

Tudeh News

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Ending tensions, securing peace, revoking sanctions, safeguarding national interests, a necessity

(From "Nameh Mardom", Central Organ of the Tudeh Party of Iran No. 795, 19th July, 2008)

The sharp turn of political events in the recent weeks, including the sudden announcement of the U.S. administration to be ready to negotiate with Iran, and the recent meeting of Javier Solana with Saeed Jalili once again turned the world public opinion to the events in the region, especially the issue of the war and peace in the Middle East. Prior to the events of the recent days and following the new offering of the incentive package by the group of 5+1 and the discussions among the various factions of the ruling regime on how to respond to the package, new sanctions including the one on the Bank Melli of Iran by the EU, and new pressures on Iranian oil and gas industry, including the status of the contract with French company Total, by and large had created an alarming situation.

The news about the extensive Israeli air force exercises in the Mediterranean Sea using the resources of the Greek government as a member of the EU and NATO should also be added to these series of events. This in turn was responded by the Islamic Republic and its Revolutionary Guards in

the form of a mock show of power through exercising the missile capabilities. The Guards chief commander ... claimed that "fearing the military exercises of the Guards, the enemies proclaimed that they do not have any intentions of engaging in war with Iran". Furthermore, the standing representative of the Supreme Leader in the Revolutionary Guards emphasized that "Iran's first reaction will target Israel and 32 U.S. bases in the region."

Following Solana-Jalili meeting, in a joint press conference in Geneva, Javier Solana stipulated that the main issues had still remained unresolved. The EU representative mentioned that: "we offered the proposed package to Iran and a few days ago received Iran's response in the form of a letter. Of course, we have not received a clear response to the main issue."

Following the first round of these talks, Sean McCormack, the U.S. State Department spokesperson, in his press conference said that: "we hope that Iranian people would understand that their leaders do not have any choice other than cooperation or facing more isolation." The Russian Deputy of Foreign Minister, Sergei Kysliak, who was also present in these talks, in talking to Novosti press agency stated that: "we expect a logical response from Iran in the two remaining weeks of these negotiations."

The current critical situation, which a number of political analysts assess as "neither war nor peace", by and large, and for specific reasons, is deeply against the interests of our nation and gravely weakens the national interests of our country.

The pressures and sanctions have instigated serious and deep discontents amongst the different classes and strata of the society, including the workers and toilers in the middle strata and layers of Iran's bourgeoisie class that are engaged in domestic production. These classes and strata, and their political representatives, are rightfully against this situation and call for ending it, and for revocation of the sanctions. These demands, along with the opposition to the military aggression against the country, have been appropriately reflected in the tasks and priorities of the newly created National Peace Council.

For truly objective and specific political and trade (economical) reasons, the Iranian working class and other toilers oppose and fight the external pressures and sanctions. The financial- economical sanctions have caused serious blows to the interests of the working people. Furthermore, these sanctions have instigated a middle-man economy, more than ever, in place of a healthy economy based on production, and have created the context for its growth.

Hoarding, back-breaking high prices, bankruptcy of industrial-manufacturing units, etc. as much as benefiting parasitic strata, middle-men, hoarders, and the big mercantile capitalism, have also lead to poverty, hunger, and lack of job security for workers, toilers, and deprived masses of the society. Politically, too, the sanctions and external pressures provide the grounds for the ruling reaction to inflict suppressions and impose a police-state atmosphere which do not benefit the working people.

In the current undesirable situation, in which due to the destructive policies of Ahmadi-Nejad government, hundreds of manufacturing units and factories are in the verge of bankruptcy and closure and the working people, in addition to suffering from unpaid salaries and wages, are at the risk of losing their jobs and means of living, sanctions and their further expansion

become an instrument to intensify the economic hardships and to wipe out the job security of workers!

It is a fact that the sanctions have severely strained the industry and manufacturing in our country. While the import of industrial raw material, semi-finished commodities and equipment and machinery and other technical needs are facing sanctions, the unregulated import of substandard consumer goods from western countries are flowing into the country with no restrictions. Thus, while a few greedy and pillaging merchants make fairy-tale fortunes, domestic manufacturers face bankruptcy and closure. This bankruptcy and breakdown severely impact the lives of the workers and toilers. Dastranj news site, on its February 27, 2008 report titled "private industries under the shadow of sanctions" wrote: "In addition to the large state-owned enterprises, small and medium sized industries are also clearly sensing the pressures (sanctions). Among the victims of trade and financial sanctions on Iran are the second and third tier private contractors, factories, and manufacturing shops. The main customers of these manufacturing companies are governmental factories and industries, some of which are either on the verge of bankruptcy or operate at their minimum capacity, due to the sanctions."

Later in that report, the general manager of the large industrial Parsiyan factory told Dastranj: "It is getting more and more difficult, day by day. We are all tired and exhausted. A job done by our competition in other countries, takes three times the effort here. Some goods are under sanctions and are not permitted to be sold. We have to find resources in other places with much headache. There are steels and sheets that currently we have to buy 50% more expensive in Tehran than the world market. The steel molds are our strategic industrial product but currently we, as a tire and steel mold manufacturing plant, are not

able to import the necessary manufacturing materials to Iran.”

Clearly, the trade and financial sanctions are only benefiting the middlemen and the major bazaar merchants!

On the other hand, along and in line with the external pressures and sanctions by powerful countries of world capitalism, the policies of the reactionary government and the banking system of the Islamic Republic have also devastated the manufacturers, workers and toilers.

According to the February 27, 2008 report of Dastranj news site, the GM of Roshan San-At Company says: “The domestic banking policy is also exacerbating the external sanctions. The central bank, attempting to control inflation, has adopted a certain policy, and refrains from securing funds to large and small companies. As a result, these companies fail to fulfill their financial commitments. We have to seek funds from outside the banks (Bazaar lenders most likely and foremost) in order to pay our expenses including the wages. We are facing both domestic financial issues and difficulty to import raw materials and tools and equipment.” This has caused hundreds of manufacturing units to face bankruptcies due to the financial hardships despite the effective presence of workers and their tireless efforts. Thus, the issue of unpaid wages has become the calamity of lives of thousands of workers! Iranian Students News Agency, ISNA, wrote earlier this summer: “In Isfahan region (One of the major industrial cores of the country), presently the wages of the workers is paid with months of delays. The main reason is that the credits have not been provided to the manufacturing and industrial units. In the Sugar Factory of Isfahan alone, 800 workers are receiving their wages several months late. The situation in Mobarakeh Steel, Isfahan Steel Mill and Isfahan Oil Refinery is not any better.”

The main question is that “what is the policy of the Velayat-e-Faqih (Supreme Leader) regime to deal with current difficulties?” We have witnessed contradictory positions taken by regime heads in the recent weeks. Velayeti, the Supreme Leader adviser on international affairs, took opposing political position to Ahmadi-Nejad government position, which is of importance. Etemad paper, in an editorial on its March 3rd issue titled “compromise under the conditions of armed peace” wrote: “At a time when the president, as the highest executive rank and the second official authority of the country talks about uncompromising stance of Iran on the nuclear program and the top military commanders respond to the military threats ... certain circles like Foreign Ministry, Secretariat of High Council of National Security, foreign affairs official advisers, and institutions such as the parliament have taken the task to engage in flexible negotiations. The mission of these circles is to reach a kind of compromise with the west behind the back of top military and political authorities who give crystal clear response to existing threats. And they do this in a way that in the eyes of the public opinion (Iran and world), Iran would not be considered to be backing off of its stance.”

We had mentioned previously and find it necessary to reiterate that the continuation of the current dangerous situation is playing with fire in the region. Putting an end to the dangerous tensions, refraining from hostile and baseless actions and provocations, and commencement of constructive talks, with patience and considering the national interests of Iran, is the real way out of the current crisis. The national interests of the country should not be sacrificed for dangerous political ploys and maneuvers. The current crisis and tensions must be ended through serious negotiations, while preserving the national rights of the country●

The 20th Anniversary of the “National Catastrophe”

(Excerpts from the statement by the C.C. of TPI)

Summer of 2008 marks the 20th year after organizing and committing one of the most shocking political crimes in the contemporary history of our nation, i.e. the National Catastrophe of massacring thousands of political prisoners, ordered by Khomeini.

20 years ago, after the embarrassing failure of the “war, war, until victory” policy imposed by the regime leaders against the will of the majority of the people and freedom-fighting and national forces, regime’s murderers, a number of which are currently sitting in Ahmadi-Nejad’s administration and other key state positions, committed one of the most horrendous political crimes in the history of our country... Worrying about their very political survival, they murdered a large number of popular and progressive political, cultural and social figures to secure the continuation of crime and ignorance regime for a long period of time.

Those who claim a “the world’s model system”, in fear of the ideas of defenders of freedom, democracy, justice and social progress, mass executed thousands of political prisoners who had already been sentenced to long term imprisonment, and buried them in masses in what is now known as “Khavaran Flower Garden”.

Today, there is still no clear and true information available about the dreadful conditions in prisons in those days. Murder of political prisoners was committed with full accord of high ranks of the regime, under the shadow of a total media silence, and with keeping the families of the situation of their loved ones in the dark. Ayatollah Montazeri’s opposition to this

atrocious crime in his revealing letter to Khomeini was the only voice of opposition to this crime within the regime.

In a statement, Tudeh Party of Iran called this appalling massacre “National Catastrophe”, in which hundreds of cadres and prominent members of the party and other progressive and revolutionary organizations and forces were murdered. Human Rights organizations estimated the number of losses to be more than 5000.

The 20-year silence of the regime leaders about this crime, and continuing the same methods of torture and abuse in the prisons, which we witness today in the way they treat trade unionists, students and human rights activists, is only an indication of this undeniable fact that the very existence of this regime is tied to crime, suppression of freedom and freedom fighters.

Our party and other national and democratic forces of the country assume the duty to continue their efforts to reveal this heinous conspiracy until its perpetrators are known and brought to justice. On-going brutal torture in regime’s prisons, “chain murders”, secret executions, criminal attack on students, broad and shocking executions in recent weeks, and the risk that threaten the lives of students, trade unionists and women activists these days, are the direct and indirect outcome of silence and indifference against the criminals.

Efforts to break the silence conspiracy about the National Catastrophe must be intensified. The glorious memory of the courageous struggles of these silenced heroes of people shall remain forever in the history of liberation movements in our nation.

Salute to the splendid children of our peoples!

Shame on perpetrators of the heinous crime of National Catastrophe!

15 August 2008
