

# BOLSHEVIK MESSAGE



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## WAR, THE "ALTERNATIVES", AND THE WAR OF ALTERNATIVES

Why then war? Was not a just peace possible from the end of spring 82 and the evacuation of Khoramshahr from Iraqi troops? Was not the situation ripe for the conclusion of a just peace? Why then did Khomeini continue with the war? (Mojahed 253, p.4)

This is a question that Mr. Rajavi poses to himself here and there in his interviews and messages, with the result of he himself getting entangled in the skein of formulations that he has woven together, not for the purpose of argumentation and analysis, but for propaganda and marketing. Thus the entire adversities to which the millions of Iranian toilers are subjected under the Islamic Republic are put down to the viciousness, "Imposture," lunacy, and power mongering of a single individual, so that capital, bourgeois legislation, the army, the bureaucracy, and Islam should remain untouched by the stigma of the present government.



Terms such as "imperialism," "exploitation," "class," and so on have been wiped out of the Mojahed political thinking and vocabulary, and replaced with emphasis on the "pledge" to capitalism, private property, extended relations with the U.S. and Western Europe in order to refine "the only alter-

native" in the presence of European, and recently American, king makers. It would obviously follow, therefore, that the causes underlying the Iran-Iraq war should be inquired after so naively, and receive answers just as naive, vague, and at times contradictory.

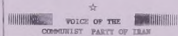
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## WORKERS OF THE WORLD, UNITE!

At any rate, however, Mr. Rajavi has put his finger on an important point. Why is war being pursued despite the existing military deadlock, considering the losses and damages it has brought to the economy of the two bourgeois countries, and the intense dissatisfaction it has caused, and is causing, among the masses of the people in the two countries? It is obvious that at present it is the Islamic Republic which seeks to continue and intensify the war. Also it is not a matter of dispute that the Islamic Republic looks for survival in the continuation of the war (not only us and Mr. Rajavi, but royalist liberals, and indeed the Islamic Republic itself have on many occasions emphasized the relation between the continuation of war and the existence of the regime). The more significant point is the kind and nature of the survival between war and the survival of the Islamic Republic, as well as the way in which each of these trends approach the war. The proper and clear answer to this question would reveal, not only the illusions and demagoguery of the Mojahedin, but also the features of the rivalry of the ambitious political representatives of the bourgeoisie in Iran, identifying their political trend, their beliefs and illusions, and, particularly, the message they wish to cast for the benefit of various factions of world imperialism.

Why does the Islamic Republic seek its survival in the continuation of war? Note the message of two different groupings of the Iranian bourgeoisie: Mr. Rajavi's answer, repeated by leftist liberal circles is as follows: "... because the shaky monarchic regime requires war and the export of terrorism in order to continue its reign." (Mojahed 243, p.2)

Without war this regime lacks the real stamina to answer social and economic problems. Also, in case of the war coming to an end, the regime's possibilities for repression and its entire existence would vanish -

the repression which is carried on under the pretext of war." (No. 243, p.2)

Also: Khomeini is frightened by peace, because he knows that a strong resistance and opposition exists. In this case (and in the event of peace) the regime will have to do something to appease the people; it must carry out reforms, must ensure improvement in the socio-economic conditions. At any rate, with the establishment of a form of peace a certain form and degree of open political space will have to come into existence. In such a case, however, social demands will intensify and present themselves in an explosive way. This would be the exact moment that the asks reform. (No. 194, pp.13-14)

Reconstruction after peace would require a certain extent of liberalization, no matter how small, particularly since the present oppression is justified through war. (Ibid)

You are also aware that one of the reasons for the continuation of war and the existence of the regime, is keeping the army engaged in the borders. (No. 194, p.13) By continuing the war, Khomeini has meanwhile kept the army personnel busy in the borders and formed his own private army, i.e. the guards. (254, p.4)

And, finally, we cannot conceal the fact that Khomeini has always wanted to export his Islamic revolution.

The answer provided by Bakhtiary and his "farious type company" is as follows:

What we are saying is that Khomeini may be the only person who knows that a return to normal conditions, or a transition to such a condition is not possible for his regime....

Khomeini knows only too well that a regime based on blood, terror and war, a regime which can breathe and go on living only in constrained and extra ordinary circumstances, would not find it easy to change its breeding

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ground and go on as before. (Nehzat, organ of the National Resistance Movement of Iran, No.85,p.2)

Khomeini had many opportunities to put an end to the war... But Khomeini wanted war so that by involving the army, he may delay the alliance between the armed forces and the Iranian people for the overthrow of his regime... He wanted to use the war to suppress his adversaries, and to put the ineptness of his regime in running the country down to the war. Moreover, in case of victory, he wanted to dominate the countries in the region through exporting the Islamic revolution. (Nehzat, No.101,p.12)

Khomeini utters the slogan that he wants to revive Islam throughout this war. However, what has visibly been revived is military industry and the black market for arms which provide the combat requirements of the two countries... who benefits from this war? The answer is clear in one respect: he who sells his arms... he who does not wish the two countries to regain the position that their capacities permit as exporters of oil. (Nehzat, No.97, p.2)

This is the collection of the arguments of the knights of the Iranian bourgeoisie in explaining the inescapability of pursuing the war for the Islamic Republic - journalistic, ambiguous, illusive, and propagandist concepts offered, mainly, to suit the listener's state of mind. The headlines of these current interpretations common to the bourgeois opposition, meanwhile, reveal the line and the position of each grouping. They are as follows:

1- The Islamic Republic requires crisis in order to survive! It cannot live under conditions of stability. The war is necessary "to amuse" the people, to divert their attention toward the enemy without, and to conceal the malady of the government in the economic sphere.

Although this interpretation, somehow and to such extent, corresponded to reality in the

earlier months of the war, it is now dated and irrelevant. It is true that the Mojahedin, following a large proportion of the masses, were practically "amused" in the beginning of the war, that they lost their heads to the flames of "love for the motherland" and hastened to the help of the Islamic Republic. It is also true that the royalists sought to take part in the war to defend their "motherland of the Ahura" but to attribute such illusions to the majority of the Iranian people today is totally incorrect. News of the rising dissatisfaction of the people and their abhorrence for the Islamic Republic and the war is reflected even in the regime's own papers. The war today is itself one of the most serious causes in spreading dissatisfaction among the masses of the people and a cause for their more radical and exact interest in internal affairs.

But to say that the Islamic Republic can only live in crisis, rather than being a serious argument, is basically a means to advocate the stabilizing function of any of these opposition groupings against the disruptive role of "Khomeini". Obviously any government would endure better under conditions of economic and political stability, in stabilizing its rules and regulations, and in enforcing the fullest control on the relations under its domain. The Islamic Republic is no exception in trying, not to create crisis and instability, but to bring about a certain kind of stability for the bourgeoisie in Iran and in the region.

2- In the event of peace the regime will have to answer to the suppressed expectations of the people. Some liberalism should be provided, some reforms should be carried out, and this would be beyond the Islamic Republic. This argument is by no means the answer to the question. A regime which managed to begin to suppress before the

war, a regime which continues the war despite the people's increasing dissatisfaction, and which, according to their own estimate, spends some two third of the government budget on war and repression, can expect general dissatisfaction to subside with the ending of the war, the decrease in the casualties and damages to the people, the decrease in the war budget, and, inevitably, the expenditure of some of this huge sum on the alleviation of some of the present hardships. The argument that in the event of any form of end to the war the downfall of the Islamic Republic would apparently be inevitable is an effort to convince this or that faction of world imperialism of the futility of dependence on an instrument such as the Islamic Republic. The illusion that is peace in itself would force the Islamic Republic to reform and liberalize is illusory, even conscious demagoguery on the part of those who have failed to understand the necessity and the logic of the suppressiveness of the Islamic Republic. If to the Mojahedin the origin of the suppressiveness of the Islamic Republic is 19 June 1981, Iranian workers have not forgotten the shooting of unemployed workers in Isfahan in March 1979-3. The end of war and recall of the army from the frontiers would cause the downfall of the Islamic Republic. This argument reflects the hope and the dependence of the bourgeois opposition on the army and the kind of overthrow they have in mind, rather than any worries or

alarm the Islamic Republic and other parts of the world's army. The army of Islam is at the moment suppressing the Kurdish toilers not in the frontiers but deep inside the Iranian territory and in the face of the new revolution of the aftermath of the return of the army from the borders throughout the country. Those currents which foresee "overthrow of the Islamic Republic" to be fulfilled by the army

rather than against it, must need conceal this fact and appease and vindicate the army. The war has continued because "they are buying cheap oil and selling weapons". This argument that Mr. Rajavi has omitted from the collection of his arguments for fear of offending the statement of capitalist countries, but nonetheless is being repeated by the left-liberals, is as old as the National Front itself. Here, imperialism, the interests of the bourgeoisie as a single class, and the need of world imperialism for security in investment and exchange is brushed aside, and the world is analysed on the basis of the interests of businessmen, the competition of the "pentagonists" and against the "pentagonists". This is an entirely liberal interpretation.

The analyses and arguments of the various factions of the Iranian bourgeoisie, as we have seen, are not only unconvincing and ambiguous, they are eclectic and misleading. The function of these explanations is to distract the people from thinking about the main reason for the war and the survival of the Islamic Republic on the one hand, and enhancing their own "alternative" in the eyes of the imperialist parties and governments on the other. To fully understand the relationship between the war and the survival of the Islamic Republic one must turn to the fact that Mr. Rajavi "cannot conceal," what Bakhtiary calls "the export of the revolution and invoking calamity and riot and their parts of the world," and what has been designated "the export of the Islamic revolution" in the propaganda jargon of bourgeois media. The Iran-Iraq war, as we have said before, was not the result of the mutual territorial and economic avare of the two bourgeois states in the region. Contrary to what the revolutionary left thought at the time, it was not an imperialist

**LONG LIVE PROLETARIAN INTERNATIONALISM!**

war on a miniature scale. Rather, it stemmed from the requirements of the bourgeoisie as a whole (in the region as well as in the imperialist countries) to revive regional stability in the aftermath of the Iranian revolution. We have said:

Our point of departure in the assessment of the nature and the necessity of the Iran-Iraq war is not the foreign policy of the Iranian and Iraqi bourgeoisie; it is not their ancient rivalry over the Shat-el-Arab, the triple islands, or hegemony in the Persian Gulf, etc. It is, rather, productive relations in the region, concrete changes in these relations in the last few years, and, finally, the policy pursued by monopoly capital led by imperialism in the region. In other words, we too, regard war as an extension of policy in a violent manner," but in determining the policy for which this war is an inevitable consequence, we turn to the relations of labour and capital in the region, and concrete changes in these relations and the policy of monopoly capital and American imperialism toward the conditions prevailing over these relations in the present stage....

Also:  
The basis of the policy of imperialism in the present juncture is, as we said, not the revision of the region, but the restoration of pre-revolutionary conditions and the start of a new round of the accumulation of capital in the context of the decisive defeat of the revolution of the Iranian workers and toilers. The restoration of previous conditions would be politically that two radical changes take place in the current relations between classes in Iran: 1) The decisive suppression of the revolutionary proletariat and its bringing back to pre-revolutionary conditions of total submission, and, 2) The revival of the leadership of the monopoly bourgeoisie in the

ranks of the bourgeoisie in Iran. (Nozoy-e-Sayyaliem, 1st series, No.3, p.19420).

Based on the above analytical foundations, we showed at the time that the Iran-Iraq war, irrespective of which of the two sides may win, is against the Iranian revolution. Such a war could not be welcome to a regime whose existence was in jeopardy from within and by the masses, and that is how it turned out to be. At the outset, the desirability of this war as an instrument and a method for pounding the waves of the revolution in Iran and the restoration of imperialist order to the region, was, from the point of view of the Islamic Republic, a subsidiary to its life and survival in the face of the revolution and the masses. To what extent is this imperialist policy realized seven years after the Iranian revolution?

As relates to the first factor, the bourgeoisie has gained certain advantages. The waves of the revolution have subsided, the working class is driven back and the communist and revolutionary movement have borne terrible blows. Organs and institutions of systematic suppression are vindicated and reconstructed. Oppression prevails over all these advances of the bourgeoisie. The revolutionary crisis is not obliterated. As relates to the second factor, despite the formal integration of political power after the expulsion of the liberals from the government in '81, not only are the various strata of the Iranian bourgeoisie not unified, divisiveness in the ranks of this class prevails to the extent that various factions present "alternatives" against the present bourgeois government and ask for its "overthrow." Conditions prevailing over the political relations in the region are as follows: The position of Israel as one of the major levers for the dominance of the American imperialism in the region is consolidated. American policy has ceased to be a factor in the crisis and the Palestinian question. Preparations for the American "swift reaction" in

the face of unexpected developments have been made, and noticeable changes in the balance of imperialist rivalry between the U.S. and the Soviet Union have taken place in favour of the western block. But despite these developments, the crisis has not ended, and political stability has not returned to the region.

These developments which are directly in the line of imperialist interests, and specifically American imperialism, have been made possible at the cost of savage suppression, war, and the perpetuation of a regime which: Firstly, has a theocratic form which creates certain legal, administrative, and ideological obstacles on the way of the expansion and functioning of capital; Secondly, is in a position which allows for any minor developments in the region to act as a matrix for the emergence of a movement of such dimensions as would be capable of delivering smashing blows, not only to this specific regime, but to the sovereignty of capital as such.

Thirdly, this regime has intensified divisiveness in the ranks of the bourgeoisie in the entire region. We have spoken extensively in various articles in *Komunist* about the first two factors. We shall not turn briefly to the third one.

Those characteristics which distinguish the Islamic Republic from other bourgeois factions consist of: mysticism and communism; critique and accusation of "Nationalism" and liberalism by virtue of their inability to suppress the revolution and repel communism and, finally, of mysticism and fanaticism. The Islamic Republic recommends and advocates "Pan-Islamism" and "Islamic unity" against Pan-Arabism and Arya Mehr type of nationalism. It advocates these as the only context for the alliance of the bourgeoisie and to repel the revolution. Even if we stop at this plane, the advocacy of these positions in Lebanon, too, is a critique and accusation of bourgeois governments in the region. But that is not where the matter ends.

The Pan-Islamist faction of the bourgeoisie is not a purely Iranian phenomenon. This faction is active in North African and Middle Eastern countries, mainly in opposition to the governments. The existence and survival of the Islamic Republic up till now, and its tacit and pronounced support for these factions has allowed their activities against the governments in the region to intensify, and the internal breach of the bourgeoisie in the region to widen. The growth of Hizb-al-dava in Iraq, Amal and Hizbullah in Lebanon, the reformation of Ikhwani Muslimin in Egypt, the emergence of Pan-Islamist groups in southern countries of the Persian Gulf and in North Africa, are signs of this division in ranks.

The above mentioned attributes put the Islamic Republic in a unique position from the standpoint of the political interests of imperialism in the region. Internally, in so far as the regime is threatened by the revolution, the working class and mass movement, it enjoys the support of imperialist governments by virtue of its anti-working class, anti-democratic and anti-communist capacity.

Moreover failing to ★ *Newsweek* wrote on August 26, 1985 "Western diplomats in Tehran argue that it would not be in Washington's interest to undermine the current regime. Neither the Mojahedin-e-Khalq resistance nor the upper-class Iranian elites in Paris offer a credible alternative, they believe. And if this government fell, the country might descend into chaos... Eventually Iran may emerge from its self-absorption and become a force that is more palatable to the West." *New York Times* has expressed this anxiety of Imperialist circles by saying: "Supposing the war should continue... Resistance to ending off the young people to go military service and to get killed is bound to mount and weigh against fanaticism. At the moment most organized resistance to Khomeini inside Iran is extremely leftist."

support the Islamic Republic and paying serious attention to, and support for, bourgeois oppositions of the regime would have meant accepting the risk of popular insurgency in case of a transfer of power at the "top". From the point of view of regional politics this would mean disappointing, and rendering futile, those Islamic forces which at the moment support along the lines of western imperialist interests in Afghanistan and Lebanon. It would also mean giving up the Islamic opposition of the governments in the region Lebanon as a counter-revolutionary resource for revolutionary times. On the other hand, however, active and comprehensive support for the Islamic Republic would, from the point of view of internal politics mean nothing.

But the dismissal of those forces which potentially have the utmost capacity and competence to serve capital. Regionally it involves encouraging and bolstering up the Islamic factions of the bourgeoisie against the governments in the region. This would weaken these governments and create breaches in their reactionary dominance which can turn into channels for the flow of the protest, hatred, and struggle of the toiling and oppressed masses in these countries. It can therefore be deduced that imperialism, and particularly the United States suffers from ambivalence and hesitancy as to the form of ideal government in the region, and is lacking in a consistent strategy compared to the '70s. We call this situation the governmental crisis of imperialism. Without entering into details, we leave the reader's attention to the point that this crisis stems from the futility of previous governmental patterns, and the lack of a new and comprehensive pattern is by no means limited to the Middle East region. Rather it is the universal problem of imperialism.

So far as it concerns Iran, however, the solution of the problem from the standpoint of the interests of world imperialism requires the kind of

government which: 1) Should complete the measures taken so far by the Islamic Republic against the revolution.

2) Should end the political crisis in Iran and release the bourgeoisie from the nightmare of a revolutionary uplift and a new uprising. 2) Take active part in the restoration of a bourgeois-imperialist stability to the region of the Middle East. This is particularly so if we remember that the previous monarchist dictatorship in Iran was, along with Israel, the main stronghold of imperialist reaction in the Middle East, and specifically played the part of the gendarme of the Persian Gulf, i.e. one of the most important strategic regions under the American influence. From these two statements and as a necessary condition it follows that the Islamic Republic methods and instruments of this government should correspond to the regional interests of imperialism, and stand within the framework of American strategy.

From this point of view the "Islamic Republic," despite its existence as a government, is nonetheless still no more than an alternative for the removal of the existing crisis in Iran and the region, on a par with the royalist factions and the advocates of the Democratic Islamic Republic. Even though this alternative holds the reigns of political power in Iran, it should as yet obtain Islamic security from imperialism for its survival. Therefore: "The Islamic Republic itself tries actively to remind imperialism of its aptitude in overcoming the crisis. The Islamic Republic tries to display in various forms its economic stability and its ability for counter-revolutionary intervention in the region and the suppression of any kind of revolutionary movement of the masses and convince the very alternative makers to whom the National Council of Resistance and the Royalists are now appealing thereof." (Komonist, No.3, p.3). From this standpoint the Islamic Republic is a very proposed solution presented by

one bourgeois political grouping. The advocates of this solution must struggle to enforce it, to prove its efficiency and practicability, as hard as the advocates of the "military-revolutionary" or "democratic-Islamic" solutions.

Thus the condition for the desirability of the Islamic Republic as well as any other bourgeois alternative in Iran depends on its acceptance as a pattern, as a regional alternative by imperialism, or, at least, on its digestibility and ability for absorption into the bourgeois-imperialist relations in the region as a whole. In other words, if the existence of the Islamic Republic in Iran, the Islamic opposition in Afghanistan, the Amal and Hizbullah in Lebanon, and the Islamic opposition in the Middle Eastern countries makes the Islamic way of capital viable to the imperialists as a regional alternative, the progress and strengthening of this alternative in the region is the definitive condition for the present regime in Iran to be stabilized by the imperialists. Going beyond the national boundaries, the export of the Islamic revolution, therefore, is an inseparable part of the existence of the Islamic Republic. The regime goes beyond the "national" boundaries in various forms and by various methods. The pan-Islamic paradigm of the holy pilgrimage (Hajj), support for the Afghani Mojahedin, the dispatch of Islamic troops to Lebanon, and the Iran-Iraq war are manifestations of this policy.

As we said before, the necessity for the restoration of imperialist order to the region, the absence of reliable bourgeois alternatives for the imperialists to set against the existing governments, has provided the Islamic Republic with the historic opportunity to promote pan-Islamism to the level of a regional strategy by its anti-imperialist determination and capability.\* This

\* Washington Post writes (on May 30, '85): "Holding the Post-Khomeini Iran in view, the Reagan government has tried to

position of the Islamic Republic in the Present circumstances is similar to that of the reactionary-Islamic opposition to the royalist regime in 1979. Just as the disintegration of the royalist counter-revolution, the absence of a reliable alternative, and the terrible waves of the mass revolution in Iran compelled the world imperialism to the direct suppression of its capital, so now such a perspective has opened up, this time on a regional scale, and potentially before the pan-Islamic faction of the bourgeoisie. In the present circumstances, and as it relates to Iran, the Iran-Iraq war stems from this policy.

In other words, to the extent that the Islamic Republic, relying on the Iran-Iraq war, enjoys the support of the workers and toilers, advanced in defeating the revolution as a living, ongoing current, to the same extent it curtailed its useful life from the point of view of the imperialists as the only possible imperialist alternative to the Iranian revolution under certain circumstances. To the same extent, also, the regime faced the necessity of gaining the recognition, endorsement, and support of imperialist powers as a more endurable bourgeois government than the other bourgeois alternatives. The continuation of the Iran-Iraq war by the Islamic Republic is its specific answer to this necessity. Today also the Islamic Republic continues the war for the sake of its own survival. This time, however, it seeks for survival beyond the region.

Through the war the Islamic Republic is trying to lay the grounds for the downfall of the present Iraqi government and the strengthening of its Islamic opposition, who in the present circumstances, and in the event of the realization of the military objectives of the Islamic Republic, would be the best refrain from choosing between Iran and Iraq.... The American policy, which is to be tested in the heat of the battle, is a negative one.

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candidate for replacement. From the standpoint of the Islamic Republic this is the first and the most decisive step in realizing pan-Islamism as a regional imperialist policy. If this does not occur, and should at any event the Islamic Republic have to confine itself to "national" limits, it would face total annihilation in the context of the absorption of the masses from below, and lack of acceptance from above. It is in this sense that the Islamic Republic seeks its survival in the continuation of war.

The U.S. not to be lured to the idea of the green belt and Pan-Islamism, and to rely upon the state power of its previous gendarme, with its racist "Aryan" ideology and the Arya Mehr type of government, i.e. despotism. It must start from the same organized army and police. Therefore those who wish for the resumption of the political and military hegemony of Iran in the region, regard the realization of this objective as a step forward in the direction of their alternative. They ask for the continuation and intensification of war, warn the Iraqi regime, and reproach the Iranian regime for its "military ineptness".

The National Council of Resistance (better called the deceased NCR) is for the moment not so ambitious as the royalists. As the representative of the inexperienced and less demanding sector of the Iranian bourgeoisie, it is prepared to abandon temporarily the idea of hegemony in the Gulf in exchange for the unblemished receipt of the "territorial integrity" of the Islamic Republic. The Islamic Republic would agree to changes in the bourgeois balance of power to maintain stability in the region. It would provide security in the Gulf by accepting a humble role in cooperation with the imperialist powers of the peripheral countries in the Gulf. In case of necessity it would enter into any number of regional and ultra-regional military pacts which would ensure the safety of the Middle European, and Japanese oil resources and oil routes. The

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the country. Rather, the developments have stemmed from avoidable tactical mistakes by the Shah and the U.S. They believe that the "decisiveness" by the Shah, and the more extensive and outspoken support of the United States for its allies in dominated countries including the Shah's regime, could have prevented the present instability and revolutionary crisis. Today they ask for the re-dependence of the U.S. on the Iranian bourgeoisie and its economic and military strength in the region. They want the U.S. not to be lured to the idea of the green belt and Pan-Islamism, and to rely upon the state power of its previous gendarme, with its racist "Aryan" ideology and the Arya Mehr type of government, i.e. despotism. It must start from the same organized army and police. Therefore those who wish for the resumption of the political and military hegemony of Iran in the region, regard the realization of this objective as a step forward in the direction of their alternative. They ask for the continuation and intensification of war, warn the Iraqi regime, and reproach the Iranian regime for its "military ineptness".

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supremacy of the nationalist element in the Mojahedin type Islam—compared to the Pan-Islamism of Khomeini's orthodox Islam—provides the ideological license for Khomeini's pacifism today and in the aftermath of the gradual departure of Iraqi troops from the Iranian soil. After its bourgeois defensiveness and presenting the people's arms to the "Shah and Ayatullah" at the beginning of the war, the Mojahedin organization, banking on the assumption that imperialist states are looking for a compliant, non-interventionist trend, has signed the peace treaty in advance, turning Khomeini's hawkishness and Rajavi's Pacifism into one of the hallmarks of its international propaganda.

The liberal royalists also start from the same national position as the Mojahedin. Their primary problem at this juncture is the reorganization of the bourgeois government in Iran itself, the end to the political crisis with the aid of the army and other traditional institutions of bourgeois suppression in the guise of a puppet parliament. They believe that a "reconstructed" Iran, dependent on a strong army, would command such political authority as to maintain its regional status and the security of the Persian Gulf. Thus they blame the regime of the "mullahs" for what, they consider to have been preparing grudge for the outbreak of war through the sapping of the army. They advocate armed peace, regard the "war mongering" of the mullahs to be the cause of instability in the region, and are prepared to restore order and security to the Gulf in cooperation with the other western oriented governments in the region. The differences in their regional policy, if any, with the MCR is distinctions of courage and an inclination to resume relations with Israel.

On the threshold of the sixth year of the Iran-Iraq war, no end to the war is in sight. With the initial "losses" of the war for the Islamic Republic having run out, and

protest movements against the war having turned into a new factor threatening the existence of the regime, the main problem of the war itself has remained unresolved. To end the war two solutions, belonging to two major classes, exist. The desirable end to the war from the standpoint of the interests of the imperialist bourgeoisie requires the restoration of imperialist law and order to the region, the end to the crisis, and the start of a new period of capital accumulation. This is the common refrain of all regional alternatives and regional plans of the alternatives. The hawkishness of fervent royalists and of the Islamic Republic, as well as the pacifism of Juan Carlos type royalists and of the MCR, and, recently of the Mehat-e-Ahadi (Freedom Movement) are different methods leading to the same goal. No matter how the goals achieved, peaceful relations in its aftermath would depend on such unstable balance of the arrangement of the forces of the exploiters that peace would be no more than a fragile ceasefire. It would be questioned in any change in the balance of class power in the region and on the world scale. The other barrier of the exploiters, that is the abolition of the decadent capitalist system, to which war is an inherent corollary, the foundation of a new order, and a society devoid of the barbarism of the exploiters. This peace is founded on internationalism, and the universal alliance of the working class. So far as the Iranian working class is concerned, the overthrow of the Islamic Republic is the first step in this direction.

Habib Farhad

September '85



## CRITIQUE OF THE POLITICAL PLATFORM OF THE INTERNATIONALIST COMMUNIST PARTY

The following is the translation of the first part of an article recently published in the 2nd issue of the theoretical organ of the PCI, *Bolshevik-Socialism* (Towards Socialism), Dec-65. The second part of the article will be published in the next issue of the BM. Because of lack of space we are not able to publish the text of the PCInt platform which was a supplement to the present article. Readers wishing to obtain the platform may write to the PCInt, address at C.P.1753, 20100 Milano, Italy.

### Bolshevik Message

"Internationalist Communist Party"\* is one of the branches of the "Communist Left" which progeny, historically, goes back to the '30s, and as "Internationalist Communist Party," to 1942. The "Political Platform" that we intend to examine and criticize in the present article, was ratified in the Second Congress of this party in 1952, and reconfirmed at its Fifth Congress (1962). The translation of this platform is given at the end.

This platform which, essentially and in its totality, signifies the positions and politico-theoretical ideas of a certain spectrum in the left movement in Europe, distinguished itself from modern revisionism, Trotskysm, Maoism and Stalinism a long time ago, by breaking with the Comintern and Stalin in the period of World War II, and by assessing the Soviet system and government as capitalist in 1945. As to what extent this historical and politico-theoretical distinction and independence of the "Left Communism", in particular of the PCInt, from these monopolistic views display its identification with, and looseness to Revolutionary Marxism, is itself a different issue which requires, first and foremost, a study and examination of the views and the positively-defined positions of this current. Our objective in criticizing the "Political Platform" is nothing but to clarify this issue.

The "Political Platform" is divided into "general issues" and "theses". In each of the two parts various topics, from theoretic-programmatic ones such as the capitalist system, the relation between party and class, the dictatorship of the proletariat, to specific stands on trade unions, national liberation

\* Throughout the article we shall refer to the Internationalist Communist Party in the abbreviated form of PCInt.

movements, the question of taking part in parliaments, etc. are presented and discussed, according to no logical order. Indeed one can say that from the standpoint of the form of the arrangement and the type of problems it presents, the PCInt platform is neither a cohesive political platform, nor is it similar to a party programme. Rather it is a miscellaneous combination of theoretical statements and political stands, without presenting a specific political stride or theoretical viewpoint clearly and comprehensively.

The "Political Platform" however, is a document representing the PCInt, and more generally, "Left Communism". For, as we shall see in examining the content of the platform, it is characteristic of this trend that it makes no great distinction between general theoretical topics and categories, and specific political and tactical issues, and does not go far beyond its typical principles and tenets in dealing with specific political problems.

Here we shall not enter into each and every single article and all the issues presented in the platform. Rather, we will specifically deal with questions which give the PCInt as a particular intellectual current its characteristic and distinct features. These issues consist of: the characteristic feature of capitalist production, the relation between party and class, tasks of the party, trade unions, imperialism, the question of democracy, and national liberation movements.

### 1- What is the characteristic of the capitalist system?

The essential characteristic of capitalism is the contradiction between the forces of production and the relations of production. The proletariat, as the historical antithesis of capitalism, expresses this contradiction and thus gives rise to class struggle. (from article I in the platform)

Few people can so blatantly undermine the most obvious theoretical basis of Marxism in two short sentences. It is usually thought - or at least we used to think so from a distance - that "left communism" is a theoretical current whose problem is to be looked for in its failure to understand the relation between theory and practice, rather than its unfamiliarity with theoretical Marxist principles and tenets. Unfortunately we now have to say that that

thinking has been entirely optimistic. The above statements show clearly that the estrangement of PCInt from Marxist theory is not a part with its distance from practice. The definition of the capitalist system according to the "contradiction between forces of production and relations of production," and of the proletariat as the "antithesis of capitalism", is closer to the superficial views of indigenous Maoists and Marxists - Marxists based on "Mao Contradiction" and "Nikitin's Economics" - than on the Marxism of Marx and Engels.

Marx has written in the introduction to the "Critique of Political Economy" that:

At a certain stage of thier development, the material productive forces of society come in conflict with the existing relations of production, or - what is but a legal expression for the same thing - with the property relations within which they have been at work hitherto. From forms of development of the productive forces these relations turn into their fetters. Then begins an epoch of social revolution. (Marx and Engels, Selected Works, Vol.1, Progress Pub. p.503.)

Here Marx turns to the conflict between productive forces and productive relations as the characteristic of a certain stage in productive systems, a stage in which relations of production turn into an obstacle on the way of the development of productive forces. He is not speaking of characteristics of a certain productive system. The reason is quite obvious.

To begin with, the contradiction between productive forces and relations of production is a general, abstract formulation of the basic contradiction in all systems of production. In all economic formations, from slavery to the present, relations of production have at a certain stage, stood in contradiction with the productive forces and turned into an obstacle on their way. This contradiction is the most basic reality throughout the history of class society and their common denominator. It therefore cannot in any way be a "characteristic" indication of a specific productive system, for this, by definition, is the self-specific character of the system and the differentiating point between that system and other economic formations. Secondly, and more important, is the fact that the specific stage in the relations of production turn into an obstacle against the productive forces, does by no means determine the period of the standard functioning of that productive system. Quite conversely, it expresses its stage of crisis and decadence. In other words, the contradiction between productive forces and relations of production explains, not a mode of production, but the most basic cause for the crisis in a mode of production. In no economic system, including capitalism, are productive forces in

contradiction with relations of production from the moment of its emergence and establishment. Rather, as a rule, new relations will at the beginning bring about the development of productive forces, and only at a certain stage will they turn into an obstacle on the way of their further development. In so far as capitalist society is concerned, this contradiction displays itself in the form of periodic crises. Should the crisis not result in a social revolution, it would inevitably entail a period of new economic boom with further concentration of capitals, advancement of technique and further mechanization of the process of production, i.e. the development of productive forces. This crisis-boom cycle, of course, is not a vicious circle on a closed circuit. The longer the capitalist system should last, its death throes would occur at shorter intervals and with more intensity and depth, with the contradiction between capitalist productive relations and productive forces assuming deeper and more severe form. But, at any rate, what we would like to emphasize in the present discussion is that the capitalist system does not like all other productive systems cannot be explained in terms of its crises. The capitalist system, as its name implies, is not the system of crisis and decay of capitalist production, but the system of production in a capitalist mode. In this mode "forces of production" function within the framework of certain relations." To understand and explain the characteristic of capitalism" the manner of this functioning should be understood and explained.

PCInt writes that "the essential characteristic of capitalism is the contradiction between forces of production and relations of production." By so doing, on the one hand it violates the common denominator of the system and all its preceding economic formations - the fact that in all class societies, productive forces at a certain stage of their development come in contradiction with the relations of production - i.e. it actually purports that no such contradictions existed in pre-capitalist systems of production. On the other hand it offers no definition of the capitalist system, and even its specific contradiction, or more precisely, the specific form of the emergence of the contradiction between the productive forces and relations of production in this system.

But what is the characteristic and distinct feature of the capitalist system? How is this system distinguishable from others? This is how Marx explains the criterion for recognizing, and distinguishing between, various economic formations:

What distinguishes the various economic formations of society - the distinction between for example a society based on slave-labour and a society based on wage-labour - is the form in which this surplus

labour [the labour producing surplus product] is in each case extorted from the immediate producer, the worker [in the general sense of the term].

(Capital, Vol. 1, penguin pub. p.325)

To explain the distinct feature of the capitalist system, therefore, the particular form in which "surplus-labour is extorted from the workers" in this system should be recognized. This particular form is nothing but surplus value. The capitalist system is the particular mode of production in which surplus value comes into the possession of owners of means of production in the form of surplus value. "The essential characteristic of the capitalist system", therefore, can be summed up in the production of surplus value, or, more specifically - since this would require of labour power to turn into a commodity and the opposition of wage labour and capital - in turning of labour power into a commodity and the exploitation of wage labour.

This is the gist and the outline of the Marxist views on the capitalist system and its characteristics. These are clearly and explicitly explained in Capital and regarded as fundamental and basic principles of Marxism.

Having explained the point, i.e. having recognized the capitalist system of production and the specific mode of the functioning of the system, we can speak of its inherent contradiction, i.e. the specific way in which productive forces come in conflict with relations of production in the capitalist system. This specific way consists of the contradiction between "the social character of production" and "the private character of the ownership of the means of production."

"Along with the constant decrease in the number of capitalist magnates, ... the mass slavery, oppression, and degradation and exploitation grows; but with this there also grows the revolt of the working class, a class constantly increasing in numbers, and trained, united and organized by the very mechanism of the capitalist process of production. The monopoly of capital becomes a fetter upon the mode of production, which has flourished alongside and under it. The centralization of the means of production and the socialization of labour reach a point at which they become incompatible with their capitalist integument. This integument is burst asunder. The knell of capitalist private property sounds. The expropriators are expropriated." (Capital Vol. 1, p.929, penguin pub. Our emphasis)

In other words the increasing concentration of capitals in the hands of a fewer number of capitalists on the one hand, and the socialization of labour power on the other, is a contradiction which would eventually put an end to the capitalist system and the private

ownership of the means of production. This contradiction between "the private character of the ownership of the means of production" and "the social character of labour" which, in turn, originates, in the final analysis, from the distinguishing feature of the capitalist system compared to all its preceding economic formations, i.e. the separation of direct producers from the means of production and the turning of labour power into a commodity, is in fact the specific contradiction of the capitalist system and intrinsic to it. To this, however, no reference is made in the first article of the PCInt platform, i.e. the only place in the platform which deals with capitalism and its contradiction.

To sum up the novel thesis that "the essential characteristic of capitalism is the contradiction between forces of production and relations of production" completely distorts and violates the most basic and obvious Marxist tenets on the capitalist system: passing the common denominator of all economic formations in class societies for the distinguishing feature of the capitalist system, the explanation of a particular mode of production in terms of the general basis and cause of the decay and the deadlock of all modes of production in class societies, the substitution of a general and abstract formulation about "the contradiction between forces of production and relations of production" for the inherent, particular contradiction of the capitalist system, constituting the combination of the theoretical "mistakes" made by the PCInt in the first sentence of its platform.

Allow us to take a look at the second sentence. In this phrasing the proletariat is presented as the historical antithesis of capitalism, reflecting the contradiction between productive forces and relations of production, and therefore the originator of class struggle. Regarding what we have already said, it would be needless to argue and explain the incorrectness of this view in any great detail. Suffice it to make the obvious point that the proletariat is not the historical antithesis of capitalism, but the social class, the system of production but the antithesis of the bourgeoisie, i.e. a certain social class which has the means of production in its possession, purchases its [the proletariat's] labour power, and exploits it. The objective basis and grounds for class struggle - which, as the term shows, is struggle between social classes, and not between a class and a system of production - lies in this fact. This is how Engels explains the issue:

From being an exception and an auxiliary, wage-labour became the rule and the basic form of all production, from being a side-occupation, it now became the workers' exclusive activity. The occasional wage-worker was transformed into the wage worker

for life. Furthermore the number of life-long wage-workers was enormously increased by the simultaneous collapse of the feudal system, the disbanding of the feudal lords' retainers, the eviction of peasants from their homesteads, etc. The separation of the means of production concentrated in the hands of the capitalists, on the one side, from the producers now possessing nothing but their labour-power, on the other, was accomplished. The contradiction between social production and capitalist appropriation became manifest as the antagonism between proletariat and bourgeoisie.

(Anti-Dühring, FLP, Peking, p.349)

It is specifically this human vehicle and manifestation of economic contradictions, i.e. the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie that PCInt ignores by placing the working class directly in opposition to a system of production. It speaks of the proletariat and of class struggle, but neglects the bourgeoisie, just as in speaking of the capitalist system it "neglects" exploitation and the turning of labour power into a commodity. It appears as if what is at issue is not a human society, the majority of which, the proletariat, because of exploitation by a minority which holds all means of production, i.e. the bourgeoisie, engages in a struggle against it in order to expropriate it. Rather, it is speaking of a mechanism, an unpassive system in which an abstract, indeterminate entity by the name of "the conflict between forces of production and relations of production" moves the "historical antithesis" in order to trigger off class struggle against the system! This is the idea which lurks behind the abstract and philosophical terminology and the generally irrelevant expressions of the PCInt about the capitalist system and class struggle. We are going to get more familiar with these as we go on with the article.

## 2- The Relation Between Party and Class

The specific, permanent and irreplaceable organ of the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat is the class party.

(Article 2 of the platform)

This emphasis on the permanent importance of the party is a positive point, in comparison with other "Left Communist" organizations such as "International Communist Current"(ICC) who do not believe in the formation of the party, except in exceptional revolutionary circumstances and at the time of the uprising. However, it fails to provide a precise and essential

theoretical definition of the class party of the proletariat, is one-sided, and may lead to entirely deviationist consequences. From the emphasis on the lasting, i.e. constant and permanent character of the party in the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat, it would be deduced that this struggle is unambiguous and impossible in the absence of the party. Both theory and historical experience refute this proposition. Historically the European working class has participated in a kind of partisanship and partisan struggle, repeatedly engaged in revolutionary struggle (for instance in France and Germany in the second half of the last century). Even though these struggles remained unfulfilled in the absence of the party and party leadership, their revolutionary character cannot be contested. Today also there are numerous cases of the revolutionary struggle of the working class in dominated countries in which no party or partisan movement exist, or, if it does, is very weak.

Analytically also the struggle of the working class cannot necessarily be made conditional upon the existence of the party. The struggle of the working class against capital is an objective factor in society, apart and independent from the mentality of the communists and the communist party. The absence of the party does not mean that these struggles are lacking, both in their manner and content, in revolutionary character (In the same way that the social system, such as not a production of our wishes or our will, but is a social reality with its own objective basis). In other words, the party is not the initiator and creator of revolutionary struggle, but the instrument of organization and leadership, and the necessary condition for bringing victory to the struggle of the working class. In the absence of the conscious and vanguard party of the working class, and without the active and consistent intervention of this party, the struggles of the working class would no doubt fall foul of triumph and lasting achievements.

But the conclusion cannot be drawn from any of these facts that the revolutionary struggle of the working class of the soviet union is the party, or that a working-class struggle is revolutionary only in so far as the party is involved in it. Such a conclusion would pave the way for passivism, inaction, and withdrawal from the day-to-day struggle of the working class, under the pretext of the struggle lacking in revolutionary character.

Thus, even though the PCInt puts emphasis on the importance and the necessity of the party, the emphasis is misplaced, and weakens and damages the real role and necessity of the class party of the proletariat, i.e. the all-round leadership and organization of the

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struggle of the working class. It can only lead to ignoring, and failing to recognize, the struggle of the proletariat outside and independent of the party, and, ultimately to passivism and withdrawal from such struggles.

But article 3 of the platform goes even further, turning the relation between the class and the party on its head and into an entirely metaphysical idea:

In no phase of its history does the working class exist without the living and active presence of its party, just as a revolutionary party is nothing if it does not sit on the throne of the class, if it is detached from its daily life, from its struggles and needs (either contingent or basic). Reaction or counter-revolution can decrease or reduce it to a temporary silence but it will never be able to destroy it historically.

(Article 3, Platform)

It is true that without the working class and without being related to it, the revolutionary party is not much to speak of. Nonetheless, only a complete idealist such as Herr Dühring who supposes that reversing any relationship is indicative of dialectical thinking, can take the opposite to be also true. The authors of the platform, apparently to do justice to the importance of the party, have gone beyond identifying the party with the revolutionary struggle of the class, and made the very existence of the working class conditional upon the existence of the party. By so doing they have in fact detached the existence of the working class from the absence of the party! The idea is far too absurd to require arguments to refute. Do we need examples to show that in many countries the working class existed, not only long before the formation of the revolutionary party of the working class, but even long before the ideology, the class policies and objectives of the proletariat were drawn up and formulated by Marx and Engels

- that basically without the objective existence of the working class, arriving at scientific socialism would have been impossible? Should those who lay claims to Marxism be reminded that the working class has an objective social existence, and that the existence of the capitalist system is automatically and by definition the sine qua non for the existence of the working class?

It may be the case that PCInt should want to defend the idealist formulation of its platform, not by denying and refuting these realities, but by emphasizing the fact that without the existence of an active and living party the proletariat would not exist as a class. This, however, would solve no problem.

In *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* Marx explains the conditions of a part of French peasantry:

In so far as millions of families live under economic conditions of existence that separate their mode of life, their interests and their culture from those of the other classes, and put them in hostile opposition to the latter, they form a class.

(P. 106, Progress Publishers)

Clearly this definition of Marx can apply to other social classes as well. According to Marx, in other words, class is a social phenomenon whose existence is determined according to the economic conditions of life as reflected in its lifestyle, interests, and culture. Obviously, the economic conditions of the livelihood of any class, in turn, is directly related to its place in production, and its relation to the means of production, independent of the mentality of the multitudes of the class. The existence or the absence of the class party of the proletariat, moreover, to the extent of its influence, strength or weakness in the final analysis reflects nothing but the extent of awareness of the working class of its condition, abilities, objective interests, and the extent of its unity and organization on the basis of this awareness.

Even though Marx speaks of the place of struggle and unity in the advancement of the working class into a class for itself, he nonetheless presupposes the existence of the working class:

Economic conditions had first transformed the mass of the people of the country [England] into workers. The domination of capital has created for this mass a common situation, common interests. This mass is thus already a class as against capital, but not yet for itself. In the struggle, of which we have pointed out only a few phases, this mass becomes united, and constitutes itself as a class for itself.

(*Poverty of Philosophy*, FLP, Peking, p. 168)

Here Marx clearly emphasizes the role of "economic conditions" and "the domination of capital" - i.e. objective conditions entirely independent of the party - in turning the workers into a class. Meanwhile he regards the transformation of the working class into "a class for itself" a matter of the unity and struggle of the workers. The proletarian party, of course, can and must be regarded as the precondition for the development of the proletariat from a class in itself into a class for itself, because of its decisive role and effect in the organized struggle of the working class. However treating the party as the sine qua non of the working class is entirely incorrect and absurd. It is an indication as regarding consciousness of exploitation and the unity against it as the precondition for the existence of exploitation.

In other words the dialectics of "party"

and "class" lie, not in the positive existence of the objective condition of the proletariat as a class - as the PCInt makes the existence of the party and class interdependent - but in the negating process of this fact, i.e. in the mode of organization and united struggle of the proletariat to set itself free from class oppression and exploitation. The proletariat does not require a party in order to prove its existence as a class. Quite conversely, it requires the party in order to negate its condition as the working class. The proletariat requires the party in order to advance consciously, united, and organized struggle against the bourgeoisie, and in order to bring victory to this struggle, i.e. to set itself free from exploitation and all varieties of the bondage and oppression of capital. In this lies the entire necessity, role, and importance of the party.

What is at issue, therefore, is not merely two different interpretations of class, or the confusion between "the class for itself" and "the class in itself". The more important issue is that by tying in the existence of class to the party, PCInt has emptied the party itself from its real class role and content. The belief that "the working class does not exist without its party" or that "the class gives rise to the party as a condition of its own existence" (Platform, the section on the nature and function of the party) has no other meaning than that we deduce the party not from the necessity of the liberation of the proletariat, but from the necessity of the existence of the working class (as though the bourgeoisie itself were not interested enough in maintaining the existence and survival of the proletariat)! This is not only are the concepts of the "party" and "class" and the relation between "objectivity" and "subjectivity" confused, violated, and reversed, but more important still, the link "class struggle and the role and necessity of the party in this struggle" is entirely omitted from the relation between party and class.

### 3- Tasks of the Party

The nature of the PCInt as a party of the working class indicates and defines its tasks. These are established within a strategic and tactical class framework which is tightly bound to an objective analysis of real economic relations and the development of the technical means of production. (Ibid)

What consistent economicism! When the working class is made to be the antithesis of a productive system, then surely its party also would have to derive its tasks from "economic relations and the development of the technical means of production"! Once more class struggle and the bourgeoisie are forgotten and everything is directly tied in with economics.

What is determined by "the objective analysis of economic relations and the development of the means of production" in a hypothetical society is the productive system of that society and its economic attributes and characteristics - question such as which stage of development is capitalism at, whether it is going through a boom or a recession, what the relation of various sections of capital are to each other, what the economic condition of the working class consist of, etc. Not only is it not possible to conclude the framework of class strategies and tactics of the party from this, even the tactical tasks of the party for economic struggle - the struggle of the class over the conditions of the selling of labour power - cannot be derived from it. For without taking political conditions into consideration, even the most basic tasks of the party in the area of the economic struggles of the workers, i.e. promoting these struggles and relating them to the political class struggle of the proletariat cannot be explicated or adopted. Since, however, the class strategy and tactics of the party in general are the points in mind to be arrived at, one of the two conditions setting out from "economic relations and the development of the technical means of production":

1- Economic reformism: the effort to reform and amend the shortcomings and solve the economic inadequacies of the capitalist system. Petty bourgeois socialism and generally revisionist parties worried about the development of productive forces who play the part of consultants to the bourgeoisie on the question of "socializing" existing socializing capitals, etc., are typical examples of parties which take economic and productive conditions as the basis of their strategy and tactics.

2- Economic determinism: believing that productive relations and the degree of development of productive forces have made everything clear in advance, and therefore any specific confrontation or struggle which does not have the entire capitalist system as its direct and immediate target is futile and of no avail. Example: The "Left Communist" current in Europe, and specifically PCInt, currents which begin from the global domination of capital and imperialism and reach total passivism and inaction.

Both these currents are incapable of grasping the fact that while the working class is the product of the productive relations of capitalism, it is not totally at the mercy of these relations or responsible for their degree and stage of development; it strives for the annihilation of capitalist system and relations of production, and exactly for this reason, neither reform and reparation of economic relations, nor submitting to them are able to pave the way for the liberation of the working

class.

In its struggle to destroy the capitalist system, the proletariat faces the bourgeoisie, i.e. the class which holds the means of production, has the productive relations of capitalism entirely and directly at the service of its interests, and holds the reins of political power and state machinery to safeguard and protect this system. The pivotal issue for the proletariat in this struggle, and what determines the framework of its strategy and tactic, is capturing political power and destroying the state machinery of the bourgeoisie. This is the link connecting economics to politics, and translating the contradiction between productive relations and productive forces into the contradiction between classes, and the struggle over the maintenance or the destruction of the capitalist system into class struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. Without grasping this issue, which should be an obvious and assumed fact for all communists, it would be impossible to explain or determine either the class strategy of the proletariat - the general course it should take to arrive at the final goal of its own liberation and that of all workers from the grip of class oppression and exploitation - nor its tactics - elimination of the particular obstacles set on its way at each specific historical juncture or period. Therefore what should be objectively analysed in determining the tasks of the party and its class strategy and tactic, are exactly the same as those of the PCInt platform. They are the overall political conditions of society and the objective place, relations, and the balance of power between all classes in general and the proletariat and the bourgeoisie in particular. Only within this framework can issues such as the methods and specific forms of bourgeois rule, the degree of consciousness and organization of the proletariat, obstacles in the way of its political development and advancement, the place of intermediary classes and strata, etc. be dealt with. Without throwing light on these issues, there can be no question of deciding on the strategy and tactics of a real working-class party, even in their most general outlines.

At the end of this section let us take a look at the list of tasks the PCInt sets itself: The tasks of the Party can be summarized as follows:

a) Conducting the political battle against bourgeois ideology in all its various forms; above all its social-democratic form, the most dangerous and influential within the working class. This battle must orientate the proletariat towards a revolutionary perspective and reintroduce the programme for communism at the direction of the working class movement.

b) Propagandizing its principles and continually elaborating and developing them.

c) Actively participating in all proletarian struggles as far as immediate demands are concerned.

d) Leading the insurrection for the revolutionary assault on bourgeois power.

e) Politically leading the proletariat dictatorship and the construction of the socialist economy.

In all those situations where it is not yet possible to fight directly for power the Party must develop the first three tasks simultaneously since it is impossible for the party to be absent from even the partial and immediate struggles of the working class.

(Ibid)

While it is true that the absence of the party even in the immediate, day-to-day struggles of the workers is unacceptable, the more essential issue would nonetheless be what the party is aiming at by its presence in these struggles. Which slogans and what objectives are pursued in active involvement in all the workers' struggles. Is active participation, and more important still, generally the training and preparation of the proletariat for "insurrection and revolutionary assault on bourgeois power" possible merely by propagandizing the principles and fighting against bourgeois ideology?

Neither in the above description of tasks nor in the other parts of the platform, is any mention made of the tasks of the party in relation to the leadership and organization of the political and economic struggles of the working class, while without specifying these tasks and performing them simultaneously, conditions for "fighting directly for power" would never arrive. In criticizing the tasks that the PCInt sets before itself we should particularly point out:

a) Advancing the political struggle against bourgeois ideology is necessary but inadequate. What should be on the agenda is advancing the political struggle against the bourgeoisie itself. This means critique and exposure of the anti-working class and anti-democratic policies of bourgeois political parties as well as its class government, i.e. presenting and advocating the proletarian alternative among the working class masses and the people in general against government policies as relates to various economic, political and social problems. This means enlightening the working class as to the place and condition of other social groups, strata, and classes which in one way or the other are politically and economically oppressed by capitalism, active support of their legitimate democratic rights, demands, and struggles, and attracting and drawing them toward the working class and its democratic slogans and policies.

b) Advocating the principles is necessary, but without deducing specific political and economic

slogans and demands from these principles and carrying out propaganda about them, it would not be possible to move and mobilize the working-class masses under the banner of their class party. The propaganda platform of a proletarian party must be the indictment of the proletariat against the entire adversity and sordidness caused by the capitalist system, and put the prospect of a society free from class oppression and exploitation, not only in its economic aspect, but particularly its political one, before the workers and all masses of the people.

Moreover and more important, speaking of propaganda without specifying the organizing tasks of a party is futile and meaningless. A definite organizational plan for action to organize the most advanced sections of the workers in the ranks of the party and also the non-partisan masses of the workers - or to participate in and influence their already existing organizations - should be drawn and adopted. And, finally, c) Taking part in the day-by-day struggle of the workers is not enough. Efforts should be made to lead and organize the workers' struggles, to coordinate them into a nationwide and class struggle. To do so, certain economic slogans and demands which provide and secure the interest of the working class in the best possible way, should be put forth and propagandized. These struggles should not be allowed to remain within the framework of the factory or trade union efforts should be made to overcome the possible weaknesses and mistakes of any particular workers' strike or struggle. The support of the whole working class for these struggles should be gained, and the workers should be taught the practical ways and methods of expressing this support. The poisonous propaganda, distortions, and the current struggles of confronting the strikes and the current struggles of the workers must be countered. Masses of the people should be enlightened as to the legitimacy of the workers' struggles, and encouraged and mobilized to give moral and material support to these struggles.

These are the outlines of the work which we have in mind for the attainment of power for the proletariat in circumstances when direct struggle for power is not yet possible. The basis and substance of these tasks is the political education, organization, and leadership of the working class, and this is the missing link which is completely absent from the "strategy and tactic" of the PCInt.

#### 4- The Question of the Unions

The Party states categorically that, in the present stage of totalitarian domination of imperialism, the unions are necessary for the working class and its democratic since their aims correspond to the counter-revolutionary requirements and war needs of the bourgeoisie. We therefore reject as false

the perspective that in future such organizations could have a proletarian function and that the party should therefore reverse its view and reconsider the possibility of conquering the unions from within. (Platform, the section on Relationship between the Party and Masses)

To begin with we must say that methodologically an undifferentiated assessment of the condition of all unions - or any existing economic-trade labour organization - in general, and adopting a single general position toward all these organizations is essentially contradictory with Marxism. The question of the non-party organization of the workers and taking a stand toward each specific working-class organization, is a definite and tactical question. It should be determined and adopted only after definite circumstances have been taken into consideration in each particular case (the living and working condition of the workers, their traditions for struggle, the policies and attitude of the bourgeoisie toward the workers' struggles, the degree of influence of communism among working class masses, etc.) Would it be possible for example to regard trade unions in Britain of a par with trade unions in Bolivia, or the trade unions in the United States with those in India, and consider them all a necessary condition for the dominance of imperialism (whether this assumption itself is viable or not is a different matter)? Obviously not. The condition of the working class in each of these countries, the circumstances of its life and struggle in each case, is different. The trade union movement has a different history, and therefore the weight, role, and function of the union of each of them. Even if we refuse to accept this fact analytically, the slightest familiarity with the history and activity of trade unions in countries such as Latin America and comparing them with the function of European unions would suffice to show the inaccuracy and baseness of some of the party's position toward the trade unions in general.

The first question in examining the view that "the unions are the absolutely necessary part of the domination of imperialism" therefore, would be which unions and where? So far as trade unions in dominated Asian, African, and Latin American areas are concerned, they must have been entirely deprived of vision to fail to see the fact that in many of these countries (such as Chile, Bolivia, South Africa, etc.) trade unions have on many occasions engaged in struggles against capitalism and the domination of imperialism, and are doing so now. Any use of the term "unions" in fact, and deviations of these unions are, is an entirely different matter).

The truth is that the absence of a labour aristocracy in dominated countries, the open,



violent, and immediate opposition of the government to any strike or protest action of the workers, the close, and often obvious, relation between economic and political matters in many of these countries, are all factors which prepare the ground for revolutionary tendencies in the workers' movement, and leave little manoeuvring space for reformism or compromise.

In other words "the totalitarian domination of imperialism" over these countries has created the objective ground for the development of the workers and the workers' movement. This radicalism is directly reflected in the policies and practices wherever the workers have succeeded in forming their mass organizations. This is exactly the reason why in most of these countries "the totalitarian domination of imperialism" which, according to PCInt should first and foremost have turned the unions into a necessary part of their domination - is absolutely incompatible and contradictory with the very existence of mass workers' organizations, the unions or others. Not only do bourgeois-imperialist dictatorships in these countries have no room for "the necessary part of their domination", not only do they not seek to create or support the trade unions, or even to adopt an impartial policy toward the existing unions and the unionist movement, but they use all their force to thump down any mass workers' organization. The views of PCInt on trade unions in a large part of the world is without foundation and is therefore wrong.

What is the condition of unions and the unionist movement in metropolitan countries and specifically European countries (which appear to have been the basis for the PCInt's general assessment and stand) and what characteristics do they possess?

On the one hand the struggle for economic and trade demands constitutes an important aspect of the workers' movement in these countries, and the unions play a decisive role in the workers' movement as a suitable receptacle and organization to conduct these struggles. In these pioneering industrial countries of the world the history of the workers' movement and the unionist movement are intertwined. A very large proportion of the workers have for a long time been organized in their nationwide trade unions, and unification, organizationality, and unionist traditions and ways of struggle have turned into an aspect of the culture and overall understanding of the workers' movement.

On the other hand, compromising and anti-proletarian policies dominating the unions, their bureaucratic structure and the opportunism and compromise of the leaders of the unionist movement constitutes the other aspect of the European trade unionist movement. It is a fact that the existing unions in the channel through which bourgeois-reformist and opportunistic policies are injected into the workers' movement in Europe - a fact issuing from the existence of the labour aristocracy in these

countries and its sway over the unions.

Without recognizing and taking into consideration these two contradictory aspects of the role and place of the unions in the European workers' movement - their mass influence and all-embracing organizational character against the bourgeois-reformist leadership and policies dominating them - it would not be possible to adopt a correct and principled stand toward them. The PCInt simply displays its inability at getting the point when it says that "the unions are an absolutely necessary part of the domination of imperialism." European trade unions have historically come into existence as the necessary organization for the economic struggle of the workers, and their reason for existence in present day conditions also is no different. The economic struggle of the workers and their need to conduct this struggle in an organized way is as much a reality as the compromise and betrayal of the unionist leaders. The reason behind the existence, survival, and mass influence of the unions is that they provide the only existing answer to the necessity of the actual organized struggle of the workers. This means that their leadership follow bourgeois policies and objectives. Therefore, no matter what the degree of the compromise and betrayal of the unionist leaders, the unions can not be considered "the absolutely necessary part of the domination of imperialism."

What is absolutely necessary for the domination of the bourgeoisie (in the pre-imperialist era as well as now) is that it intensify the working class struggle in whatever way possible, and in this confrontation, for which the miners' movement in Britain provided the latest and most notable example, to make use of all its means, from the police, the courts, the mass media, down to the equivocations and deviations of the working-class movement. The only peculiarity of "the present stage of the totalitarian domination of imperialism" lies in that the imperialist bourgeoisie in the metropolitan countries, relying on the labour aristocracy, has found it possible to systematically and effectively spread compromise and opportunism in the unionist movement.

It has increasingly taken advantage of this factor (as usual, along with the police, courts, etc.) to contain the economic struggle of the workers and their unions which play a decisive part in these struggles. By so doing it has prevented a criticism of the entire existing system by the workers and the promotion of their struggle to the level of a general political struggle. But even under these circumstances it would no doubt have been more favourable to the bourgeoisie not to have confronted organized and united workers in the unions.

It would have preferred to have the workers deprived of the existing unions in their economic struggles! But the bourgeoisie is already making efforts to promote divisions and splits among the trade unions as one of

the outcomes of its victory over the miners.

Anyone who should fail to grasp the above points has proved to have no clear understanding either of the struggle between the bourgeoisie and the workers in its real and living form, or of Marxism as the science of revolutionary practice and intervention in this struggle. We are sorry to say that the PCInt is one of these. The PCInt is able to observe "the totalitarian domination of imperialism" and "bourgeois policies" dominating the unions, but is entirely incapable of making a real connection between these two facts. There is no room in its analysis for "labour aristocracy, its function and operation in the unionist movement." Rather, the "aims of the unions" are miraculously tied in with the "counter-revolutionary requirements and demands" of the bourgeoisie, and the unions themselves turn into the "necessary part of the domination of imperialism." As though imperialism were a conjuror whose incantatory spell sways over all!

What the PCInt does not see, however, is the actual, day-to-day struggle of the workers in Europe, the mass influence of the unions, and their practical role on the one hand, and the need of the bourgeoisie to counter these struggles on the other. This neglect is the very basis of its deviation in its attitude toward the unions.

The incorrect assessment and analysis of the PCInt of the unions brings it to a fatalistic stand. The first and foremost consequence "the perspective that in future such organizations could have a proletarian function" and anticipates that "in future, when the working class is mobilized under the leadership of its class party to attack the state head-on, today's unions will be found marching arm in arm with the state." (Ibid) This is a deviation from the position that "in any case the Party [PCInt], closely following the historical viewpoint of the Italian Left, is neither for the constitution of new trade unions, nor do we advocate that workers recuperate the existing unions. The slogan 'Abandon the unions' will only be launched when a general crisis of the capitalist social structure has generated the mass revolutionary movement." (Ibid)

To sum up: even though the PCInt believes in boycotting the unions from this very day it would propagandize it in the future! All that the PCInt knows today is what it would not do; and not only do the existing unions would not advocate the recuperation of the existing unions. If the unions are supposed to march arm in arm with the state tomorrow, one might as well stay away from them today to save "the historical prestige of the Italian left." The see-saw position of the PCInt between the present and the future stems from this salutory "forethought". What we have to say to criticize this stand is:

1- Leave taking positions about the future to the people of the future themselves! The workers

who have mobilized to "attack the state head-on" will settle accounts with the treacherous unions of the future too. The present-day problem of the masses of the workers is that opportunism dominates the only existing form of organization they have for conducting their economic struggles, and that they are deprived of any other alternative. By rejecting to improve the existing unions and refusing to create their alternative, you not only refuse to take any action toward solving the problem, you consolidate it.

2- As to what will be the condition of the unions in the future, it would depend entirely on how we treat them as of today. If we settle on the alternative of not constituting, improving, and even of not boycotting the unions, the forecast of PCInt about the future of the unions would no doubt come true. Passivism is one of the ways of ensuring fatalistic forecasts.

3- Refusing to support the struggle to change the condition of the unions, and evading the formation of new ones means accepting and approving of the present conditions. The passive stand of the future has no other outcome than losing the compromising and opportunistic policies of the union leaders and abandoning the fate of the economic struggles of the workers in their hands.

4- PCInt can take pride in "closely following the historical viewpoint of the Italian left" in its lack of stand. This pride however will not solve the problem of the unions, but the workers who are in no position to give up their demands and the struggle for those demands out of respect for the historical traditions of the Italian left. Whatever the analysis of the PCInt and of the Italian left of the unions, their past and their future may be, it should provide an answer to the question of what its plans are for the organization and leadership of the economic struggle of the working class, and what specific guidelines and plans of action it would set before the workers. Like its predecessors, the PCInt has no answers. Finally, on the "future stand" of the PCInt, i.e., the boycotting of the unions we must state that:

5- The major problematic of the communist movement in the attitude toward the workers' movement and the current struggles of the workers in Europe is finding a way to overcome the compromising and opportunistic policies of the existing unions. The way to deal with this problematic is to answer to the practical question of how to constantly and persistently carry within the ranks of the workers the proletarian alternative of the practice and the policies of the unions, both in their general points and in dealing with each specific strike and struggle. This should be carried out down to the level of political work, and specifically to the political work. The political deviations and organizational weaknesses and limitations in the existing

BESOOY-E-SOVSALISM, No.2, Dec.85 - the theoretical organ of the CPI (in Farsi):

- State in revolutionary periods. Mansoor Hekmat
- Critique of the Political Platform of the International Communist Party. Hamid Taghvae
- Critique of the Organisation of Communist Unity: the anatomy of left-liberalism in Iran (part 2). Mansoor Hekmat
- Review of the British miners' strike. Farhad Besharat
- The method of Fedaiien (Minority) in ideological struggle. Iraj Azarin

#### Review:

#### STATE IN REVOLUTIONARY PERIODS

M. Hekmat

The article is an attempt to offer a dynamic understanding of the category of state, as opposed to its clichéd, static and mechanical definitions. Starting from the general Marxist definition of the state, the article particularly refers to the characteristics of the state in "revolutionary periods".

The article makes a distinction between the state in non-crisis periods, which is based on established laws and "legal" institutions, etc., and the state in revolutionary periods, which relies on above-legal and particular institutions and relations. It also deals with the fact that a state in such periods has the task of building up the instruments of the rule of the regular state.

This use of the Marxist methodology in analysing the phenomenon of the state, enables the writer to specifically consider the following questions:

- a) The question of the revolutionary state in the programme of the CPI.
- b) The attitude towards the Islamic Republic, its emergence and its development.
- c) The state in the proletarian revolution and the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Based on the above methodology, the writer defines two phases for the proletarian dictatorship:

- a) The proletarian dictatorship in the revolutionary period (in the specific sense of the term) - a time in which the proletarian power must be immediately and indisputably established and the bourgeoisie's resistance suppressed;
- b) The proletarian dictatorship in the period of its political stability; when it is no longer functioning in a "provisional" way, when the direct organisation of the whole working class as the ruling class and the establishment of proletarian democracy in the fullest possible way is actually realized, and the task of the transformation of the economic foundations of the society can be put on the agenda.

Having defined the two phases, the writer shows how the distinction existed in Lenin's works (though not as clearly stated), and points out the legitimacy of the function of the Bolshevik state in its first phase during 1917-1922. The writer believes that economic functioning has its specific meaning in each phase of the proletarian dictatorship. In the first phase economic policies and practices are important, not from the point of view of their economic content, but because of their significance as to the consolidation of the proletarian state. In other words, the political aspect of the economic steps is essentially in mind. In the second phase, a socialist economic programme, corresponding to the economy of the proletarian dictatorship, is on the agenda.

The article concludes by stating that the question of the state in revolutionary periods is a small part of a broad discussion which must be considered in order to avoid the previous defeats, and that the discussion here presented is merely an attempt to introduce this important theoretical question.

The English translation of the article will be published in the near future.



Tom p.17

unions (such as the bureaucratic structure, inability in organizing the unemployed, etc.) should be criticized and exposed. The vanguards of the workers' movement must be well equipped to overcome these deviations and weaknesses. Clearly conducting these tasks would, in turn, be impossible without having specific tactics, slogans, and practical programmes for the economic and welfare struggle of the workers and the struggle to adopt them in practice. So long as these policies and the method of practice - which, as we showed in the discussion on the tasks of the party is entirely absent from the thinking system of the PCInt - have not been put on the agenda of the communists and the vanguards of the workers' movement, and carried out to a certain extent, boycotting the unions would in practice mean boycotting the economic struggle of the workers.

Hamid Taghvae

To be continued



LETTERS!

Dear B.M. Comrades

Your article in B.M. 3, "Revolutionary Crisis in South Africa", suffers from a methodological failure. Settling itself the task of offering an analytical statement of the South African question from the standpoint of the CPI, the article puts forth a solution to the problem by suggesting that the South African working class make its ranks distinct and independent from all bourgeois and petty bourgeois currents and tendencies." This solution, however, is not borne out in the development of the reasoning in the article itself. For the article fails to abstract from the information given on apartheid on the one hand, and the exploitation of the South African workers on the other, to arrive at the causality which makes the one necessary for the other. What is lacking, basically, is a Marxist, dialectic, oriented interpretation of apartheid, as distinct from a liberal-humanist one. The solution, addressing South African workers, becomes an arbitrary one, as it is not derived from the pile of the facts presented. Whether strengthening, this fault weakens the thrust of the argument and the legitimacy of the solution.

If this makes the article politically flimsy, the absence of an underlying analysis for selection of facts themselves is random, haphazard, and inadequate. Substantial issues of the South African situation, the importance of South Africa to western economy, which necessitated such rigid regimentation of labour-power at a time when - as is pointed out in the article - liberation movements in other African countries made a certain degree of liberalization unavoidable, and political power changed hands from the white to the black bourgeoisie, are not resolved. Issues such as the political and economic significance of the

coloureds and Indians, the class content of ANC, the place of gold in South African economy, conditions in the Bantustans, and most important of all, the interest of certain sectors of western capital in doing away with apartheid are not touched upon.

The hard-gained lessons of the Iranian revolution belong to the working class of all countries and to communists throughout the world. To apply them without paying proper attention to the specificity of individual situations is to treat them lightly, to reduce their effectiveness and their significance.

Zohreh Kuyan

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#### BM REPLIES:

Dear Comrade,

We agree that the article "Revolutionary Crisis in South Africa" (a translation of an article originally published in Komunist the central organ of the Party) could have been a more comprehensive article, also dealing with the points that you mention. However this is not necessarily the aim pursued by every political article. This article too had not defined for itself the task of offering an analytical treatment of the South African question..." Questions such as the significance of South Africa in the Western economy, the political-economic

significance of the coloureds and Indians, the place of gold in South African economy, etc., are important questions in their own right and can correctly be the subject of separate articles on South Africa. But as we said, the above-mentioned article had not defined such a task for itself. Also we do not think it is a "methodological failure" for the article that it does not present a theoretical reasoning before stating that the South African proletariat must make its ranks distinct and independent from all bourgeois and petty-bourgeois currents and tendencies". Because this is a basic Marxist tenet, and need not necessarily be proven each time we write a political article. Nevertheless we agree that a more comprehensive and analytical approach to the South African question and other important international issues is necessary and shall try to publish such articles either in the *Bolshevik Message* or other Party publications.

BM.

#### REPLY TO THE RPP LETTER

Unfortunately, the third and final part of the reply to the letter by the comrades of the "Revolutionary Proletarian Platform" (India) could not be published in this issue of the BM. This will be published in the next issue.

COMMUNIST PARTY OF IRAN is the political and nationwide organisation of the working class in Iran. The ideology of the Communist Party of Iran is Marxism-Leninism. The Party of Iran is the leading organisation and leadership of all aspects of the struggle of the Iranian working class against the bourgeoisie, and on the basis of its programme is fighting for the seizure of political power by the working class, the destruction of the capitalist system, the establishment of socialism and marching towards communism.

Communist Party of Iran believes in proletarian internationalism and considers its task solidarity with the struggles of the world working class, struggle for the world unity of the working class, and endeavour for building a new Communist International.

The first article of the "Constitution of the CPI"



## In memory of the fallen comrades

COMRADE BASHI SHOKRI (BAYAN)



"Bayan"'s letter to "The Voice of the Iranian Revolution," written some time before she lost her life in Baneh in a battle with the KDP forces on 12th March, 1985, reads:

"I was forced since early childhood to work. Being born a girl I was prevented from learning to read and write, so like the other women in the village I was put to work in the house and outside as a shepherd. The work in the day-time was so tough that I did not know how my nights passed. At home there was no freedom whatsoever. At the beginning when they restricted me, I blamed my father and brothers. But Komala Peshmargas who passed through the village from time to time made me see how the women's rights are treated on under capitalism....

Bayan learnt to read and write after she joined Komala. This did not come about easily. She got to know about Komala and its ideals for working men and women through Komala agitators who visited the village. As time passed she turned into a propagandist of Komala's ideas and policies among the toiling youngsters in the village. The reactionaries put pressure on her parents to marry her off to quiet her down. She refused to give in, and finally, in the

*Communists do not shroud the memory of their fallen comrades in a halo of superstitious and religious sanctity, because self-sacrifice for the cause of emancipation is the precondition for the victory of a class whose youngsters, elderlys, and millions of men and women die and come to life in factories, mines and farms and in the whole of the barbarity which the bourgeoisie has named the whole.*

*The memory of fallen communists are dear and unforgettable, since they have fought ceaselessly and to the last breath for a cause which is itself dear and sacred: the cause of emancipation of the working class and the whole humanity from the capitalist system of exploitation and oppression and the foundation of a new society worthy of free human beings.*

*If in their daily lives, communists are the teachers of workers in the cause of the emancipating communist revolution, those communists who heroically welcome death, are the dearest of all teachers. Because they so clearly prove the impotence and weakness of the bourgeoisie and the futility of its apparatus of violence and suppression against the firm resolution of revolutionary workers. Long live the memory of those who lost their lives in the path of socialism!*

winter of '84, left her village and her family in the company of a unit of Komala Peshmargas. The reactionaries in the village, headed by the village Mullah, followed the Peshmargas to the next village and demanded the return of "Bashi" (Bayan's original name). A public meeting was called by the Peshmargas, attended by the people, members of the village council and Comrade Bayan herself. Here she courageously defended her decision to take part in the revolutionary struggle, join the ranks of Komala, and not to turn back.

Having completed the training period towards the end of winter, comrade Bayan was officially accepted into the ranks of Komala Peshmargas. She learnt to read and write while serving in the military division to which she was sent, managing, in a very short time, to write letters, and to read political literature with help from her comrades.

Comrade Bayan carried out her responsibilities with a strong sense of responsibility. She could easily get close to the Kurdish toilers, and the women in particular, and was in correspondence with many of them.

She took part in several military actions, including the battle against the KDP forces in Daman on 26th January 1985. She fell a month and a half later in confronting the KDP offensive in the Baneh area.

The short, simple myth of Bayan inspired Shirko Bikas, one of the best known poets from the Iraqi Kurdistan to turn her life and death into a poem which while written under the influence of the poet's staunch nationalist sentiments, is one of the most moving pieces of contemporary Kurdish literature.

Comrade Bayan was 17 when she died.

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## Party publications



"BESOQY-E-SOSYALISM (Towards Socialism) is the theoretical organ of the Communist Party of Iran and is published in Farsi. Its 2nd issue appeared recently:

**Besoqy-e-Sosyalism No.2, 2nd Series, December 1985**

- ▲ The state in revolutionary periods. **Mansoor Hekmat**
- ▲ Critique of the Political Platform of the Internationalist Communist Party ("Battaglia Comunista"). **Hamid Taghvaei**
- ▲ Critique of the Organisation of Communist Unity: the anatomy of left liberalism (part 2). **Mansoor Hekmat**
- ▲ Review of the British Miners' strike. **Farhad Besharat**
- ▲ The method of Fedaiien (Minority) in ideological struggle. **Iraj Azarin**
- ▲ On productive and unproductive labour (a translation of Marx)

"KOMONIST" is the Central organ of the CPI published in Farsi. Its 23rd issue appeared recently:

**Komonist No.23, November 1985**

- ▲ Is Peace Possible in Kurdistan? **Abdollah Muhtadi**
- ▲ State or Private Capital? **Khosro Davar**
- ▲ The Spread of Communism in Kurdistan Is an Undeniable Fact, Interview with comrade **Ebrahim Alizadeh**
- ▲ Organization of Communist Unity and the Civil War in Kurdistan: Where Did Left Liberalism Stand? **Mansoor Hekmat**

▲ The Strike of Abadan Oil Refinery Workers (Its Seventh Anniversary). **Reza Moghadam**

"PISHRO" (in Farsi) is the organ of the Kurdistan Organisation of the CPI-Komala- and is published monthly. Its 10th issue appeared recently:

**Pishro No.10, October 1985**

- ▲ On the (Military) Offensive of the KDP on other Political Groups.
- ▲ Economic Bankruptcy of the Islamic Republic and Efforts to Save the Regime (broadcast from "The Radio Voice of the CPI")
- ▲ Summary of the Military Activity of the Komala Peshmarga Force in the First Half of the year. **Ahmad Fatemi and Bijan Kaviani**
- ▲ KDP and the Denial of Class Struggle in Kurdistan. **Farah Sheikholeslami**
- ▲ The Battle of Neshkash
- ▲ Aksaryat and the Komala-KDP War
- ▲ A Report from Komala's Revolutionary Courts

**Pishro No.17 Sep./Oct. 1985**

- ▲ Rah-e-Kargar, Face of a Spokesman of the Bourgeoisie: **Iraj Azarin**
- ▲ What does the Formation of the Communist Party of Iran Depend on? **Mansoor Hekmat-Habib Farzad**
- ▲ Fedaiien (Minority): Defender of the Kurdish people's Movement or the propagandist of Passivism and Defeatism? **Osar Ilkhanizadeh**
- ▲ Methods and Principles of Communist Leadership.

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## News from Iran

### CATERPILLAR WORKERS WIN THEIR DEMANDS AFTER 45 DAYS OF STRUGGLE

The Caterpillar factory in Tehran is an affiliate of the Ministry of Commerce and employs about 1000 workers (700 manual workers). It repairs and services vehicles, tractors and bulldozers, etc., for the regime.

In October 1985, the management announced a set of new changes. These included the changing of the name of the factory (which would have discounted the workers' work record, treating them as new-comers), sending the workers for repairs on site, without paying them any extra wages, work on all Thursdays, and the transferring of some of the workers to another factory.

The workers protested against these decisions, and in their general assembly questioned the management and called for its resignation. The management was forced to leave the factory and the workers imprisoned an official from the Ministry of Commerce for 48 hours, on charges of spying on them. The arrival of the Pasdars (armed Islamic guards) did not deter the workers, and the Pasdars soon withdrew from the scene.

The workers continued their protest and took over the running of the factory. The protest lasted for about 45 days and the following developments took place over this period:

-on 28th Oct. the workers' wages were paid;  
-a workers' fund was set up by the workers, which collected about 180,000 Tomans (\$3600) at its early stages;

-workers prevented the removal of the official documents. But later on during the protest the managers used armed guards to break into the factory during the night, while the workers were away, and removed the office books and documents; -by the decision of the majority of the workers, all leaves were cancelled (except in emergencies) to create the greatest solidarity amongst the workers;

-at the early stages of the protest, 9 workers were arrested and taken to Evin prison, but were released after 48 hours;

-under the pressure of events, a worker committed suicide. The incident added to the anger of the workers, and they held the management responsible. The news of this incident was reported in the daily papers;

-the factory's Islamic Society which at first was pretending to be neutral began supporting the management. The workers reacted by beating them up in the factory prayer hall.

With the failure of the management's attempts to defeat the struggle, the case was taken into an arbitration court. There the workers' defence was such that the court was forced to rule in their favour. On 11th December the court announced the acceptance of all the workers' demands. Later the workers also reinstated the factory accountant and treasurer and some of the others whom the management had earlier dis-

missed.

The victory, which came about after 45 days of united and resolute struggle, boosted the workers' fighting morale. Also the workers' fund rose to about 300,000 Tomans (\$6000).

### WORKERS SET UP FUNDS IN TEHRAN'S CEMENT FACTORY

The workers in Tehran Cement factory have set up Workers' Funds in most sections of the factory (such as electricity, mechanics, mining and the technical sections). The Funds have definite aims, rules and meetings. Their purpose is generally to meet the urgent needs of the workers. They began taking shape from about two years ago and now function in a planned and regular way. The executives of the Workers' Funds are elected once every two years from among the workers and in their general assemblies. The extension of these funds has increased the cooperation and unity among the workers and enjoys much sympathy among them. The factory management and Islamic Society have constantly tried to destroy the Funds but have not succeeded. The last elections for the Funds were successfully held in the workers' general meeting on December 1, 85.

### STRIKE BY ABRAR PRINTWORKERS

About 50 workers took in this printworks in Tehran which produces the state daily newspaper Abrar. In mid November the workers began a protest over the following demands: 1) The payment of the extra wages which had not been paid over several years; 2) The payment of several months' overdue wages for overtime work; 3) The payment by the employers of the insurance contribution to the Social Insurance Organisation (The employers had not been paying this, so the insurance institution had refused to renew the workers' insurance cards) 4) The provision of work uniform and shoes; 5) The serving of a warm meal each day... and some other demands.

On Tuesday November 19 the majority of the workers put forward these demands and

asked to see the manager. A man by the name of Ganjez took to the workers' assembly and shouted abuse and threats at them. The workers then stopped work and began a strike action. During the first two days of the strike the newspaper was published only 8 pages. The workers made a protest to the Ministry of Justice over the issue. In the first day of the strike, large numbers of pasdars (the regime's armed Islamic guards) arrived at the printworks but no confrontation or arrests took place. After two days, the management ordered the expulsion of 10 workers. But the workers refused to accept expulsion and along with some other workers once again made a protest to the Justice Ministry. We do not yet have the news of the outcome of the strike.

### ELECTRICITY WORKERS PROTEST OVER SHIFT CHANGES

Following a decision by the management of the electricity generating board (Tavaneer) about changes in the shifts, the workers and employees started a series of protests, objecting to the shift changes. According to the old shifts, the workers worked for two 12-hour periods and then had two days off. According to the new shifts, they would have to work for three 8-hour shifts without any days off.

On November 22, the workers and employees of the Ray power station in Tehran decided in their general assembly that they should turn for work at 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. as before. The workers attending for work at 7 p.m. were prevented from entering the power station until 10 p.m. (the new time for the evening shift). The management continued preventing workers from entering the plant on the basis of the old shift hours. The workers' resistance against the shift changes was accompanied by go-slows inside the plant. On the 21st day, the workers held another general assembly. In this meeting they rejected the management's plea that they

should put off their action until a board reviewed the shift changes. They ridiculed the threats made by the factory's "Security" officials and did not allow the members of the Islamic Society to speak. In the end, by the proposal of one of the workers, they decided to give 16 days to the management to review its decision, and passed a resolution to the following effect:

- 1-the workers will work provisionally according to the new shift;
- 2-all decisions leading to the dismissal or suspension of the workers should be revoked;
- 3-the deadline for the management to review the case is set at December 11.
- 4-the workers' representatives for negotiation with the management must be cleared of any accusations.

The deadline given by the workers of the Ray power station was later extended by 10 days. Most of the other power stations in Tehran have taken similar actions, and the deadline agreed by all the workers was December 22. We do not have further news about the protests.

### NEWS FROM THE ARJ FACTORY

The workers of the Arj factory in Tehran (makers of heating and cooling systems) struck in November of 1985, on an incident in which a worker working with a press-machine lost three fingers. The workers called for the dismissal of the manager of the press section and the improvement of safety conditions in the work-place. The factory management retreated in the face of the workers' demand and promised to dismiss the manager of the section. The latest news we have from the factory is that the strike lasted for three days. A few days later 5 experienced workers (each having from 18 to 20 years work experience) were prevented from entering the factory. The workers of the press section made a complaint to the Ministry of Labour, but received no response. Thus the 5 workers, whom the

management had singled out as having been behind the strike, were expelled. Unfortunately, due to lack of unity among the workers no further action was taken by them. Later the management also reinstated the manager of the press section.

Also in the Arj factory: a government committee allocating 20 to 30% of the workers of each factory for conscription for the Iran-Iraq war was recently distributed in the plant. The committee states that even if the management cannot prevent the enlisting of workers to the war fronts. The exception is in cases where the management can prove to the Industry Minister that the absence of the worker may disrupt the production in the factory.

### PRESSURE ON WOMEN WORKERS

■ **Indamin Factory:** In early December, 5 women workers in this factory (producer of car suspension springs) were transferred to the Starlight factory. But the workers only worked there for one day and the next day returned to Indamin, saying that they were not prepared to work in another factory. The management prevented the workers entering the factory, by seizing their time cards. Later the women workers made a protest to the Ministry of Labour. The workers have not succeeded in their protest yet.

■ **Pars Electric:** The pressure on women workers in this plant has recently increased. During November a delegation from the regime visited the factory and stayed there for several days in order to inspect the implementation of the Islamic rules concerning hejab (the covering of the body by women). The delegation threatened a number of women with suspension and expulsion and imposed fines. At the end a circular was published to the effect that the use of ordinary scarves by women was forbidden and they would have to wear "high quality" Islamic scarf which covers part of the forehead, the neck and the shoulders.

## Down with the Islamic Republic regime!

## NEWS OF EXPULSIONS IN THE FACTORIES

■ **FIAT FACTORY:** 40 workers were recently expelled from the construction section of the factory. The workers were expelled individually to prevent them from organising mass action.

■ **PEPSI-COLA:** Some time ago the management announced that the 'cutting section' of the plant will not be needed any longer and would have to be closed. As a result, the 10 workers employed there were made redundant.

■ **Shiraz Petrochemical Compound:** About 600 construction workers have been sacked from this plant over the last few months.

■ **The Metal Industry plant** (an affiliate of the heavy industry Organisation): This plant is presently threatened by closure as a result of the regime's deepening economic crisis. The management has already decided to expel a number of experienced workers. A worker with 17 years of experience was told to resign or face a forged case against him. 5 workers have so far been sacked.

■ **Azmayesh Factory:** On December 22, 23 and 24, 38 employees (including workers, clerks and security workers) were expelled from this factory. The factory produces household goods, coolers, heaters, boilers, etc. The workers are saying that the number of the dismissals may rise to as many as 600 to 900. The total number of the workers in the factory is 1500.

■ On December 1, all 80 contract janitors of the Saghez rural schools (in Kurdistan) were sacked.

## SHORT NEWS FROM FACTORIES

■ The government's industry department has sent a communique to all of Iran's factories to the effect that all over-time work must be abolished. Most factories are now facing shortage of raw material, and it has been reported that the import of 12

main manufacturing items needed by the factories has been stopped.

■ It has been reported that the night-shift work in the Chit-ran textile factory in Tehran is to be abolished. The workers in this shift (about 700) are either to be sacked or integrated into the morning shift.

■ 40% of the workers in the Iran-Cylinder factory may be sent to the war-fronts; although the government's own official communique on the conscription of workers called for 10% of the workers from this factory to enlist. The workers are being sent to the fronts on the promises of being paid normal wages and receiving a 5-day paid holiday, full allowances and a two-grade promotion.

■ During October three militant workers in the Bandar Abbas Fisheries (in the main port city of Bandar Abbas in the South) were arrested for having taken part in the struggle for workers' basic demands. One of those arrested was sentenced to one year imprisonment, and the other two to six months each.

■ The Lent-Tormoz factory in Tehran (manufacturer of car brakes) is facing shortage of raw material. Like many other factories in Iran. There has been a sharp reduction in the import of raw material from West Germany. As a result, the production has fallen and so far 10 contract-workers in the construction section have been sacked. Over-time work has been almost abolished and the factory is presently working on a 5-day week basis.

■ Production in the Zamyad factory (manufacturer of trucks and vans) has fallen sharply and the factory is facing near-stand still. At times the factory has been closed for several consecutive days.

■ **Zimber Industries:** In early November elections were held in this factory to choose the members of a delegation for job

classification. At the beginning, the management and the Islamic Society tried to push in two of their agents as representatives of the workers. But the workers thwarted their plot and elected two of their genuine representatives.

■ **Pars Electric:** During November this factory was witness to another show of medieval savagery by the regime's agents. The factory's old workers and employees were condemned to 'Islamic Had' (punishment by the lash) on charges of being addicts. They each received 75 lashes in the work-place in front of some of the workers. After the execution of the order, the workers carried away the bleeding bodies of their comrades for treatment, while shouting abuse at the Pasdars. The spread of the news in the factory created intense anger and hatred among the workers.

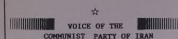
■ On 24 November the lorry-drivers in the city of Qazvin (North West Iran) struck for a wage rise. The strike lasted for four days, with the workers winning their demand.

## TEACHERS AND PUPILS PROTEST OVER THE SHOOTING OF A SCHOOL GIRL

On November 30 a patrol unit of the Pasdars, in pursuit of a moped rider, shot and killed a passing school girl in the Tohid square in Tehran. The Pasdars tried to wipe out the blood and eliminate all clues. The people and a local policeman in the scene protested against the Pasdars. The policeman pulled out his gun and threatened the Pasdars that if they did not leave the area he would first kill them and then himself. The Pasdar who found themselves isolated, left the area. The case was later taken up for investigation by the local police station.

Following this incident the staff and pupils of the Ershad highschool, in which the deceased girl was a pupil, mourned her death by wearing black and refer-

## FROM THE PARTY RADIOS



## SOVIET GOVERNMENT TURNS TO STEKHANOVISM

Soviet Television has recently shown a film in which homage is paid to Alex Stekhanov, the miner whose record in producing coal was used as an excuse in creating the movement to accelerate production in the thirties in the Soviet Union. The film showed a march by a number of workers to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Stekhanovist movement. In the film, shown as the prime part of the news, the television newsmen, praising Stekhanovist methods, emphasized that "we are to study such methods"! What is known as Stekhanovism is basically intensifying and promoting competition among the masses of the workers. The method is characterized by practically eliminating the official and equal level of wages, the rate

of wages being tied in with competition among the workers to deliver more work, and the system for the payment of wages turning into wage labour or varieties of piece-work. Thus, by giving rise to varieties of individual competition to acquire wages, this method leaves damaging effects on the struggle and the living conditions of the masses of workers.

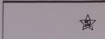
The new attention paid to the reactionary Stekhanovist movement by Soviet leaders is part of their effort in search of methods to intensify the exploitation of the workers, to "improve the economic conditions of the Soviet Union". (Broadcast from the Radio Voice of the CPI, November 10, 1985)

sing to hold classes. They said they would continue their action until the matter was cleared. This has become a topic for discussion in many schools.

## NEW FORMS OF TORTURES IN PRISONS

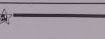
The Islamic Republic has recently put into practice new torture devices called "the grave" and "the cage" for political prisoners. These are in addition to the previous forms of intolerable torture such as flogging by cable wire, steelyard (hanging weights on the prisoners), suspension, boxing and kicking, which are carried out under the Islamic punishment of 'Ta'zir' (atonement). The first device consists of an open bed, boarded on all sides, with a lid on the

TO BE PUBLISHED SOON



COMMUNISTS and the PEASANT MOVEMENT of the ISRAELI SOLUTION of the AGRARIAN QUESTION IN IRAN

COMMUNIST PARTY OF IRAN



PRINCIPLES et STATUTS DE TERREUIL

DES CELLULES DE PARTI

Derniere MISE

OCTOBRE 1985

THE PRINCIPLES and STYLE OF WORK OF PARTY CELLS - IN FRENCH -



PROGRAMM DER KOMALA FÜR DIE AUTONOMIE NERDISTANS

Autonomie der Provinz Kurdistan

THE PROGRAMME OF KOMALA FOR THE AUTONOMY OF KURDISTAN

- IN GERMAN -

## NOTE

The acknowledgment of the contributions received will be continued from the next issue of the BM.



For a Revolutionary Democratic Republic !

From p.28

were inflicted on the regime's forces.

Δ In the afternoon of 14th Jan., several units of Komala Peshmargas entered the city of Marivan and brought certain Sections of the town under control. During the operation, two vehicles carrying Pasdars were ambushed and a number of the guards were killed.

Δ On the night of 31st Jan., Komala Peshmargas entered the city of Divandareh and set ambush on the regime's forces. A number of military vehicles and a base outside the town were attacked. The regime's forces suffered heavy casualties in these operations.

#### REGIME'S ATROCITIES AGAINST THE TOILERS—STRUGGLE BY THE MASSES

Δ On 13th Dec. the regime's forces, while controlling a road in the Sardasht area, seized hold of two passengers and executed them in front of the people. This latest crime has added to the people's hatred of the regime.

Δ On 15th Dec. the regime's forces entered a village in the Saghez area and arrested one of the residents. The people of the village protested against the action and tried to free the arrested person. The Pasdars then fired into the crowd injuring a woman toiler. The arrested youth finally escaped by the aid of the people.

Δ On 15th Dec. a large column of the regime's forces entered a village in the Divandareh area and arrested the wife of a revolutionary, torturing her to find about the whereabouts of her husband. They finally found the person they were looking for and executed him on site. The people of 6 villages in the region have held commemoration sessions in memory of the executed revolutionary and assembled in front of the regime's military centres in protest against the crime.

Δ On 22nd Dec. the regime's forces attacked a village in the Saghez area, beat up the residents and arrested 4 of them. The people of the village protested against the attack



and tried to free the arrested youths. But the 4 were taken to the Baneh prison.

Δ On 27th Dec. the people of a number of villages in the Marivan area held a gathering in front of one of the regime's military centres in protest against the mortar-shelling of their houses. Δ On 9th Jan. the regime's forces, based in a village in the Sarshay area, attacked the people's houses and inflicted damages on them. The people of the village jointly protested against the action and gathered in front of the base.

Δ Following the continuing wave of protests by the street-sellers in the city of Saghez against the pressures by the authorities, on 11th Jan. a large number of the unemployed assembled outside the Town Hall. To prevent the spread of the struggle, the town's mayor said that some plots of land in the vicinity of the town could be used by the sellers. The unemployed youths immediately set out to put up their stalls in the land. But on the same night the regime's bulldozers attacked the stalls and destroyed them.

#### CONFRONTATIONS WITH THE KDP

Δ In the evening of 6th Dec. a unit of Komala Peshmargas encountered the forces of the KDP (the Kurdistan Democratic Party) in an area near the town of Baneh, and a battle broke out between them. After a short confronta-

tion, the KDP forces retreated from the area. Our comrades were unhurt. We have no news of the KDP casualties.

Δ On 9th dec., a unit of Komala Peshmargas were involved in a confrontation with the KDP forces in a village in the Marivan area. In the course of a 2-hour battle, at least 3 KDP Peshmargas were killed or wounded, and the KDP forces were forced to leave the village. One of our comrades also lost his life.

Δ On 11th Dec. a unit of Komala Peshmargas confronted a group of the KDP forces in a village in the Marivan area. In the course of a short battle 2 KDP Peshmargas were unhurt. Our comrades were joint.

#### KDP PESHMARGAS JOIN KOMALA

During the two months of December and January, 12 more KDP Peshmargas deserted the ranks of this party and introduced themselves to the Komala Peshmargas.

#### RELEASE OF PRISONERS OF WAR

From 3rd December to 31st January, 26 prisoners of the Islamic regime's forces, captured in the battles in Kurdistan, were released from Komala's prisons. One of those released asked to join the ranks of Komala Peshmargas.

#### DESERTERS FROM THE REGIME'S FORCES

From 7th December to 2nd January, 9 soldiers in the

← regime's forces deserted barracks and volunteered to join the ranks of the Komala Peshmargas.

#### MORE REVOLUTIONARY WOMEN & MEN JOIN KOMALA

On 31st December another group of revolutionary women and men who had successfully completed the politico-military course of the Komala Peshmarga Force were armed in a special ceremony and joined the ranks of the CPI Peshmargas.

#### COMPULSORY CONSCRIPTION BY THE REGIME

The Islamic Republic has recently issued a communique that every villager in Kurdistan

must take up arms for 3 months as Basij (mobilization) forces. This is in continuation of the regime's counter-revolutionary attempts to arm the people to fight against the revolutionary movement in Kurdistan or be sent to the Iran-Iraq war fronts.

The regime has threatened the people with eviction if they refuse to comply. But the toilers have extensively refused to give in to this policy of the regime.

#### BOMBING OF KURDISTAN'S TOWNS BY IRAQI AIRPLANES

At 11 o'clock on 2nd January some districts of the town of Baneh were bombed by the Iraqi planes. A number of people were killed and injured in these bombings. According to the

Baneh Committee of Komala the people have evacuated the town and taken refuge in the nearby villages.

The city of Marivan, which was the target of a bomb attack in early January, was once again hit by the Iraqi war planes on 24th January. Many people died or were injured as a result of these bombings. The Marivan Committee of Komala, in a communique addressed to the people of Marivan, has expressed its condolences over the incident and called on the people to step up their struggle for the immediate ending of the war.

Also the city of Piranshahr has recently been shelled, resulting in a number of casualties.

★

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September 85

THE PROGRAMME OF THE CPI  
- IN SPANISH -



## In revolutionary Kurdistan

The following is the summary of the main news of struggles in Kurdistan during December 85 and January 86. More detailed news of the struggles in Kurdistan are regularly published as biweekly newsletters in Farsi, English and French by the Representation of the Kurdistan Organisation of the CPI-Komala-Abtoad. The news also appear in *Report*, the biweekly newsletter of the CPI-the Committee Abtoad, in English, French & German.

\* \* \*

### KOMALA PESHMARGAS CONFRONT THE REGIME'S FORCES

Δ On 2nd Dec. a unit of the Peshmargas of the Kurdistan Organisation of the Communist Party of Iran-Komala- who had entered a village near the town of Marivan for political discussions among the toilers, confronted a column of the Islamic Republic's armed forces advancing on the village. The offensive was repulsed and the regime's forces suffered some casualties.

Δ In the morning of 6th Dec. a Komala Peshmarga who was in a village near Marivan was attacked by large numbers of the regime's forces. He engaged in a 10-hour battle with the guards and finally managed to leave the village with the assistance of the toilers. During this incident

3 guards were killed and 2 were injured. The following day the regime's forces entered the village to harass the people and took their belongings, but the toilers drove them out of the village.

Δ On 7th Dec. the regime's forces attacked a village in the Marivan area where the Komala Peshmargas were stationed. After a heavy battle, our comrades broke through the encirclement of the enemy and left the village. In this battle, 3 guards were killed and several others were injured. The Pasdars later arrested two villagers, executing one and wounding the other.

Δ On 12th Dec. the regime's forces attacked a village near Baneh. Our comrades in the village repulsed their attack and regained control of the village heights. The enemy forces retreated, having suffered some casualties.

Δ In the afternoon of 15th Dec., several units of the Komala Peshmargas attacked a military base of the regime near the town of Baneh. A heavy battle raged for 2 hours. The regime's forces suffered heavy casualties and a large part of the base was destroyed. Unfortunately one of our Peshmarga comrades also lost his life.

Δ In the morning of 25th Dec. a large military base of the

Islamic regime near the town of Saghez was attacked and fully captured by the Komala Peshmargas. During this operation, 19 of the guards were arrested and the rest died in confrontations. Large quantities of guns and ammunition were also seized.

Δ On 25th Dec. several units of the Komala Peshmargas brought part of the Saghez-Marivan road under control. A passing military vehicle of the regime was ambushed and a number of the guards were killed. Some guns and ammunition were also seized.

Δ In the morning of 5th Jan. the government forces attacked a village near Baneh. The Komala Peshmargas present in the region confronted them and forced them to retreat. The reinforcements sent to the area were attacked and were forced to flee. The battle lasted for 5½ hours and some casualties were inflicted on the enemy.

Δ On 9th Jan. a garrison of the regime's forces near Baneh was attacked by the Komala Peshmargas. During this offensive a section of the garrison was destroyed and some casualties

See p.26



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