy and Finance had stressed in an interview with "Mehr" news agency that "the government is very determined to stimulate the country's economy and its infrastructure, and the private sector should also be present in the scene and implement the macro plans of Article 44 of Constitution [dealing with privatization]. The "Private Sector Empowerment" bill that is being reviewed by the parliament and the ministry of Economy and Finance lays the grounds for the effective presence of the private sector in the economy of the country."

This determination of the government for economic reform and empowering the private sector is nothing but executing such economic reform policies to align the country with globalization and to join the World Trade Organization! Around this topic, the regime held the "International Forum on Globalization, Privatization, and Economic Justice" from January 6th to 8th of this year, whose supporters and organizers were Islamic Republic's National Centre for Globalization Studies, the Chamber of Commerce, and Privatization Organization. During the three days of the Forum, such topics as the effects of globalization on the economic growth of countries, privatization and economic justice, competitiveness and economic justice, the interaction of governments and enterprises over globalization, and other subjects were discussed. It was not accidental or for no reason that this forum was held during the current

circumstances, and with extensive representation by a broad spectrum of reactionaries, along with other supporters and defenders of neoliberal policies from different factions inside and around the regime. The solemn emphasis of some of the influential figures of the ruling reaction on rapid adaptation to globalization by Islamic Republic of Iran, and their propaganda that the general globalization policies and its prerequisites – including privatization and economic liberation – are favored by the highest ranked elements in the regime was not accidental and for no reason.

This effort by the ruling reaction, especially at the current moment - considering the critical political situation in the country on the eve of the 8th parliamentary elections, and the kind of interaction between the regime and international capitalism and imperialism - has a very clear and telling message!

On the first day of the Forum, Esfandiar Rahim, a Presidential advisor and the new head of the National Centre for Globalization Studies, outlined: “the Islamic Republic is ready for serious partnership in enunciating the logic of the global move... as a natural trend, globalization is unavoidable... Opportunities for globalization [for the regime] are free from natural, political, and economic worries and pressures [meaning policies of the US and Europe] that exist for the regime today.”

Next, Mohammad Nahavandian, the head of the Chamber of Commerce, took the stage and supporting and praising globalization and the necessity to expand the private sector said: “globalization has created the opportunity for the smaller players... today one must ... defend the right to economic relations [read joining the globalization bandwagon] with abroad [relations with imperialist monopolies].” The head of the Chamber of Commerce added: “...The rules of the game in various economic sectors must be re-examined; the same way that nuclear energy is our right and a national slogan, economic progress [privatization] should also be considered one of the indisputable rights of our country. Effective interaction with world economy ... is a necessity.” However, the most important speech in this forum belonged to the Speaker of the parliament. Haddad Adel announced: “globalization which is a challenge for us and other nations, and privatization which is in the immediate agenda... are essential elements in managing the country and establishing relations with the world.”

The emphasis of the Speaker of parliament and influential member of the ruling reaction on globalization and privatization as essential elements of establishing global relations, clearly

points to the regime’s plans in the near future, and also the changing terms inside the regime. Haddad Adel, then clarified the regime’s position and added: “today, the development of information technology has prepared the context for globalization and its clearest facet is the globalization of economy. The execution of the policies of Article 44 and getting close to the realization of privatization in our country, under the context of globalization take a particular shape to it. Today, the ideology that maintained that justice and private ownership are mutually exclusive and believed that any kind of justice requires abolishing private ownership and creating a centralized state economy, has failed all around the world amid the collapse of USSR and Marxism, and the world has put this stage behind [through the process of globalization].”

The Speaker of the parliament then boldly added: “In the Islamic Republic of Iran today, people have distanced themselves from ideas that consider private ownership and justice mutually exclusive, and if advocates of the private sector would like to reform the [business] culture and are after job creation and related regulations, then they should take responsibility, and be prepared to take risk and not rush.”

Majlis Speaker: “globalization...and privatization...essential elements in managing the country and establishing relations with the world.”

Thus, considering the changes in the balance of power in the regime, pivotal and fundamental elements of the regime’s policies were expressed by the Speaker of parliament and one of the main players in the ruling reaction and left no doubts about the true objectives of the ruling reaction in dealing with future developments.

The “International Forum on Globalization, Privatization, and Economic Justice” shows that the Supreme Leader regime has relied on and planned for deep and extensive changes ensuing the prescriptions and directives of the IMF and the World Bank in order to guarantee its survival and its future...

It is interesting that the Forum was held with the presence of foreign guests [Asian and European]. Directors of some of the multinational monopolies as well as the former Prime Minister of Malaysia attended via videoconferencing...

During a similar fair [International Green Economy Fair], while highlighting globalization and joining that process, Hashemi Rafsanjani [ex-President] said: “with 25 years of experience in managing the economy of the country, we have come to the conclusion that the capabilities of the private sector must be leveraged in order to achieve economic prosperity. The road for the

private sector to operate is unhindered through Article 44 of Constitution...the recommendations of the Supreme Leader... will result in increased and effective presence of the private sector in society. It is everyone's duty to comply with the decrees of the Supreme Leader [regarding the 44th Article] whose execution brings about an economic revolution."

On the eve of the 8th parliamentary elections, the conflicts over how to execute these economic plans have intensified and various factions are battling hard to show that they are committed to privatization and protection of capital... Can such socio-economic policies really solve the current deep crisis in favor of establishing freedom, social justice, and prosperity of national economy?

STATEMENT OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF TUDEH PARTY OF IRAN

Comrade Maryam Firooz Has Passed Away



Comrade Maryam Firooz passed away at the age of 94 after many years of heroic struggle for freedom of Iran and for the emancipation of women from the dark minds of reaction, and gender and class oppression.

Comrade Maryam was born in 1913 and joined Tudeh Party of Iran in 1944 during the rise of national and anti-colonial movement in the country, and was loyal to her beliefs till she died. Since the attack of Shah's regime on the Party in 1948, Comrade Maryam was forced to live underground, and after the August 1953 coup d'état she was forced to emigrate to Soviet Union and then German Democratic Republic. In Germany, Comrade Maryam graduated with PhD degree in French Language and taught French in one of the universities there. Maryam Firooz did not quit political activism during her exile and spent her spare time writing and translating.

The printed legacy of Comrade Maryam includes various articles in Party media, including Donya [Political and Theoretical Journal of the Party], **Tudeh News, International Bulletin of the Tudeh Party of Iran March 2008 - No. 251**

and also the book titled "The Prominent Words on Women" and her autobiography titled "Brilliant Personae".

Amid the escalation of the historic struggle of the Iranian people against the imperial regime of the Shah, and growth of the activities of the party, Comrade Maryam was elected as a member of the Central Committee in 1978, and in 1979, after the victory of Feb revolution, she returned to Iran. Upon returning to Iran, the Party assigned Maryam Firooz the arduous task of reviving and developing activities of "Democratic Organization of Iranian Women", and during the critical and complex conditions of the early years after the victory of revolution, played a decisive role in partisan activities and struggle, and particularly in the area of organizing women and familiarizing them with restrictive and anti-woman laws of Islamic Republic and guiding them through an efficient struggle for their rights.

She was a dynamic leader of the "Democratic Organization of Iranian Women". In the 17th plenary meeting of the Central Committee of the Tudeh Party of Iran, Comrade Maryam was elected as a member of the Political Bureau.

With the betrayal of the regime's leaders against the popular movement and brutal attack of regime on the Tudeh Party of Iran, Comrade Maryam and her husband Comrade Nouredin Kianouri were arrested in February of 1983 and sent to regime's torture chambers. In order to put pressure on Comrade Maryam and her husband, the regime's goons even detained and harassed their daughter and their 9-year old grandchild. In order to damage the credibility and brilliant history of the struggles of the working class of Iran, regime thugs employed all their power to break the spirits of these militant fighters, those who had spent their entire lifetime to fight for their ideals. Comrade Maryam Firooz was released from prison in 1990 but lived along with Comrade Kianouri, under house arrest in Tehran, under the watch of regime's security forces. Maryam Firooz spent most of her life in exile or in prison, or fighting. Even at the end, Comrade Maryam Firooz, an activist for Peace, Freedom and Women's emancipation, was buried by the bloodthirsty brutes of the highly anti-popular Velayat-e Faqih [Supreme Leader] regime, without even informing her friends and relatives of her demise or burial.

Her Memory will always be cherished!

**Central Committee of Tudeh Party of Iran
13 March 2008**