Tudeh News

International Bulletin of the Tudeh Party of Iran – August 2012 - No. 278
International Dept. Address: BM Box 1686, London, England, WC1N 3XX
Fax: (Berlin: 324-1627) (London: 208-392-2653)
e-mail: mardom@tudehpartyiran.org - **URL:** http://www.tudehpartyiran.org

Statement of the Central Committee of Tudeh Party of Iran:

We Condemn any Action Promoting the Military Attack on Iran

Reports in the international media and worrying statements made by Israel's policy makers, the US and the Islamic Republic of Iran in the past two weeks signal the development of a very dangerous situation in respect of our country, Iran. In some circles it is suggested that the current belligerent and right-wing Zionist government of Israel, led by Benjamin Netanyahu, has decided to attack Iran in the next few weeks, ahead of the US presidential elections. Although the warmonger prime minister of Israel has claimed that Israel is able to attack Iran "independently" of the US, there are certain signs that indicate an ongoing coordinated effort around this military adventurism between the reactionary government of Israel and ruling circles in the US.

Meanwhile, as the war propaganda heats up, the ruling reactionary regime in Iran – which by following adventurous and totally unrealistic policies in recent years has had a significant role in provoking these real threats against the independence and sovereignty of our country – has now launched a new round of political idiocy and is demonstrating complete lack of awareness about the basic tenants of effective diplomacy in the interests of the people and for the protection of our homeland. The foolish and provocative words of Ahmadinejad during the "Quds Day" march and rally on 17 August [the last Friday of the month of Ramadan], who again threatened the complete destruction of Israel, which was condemned by the UN Secretary General, and also the repetition of the same threats by the leaders of various organs of the Islamic Republic and the leaders of Hezbollah in Lebanon, is in fact what we had previously warned against time after time. What happened a year ago in Libya, and what is now taking place in Syria, should have made the leaders of the ruling reactionary regime in Iran think that, given the current balance of power in the region and the world, such irresponsible statements could be highly dangerous for our national interests.

In recent years, the Tudeh Party of Iran has repeatedly warned about the necessity of pursuing an active diplomacy that would keep world public opinion on the side and in support of the people of Iran. But, on the contrary, the policies of the ruling regime have made our country dangerously isolated around the world.

White House officials and US embassies around the world hesitate to speak directly and clearly about the position of the US regarding Israel's military attack on Iran. Mitt Romney, the US Republican presidential candidate, has raised the flag of war and supported the Israeli military attack on Iran, and in fact, has made support for assault against our country a pivotal issue in the US presidential election campaigns. Considering the narrow gap in the polls between the two candidates in the forthcoming US election, there are certain signs indicating that President Obama will most likely support the military action of Israel against Iran in order to obtain the support of the powerful pro-Israel lobby in the US. On 30 July the Montreal Gazette disclosed that Obama's National Security Advisor, Tom Donilon, has had in depth and detailed talks with Benjamin Netanyahu, Israeli Prime Minister, about how and to what extent the US will militaristically support Israel if and when it decides to attack Iran.

On 20 August Mehr news agency quoted General Martin Dempsey, Chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff, justified the warmongering and criminal words of the high officials of the Israeli government by saying that "Israel sees the Iranian threat more seriously than the US sees it, because a nuclear Iran poses a threat to Israel's very existence", whereas Americans don't have such a concern and are in no rush to stop Iran's nuclear programme.

According to a report in the Israeli daily paper Haaretz, the leader of the opposition in the Knesset (Israel's parliament), Shaul Mofaz, in his letter of 20 August, has asked Netanyahu to appear immediately before the parliament and explain the government's plans for waging war with Iran. As reported by the radio station of Israel's Army, Shaul Mofaz has requested clear answers to questions such as the degree of preparedness of Israel for launching war against Iran, the official position of the US administration in this regard and also the degree of coordination between the US and Israel over security intelligence, operations, and economic and political matters. In the past few weeks, the progressive and peace-loving forces of Israel, and particularly the Communist Party of Israel and Hadash (The Democratic Front for Peace and Equality), which has close relations and acts jointly with the Communist Party of Israel, have launched very effective protest campaigns to demonstrate the opposition of vast sections of ordinary people, intellectuals, and peace advocates with waging of any war under any pretext. The Communist Party of Israel, which analysed the war with Iran as a full scale disaster, has called upon all party organizational units and its allies to give absolute priority to fighting against the risk of military attack on Iran and to the intensification and escalation of all anti-war campaigns.

Analyzing the very critical and intense situation in the Middle East, and the adventurous policies of the US government and its allies in the EU and in such Arab states as Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and also in Turkey, the Tudeh Party of Iran is rightly concerned about the development of a situation which could jeopardize peace and security in the region and in our country, trample on the sovereignty of Iran, and once again make the working people of our country the target of a war in which they played no part in creating.

The Tudeh Party of Iran once again strongly condemns the position declared by Benjamin Netanyahu, and denounces the action of the Prime Minister of a UN member state in so openly violating the Charter of the United Nations and international law, by speaking so explicitly to threaten the launching of a "pre-emptive attack" on the pretext of destroying the nuclear sites and strategic military facilities and resources of Iran. We condemn the position of the US and EU in the form of a consenting silence with regards to the actions of the state of Israel. We believe that the policies of US imperialism and its allies with regards to the Middle East nations have encouraged the Israeli leadership in a manner that they feel free to promote openly aggressive and belligerent policies whose consequences would be to inflame the entire region of the Middle East and jeopardize global peace.

The Tudeh Party of Iran has persistently and tenaciously condemned and denounces the warmongering policies, statements and positions of the authorities and governments of the countries in the region. We have consistently campaigned for the imperative of attempting to find ways to resolve the current disputes through negotiation and other methods based on preserving peace and the Charter of the UN and respect for the sovereignty of nations. We call upon all progressive and peace-loving forces around the world to support this position.

The Tudeh Party of Iran believes that the path of the future political development of our country is solely the business of the people of Iran and no one else and must be decided solely by the people of Iran and the democratic and patriotic political forces, based on respect for and belief in the economic and political independence of our nation. Once again, we call upon all the forces campaigning in defence of freedom, democracy, social justice and peace to urgently join a united front to rescue the country from the risk of war, and advocate democratic development and the independence of the country.

Central Committee of the Tudeh Party of Iran
August 21st, 2012■

Tudeh News

In Defense of the Interests of the Working Class and the Urgency of an Organized Struggle

(From "Nameh Mardom", Central Organ of the Tudeh Party of Iran No. 898, 2nd July 2012)

During the past weeks, the Iranian workers have expanded their protest movement against the economic and social programs and policies of the regime of the supreme leadership (theocracy). Implementation of economic liberalization ("purposeful subsidies") has deteriorated the livelihood of the working class and all the working people. Without job security, our country's working class faces increasing impediments and exploitation by the employers.

Since the beginning of this year, with an increase of the inflation rate and extremely high prices, the workers' real purchasing power has significantly diminished. At the same time, delay in paying wages, extensive layoffs, and temporary and blank-signed contracts have become prevalent in the industry and service sections. When the Islamic parliament passed the current fiscal year budget of about $290 billion, and with the advice of the supreme leader, the government and the parliament reached an agreement over the implementation of the second phase of the elimination of subsidies, a very difficult year ahead of the workers and a worsening situation for their families was not unexpected. Devastating impacts of the economic liberalization on the workers' lives, employment and job security are undeniable. It is therefore of utmost importance to fight against these programs. The recent letter from 10,000 workers addressing the Minister of Labor in opposition to the economic liberalization is a telling example of the level of dissatisfaction among the working masses with the policies of the Ahmadinejad government and the so-called "purposeful subsidies". The letter elaborates the effects of such policies on the lives and jobs of the working class and other working people. Increased rate of inflation and falling standard of living are the first consequences of such policies for the workers. The letter stresses that "Since a year and a half ago, with the launch of phase one of eliminating subsidies, the prices of the staple goods have increased several times. This is at a time when the average wages over the last two years have declined compared to the years before the first phase of the elimination of subsidies was implemented. Furthermore, during this time, enacting first a 4% and then a 5% value added tax on all consumer goods has literally funneled 5% of the already under the poverty line wages of workers into the coffers of the government."

In its June 10, 2012 report titled "Reduction of workers' purchasing power; Pays run out in just a few days", Mehr News Agency indicated that "In the months after the implementation of the first phase of 'purposeful subsidies', the inflation rate has followed an upward stepping trend every month, and this has continued at least in the past one year… the $195 minimum monthly wage, as approved by the Supreme Labor Council, can at best provide for only 10 days of the needs of a worker's family… this question still remains that, today, who can make ends meet with only working one shift a day?"

The recent reports of the Iran's Central Bank on the inflation rate demonstrate that the country's workers are in a dire situation. ISNA (news agency) reported in May 2012 that according to the figures from the Central Bank, only during the last year, the prices of 33 staple food items and major goods have increased between 18 and 146%.

The reality is that the policies which have been implemented over the last 3 decades to benefit the country's big mercantile and bureaucratic capitalists have had dire consequences for the working people. As an example, according to the official figures, the real minimum wage, or in another words the purchasing power of the nominal minimum wage, have decreased by 36% from 1979 to

2009. This along with the decisions of the Supreme Labor Council, especially with regards to setting this year's minimum wage, has meant living under the line of poverty for the working people and their families. Every year more workers are forcibly removed from protection under the labor law and are deprived of having the right to receive the minimum wage. Currently, 40% of the country's workforce is not entitled to the minimum wage. To this must be added the devastating phenomenon of unpaid wages. Although this started since the economic restructuring and adjustment was launched, but the policy of elimination of subsidies has worsened and expanded the span of the problem.

In some plants, such as the Mazandaran Textiles and Kashan Weaving Factories, workers have not been paid for 12 to 20 months. In some manufacturing units, such as Ahvaz Tubing, Kavian Steel and Arak's Pars Wagon factories, workers are owed three to six months of unpaid wages and are facing bleak prospects.

One of the direct consequences of the anti-people program of economic liberalization has been the weakening of the country's manufacturing power and has led to closure of factories, resulting in layoffs and deterioration of job security. On May 7, 2012, ILNA (labour news agency) wrote: "this year, the crisis of unemployment and closure of manufacturing plants will be worse than prior years."

The letter from the 10,000 workers in opposition to economic liberalization echoed the same sentiment when it stated that "job insecurity, layoffs and closure of factories are much worse than in prior years." According to the statement from the Head of the Contract Workers Union, elimination of subsidies in the last year has led to the bankruptcy of 300 manufacturing plants. Also, the General Secretary of the Islamic Republic House of Worker admitted that "according to official figures, during the last year, 100,000 workers have been laid off from more than 1,000 manufacturing units" (ILNA, April 23, 2012).

…Another serious challenge that workers will be facing in the coming year is the attempts by the reactionary regime to "reform" the Labor Law and eliminate those rights in the law that have been won by workers through extensive struggles. During discussions about the fiscal year budget and after its approval in the Majlis (Iran's parliament), Labor Minister of Ahmadinejad administration mentioned that all factions of ruling factions have agreed on implementing the second phase of "purposeful subsidies" law and also expressed that the final draft of the Labor Law reforms will be submitted to the Majlis for approval.

With regards to the discussions about the reform of the Labor law, Mehr News Agency reported on June 10 that "One of the most serious aspects of the negotiations between the employers and labour authorities was about the reform in the hiring procedures and attracting new hires (i.e. contracts) and also how to end and terminates contracts, which remained unresolved… after numerous discussions between workers, employers and government, they could not reach a final agreement (in labour law reforms). But Minister of Cooperation, Labor and Social Welfare indicated in the past couple of months that the Labor Law reform bill has been sent to the government and will go to the Majlis next".

This action by the Minister of Labour means that in the matter of Labour Law reforms, even the opinions of the yellow trade unions which support the regime are discounted and the ruling regime, in the framework of the economic liberalization is determined to reform the Labor Law against the workers interests and in favor of the grand capitalists.

An important point in the essence and content of the Labor Law reform bill is its close ties and inseparable relations with the prescriptions of the IMF (International Monetary Fund) and WB (World Bank) to "liberalize the job market". The struggle of the working class and working people of our

Tudeh News

country against the "Labor Law reform" is closely tied with the struggle against the economic-social direction of the theocratic regime of Iran and the programs of its reactionary government, such as "economic liberalization".

The current developments and trends in activities of the labour and union movements clearly show the necessity of struggle to safeguard union and political rights of the workers. Nowadays, the disastrous consequences of the free market economy policy, has made the working class and other working people more aware of the necessity to fight against this policy and in general, against the systematic suppression of the regime. In this standoff, the level of organization and the intensification of the labour movement are of utmost importance.

In this respect, the labour movement must vigilantly wage an organized struggle against the policies of the reactionary regime by utilizing all feasible and possible methods. Repression against union activists and intimidating and threatening the workers are purposeful attempts by regime supported organizations to control the protest movement and funnel it towards controllable channels. The experience of the working class and working people of our country in 1980s to force the regime to enact the Labor Law, showed that- despite the repressive actions of the security forces of the regime- through careful organization of protest movements of workers, reactionary regime could be forced to retreat and bow to workers demand. The ruling regime will continue its course of action only if it concludes that it can enforce "Labor Law reform" without serious opposition from people and with minimum political and protest confrontation. Efforts to raise the awareness about policies of the reactionary government in manufacturing plants, large or small, and organizing massive opposition movements against the implementation of the policies of the ruling reaction, is the only venue to stop the process that the theocratic regime has undertaken against the interests of the working class of Iran…

With vigilance and patience, the current scattered protest movement of the workers must be directed to a more organized form so that the ranks of the labour and union movement could be strengthened in its opposition to the reaction■

The Dire Consequences of Sanctions on the Lives of the Working People of Iran

(Abridged from "Nameh Mardom", Central Organ of the Tudeh Party of Iran No. 901, 13th August 2012)

The resentful protests of the Iranian people against the high price and shortage of chicken in the past few weeks was just a glimpse of the worrisome situation of the working people of Iran. Although the authorities tried hastily and by resorting to the usual tricks to play down the protests, but the reality shows that contrary to the rhetoric of the authorities, the livelihood and economic situation of the people is facing much troublesome challenges (because of the sanctions). Similar situation in other countries, like Iraq, irreparably damaged the economic foundations and the livelihood of the underprivileged people which still heavily shadows the future of the Iraqis. Although the Iranian authorities, whether previously or currently, are trying to deny this fact, but their contradictory statements proves that the current developments are making them worried. The Imam of Friday prayers in Tehran acknowledged that there is an "economic crisis that is more political" and as usual claimed these are the God's wills and said: "thriftiness is one of the ways to tackle these problems." In response to the latest sanction imposed by the USA related to grain-for-oil program, Rostam Ghasemi, the Minister of Oil, claimed: "We are not worried about oil sanctions at all." This is when parliamentarians and academics are stressing on taking proper economic policies, cutting back the imports and paying more attention to the manufacturing and domestic production.

According to the media reports on August 6th, the Central Bank of Iran released the new figures for inflation at 23% which is 0.5% higher than the figures reported 2 months earlier. This official figure clearly shows the mounting pressure on the working people of Iran. In late April, the Central Bank of Iran released its reports about the prices of the daily necessities and staples. The increase in prices range from 146% for vegetables and 45 to 50% for various meat produce. The price of cooking oil and sugar rose by 30%, while the price of diary items, beans and rice rose by 60, 45 and 28% respectively. The increase in the price of fruit ranged from 27 to 64%. In general, during the last 12 months, the price of 33 necessary food items and staples rose from 18 to 164%. High prices is only one aspect of the current profound disaster. Numerous reports about the shortage and lack of raw material for the industry have exacerbated the situation...

According to a report by Arman newspaper in early August, "...A large number of industries are complaining about the deficiency of foreign currency for importing raw material... and believe... that eventually will cause an increase in the price of the finished goods." Furthermore, the situation of the medical services and medication has become very fragile and precarious. Even before the imposition of the sanctions, the health care system was facing with serious challenges due to the elimination of subsidies. According to media report in early August, "the fact that you find smuggled medication in the hand of the patients, is an indication of shortage of drugs and lack of control over the distribution of certain (and expensive) drugs." Also, "3 months after the executive order of the President for the medi-care to cover 202 drugs for hard-to-cure illnesses... this order was not executed due to the lack of financial resources to be provided by the government and patients are paying hefty prices to buy their much needed medications." Shortage of vital drugs, now and in future, is causing silent deaths of which no statistics are available. This means a horrible disaster for the people and particularly the underprivileged. Economic instability, shut down of manufacturing plants and growth in unemployment had caused devaluation of the national currency that is reflected in the high price and fluctuation of conversion rate of foreign currencies... Taking advantage of the anti-people economic policies and widespread corruption in the system, a small minority has been able to gather astronomical wealth through parasitic transactions. This has created an exorbitant growth of cash that has had adverse impact on the lives of the working people. Between 2005 and 2011, the amount of cash in the hands of the wealthy almost quadrupled. This is while according to the media report quoting the Minister of Industry, "the shortage of cash in industrial section is critical and must be taken seriously."...Since the imposition of the economic sanctions, we have witnessed a draught of investment in manufacturing.

Another very challenging economic issues for the people and the underprivileged, is to have enough funds to purchase or lease (or rent) housing... Surely, a large sum of the flowing cash (speculative capital) in the economy enters in the housing market... which has caused a sharp rise in the rent of houses in some areas...

The working people of Iran have to simultaneously fight for their survival in several fronts. The current situation will certainly ruin the lives of many people more than ever... The experience of imposed sanction in Cuba and Iraq and other nations has proven that the perpetrators of sanctions take no responsibility for the dire consequences of the sanctions on the lives of the ordinary people.

The current repressive regime in Iran will only retreat if it feels that its very existence is at risk. It is the ordinary people that will directly pay the price of taking such policies (economic sanction). Realistically, without unity and united action of the progressive forces, the possibility of getting out of this situation in favor of the people is unimaginable...■

Tudeh News

Assembly of the World Peace Council:

Resolution on Iran

The **WPC** expresses its categorical rejection to the imperialist plans of USA, EU and NATO to attack Iran under any pretext and in particular with the one of the Nuclear program of the country.
The people of Iran are the sole to decide upon their future and leadership of the country without any political and military interference.
The **WPC** expresses its solidarity with all progressive and peace loving forces in Iran which are committed to the struggle for peace and are resisting imperialism. The Assembly expresses its militant solidarity with the working people of Iran in their complex struggle for peace, social progress and decent life expressing also its support to their democratic and people's rights.
We call upon the peoples of the world to be vigilant for the war plans of imperialism in the coming period.

22nd July 2012
Katmandu-Nepal

World Peace Council Regional Meeting:

Statement on Iran

This regional meeting of **WPC** which took place in Larnaca, Cyprus, on 6th April 2012 condemns the imperialist threats against Iran and expresses its support for the complex struggle of the Iranian people for peace, sovereignty, democracy and social justice.
The US imperialism and its Israeli ally have in recent months intensified their threats of bombing Iran and undertaking pre-emptive strike on Iranian strategic targets. The US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton threatened on 31st of March that "time is running out for diplomacy over Iran's nuclear programme" and that "Our policy is one of prevention, not containment. We are determined to prevent Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon."
There are clear signs that the US sentiments are shared by the US allies in the Middle East and in particular Israel and Saudi Arabia.
WPC is concerned that NATO powers, following their intervention in Libya, are actively pursuing a policy of "regime change" in relation to Syria and Iran. The policies, statements and concrete actions adopted by the US, the EU and Israel in the region all indicate an active intent to shift the balance of power across the entire Middle East in favour of the full control of the region by imperialism. We in the **WPC** believe that Imperialist policies in the Middle East have nothing to do with their "concern" for nuclear proliferation or regard for democracy and human right as they claim, and in fact are designed to guarantee the unrivalled control of the massive energy resources and untapped markets of this geopolitically strategic region for monopolies and oil transnationals.
WPC believes that development of a powerful and independent peace movement in Iran is of paramount importance. We support the free operation of trade unions, progressive youth and women organisations in Iran as contribution for building of such a powerful peace movement capable of resisting imperialist threats of war and military interference in the country. WPC supports the struggle of the Iranian people for peace, democracy and social justice and reiterates its strong opposition against the harsh sanctions imposed by the USA and EU on Iran.
WPC believes that it is the sole right of the Iranian people themselves to determine the direction of future developments in their country and to achieve peace, democracy and social progress**.** WPC strongly condemns any intervention in Iran by imperialist states and their allies under any pretext, which are trying to advance their plan for the control of the region and creation of a "Greater Middle East".

6th April 2012
Larnaca, Cyprus

Tudeh News

*Message of the communist party of the United States of America (**CPUSA**)*

To the Central Committee and Membership of the Tudeh, and to the Workers of Iran

In recognition of International Workers' Day, May 1, the **CPUSA** salutes both the working people of Iran and our comrades of the Tudeh Party of Iran. Workers in Iran, and especially the Iranian labor movement, have long and consistently defended Iranian national sovereignty, sought to protect natural resources that are the patrimony of the Iranian people, and fought for the dignity and basic rights for all Iranian people against repression. Our party salutes the Tudeh Party for its leadership role within the oppressed but combative Iranian working class. Additionally, we are aware of the terrible costs that dominant forces within your society have forced your party and its militants to pay. We salute you for the courageous and dignified way you have kept up the struggle in these harsh circumstances.

This May Day is a fit time for our party to rededicate itself to solidarity with the Tudeh Party. That is because, as we know from media reports, economic sanctions imposed by the United States and European powers now threaten the very survival of your people, especially those already living on the very edge of existence. Measures taken to undo your nation's independence and your people's control of their own fate have led to massive job loss, inflationary price rises, and dire shortages of supplies people need merely to survive.

The mounting assault upon the Iranian people is a harbinger of disaster, one such as occurred during ten years of U.S. sponsored sanctions applied to Iraq. Then, death and chaos afflicting the most vulnerable Iraqi citizens were the prelude, of course, to an illegal and cruel war. On top of this comes the threat of an Israeli attack on Iran, the effects of which would be extremely negative for the Iranian working class and for world peace.

We call for an end to an economic blockade aimed at tearing apart your national social fabric, one that hurts, even kills, working and marginalized Iranian people. In view of the historic role of the Tudeh Party in defending working people in your country, we defend the right of party workers to freely assemble, organize, and to speak out on all issues. We join with others in struggling to prevent war against Iran by rich and powerful nations. As anti-imperialists, we denounce war aimed at securing total control over natural resources in your region. And we act, with the Tudeh Party, in recognition of the terrible hazard of far-flung military conflict, especially a war resorting to weapons that threaten the future of humanity. Finally, we call for the transformation of the Middle East into a nuclear free zone, in accordance with UN resolutions.

On May 1, International Workers' Day, once more, we are with you in your struggle■

May 1, 2012

Workers of the World, Unite!