

Tudeh News



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Statement of Central Committee of Tudeh Party of Iran (on the Disbarring of Many of the Reformists in the Upcoming Elections)

*Widespread and blatant attacks by the
reaction's Council of Guardians and the
need for broadening the popular protests*

As expected, the Council of Guardians (*an appointed 12-member body with far-reaching powers of vetting legislation and electoral candidates*) by disqualifying thousands of the candidates for the seventh parliamentary elections - including more than 80 members of the current parliament, has taken another blatant step in violating the people's liberties and in particular their right to elect.

Following the disqualification of more than three thousands candidates by the Council of Guardians, tens of the members of parliament expressed their strong objection by staging a sit-in. The council's decision was not unplanned and without consultation at the highest levels of the ruling reaction i.e. the Velayat-e Faghih (supreme leader) and the heads of: the Judiciary, Council of Experts, and the Council of Expediency.

The second statement issued by the protesting MPs reads:

“This sit-in in the People's House is on behalf of all those whom innocently have been the target of unjust accusations made by the central commission of Council Guardians that oversees the elections and those that have been illegally disqualified on fictitious and baseless grounds, and on behalf of those whom cannot plead to anyone. Although there is still another stage left in the appeal process, however given the extent of the disqualification by the Council of Guardians' decision and despite all the warnings and recommendations of the concerned forces, in particular by the caring President and the Speaker of Parliament, and given the council's resistance against the determination of the parliament and government in passing the “dual bills” (*submitted by the President for discussion and ratification to the Parliament a few month ago*) have left no prospect for the review stage. This is why, we have found no other way but to act ourselves and on behalf of a large part of our nation which sees its century long struggle against despotisms and its determination for free and just elections have been threatened and constrained; by standing against this distortion, we would not allow the will of a small group to take precedence over the determination of the nation, by restricting the elections according to their preferences...”

The Participation Front in which a large number of its candidates have been disqualified by the Council of Guardians, released the following statement:

“Questioning the parliament’s legality through disqualification of more than 80 of its present members in the 6th parliament and thousands of other candidates running for the 7th parliament, and weakening of the Parliament in the Islamic Republic, naturally weakens the pillars of republicanism within the system and damages the country’s international credibility. The Islamic Participation Front of Iran, while condemning this illegal and provocative action which is contradictory to our national interests, notes the following: by expressing our support for the courageous and responsible actions of reformist members of the parliament in staging a sit-in, and their persistence in safeguarding the rights of the unlawfully disqualified candidates, we urge them to take advantage of all the legal means in order to achieve results in appealing to the legal authorities for the withdrawal of the unlawful disqualification of both existing MPs and the other candidates. The MPs action in defence of free and fair elections, and their protest against extensive and illegal disqualification of the candidates, in fact is their resistance against the “Silent Coup de-tat” that is taking shaping through abusing the opportunity to review the qualifications of candidates. We call upon all strata, experts, social and political groups, organizations and assemblies that strive to establish democracy in Iran, to raise their voices and objections in exposing this action against human rights, and making it known to everyone.” The Tudeh Party of Iran, while condemning the Council of Guardians’ blatant anti-popular acts, declares its firm support for all the protest movements against these actions, such as the sit-in by a

group of MPs. Our party had previously stated that the ruling reactionaries know the 7th parliamentary election is only the first obstacle in which before or after the upcoming presidential elections [Khatami stepping down] ought to reach its appropriate ending, i.e. putting an end to “reform commotion”. The regime’s leaders noting the critical situation in Iran and the outside pressures are attempting through various plots, to repeat the experience of the City Council elections [March 2003], i.e. to create a situation in which the people are disheartened towards their actions effecting the elections. And the reactionaries on the basis of their limited minority would takeover the legislative power. We had also emphasized that fighting against the reaction’s determination is not possible through preaching and giving advice. By declaring such an election as illegal and by mobilizing the people, the reformists within government can take practical steps in confronting the conspiracies of the reaction. The protests and the sitting-in by a number of the members of parliament can only be effective, when, the political and social forces of the country through coordinated and organized actions broaden the protests against these illegal action across the society - not allowing the reactionary leaders to accomplish their sinister plans. Once again, the Tudeh Party of Iran, while condemning the anti-popular action by the Council of Guardians, calls upon all the popular and freedom-loving forces in Iran and across the world to joint the protest and struggle against the conspiracies of the reaction.

**Central Committee of Tudeh Party of
Iran**

January 12, 2004

Tudeh Party of Iran condemns the outrageous assault of regime's thugs and killing of workers in Shahr-e Babak!

We call for Urgent Solidarity actions by all progressive, trade union and democratic organisations. Sent letters of protest to the regime's diplomatic representation in your country.

Dear compatriots!

The repressive regime of Velayat-e-faqih (the rule of supreme religious leader) once again revealed its anti-labour and anti-popular face and the true nature of the bogus "pro-toiler" slogans and. Assaulting the peaceful protests of overwrought workers who are losing their livelihoods under the devastating anti-popular policies, in a country with abundant natural and human resources, which has had a wealth of oil income in the recent years, is indicative of the depth of the economic-political crisis, and also the corruption, brutality and oppressive nature of the administration of the ruling despots that has ruined the life of millions of noble toilers and workers for so long.

According to the reports released by official media, the repressive assault of intelligence forces of regime against the protesting workers of "Copper Smelting Plan" in Shahr-e Babak in Kerman Province resulted in killing of 4 workers and wounded more than 20 workers. The protesting workers, who have been working for some time for the contractors of "Copper Smelting Plan", had staged a sit-in, at the entrance of the

plant, to pursue their collective demand of converting their temporary contracts to permanent employment. As had been previously agreed, 1500 workers of Khatoon Abad Copper Smelting Plant were supposed to get permanent contracts for work at the Plant. The struggle of temporary workers of "Copper Smelting Plan" in Kerman, is in line and in pursue of the lengthy and much-deserved struggle of the workers of country against the use of temporary contracts by employers to evade their responsibilities under the labour law and anti-labour policies of the regime to oppress the toilers from the legal benefits of employment and the labour law.

Fearing from the expansion and augmentation of the labour protests, the anti-popular and despotic regime declared emergency conditions in the town of Khatoon Abad, in which the majority of protesting workers reside, and in Shahr-e Babak sent for the special guards of intelligence and law enforcement forces from Kerman city (capital of the province of Kerman), and invaded the rightful protest of the workers. The interesting point is that, while negotiating with the protesting workers on one hand, the official authorities practically organized the outrageous repression of workers by referring the case to the "security council" of the Shahr-e Babak. This criminal action is the beginning of a new phase in regime's attempts to overcome the crisis that it is facing with. It also shows the panic reaction of the leaders of despotic regime in the face of the expansion of the popular movement in our country and joining of workers with this movement.

By making up stories like the attack of an "unknown bikers group...against the critical positions" of the town, and the fight of the law enforcement agencies with them, the

official authorities of the regime, including the governor of Shahr-e Babak, tried to patch up a security context for their criminal action. However, the reality is that the bloody and anti-labour report card of the regime is so blatant that such cover ups cannot save the regime from this horrible crime that is of the same order of magnitude as the massacre of striking workers of Isfahan Steel Mill over 15 years ago.

We call upon all progressive forces, and particularly trade unions all around the world to send protest letters to regimes embassies in various countries, to condemn this criminal act. Tudeh Party of Iran condemns this criminal action and calls upon international bodies, including the Human Rights Commission of the UN, International Labour Organization, the World Federation of Trade Unions, and the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions to immediately and strongly condemn this action of the regime.

We call upon all the freedom-loving forces of the country to condemn the anti-popular action of the regime in solidarity with the families of the victims of this crime. We call upon all labour activists to protest to the massacre of the workers of Khatoon Abad “Copper Smelting Plan” in any ways possible within the context of the existing conditions, including issuing resolutions, sit-ins, walk outs and petitions, and to support the workers demands and to ask for the punishment of those who committed this bloody crime in Shahr-e Babak.

Victorious is the rightful struggle of workers and toilers of the nation!

Central Committee of Tudeh Party of Iran

January 26, 2004

Statement of CC of Tudeh Party of Iran:

Preventing the Sham Elections through an Active Boycott is a Vital Task of the Popular Movement

The conspiracy of Vali-e faqih (supreme religious leader) and his advisors in the Guardian Council can only be defeated by popular resistance and an active boycott of the sham elections.

After weeks of maneuvers by the Guardian Council, and the joint efforts of Khatami, the president, and Karroobi, the speaker of parliament, to prevent the intensification of the political crisis of the regime, Jannati, the spokesman of the ruling reactionaries, has announced the disqualification of thousands of candidates for the upcoming, seventh elections of the parliament. These disqualifications which also apply to a large number of sitting members of parliament, signal the intention of the dark-minded rulers of the regime to hold a totally sham election. In the days prior to the release of this news, Hashemi Rafsanjani, the head of “the Assembly for Recognizing the Interests of the Regime” was quoted to have advised Ali Khamene’i, the regime’s Leader, to ignore the people’s escalating protests, and if needed, to discipline the MPs staging a sit-in in the Parliament and proceed with the sham elections.

Following the release of this news, the press reported that 122 MPs submitted their resignation. In a statement, the resigning MPs declared: “an election that clearly violates the basic rights of the people and deprives them of the right to elect and be elected, an election with pre-determined results, is the betrayal of the nation’s aspirations in the Islamic Revolution, and

therefore illegal and devoid of legitimacy; the outcome of this election will not be accepted by the people, and we will not participate in such an election. We are certain that any person or group who has the prosperity of this nation at heart and is devoted to the aspirations of the revolution and the legacy of Imam (Khomeini) would not participate in this election.”

The events of the past few weeks, are rooted in the developments of the past six years in the country and the continuing conflict between reactionary forces and supporters of “dissolving in Velayat” on one side, and a broad spectrum of popular forces and also reformists in government on the other. The past six years have been accompanied by various significant experiences for all the national and freedom-loving forces of our country. With a view to the national interests of the country and making every effort to improve the life of the people, all progressive and democratic forces, among them the Tudeh Party of Iran, have supported any efforts towards reforms. Stressing the fundamental principle that it is not possible to make fundamental, lasting and democratic changes in the politico-economic life of the country while the deeply anti-popular, anti-democratic structure of the regime of ‘Velayat-e Faqih’ is preserved, our party has always believed that it is only by relying on the power of the people and mobilising the masses that the demands of the majority of the people can be met.

In recent years, millions of Iranians have come to the same understanding and participated in what have in effect been tests of civil rights, such as presidential elections of 23 May 1997, the sixth parliamentary elections, the first elections of town councils, and again in the presidential election of 28 June 2001, in all of which they have cast their votes rejecting the absolute rule of the reactionaries and opposing the political representatives of

these forces and their hold over the politico-economic life of the country. The heavy and embarrassing defeats of indirect or direct representatives of Vali-e Faqih (the Leader) and his supporters, in the above-mentioned four electoral tests are the most decisive expression of the people’s deep hatred and disdain for the heads of despotic regime and its associates.”

Despite all these attempts and in spite of the courageous and conscious struggle of the youth and students of our country and their remarkable sacrifices, and despite the resistance and struggle of millions of women, workers and toilers of Iran, frustrated by ever-increasing injustice and class oppression, the ruling reactionaries have been able to continue their hated rule by relying on suppression and the leverage of “law”, frustrating the will of the vast majority of our people.

Our party believes - as stated in previous statements about the seventh parliamentary elections - that the open attack of the Guardian Council on the process of elections has been coordinated and approved by the regime’s leaders at the highest levels. The aim of this attack was to deal with the reformist forces that are still steadfast in their positions, depose Khatami’s government or force it into complete and unconditional cooperation, and in effect to complete the inching coup d’etat that started the very next day after the great victory of the people on 23 May 1997.

Confronting this treacherous conspiracy that will have profound consequences for the popular movement, is possible only through the organized and united movement of all forces that believe in freedom and the national interests of our country. In these critical conditions we have a number of pressing tasks ahead of us. Among these are: boycotting the regime’s sham elections, preventing the process of elections through popular protests and involving the broadest

social strata in this struggle, voicing people's demands and calling on Khatami's government to oppose the holding of such an election, organizing a widespread global movement in solidarity with the struggle of our people, and declaring that a parliament and government resulting from such an election cannot have national or international legitimacy.

At this juncture, adopting silence, staying at home and leaving the scene of struggle in the face of escalating pressure from the ruling reactionaries, would have very destructive and negative consequences for the future of the movement and for our homeland. There are reports that the ruling reactionaries are trying to make secret deals with western countries, making a number of important concessions with regards to Iran's atomic and military plans in return for the western countries ignoring the continuing violation of human rights and democratic freedoms in Iran, thus preparing the conditions for the suppression of the popular movement in the country. It is of utmost importance that these plans are exposed worldwide. The conspiracy of Vali-e faqih, the regime's Leader, and his associates in the Guardian Council, can only be defeated by a popular resistance and the active boycott of the planned sham elections.

Central Committee of Tudeh Party of Iran

1 February 2004