

The United States and the Islamic Republic are using a weapon of mass destruction against the workers of Iran



Lead Article:

New circumstances have arisen from the civil disturbance towards the repressive rule and inhumane policies in existence. Both national and international attention on the fundamental and class movement has increased. Perhaps the people's war with the government on the streets is not in the manner of the films and reports we witnessed in the days immediately following the elections, but it is the ash that with the slightest breeze will be a flame lit anew. Anger poured onto our streets with the excuse of election fraud, but it's enough to hear the talk on the street to realize that this isn't an atom bomb that may go off at any moment, but a bomb of mass anger the explosion of which becomes more and more imminent with each day. The issue that has caused such widespread discontent and despair is above all the dismal state of the people's of Iran's economic situation and welfare...[Continued on pg 18]

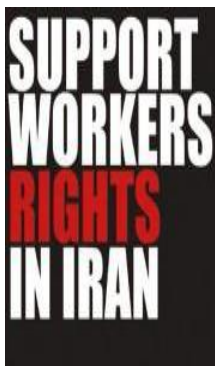
NEWS

- Afghan Children Not Registered In Schools
- *Bidari* Student Newsletter at Shiraz University is Banned
- Alborz Ceramics Factory Workers Block Road
- Jila Bani Yaghoub Wins International Press Freedom Award
- Iran: Student Activist on Trial
- 12 Million Smokers In Iran
- Iran's supreme leader 'against direct talks with US'
- Arrest of participants at reform group gathering
- Masoud Bastani Sentenced to Six-Year Jail Term
- Bakery workers on Strike in Sanandaj

>Interview with Amin Ghazaie



The reopening of universities, the current climate in society and the extensive protests we've seen were good enough reasons ...
[Continued on pg8]



>Workers Take Stand Against Charges Brought Against Union Members

Tehran Bus Workers' Union has issued a statement condemning the charges by which labourers of Haft Tappeh have been sentenced to prison...
[Continued on pg 2]



>The University: Green Politics and Deep Politics?

The university has never been a warm and comfy house of learning. At least not in Iran.
[Continued on pg 12]



>Why the Islamic Republic is Not Our Slogan

Some claim that the 40 million participants in the election were those who believe that reforming the Islamic Republic is possible and therefore ...
[Continued on pg 3]



>Shirin Ebadi and Defending the Rule of Islam

Shirin Ebadi in a recent speech at the Naropa University of Colorado announced that the only way for Iran and other Islamic countries to be relieved of ...
[Continued on pg 5]



>UN inspectors arrive in Iran to visit secret nuclear plant

United Nations inspectors visited Iran's most recently revealed nuclear plant yesterday in an attempt to determine if it is part of a ...
[Continued on pg 6]

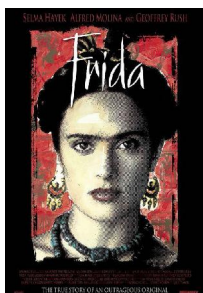
Pg 4



The New Hostage Crisis

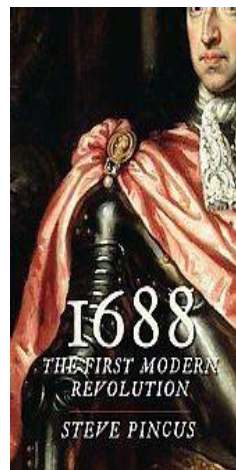
Pg 14

- Shahin Najafi
- FRIDA
- Top 10 Books(2009)



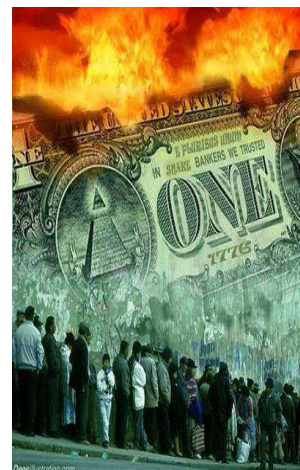
ART MAGNET Pg 15,16

1688: The First Modern Revolution
A new history of the Glorious Revolution of 1688 labours too hard to prove that it was every bit as bloody as France in 1789 or Russia in 1917.



Pg 16,21,25

The Crisis of Capitalism and the tasks of the Marxists – Part One



Pg 22,23,24

Workers Take Stand Against Charges Brought Against Union Members

Tehran Bus Workers' Union has issued a statement condemning the charges by which labourers of Haft Tappeh have been sentenced to prison, and requested their immediate release. The statement by Tehran Bus Workers' Union explains that following the demonstration of labour workers of the Haft Tappeh Sugarcane Company, in 2007 for overdue wages - their basic work rights - some were detained and after repeated interrogation were released on bail with the organization of an independent support group. At the first court hearing, the court sentenced these individuals to one year of imprisonment, with a six month suspended jail term. The labour activists had asked the court to revise this decision, only to be faced with the same verdict. The labour activists of Haft Tappeh Sugarcane Company were issued these verdicts, while their wages were overdue by three months, while they acquired minimal overtime hours and were deprived of their basic job rights and benefits.

During the past years, the labour movement of Iran has paid a hefty price to improve the working conditions of its members. Many of the workers have been unable to make their monthly rent payments and some have lived below the poverty line, having to spend long periods of time behind bars just to get their very fundamental rights as a worker. The actions of labour activists are encountered with daily threats, limitations, unemployment and imprisonment. However, this has never prevented them from voicing their concern. Thus, we are sure it will not quash the labour activists of the Haft Tappeh's union from protesting for their rights now and the Tehran Bus Worker's Union will not spare any endeavors to attain and assure these labour movement representatives' freedoms and rights.

On top of condemning the court verdict they demand the immediate dismissal of all detained workers including, Ibrahim Madadi, Mansour Isalou, Farzad Kamangar, and Mehdi Farahi-Shandiz. In addition, they stipulate the abrogation of court ap-

pearances of labour activists held in custody on International Labour Day.

Members of the board of directors of labour workers of Haft Tappeh Sugarcane's Union are on the verge of getting fired and face possible incarceration. Based on recent reports on Haft Tappeh Sugarcane Company, the threats and pressure from the intelligence agency of Shoosh on the board of directors and labour activists of this association has increased. According to statements released by human right activists and democratic associations in Iran, four members of the



Board of Directors of Haft Tappeh union, Fereidoun Nikou-Fard, Jalil Ahmadi, Ramezan Alipour and Mohammad Heidari-Mehr were banned from entering the company's building. The security guards of Haft Tappeh Sugarcane Company administered by the city of Shoosh's intelligence agency, responsible for suppressing the workers from uprising, prohibited their entrance. The four have recently been sentenced to six months' imprisonment and a six month suspended penalty. Mr Heidari-Mehr has been condemned to four months' imprisonment and an eight month suspended penalty. Mr Ali Nejati, Head of the Board of Directors of Haft Tappeh Worker's Union, was fired from his job and banned from entering the premises some time ago. He has been deprived of his salary and job benefits for more than six months despite submitting a complaint concerning the illegal and inhumane dismissal from his

job. The office blames consecutive long absences by Mr Nejati, even though he was in the custody of the Intelligence Ministry.

Davoudi, who is head of the company's security, has doubled the number of security guards from 50 to 100. These guards occupy the communal areas of the company, reporting instantly any sightings of gatherings. Also, to avert potential strikes and protests against suppression and breach of basic labour rights, they have instated informants among the workers, creating mistrust, pessimism and an anomaly.

lous environment. Madadi, the president of the company, is largely responsible for supervising these crackdowns on the labour workers.

Reports also site the rage and frustration labour workers expressed following the arrests and prohibition of members of their board of directors. They have announced and warned future protests and strikes in the event of refusal to release these individuals, demanding the immediate and unconditional discharge of all workers in custody. In addition, they demand the return of Mr Nejati to his post and full back payment of his overdue salary. They have also requested an official public apology, in front of workers, from the president of the company to Mr Nejati and other members of the board of directors. Last but not least they demand the firing of Davoudi, Haft Tappeh Sugarcane Company's Head of Security.

As it stands, the workers have yet

to receive their salaries of the last two months. Furthermore their hours have been reduced, cut almost, creating enormous financial pressure.

Human rights and democracy activists in Iran condemn the heavy prison verdicts, dismissal and prevention of worker activist presence in their workplace and call the International Labor Organization (ILO) and International Union of Workers (IUW) to support the members of the Union workers of Haft Tappeh who are members of this organization.

Mourning Mothers Continue Their Protest, Lighting Candles in Laleh Park and Singing "Ey Iran..."

According to reports a large number of mourning mothers made their weekly protest on Saturday 24 October against the bloody repression, continued arrest of detainees and the issuing heavy verdicts against them, demanding the freedom of political prisoners and prosecution of the perpetrators of the bloody repression of the Iranian people.

The protest began at 5pm and many others joined the mourning mothers, families of killed protesters, women activists and students. Mourning mothers lit candles and moved towards the waterfront square of Laleh Park. They gathered around the waterfront and held a 1 minute silence in remembrance of those killed. They chanted Allah Akbar (God is great) for the freedom of all those held in the prisons of the dictator regime.

The group of 200 sang the anthem "Ey Iran" and protest song "Yare Dabestani". Security forces on motor bikes, plain clothes and uniformed police were at the scene carrying batons to intimidate the protestors. The protest continued until 6pm. Democracy and Human Rights Activists in Iran

By: Saeed Qaseminejad

Some claim that the 40 million participants in the election were those who believe that reforming the Islamic Republic is possible and therefore the chanting of slogans against the Islamic Republic is unacceptable. Not all those who participated in the elections believe that reforming of Islamic Republic is possible or believe that reform of the Islamic Republic means we shouldn't demand a different system. But before analyzing these two points it's essential to explain an obvious point. Most of those who participated in the elections do not believe in the regime and they are against it from the bottom of their hearts and want the Islamic regime to be overthrown. In the 2005 elections, a significant number of people did not

cal parties did the maths and knew that by participating in elections their situation may improve a little, and the re-election of Ahmadinejad would destroy and corrupt the country further. They participated because they had no other choice, and in the hope for a better tomorrow. Participating in the election for people and the majority of political parties has nothing to do with giving credit to the Islamic Republic, since the state has a direct effect on everyday life there were more critical issues for people to deal with than giving legitimacy to this regime or not. Today, many are forced to serve their time in the Revolutionary Guard (instead of the army). Does this mean they believe in the legitimacy of the Revolutionary Guard or that they are forced to join and serve their time? People are forced to go to the judiciary to report issues and resolve

Islamic Republic, namely a republic without a supreme leader, a republic without special privileges for clergymen, a republic without discrimination against women and religion. And if all these exist, there will be no Islamic Republic. What kind of logic is this? For instance, if someone accepts to work for a low salary during economic decline does that mean that he or she should receive the same salary for the rest of their life? All the sacrifices and people's revolt was not for Ahmadinejad to go only to be replaced by Moussavi. Have you not heard the Death to Khamenei slogans? Our people did not revolt for Khamenei to go only to be replaced by some other spiritual leader. The problem is not the person; it is the place of despotism and institutionalized discrimination. The further they get from that place, the closer people

gime stays in war out of stupidity and without thinking it through and causes the loss of lives of many young adults, how can this be explained as its legitimacy? If this is the case then Hitler's regime was the most legitimate regime in history since many German soldiers died out of loyalty to him. The third point is that were Basij and Revolutionary Guards the only ones killed in the war? Why do those innocent conscripts and unknown soldiers who were not enamoured with the Islamic Republic remain unknown? Why does someone not delve into what was in the hearts of these people for their country? It's certain that they did not want the regime that brought a lengthy unwanted war and caused them their lives.

The Islamic Republic has no place in our slogans because the Islamic Republic was built on

Why the Islamic Republic is Not Our Slogan

participate in the elections and it was obvious that they have no interest in the Islamic Republic. But what's important here and even the reformist are well aware of, is that the majority of those who participated in the elections or attended the election campaigns of especially Mr. Moein and Mr. Hashemi, had no interest in the Islamic Republic. The reason for the large turn out participants in elections was that people had to choose between living under a retarded monster or someone who at least could make living in this prison a little tolerable, exactly that: Tolerable. It is important to remember that the majority of educated seculars supported the reformists in these elections, it's not that they were also die hard fans of the Islamic Republic.

Some might say if they don't believe in the Islamic Republic why do they participate in elections? It's a good question, just like some green supporters of freedom have stated if you want an Iranian Republic you had no right in participating in elections - worse than the supreme leader and Ayatollah Jannati, they make decisions for people! It's pretty simple, people and politi-

problems. What does this have to do with believing in reforming the Islamic Republic or the judicial system?

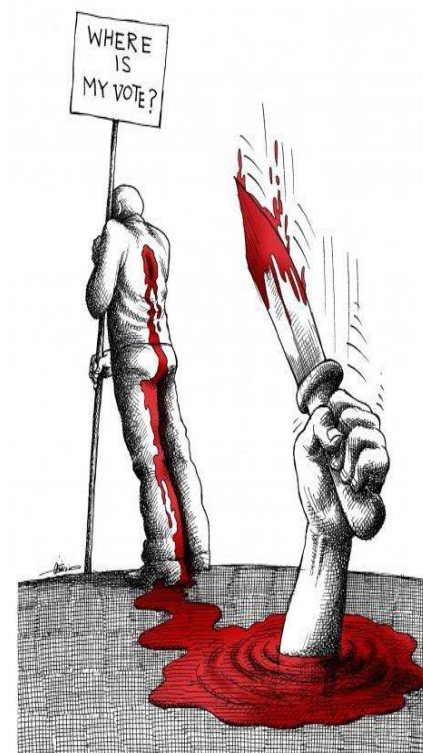
Did all those participants believe in reforming the Islamic Republic? No, but many, I insist many, believed that by participating in elections to demand basic needs and in the case of the victory of a reformist candidate, that there would be more opportunities to organize social and opposition groups to bring more desirable change. Such things were spoken of many times prior to the elections, and historically this type of cheating and fraudulent result is pitiful.

Does believing in reforming the Islamic Republic mean that no one wants anything but the Islamic Republic? No, for instance the freedom movement has never endorsed the Islamic Republic and has demanded a democratic Islamic Republic. The freedom movement has always been reformist so what does this have to do with wanting an Islamic Republic? Recently Dr. Yazdi asked for the appeal and annulment of the Supreme Leader's role. Dr. Yazdi is reformist, but his ideas and views are about major changes in the

will come to a healthy mind, the closer they get to that place, the more insane people become. The scholar, Ayatollah Montazeri is a unique exception taking the test ring of power, throwing it away and saving his faith. But almost all others who are active in the green movement, have failed the test of this ring. This magical test ring of power has deceived and infected them. Even if they don't have blood on their hands, they have kissed bloody hands. Even if they haven't tortured anyone, they have embraced the torturers, or with their steps and pencils have supported suppression, or by their silence have approved the murdering machine and suppression. These people are as guilty as the system and the magical power ring.

Some claim that many have lost their lives for the Islamic Republic, and we must therefore all accept it as it is. Such statements are more suitable for people like Jafari, Jannati and Masoud Dehnamaki. With regard to losses I will only refer to three points. The majority of martyrs' testimonies (only those published by regime) have asked their families to support the supreme leader. Secondly, if a re-

human skulls. The Islamic Republic has no place in our slogans because of its extensive human rights violations. The Islamic Republic has no place in our slogans because instead of equality it focuses on discrimination: discrimination between Muslims and non-Muslims, Shiite and Sunni between believers and infidels, between men and women, between believers of Islamic ideology and those against it, between the spiritual and non spiritual.



Afghan Children Not Registered In Schools

Despite Iranian government regulations, Afghan children are facing obstacles to their undeniable rights to an education, and as result head to the streets to undertake grueling work.



A member of a network committee to help children saying: "We know of a school that for three years has forced an Afghan pupil to remain in third grade even though the child has achieved an A+ average. The head of this school - the name of the school was withheld by the news agency - has stated that they do not have capacity in the next grades. When school officials are asked why a pupil has not been properly registered, their response is that they do not have the capacity. Despite their claim, the main reason they refuse to register these children is because they demand money for registration. Schools ask for \$70-\$100 from the Afghan children, while the majority of these children cannot afford this amount. Therefore only those able to pay this fee are registered in schools.

The committee member pointed out: "The children who are not able to register in schools to continue their education have no choice but to work on the street. In each school at least 10 1st Grade Afghan children are not registered due to their poor financial circumstances. We appreciate the government of Iran's issuing of school ID cards given directly to the children instead of the father of the child. Now that society is trying to serve these children, why are some officials creating new obstacles for them?"

Bidari Student Newsletter at Shiraz University is Banned

Bidari, a student newsletter, directed by Nastaran Rafie was banned by the cultural director of Shiraz University. According to Herana quoting Amir Kabir news agency this newsletter was banned upon publishing its 11th edition. Dr Abbasi, Shiraz University's Cultural Director announced that the newsletter was banned due to its propaganda against the regime, encouraging students to perform illegal acts and publishing fake news. A meeting to review these charges will take place on Sunday next week.

Jila Bani Yaghoub Wins International Press Freedom Award

Iranian journalist Jila Bani Yaghoub and Russian newspaper Novaya Gazeta have jointly won the International Press Freedom Award given by non-governmental agency Canadian Journalists for Free Expression (CJFE). Jila Bani Yaghoub described as a "journalist, editor and prominent women right activist in Iran" was arrested during the month of Ramadan at a fast opening ceremony in front of Evin prison. CJFE stated "This agency is proud to announce that Jila Bani Yaghoub and Russian newspaper Novaya Gazeta have won this award for their extraordinary courage and overcoming major problems in the year 2009".

The statement adds that Jila Bani Yaghoub was summoned and arrested several times due to her activities. On the last occasion she was arrested with her journalist husband Bahman Ahmadi Ammoi. Jila was released on bail after 60 days, but her husband remains in prison four months later. Jila Bani Yaghoub has worked with Hamshahri, Khordad, Azad, Aftab, Emrooz ,

Alborz Ceramics Factory Workers Block Road

Earlier this week a group of Alborz Ceramics Factory workers blocked the main road to the industrial zone of Alborz for hours in protest at non-payment of four months of wages. The governor of Alborz sent a representative to put an end the protest. According to ILNA, Seid Ali Karimi, Executive Director of Workers Center of Ghazvin said: "Earlier, the workers had a judicial warrant to seize warehouse products, but the owner suggested that they leave

the products and he would pay them the wages as soon as they were sold. Based on this agreement the workers replaced the products, but once these products were sold the owner still did not pay the wages to the workers."



Agency at the Tehran Press Fair.

He stated that the daily per capita consumption of cigarettes in the world is 7 but the rate is 2.2 in the Islamic Republic of Iran.

It is projected that Iranians will smoke 61.2 billion cigarettes in the current Iranian calendar year of 1388 (began March 21, 2009), up from 60.4 billion in Iranian calendar year 1387 (March 2008-March 2009), showing a projected rise of 1.2 percent over the past year, he said.

The Tobacco Atlas estimates that tobacco use kills some six million people each year - more than a third of whom will die from cancer -- and drains \$500 billion annually from global economies.

According to the World Health Organization, one in ten deaths among adults worldwide is caused by tobacco. Tobacco caused 100 million deaths in the 20th century. Just in 2005, it caused an average of one death every six seconds. If current trends continue, the death toll is expected to reach over 8 million annually by 2030 and could hit one billion deaths in the 21st century.

[Continued on pg 7]

12 Million Smokers In Iran

The managing director of the Iranian Tobacco Company says that 12 million Iranians smoke cigarettes. "However, drug smuggling in Iran has decreased by 10 percent over the past year," Mohammad Abtahi said here on Sunday while visiting the booth of the Tehran Times daily and the Mehr News

Shirin Ebadi and Defending the Rule of Islam

By: Hasan Salehi

Shirin Ebadi in a recent speech at the Naropa University of Colorado announced that the only way for Iran and other Islamic countries to be relieved of authoritarian governments is with the correct interpretation of the Qur'an and that especially among the Iranian people the phenomenon of refuge in "Secular Islam" does not have any followers.

Ebadi's speech was in answer to three questions that she raised herself:

Is Islam compatible with human rights? If so, Why does discrimination, especially against women exist in Islamic countries? Finally, Can a secular Islamic democracy be created and human rights be achieved through a more correct interpretation of Islam?

Shirin Ebadi's reply to these questions was that Islam is compatible with human rights and to prove her point named some Islamic countries such as Malaysia and Morocco, that prohibit physical torture. Of course she promises us that Iran and Bangladesh are presenting similar bills for approval! She also insists that the root of discrimination is not in Islam but can be traced to male leaders' use of the law to remain in power. She also maintained that the discussion of a Secular State is not worth being introduced to the people, that achievement can be attained through a correct interpretation of the Qur'an.

Why does Shirin Ebadi oppose secular power and defend the rule of Islam instead? The answer to this question must be investigated in the negative contents of the people's revolution. After three decades of bloody ruling by a religious government, society is facing a tremendous renaissance. To quote Hamid Taghvai the petrified and inhuman Islamic regime of political opposition, has a fully modern and human resistance that is mobilizing its own team and the majority are the Iranian people who don't want an Islamic regime. Not only do they not want an Islamic regime but they even want religion to be excluded from thoughts, art, culture and formal and social rankings.

Society is undergoing huge intellectual, philosophical, artistic, political and social developments and this flag is in the hands of the people. The people who have

started a huge revolution to overthrow the Islamic Republic. The social, cultural and human result of this revolution and the overthrow of this Islamic regime cannot be anything but a renaissance. But the 21st century renaissance, is speaking of a leftist renaissance, the socialist renaissance which is deeply breaking down the intellectual, social, scientific, artistic, philosophical aspects of religion and discards it in museums as a preliminary and elementary point of view of a way of life.

Shirin Ebadi who is among the Islamic critics of the Islamic regime, like other factions of the Is-



lamic government fears such futures. That is why they are struggling to remove the basis of an Islamic government from the people's protests and their revolution. They are struggling to change the view towards "kings" and "people's filth" and "corrupt people" to in their own minds save the rule and retreat of Islam. Shirin Ebadi and her partners by resorting to "benign Islam" are trying to gain the respect of western governments on account of putting the brakes on the revolution.

Today's people of Iran are laughing at Shirin Ebadi's shameless speech on the "sweetness" and "wonderfulness" of Islam. They are laughing because over the past 30 years they have seen how much the religious and Islamic regime has disrupted their lives. They have experienced the Islamic regime's hostility towards culture and science and any dealings of humanity. They know that the

government of the Islamic religion is a government of torture and execution, flogging and stoning, amputating hands and feet, of terror and rape and chain murders. They know an Islamic government means the rule of poverty and ignorance, superstitions and brutal exploitation of workers and blatant discrimination against women. They have discovered the true meaning of religious rule and know the Islam's capacity for most rabid and most reactionary tendencies of Islam in decadent capitalism. The Islamic regime does not even have a grain of origin in humanity. Islamic rulers' performances not only in Iran but in Af-

ghanistan, Saudi Arabia, Iraq and north Africa is before everyone's eyes. One must be in oblivion to conceive that with all this hatred and loathing accumulated over 30 years of religious rule in Iran, that people would even think of a second Islamic regime. No! The Islamic Republic has been illustrative and informative enough. Another "less wild" version of Islamic government is a fantasy and delusory concept.

But don't doubt that Shirin Ebadi is hiding behind religious beliefs of the people and is hostile against a secular government. All this is in itself is an old trick of religion, to obtain legitimacy. All religious governments and institutions from the church to the Islamic Republic try to justify their crimes and disasters in the name of "religious people". And here Shirin Ebadi is using the people's religious beliefs as an excuse to condescend with the Islamic Republic. But everyone knows that Islamic Republic

is not a product of people's religious beliefs, but a counter-revolution from the West to ruin the Iranian's revolution. This government has been able to remain in power with its out of control suppression, and the tormented people are using every opportunity to hold protests to express their hatred towards this regime. Don't doubt that these people, even the ones with religious views are trying to clean out this Islamic barn. If Shirin Ebadi had lived during the struggle against church and religion in Europe, she would probably have joined the campaign to justify the church. Pioneers of those days, who had clearly understood the painful realities of their time and the urgency to change this ugly truth, came together and were able to separate church and Christianity from politics and relieve European societies from religious rule and its medieval disaster of the Church. Their movements did not have any roots in religious views. They had seen humanity's captivity at the Church's bloody hand in medieval times and were only asking for the respect and civilization of human beings to be recognized. The results that humanity has accomplished in western societies owes to years of struggle and perseverance and separation from superstitious religious and non-religious thoughts.

Today, capitalism all around the world is preserving most reactionary and decadent institutions, including the train of religious superstitions. Religion in a place like Iran is driven by crime and in other parts of the world by the military, police and other repressive organs and is playing a supplementary role in people's captivity and slavery. Religion, in today's world is an industry that provides the right to take from the most septic areas. The Iranian people's revolution against the Islamic regime is most definitely going to blow a worldwide anti religion whistle. The establishment of a secular system and separation of religion from politics is the least Shirin Ebadi can expect. This demand is a cry from within Iranian society. If something does not agree with the people's point of view, it's simply Shirin Ebadi and her colleagues.

UN inspectors arrive in Iran to visit secret nuclear plant



United Nations inspectors visited Iran's most recently revealed nuclear plant yesterday in an attempt to determine if it is part of a clandestine weapons programme. The visit, the first independent glimpse of the site [quietly disclosed to the UN last month](#) and dramatically unveiled by the West days later, comes at a key moment for Western countries considering whether diplomacy can succeed in forcing Tehran to respect international obligations over its nuclear programme. Iran is in defiance of five UN Security Council resolutions ordering it to halt uranium enrichment until it satisfies international concerns that it is covertly designing a nuclear bomb.

Mohamed ElBaradei, the head of

the [International Atomic Energy Agency](#), declared last month that Iran was "on the wrong side of the law" by concealing the construction of the underground uranium enrichment plant at Qom.

The plant was first revealed to the world at the G20 summit in Pittsburgh last month when President Obama, President Sarkozy and Gordon Brown announced its existence along with intelligence strongly suggesting a military use.

The revelations were instrumental in hardening Russian and Chinese resolve over Iran, and in forcing Iranian concessions at nuclear talks in Geneva on October 1 with the E3+3, the group of powers negotiating with Iran on behalf of the international community.

utes. Photographers and reporters of different news agencies and newspapers photographed them in support.

The families first went to the ILNA news agency stand, and voiced their objections against their family members' imprisonment.. They also went to Etemad newspaper, Haiate No, Sarmaieh and Iran Voice stands, asking for the media's attention to the prisoners' circumstances. They complained about the media's lack of attention with regard to the detentions and imprisonment and called for the release of all political prisoners.

Some of the families and independent journalists peacefully protested in front of the Fars and Rajaie news agency stands while holding images of political prison-

The group: the US, Russia, China, Britain, France and Germany, is also known as the P5+1, representing the five permanent members of the Security Council with the power to pass resolutions on Iran, plus Germany.

The Geneva talks were guardedly hailed as a success after Iran agreed to a three-point plan allowing inspectors into the plant at Qom; agreeing to a deal to ship its enriched uranium overseas for reprocessing, and agreeing to meet again for talks solely on the nuclear issue before the month was out. Western diplomats, however, have been deeply disappointed by Iran's efforts since then.

The inspections team is to take environmental samples to check it has no illicit military dimension, interview scientists and compare engineering designs with the facility. Negotiators say that the latter two may meet with the most resistance, making them a key test of Iranian co-operation.

Recent developments have thrown Tehran's willingness to co-operate into serious doubt. Last week in Vienna, Iran demanded more time to agree a uranium deal, saying the West was trying to trick it out of its stockpile of the material.

• TIMESONLINE

ers. People at that Rajaie stand argued with the protests saying: "We are journalists too, how come they haven't arrested us?" This argument ended when members of the public attending the exhibition came to the support of the families.

The attendance of the families of political prisoners and others was prompted by rumours that Khatami and Moussavi's would be at the exhibition. It was reported that Moussavi was stopped from entering the building. Mehdi Karoubi was seen at the event and was attacked by government supporters while there, injuring his forehead.

This year, the exhibition took place while more than 30 journalists are in prison.

Fariba Pazhouh's Detention Extended with Threat of Return to Solitary Confinement

Fariba Pazhouh a detained journalist's temporary imprisonment has been extended after a week without visits. According to Prisoner Human Rights Activists in Iran, prison officials prevented Fariba from having visitors, and has only been able to have short phone conversations with her family.

Fariba Pajouh, was arrested on the first day of Ramadan at her parents' house by intelligence agents and was kept in solitary confinement for one month. During this time she was repeatedly tortured and has been under severe psychological pressure. She was then moved to a cell with Hengameh Shahidi, another imprisoned journalist.

Judge Beigi announced the extended detention time for Fariba Pazhouh to her lawyer Mina Jafari. There is now concern that Fariba may be returned to solitary confinement. Mina Jafari, told Herana news agency: "Fariba is prohibited from having visitors. We, her family and I are not allowed to visit her and this is a direct order from Tehran's prosecutor. Fariba is under constant pressure. She is not allowed to have contact with me and I was only able to find out about her situation through her family". Ms. Jafari who also represents Issa Saharkhiz, said of his situation: "Mr Saharkhiz is still in prison and his detention has been extended, but we are not give any more information about his case".



Families of Political Prisoners Attended Press Exhibition

The families of political prisoners, together with human rights activists and independent journalists voiced their objections against the imprisonment of an extensive number of journalists and political activists at a press exhibition. The families of Tajzadeh Tajernia, Ghoochani, Ahmadi Amooie, Husain Ezami, Msoud Bastani, Saeed Leilaz carried images of the prisoners and entered the hall as people chanted "Political prisoners must be freed". Many welcomed their presence at the exhibition and some even sang the protest song "Yare Dabestani" for some min-

Student Activist on Trial

Mohammad Pour Abdollah, a male student arrested in February in Iran's capital, Tehran, is now on trial, apparently on charges related to national security for his activities in an Iranian student organization. He is still detained in Qezel Hesar Prison near Tehran and is likely to be a prisoner



of conscience. Two other members of the same organization arrested in March have been released.

Mohammad Pour Abdollah's trial, believed to be on charges of "gathering and colluding with the aim of harming national security, propaganda against the system and membership of groups opposed to the system" finally began on 12 October after having been postponed on at least three occasions. No verdict has yet been passed. The charges apparently relate to his previous arrest after a student demonstration in Tehran in December 2007, and other charges possibly relating to articles he posted on his blog after his release.

Mohammad Pour Abdollah is a member of the left-wing Iranian students' organization Students for Freedom and Equality. Two other members of the same group, arrested on 1 March by security forces apparently seeking male student activist Amin Ghaza'i, have since been released: **Maryam Sheikh** was released on bail of 500 million rials (US\$50,000) after seven days, while Amin Ghaza'i's wife **Nasim Roshana'i** (also known as Somayeh) was released after eight days, also on bail of 500 million rials. Another female member of the student group, Sanaz Allahyari, who was detained for just over two

weeks, was sentenced in August to one year's imprisonment, suspended for five years, for participating in an illegal student demonstration on 23 February.

PLEASE WRITE IMMEDIATELY in Persian, Arabic, English, French or your own language:

-
- Calling for the immediate and unconditional release of Mohammad Pour Abdollah if, as appears to be the case, he is held solely for the peaceful expression of his right to freedom of expression and association;
-
- Calling for him to be protected from torture and other ill-treatment while in detention;
-
- Urging the authorities to review the suspended sentence of Sanaz Allahyari, as if detained she would be a prisoner of conscience, held solely for the peaceful expression of her right to freedom of assembly, and to drop any charges against other members of Students for Freedom and Equality related solely to the peaceful exercise of their rights to freedom of expression, assembly and association.
-

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 30 NOVEMBER 2009 TO:

Head of the Judiciary

Ayatollah Sadeqh Larijani
Office of the Head of the Judiciary
Pasteur St.
Vali Asr Ave. south of Serah-e Jom-houri

Tehran 1316814737
Islamic Republic of Iran
Email: Via website: <http://www.dadiran.ir/tabid/81/Default.aspx> 1st starred box: your given name; 2nd starred box: your family name; 3rd: your email address

Salutation: Your Excellency

Leader of the Islamic Republic

Ayatollah Sayed 'Ali Khamenei
Office of the Supreme Leader
Islamic Republic Street – End of Shahid Keshvar Doust Street, Tehran

Islamic Republic of Iran
Email: via website: www.leader.ir/langs/en/index.php?p=letter (English)
www.leader.ir/langs/fa/index.php?p=letter (Persian)

Salutation: Your Excellency

And copies to:

Speaker of Parliament

His Excellency Ali Larijani
Majles-e Shoura-ye Eslami
Baharestan Square, Tehran
Islamic Republic of Iran
Fax: +98 21 3355 6408

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the second update of UA 60/09 (MDE 13/016/2009). Further information: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE13/016/2009/en> and <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE13/028/2009/en>

Additional Information

Students for Freedom and Equality is a left-wing student organization that was established around 2006 with objectives including the establishment of a nationwide students' network and an end to a military presence in Iranian universities. It was involved in organizing peaceful demonstrations in December 2007, following which around 70 people were arrested, the majority of whom were members of Students for Freedom and Equality (see UA 331/07 and follow ups). Several were tortured during their detention. For example, one student had his ribs and several of his teeth broken when he refused to be filmed "confessing" to having links with exile groups and attempting to destabilize the country. Another student lost the hearing in his left ear after a hard object was inserted into it and was so traumatized by his torture that he attempted suicide.

At least seven members were arrested in February and March 2009, including those named in this action. Another of those arrested, Ali Reza Davoudi, a 26-year-old man, was arrested on 12 February in Esfahan and was released on bail on 25 April. He was tortured during his detention, including with cigarette burns and beatings. He also told his family he had been suspended from the ceiling for three days. He became depressed following his release and was hospitalized in Esfahan in July. His health improved, but when his aunt called the hospital on 8 August to arrange his discharge, she was told he had died. His family believe his death is suspicious. They were also warned by officials not to publicize his funeral.

The student demonstration on 23 February was held to protest against

the burial of unknown soldiers on the campus of a Tehran university, which was widely viewed as a move by the government to seek to control student groups opposed to its policies. Burial of soldiers, called martyrs on account of their sacrifice in fighting against Iraqi forces, appears to enable non-students to enter the campus without being required to show evidence that they are students, a normal requirement for access to university premises. Student groups fear that the presence of the graves would allow unrestricted access to the campuses by security forces, including the volunteer Basij militia who are under the control of the Revolutionary Guards and who have been responsible for human rights violations over many years. Students believe such access would lead to further restrictions on debates and discussions relating to government policy.

Others from Students for Freedom and Equality were arrested during the unrest following the disputed Iranian presidential election in June. Female student Bitam Samimizad was arrested in the street in Tehran and released after two weeks and is due to stand trial in October. A male journalist and student at Mayboud University, Amir Mohsen Mohammadi, was arrested in Esfahan on 15 June after being summoned by Intelligence Ministry officials. According to Human Rights Activists in Iran, an Iranian human rights group, he was accused of organizing the election unrest, and was released on bail on 16 August. He had previously been arrested in Esfahan on 6 October 2008 and held for about 12 days. Mohammad Sayyadi, a student at the Bou Ali Sina University in Hamedan, was detained on 25 June 2009. He had previously been detained for three days in September 2008, when he was held in a Ministry of Intelligence detention centre where he was ill-treated. Released on bail, he was tried in December 2008, without a lawyer, and sentenced in January 2009 to six-and-a-half years in prison, on charges including "illegal formation and direction of a group for the purpose of overthrowing the system", "propaganda against the system", and "insulting Ayatollah Khomeini" (Articles 498, 500 and 514 of the Penal Code). The sentence was reduced on appeal to two years. He is believed to be held in Alvand Prison in Hamedan, although it is not clear to Amnesty International whether he is serving his prison sentence, or is facing new charges.

[Continued on pg10]

Interview with Amin Ghazaie

The reopening of universities, the current climate in society and the extensive protests we've seen were good enough reasons to prompt an interview with leftist student activists who have gained a breadth of valuable experience over the past few years. The purpose of this discussion is to gain a more accurate understanding of this movement through its activists who have not previously expressed their views about the past and future of this movement.

Q. Given the aforementioned background, please give us some information about the formation and growth of the left movement at university. Tell us how it took shape and what strengthens this movement.

A. To form a left movement at university or in society, two changes were crucial. On the one hand leaving the sad experience of failure during the early revolution years behind, and on the other taking the left's growth from academic study to the next level. This is not to say that the radical left, formed in early 2000 by myself and a few other students, did not consider the theoretical knowledge and experience of the fighter leftists of the previous generation. Rather, the radical left consisted of Iran's most ideological and intelligent students from the remotest parts of Iran. The Traditional left had accepted that the reformist bourgeoisie has the supreme leader and initiatives in its hands, and still believes the same. Their belief has a real base and we still witness this has not lost its legitimacy among some people. However, the traditional left despite its wrong analysis and sometimes betrayal had lost its identity, hope, truth and horizon. We had to leave its dead body and failed spirit as a first crucial step. Of course we grew from students' desperation and disappointment in the reformists and discouragement from their student leaders. Therefore, I'm upholding the radical left philosophy (though not all its actions) and what it later called Students For Freedom and Equality. At that time we had a correct understanding of our position and I

still maintain what I believed and analyzed back then. If we chose university as our place of activity it was not because we had no place in society at large or that we doubted the growth of the student movement. University was the only place to give birth to a practical left. When the independent working class movement has to start from scratch, certainly its most aware parts; the leftist students and labour activists have to be its vanguard. Just like Marx in his time had hopes in professional workers and the English union. Finally, in 2007 we suffered from severe repression of the student movement. We can't deny our weak organizational tactics, but each organization would take us forward to some point. You can't expect to achieve the goal of socialist revolution with one group or organization.

While other student activists were confused we permeated students' hearts and chanted for independent student organization. Now, in universities the left has propounded discussion, and leftist students are active and dynamic. The radical left was able to change the student's demands.

Q. What do you think of the crisis of 7 December 2007? Although a long time has passed... but considering that period and the post crisis that led to the arrest of many students. We witnessed comments and criticism from some people, organizations and parties. How do you explain the crisis as one of the movement's activists? What caused the suppression of 7 December 2007?

A. What is unfortunate is the childish analysis of left parties and the organization with regard to the reasons behind the suppression. There is not a single political and social

movement that has not been suppressed in the past four years in Iran. Some ignorants believe that incorrect tactics such as independence ceremonies, or the leaders' dramatics caused the suppression. Anyone who has a little knowledge of the tactic of Iran's or any other security agency should know that they watch activists closely for years. Once they have complete information, they attack the activists brutally and arrest them. In fighting with the must barbaric dictator regime,

you expect to be suppressed. It is imperative to continue fighting by changing tactics, work style and getting moral support from others. Just as when Marx left the first international and political party in favour of the mobilization of political organization and political struggle in countries, he led every organization to the formation of a movement. Usually in such cases where suppression is extensive, the left of

society have to unite and inject the fighting spirit into the rest of society. This is an important key that occurred only during the time of repression, and later played a destructive role due to competition between the parties and ignorance. The irony is, that if the conservatives on the right are arrested, the Islamic Republic is to be blamed, but if a leftist is arrested it's his or her own fault.

Q. After the 7 December suppression many believed this movement would not have the ability to reunite the students at university, others stating that the movement had failed. What do you make of such criticism?

A. The founders of Students For Freedom and Equality are no longer active in this field. This doesn't mean anything is destroyed, instead it means that changes have happened. Unfortunately since early 2006, we have had unrealistic growth and some with the conservative ideas of the

right, deprived of theory and seeking opportunities with a corrupt attitude influenced and weakened us, which made activities within the groups impossible. These people thought that by stealing the name of the movement they would be able to hijack our activities, but they have no understanding of organized Marxism and therefore they failed. So, if there is discussion over a name, there is certainly no such thing as Students For Freedom and Equality since activities in this name have failed. But this doesn't mean that leftist activists have failed, but that the work style and tactic of the movement has changed.

Q. Based on what you have said, you believe one of the factors of this movement's failure at least with this name, is the unrealistic growth and the infiltration of members of the right. So it isn't so wrong to say that there have been mistakes made by this student movement and therefore many of the criticisms are not so irrelevant.

As I mentioned before, I support the existence of radical left philosophy at the university. Based on our ideas and beliefs we acted with strategy and in a way to create hegemony for a practical left. I'm not saying our performance during those years was perfect or without mistakes. However criticisms that I've heard don't even touch on the real issue. They are mostly concerned with competition between the different parties and when the Information Ministry announced we are dependent on a particular movement, some immediately welcomed this idea and in action joined the political police of the Islamic Republic. This is a sad reality! Also, these criticisms are mainly related to the suppression, but as I already mentioned, the suppression had nothing to do with our mistakes. It's not as if had we done things differently we would not have faced suppression. Obviously the Islamic Republic will not allow the leftist students to act with such power. At this point in time those who ask why we didn't keep our activities secret, or why our approach was so harsh, don't have an understanding of activity within the university climate. They don't know that what's more important than the survival of a movement is bringing the discussion and identity of an ideology to life, which at that time we could only find in the memories of retired leftists.

[Continued on pg 9]



From pg8 (**Interview with Amin Ghazaie**)...

Q. Other student organizations with a leftist vision, though not “radical left” were active at university. What is your opinion on these groups’ activities? Please share any criticism or positive comments with regard to their activities.

A. If some students were active under the umbrella of the radical left, others under the banner of communist worker, or democratic etc, all were childish divisions by some students. If we’re talking numbers and influence of a movement, none stood a chance. The main motivation of the radical left founders was not to create a fan base at university to show off. Some leftist activists are only interested in having an interview with the press after each event to become a known face within their small group of friends and party. In the first instance our strategy is to create hegemony for leftist discussion at the university, to convince the class of workers of the left’s rebirth at universities and get their attention. Some in stupor and defama-

tion thought our choice of Marxist-Leninist was based on a puerile understanding of the status quo. Our next goal was to create an independent leftist student organization, and during that time we suffered from suppression.

Q. Considering events taking place in Iran so rapidly, can you be optimistic on the role of the left in society, and are you doing anything to advance it? Are the leftist students at university able to play a role in these developments?

A. Currently the left is already playing a role, but undercover and with more principle. If you look at student activists they are only loud, and don’t understand the basic alphabet of Marxism, certainly you can’t expect much from them. But the majority of young students after listening to our leftist discussions have accepted our ideology. Now if someone speaks about socialism or if a student newsletter publishes an article no one is surprised. A leftist activist at the university, unlike us six years ago, has more hopes in promoting and the success of the left.

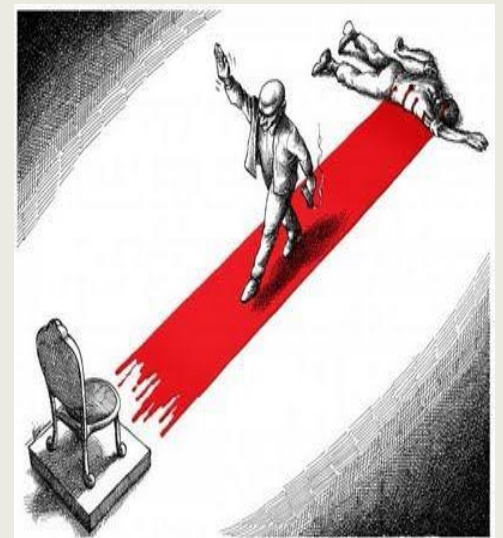
From pg 3 (**Why the Islamic Republic is Not Our Slogan**)...

The fight ahead is certainly a long one. So we must unite. But unity is not assurance for some to distort history. Using the current dangerous situation as an excuse to tell others what to do and with the slogan of Not East or West, only the Islamic Republic, the unity of the movement will be kept and those who don’t want the Islamic Republic have no place in this movement, when this is the same people’s slogan against the Islamic Republic and a demand for an Iranian republic, one against the Yes to Gaza and Lebanon, chanting Not Gaza not Lebanon only Iran. Unity of the movement’s forces is not guaranteed when the reformists insist on being the spokesperson for the secular, traditional and those opposed to Islam. Unity will be granted when the reformists present their true social base as defenders of political Islam with democratic reading, regardless of its success. If the reformists are truly thinking about a democratic society, they better speak their minds.

The temporary position gained by the reformists by taking other groups out of the picture violently and becoming the representatives of parts of the society with the logic of “it is what it is, take it or leave it”, is about to change and it’s impossible to continue in the same way. Insisting on the indiscriminate use of the capital they tem-

porarily hold, will not only destroy the unity of the movement, but also withdraw the reformists for good. It is better for each of us to not forget the experience of the 2005 elections. A large number of those who didn’t participate learned important lessons. Reformists meanwhile, have not learned anything and continue with the same proud tone of voice which caused them the re-election of Ahmadinejad.

In the end, regardless of all discussion, this slogan is even wrong in the demonstration tactics. In protests where the government chants the Not East or West only the Islamic Republic, asking people to chant along with the regime with such slogans, is the same as supporting the government to seize this day.



Mohammad Javad Larijani’s Comments On Moussavi’s Connection to 1980s Executions

Iran’s Head of Judiciary, Mohammad Javad Larijani in a debate at the press exhibition, criticized Moussavi and the reformist party stating: “I believe that murdering prisoners in prison is wrong and must be investigated. But we must ask, why when Mr Moussavi was prime minister, many were murdered in prison and he didn’t bother to raise the issue then?” Mr Larijani claimed that reformists don’t have the experience of democracy. Mostafa Kavakabian, Head of the Human Oriented Party in response to Mr. Larijani said: “Mr Larijani can’t claim that democracy is part of his university education that others do not have, and to say that if Mr Moussavi did not protest the killings at the time, then he should remain silent today, is not a valid argument.”

To this day no one has accurate information on what happened to the political prisoners of the 1980s. These prisoners were recognized by the Islamic Republic as small undercover groups and were deprived of



knowing their rights as political prisoners. The most reliable source of information from this time is Ayatollah Montazeri who was denied his title as Khomeini’s successor in the role of supreme leader because he opposed these violent acts and was placed under house arrest for several years. In the summer of 1998 after the unsuccessful

attack of the Mojahedine Khalgh to Iran, made with the support of Iraq, Ayatollah Khomeini issued the murder of thousands of political prisoners. These people were executed in less than two months. For all the political parties of the Islamic Republic this case has been a closed book that must not be opened. Even during the presidency of Khatami

when the case of the Intelligence Ministry’s killing of dissidents and intellectuals was exposed, the case was not reviewed. But now it seems acceptable to attack Moussavi and bring him out of the trenches of Khomeini’s legacy to re-open the case with Mohammad Javad Larijani at the helm. He is saying that Mr Moussavi doesn’t have democratic experience and is objecting to prisoner confessions and executions for show rather than the pursuit of freedom and justice because if he was a true defender of freedom he would have objected to murdering prisoners during the time he was a prime minister. Mr Moussavi and many elderly statesmen of the Islamic Republic can be the subject of Mr Larijani’s criticism, such as the current leader of the Islamic republic who was the president at the time. For this reason many believe that such statements are not to defend those murdered in the 80s, but for political gain.

A gathering was held in the House of Music in Tehran last week to celebrate the inscription of the Radif of Iranian music on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

The Radif of Iranian music was Inscribed in 2009 on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity

The Radif of Iranian music is the traditional repertoire of the classical music of Iran that forms the essence of Persian musical culture. More than 250 melodic units, called *gushe*, are arranged into cycles, with an underlying modal layer providing the backdrop against which a variety of melodic motifs are set. Although the main performance practice of Iranian traditional music unfolds through improvisation according to the mood of the performer and in response to the audience, musicians spend years learning to master the radif as the set of musical tools for their performances and compositions. The radif may be vocal or instrumental, performed on a variety of instruments with different performance techniques including the long-necked lutes *tār* and *setār*, as well as the *santur* hammered zither, *kamānche* spike fiddle and *ney* reed pipe. Passed from master to disciple through oral instruction, the radif embodies both the aesthetic practice and the philosophy of Persian musical culture. Learning the radif stretches over at least a decade of self devotion during which the students memorize the radif's repertoire and engage in a process of musical asceticism intended to open the gates of spirituality. This rich treasury lies at the heart of Iranian music and reflects the cultural and national identity of the Iranian people.

Decision 4.COM 13.45

The Committee (...) decides that [this element] satisfies the [criteria for inscription on the Representative List](#), as follows:

Arrest of participants at reform group gathering

The majority of participants in a prayers ceremony for the release of an executive member of the reform group, Islamic Iran Participation Front were arrested today.

Norooz website reports that according to eyewitness testimony tonight's ceremony for the release of Shahabeddin Tabatabai, which took place at the detainee's residence, was raided by security forces who appeared at the scene in three vans. The report maintains that the participants were arrested and taken away in the vans to an unknown location.

Amongst the detainees were the spouses of some of the members, as well as Mohammadreza Jalai-pour who had just recently been released after suffering two months of solitary confinement.

Reports at hand also indicate that some of the participants are detained at Mr. Tabatabai's home and are prohibited from leaving.

- R1: The Radif of Iranian music is recognized as an expression of cultural identity, transmitted from one generation to the next as the principal emblem of Iran's music culture;
- R2: Inscription of the element on the Representative List would strengthen cultural identity and raise visibility of intangible cultural heritage, as well as encouraging and improving inter- and intra-cultural dialogue and understanding among the peoples of the region;
- R3: Various safeguarding measures are foreseen, supported by the will and commitment of the community and the State to safeguard the element, including training programmes in music universities and private schools, concert programmes, as well as research and publications;
- R4: The element has been nominated with the involvement of the communities, institutions and individual practitioners whose free, prior and informed consent has been given in writing;
- R5: The element is registered in the National Inventory of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Iran.

Iran's supreme leader 'against direct talks with US'

Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei is opposed to direct negotiations with the US, newspapers quoted a senior legislator as saying yesterday.

But Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki said talks on the nuclear issue would continue with six world powers, including the US. "Presently we do not have any new issue for talks," Mottaki said, according to the semi-official Fars News Agency.

The comments by vice-speaker Mohammad Reza Bahonar appeared to contradict discussions on Tehran's disputed nuclear programme that took place in Switzerland earlier this month, and which included officials of the two foes. But he may have been referring to any wide-ranging bilateral talks aimed at normalising US-Iran ties, rather than ruling out all contact between Tehran and Washington.

Relations with the US are a sensitive issue in the Islamic republic, whose clerical leaders see Washington as the Great Satan guilty of "global arro-

gance".

"Presently, the Supreme National Security Council and the supreme leader emphasise that our strategic policies are based on the absence of negotiations with the US," Hambastegi newspaper quoted Bahonar as saying. "That is why we will not have any direct negotiations with the US," he said at a meeting of an Islamic engineers association, the reformist daily reported.

He did not elaborate on what he meant by "direct negotiations".

Bahonar is a conservative MP who often criticises the government of hard-line President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, who has said he favours dialogue with other countries including the US if this is based on justice and respect.

Khamenei has the final say on all matters of state, including the nuclear programme and foreign relations. Asked whether there was a possibility of direct US-Iran talks, Mottaki said: "We will be continuing talks on the nuclear issue and within overall five-plus-one contacts."

He was referring to the five permanent United Nations Security Council members — the US, Russia, China, France and Britain — and Germany. Asked about Bahonar's comment, ILNA news agency quoted Mottaki as saying: "We accept Mr Bahonar's opinion."

The US severed ties with Tehran shortly after Iran's 1979 Islamic revolution. But Iranian and US officials took part in discussions in Geneva earlier this month in a bid to resolve a long-running standoff over Tehran's nuclear ambitions.

Bahonar did not mention the Geneva meeting.

"The policy of the Islamic republic of Iran is based on the absence of official negotiations with the US ... the conditions for such negotiations must emerge," Bahonar said.

The US and its allies accuse Iran of seeking to develop nuclear bombs with its nuclear programme.

Iran says it aims only to generate electricity.

Tehran's House of Music celebrates Radif's Inscription by UNESCO



Masoud Bastani Sentenced to Six-Year Jail Term

Masoud Bastani is a journalist and political activist who has been in detention for the past three and a half months, and in his first trial, he received a six-year jail term.

Mr. Bastani's family members have confirmed the news. The sentencing includes one year for spreading propaganda against the regime and five years for collusion to hold gatherings and cause unrest.

In the early days of unrest which followed the general election, a group of agents entered the residence of Mr. Bastani and Mahsa Amrabadi (a reporter from Etemad Melli Paper) in absence of Mr. Bastani, and his wife and two other house guests identified as Seyed Khalil Mir-Ashrafi and Behzad Bashu were detained and sent to Evin Prison.

Eight-Year Jail Sentence for Hiva Bootimar

An appeals court sentenced Haiva Bootimar to an eight-year jail term.

Saleh Nikbakht, a lawyer representing Mr. Bootimar, announced the news. Previously, the initial court had sentenced Mr. Bootimar to a one-year jail term after he was charged with spreading propaganda against the regime, and another ten-year jail term for dealing in arms and ammunition.

Mr. Nikbakht appealed the sentencing, and in another trial, the charge of propaganda against the regime was dropped and, considering the absence of a prior criminal record and Mr. Bootimar's special condition, his arms-dealing sentencing was commuted to eight years.

Liberties Union of Iranian Workers' Declaration Regarding Haft Tappeh Prison Sentences

Widespread arrests, summons and sentencing of workers in different parts of the country in 2009 and the politics of imposed slavery and starvation of millions of worker families with the passing a bill to cut subsidies will now put the last nails in the coffin of the livelihood of the working class.

We the Liberties Union of Iranian Workers believe that the repression of enlightened workers - though part of the permanent politics of the ruling class to silence the worker class - to be inhuman. Inhuman in its political goals in our present circumstances and the vastness of its reach since the start of 2009. Inhuman in suppressing the workers more than ever, instilling fear among them and passing new bills to cut subsidies and bring about changes in work laws in order to continue the pillage and plunder of workers wages. But the Iranian worker class with its glorious fights at Sherkate



Vahd of Tehran, Haft Tappeh in Alborz, in the textile industry and hundreds of other work places has not been silent in recent years. Worker protests grow every day and this is how they have proven that in defending lives and livelihood they will not surrender to repression or fear, and this time as before the politics of suppression will not get the officials anywhere. Haft Tappeh workers in defending their lives and livelihoods have been sentenced to prison. They have committed no crime other than protesting against de-

layed wages, living below the poverty line and standing against the destruction of Haft Tappeh's wealth. They fearlessly attempted to create an independent organization to defend themselves and they deserve the most support from workers in every part of Iran.

The Liberties Union of Iranian Workers strongly condemns the prison sentences against Haft Tappeh workers and demands the unconditional and immediate repeal of these sentences and the freedom of union and public activists from prison. They ask their members and workers all over Iran for solidarity against this false imprisonment, through the organization of protests and extensive support in all aspects of these workers and their families to block the offensive attack of supporters of capitalism. Long live labour solidarity!

Long live Haft Tappeh workers!
Liberties Union of Iranian workers

Pressures and Constraints against Female Prisoners

Based on reports from the women's ward of Evin Prison, pressure, harassment and restrictions against female political and non-political prisoners and their new born have intensified in the last few days. One of the pressures on the prisoners is shutting down the hot water on consecutive days causing prolonged periods without bathing. The situation has been especially difficult for sucklings and children and their mothers who are in urgent need of hot water. Prisoners are allowed one flask of hot water per day and this limitation on hot water affects making milk for newborns and tea for adults. Furthermore the unhygienic environment for newborns and restricting the amount of hot water that they have access to has exposed them to various diseases. In the last few days mothers have refused their daily quota of hot water in protest against the restriction.

The quality and quantity of food in the women's ward is very inferior and most female prisoners from poor families have no one to sup-

port them financially so have to cope with the situation. The food has minimal or no protein. Fruit and vegetables have been removed from prisoners' diets for two months now food for couple of months now. Malnutrition is apparent in adverse signs on prisoners' faces, especially on those of children who are subjected to prison conditions because their mothers are there. They witness the daily violence and humiliation against their mothers by wardens and the conflicts inside the ward between prisoners. Prison stores have been established to exploit prisoners as goods are sold at several times their retail price and authorities neglect to make useful items available at all or in sufficient quantities. Prisoners are allowed to buy 2kg of fruit every 2 weeks. Lack of goods causes long queues in front of the prison store and sometimes leads to physical conflict among the prisoners. Political prisoners are being forced to survive on biscuits due to the poor quality of food.

These are the repressive plans of the intelligence service and prison organizations to make conditions harder for political prisoners. The number of prisoners is so high that

the number of prisoners occupying each cell is many times more than cell capacity. For political prisoners telephone contact has been limited to 3-5 minutes per day with prolonged waits between visits - that take place in cubicles. Health and hygiene in the women's ward is appalling with bedbugs and lice intensifying the pressure on prisoners as prison resembles an inhuman camp inhuman camp.

Political prisoners are deprived of vital medical treatment and the only medicine that they can take is a painkiller for temporarily relief from their acute discomfort. Among the political prisoners presently in the women's ward are Nazila Dashti, Sediqeh Falahat, Zadeh, Shanam Madadzadeh, Mahsa Naderi, Fatemeh Ziaei and Atefeh Nabavi.

Human rights and democracy activists in Iran condemn the applied pressures and inhuman and anti-women restrictions against political and non-political prisoners and demand immediate and practical directives from UN Human Rights High Commissioner and women's rights organizations to end the inhuman conditions of female political prisoners in Iran.

Bakery workers on Strike in Sanandaj

Bakery workers in Sanandaj, West of Iran, went on strike against their low monthly salary and lack of improvement in their dreadful working conditions today.

They have announced that their protest will be in limited areas in the beginning in order to meet public's need. But, if their demands are not met, they will start an all out and unlimited strike on Thursday, October 29.

There are more than 4,500 bakery workers in Sanandaj and they have problems in managing their deprived families. Workers are suppressed and officials and members of their union are arrested in order to prevent protests.

Day seven of Ahvaz Pipe Mills protest

Workers at Ahvaz Pipe Mills Company held a gathering for the seventh day running on Monday outside the governorates office to protest against non-payment of their wages and bonuses for the past 10 months.

Protestors were chanting, "Living in Iran is our indisputable right," "Government of coup d'état, resign, resign," "Death or justice," "With God's help, victory is close, death to the deceitful government" and "We will not surrender to humiliation." Members of public joined the workers in their protest.

In fear of the spread of their protest, the suppressive agents attacked the workers and brutally beat and disperse them.

The governor of city of Ahvaz and the head of the company have refused to respond to the legitimate demands of the workers who are unable to provide the basic needs of their families.

The University: Green Politics and Deep Politics?

By: Amir k.

From: Khiaban # 48

The university has never been a warm and comfy house of learning. At least not in Iran. Here, it has been a long alleyway shaped by various struggles and fights paving its path; a compact arena of struggle between despotism and freedom, between dictatorship and self-management/autonomy, between the science of oppression and control on the one hand, and the science of liberation on the other; the main artery of the contemporary political history of Iran.

The Islamic Republic was strengthened by its conquest of the universities. I do not mean merely the shutting down of the universities in 1980 and the violent elimination of the vanguards of the student movement in Iran, which in itself was a seminal arena, and the courageous resistance of students -- who fought back when confronted with Khomeini's religious fascism and lost their lives, and did not silently surrender to the cultural counter-revolution of the Islamic Republic -- will shine in the history of the [Iranian] university. But also, declaring Tehran University to be the location of the Tehran's Friday prayers clearly highlighted the relationship between the university and the current regime. The spatial conquest of the university perhaps was primary to the conquest of the social discourse and the military-political coup of 1981 and the [total] closing of the social public space. [The process of] Islamizing of the university was an important part of putting shackles on the society by the new power bloc, which had just begun battering the body of the revolution.

The rapid consolidation of the ruling regime within the life of Tehran University was the response given by Khomeini and his murdering cohorts to freedom, diversity and the collective splendor that the 1978 revolution had spread across the green grass of Tehran University. Taking the Friday prayers into the university space was done to guarantee the [continued] control of the university space by reactionary religious forces. [...] The goal of the Shiite clerics was to impose their own system of thought on the modern structures of the university. The weekly presence of numerous believers in Islam in a space which is [supposed to be] the main vessel of critical thinking, and the weekly sermons of the religious functionaries of the regime for the purpose of disseminating their thoughts and ideas, instead of disseminating concepts and ideas by academic and progressive forces, was a giant step by the regime in burying the revolution.

Now and once again, the university has been turned into the heart of the society. People

who, on September 18, raised the slogan, "When the university opens, Iran will see Armageddon!" (Daaneshgaah ke baaz besheh, Iran qhiyaamat misheh!), understand well the importance of fighting in the universities. The university is that nerve center that, with its [youthful] enthusiasm and idealism, can blunt and nullify those mercantilist type of calculations of a dictatorship-ridden society. It is also a nerve center that can prevent deviation and cooptation of the people's movement, and be the center for providing consciousness and alertness as well as defense of the interests of those whose voices have been expropriated, who have no spokespeople, and the oppressed. The dictatorship too, with its trembling, shows us the importance of this fight. The organized assault against the student activists, the absolute militarization of the university, widespread expulsions and the habitual Islamizing of the university are the regime's strategies for defeating the people in the university trenches.

The battle in the university is one of appropriating that space as one's own. By determining the subjects, by [implementing particular policies for] student admissions, by enforcement of [gender] apartheid, appointment of instructors from their own ranks, dragging their own ceremonies into the university space, expulsions, and imposition of dispersion and spreading of waves of reaction, the regime tries to achieve its goals. But, the students too, just like the ordinary people at the beginning of their new revolution, have realized that in order to defeat the enemy they must capture the university spaces. They do not fear, for they are all together. They have the power to cut off the hands of the rulers from their educational and living spaces.

The university, up to now, has been a collection of classes, spaces, doors and gates, corridors and books as well as cold and regime-afflicted discussions that the students merely passed through; a collection brimming with student populations, who are nonetheless captives of the rulers. A victory for the movement, however, means taking back this space from the regime.

[Continued on pg 13]

Editor:
Saeed Valadbaygi
Associate Editor:
Negar Esfandyari
Advice & assistance:
Abbas, Amin, Ana, Babak
Translation:
Sara, Navid, Elham, Negin, Mahan, Cristina, Pascal, Shohre, Keyvan, Arsham
Bahareh, Pegah &...
Newsgroup:
Saeed, Maryam, Bahareh, Amir, Lara, Negin, Sima, Kamelia, Kaveh,
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THE BRIDGE
J o u r n a l

From previous page (The University: Green Politics and Deep Politics?)...

Victory does not mean huge gatherings in defense of this or that political leader, a gathering, at the end of which everybody goes back to their previous situations and only some photos of flags and placards will remain of it in some media. Overcoming dictatorship means the creation of free and social spaces. Without such creations, and without taking back the university from the dictatorship, only an illusion of victory will remain in place.

Green politics or deep politics?

The higher education institutions in Iran bring together within them millions of students and tens of thousands of educators. If we add to that number the staff and workers employed in these institutions, it can be observed that compared to this large population, even thousands of thugs, Basiji's and killers of the regime are insignificant. The Islamic Republic can maintain its

quarters.

In deep politics, however, the main strategy is to take the university back from the ruling regime and to re-appropriate it. Women students who, in their dormitories and university surroundings, are subjected to discrimination, ridicule or repression, can challenge the baseless power of the religious interference and university administration with their collective organization; students can themselves determine the criteria regulating what to wear, how to behave, how to interact, etc. Their collective solidarity is their real power for taking back those spaces that in principle belong to them. In defending their right to engage in student-related and political activities, a majority of students organize themselves and break the blade of fear and oppression. They will voice their opinion about what to read and resist the imposition by the clergy of reactionary subjects on the university. They take control of their dormitory spaces into their own hands and defend their living



occupation of the university only on the condition of the indifference of a majority; just as it had an absolute occupation established on the streets only until the collective street movement of the people. Today, however, nobody in the university is indifferent. And this is exactly our point of departure:

Green politics, in recent days has been focused on showcasing general dissatisfaction regarding the coup. This policy tries to challenge the legitimacy of the current government and to legitimize its own political alternative.

Visualization of its sign as the color green, slogan writing its swift tactics, and organizing green sit-ins and gatherings are the ultimate tactics in its arsenal. This form of politics is still confused because the reformist leaders are as of yet incapable of formulating their larger goals and strategies. In this type of politics, the students keep doing busywork while they wait for further commands from the leadership head-

environment against the fascists. They organize free seminars, extra-curricular classes, study groups, they organize their own gatherings and [political] actions and determine their contents and defend them. With such a strategy, with every step taken backward by the dictatorship, a free and democratic space is created which in turn prevents the return of the dictators. The commitment or the treachery of political leaders will become clear with their commitment to, or treachery against, these collective efforts of the students.

Such an effort will provide the foundation for a nationwide federation or organization of the country's students. An organization that is open to all, and different groups are active within it while maintaining their positions, as factions, an organization that includes all students, and for this very reason will turn into the organized power of the students in the fight to push back dictatorship and to achieve freedom.

Letter of the Socialist Justice Party of Sweden to stop executions in Iran

To: Leader of the Islamic Republic: Ayatollah Sayed Ali Khamenei
The Office of the Supreme Leader Islamic Republic of Iran

Head of the Judiciary: Ayatollah Sadeqh Larijani
Let Safar Angoti and other juvenile offenders live.
Stop the executions!
The Socialist Justice Party of Sweden want to express our condemnation of all death penalties and in particular all notoriously vicious death sentences and executions of juvenile offenders, which seems to be a particularly barbaric practice of your government.

We would like you to know that our party remain in the forefront of the struggles against all US and EU imperialist wars and interventions such as the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq as well as against all imperialist threats against Iran. How-

ever, the barbaric violations that your government carry out against your own people such as executions of young people who have been sentenced to death as minors is no internal affair, but crimes against humanity.

We hereby declare our full solidarity with the Iranian people's own struggle to liberate themselves from any government that carry out such barbaric acts of repression.

We demand the immediate cancellation of the execution of Safar Angoti and all other juvenile offenders and the immediate end of the death penalty.

On behalf of the Socialist Justice Party of Sweden
Stockholm October 25th 2009
Arne Johansson

Member of the Executive Committee and editor of the Socialist Weekly Offensive .

Trial of Shabnam Madadzadeh to Take Place in 40 days

Branch 2 of Tehran's Revolutionary Court has for the fourth time postponed the hearing of Shabnam Madadzadeh, Vice President of Tahkime Vahdat. According to Herana news agency quoting Amir Kabir, the date given to Mohammad Oliaie, Ms. Madadzadeh's lawyer is 14 Azar. The lawyer and his client have objected to this the date. In response, the Revolutionary Court has announced that the hearing is based on an agreement with the Information Ministry and they have no power over it. Prior to this, they had given hearing dates of 23 Tir, 22 Shahrivar and 18 Mehr, all postponed for different rea-

sons such as negligence of the branch office manager or lack of prosecutor. This latest delay will bring Shabnam Madadzadeh's temporary detention to 300 days. Shabnam Madadzadeh who is a member of the Central Council of Tehran Teacher Training University and is Vice President of Tahkime Vahdat has already been detained for more than eight months. She has spent three of these in solitary confinement. Ms. Madadzadeh is charged with apostasy and propaganda against the regime. According to her lawyer such charges have no legal value. Her arrest was originally reported to the information offices by her brother Farzad Madadzadeh.

By: Karim Sadjadpour

My friend, the Iranian-American scholar Kian Tajbakhsh, was recently sentenced to 15 years in Tehran's Evin prison. For those familiar with the ways of authoritarian regimes, the charges against him will ring familiar: espionage, cooperating with an enemy government, and endangering national security.

Since his arrest last July -- he was accused of helping to plan the post-election uprisings -- Kian's family and friends have made countless appeals for clemency to the Iranian government, written letters to Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad pleading his innocence, and signed dozens of petitions. All to no avail.

I've come now to realize that the regime probably thinks we're obtuse. Indeed, they know better than anyone that Kian is an innocent man. As the expression goes in Persian, "*da'va sar-e een neest*," i.e. that's not what this fight is about.

Allow me to explain.

Kian was first arrested in 2007. His crime was having previously worked as a consultant for the Open Society Institute (OSI), a U.S.-based NGO. Though his work was nonpolitical, focused on educational and developmental projects, and had received the explicit consent of the Iranian government, he was accused of trying to foment a "velvet revolution" on behalf of U.S. intelligence agencies.

While in solitary confinement in Evin, he was subjected to countless hours of interrogation. Had the authorities found any evidence for the above charges during all this, Kian certainly would not have been freed after four months.

He was permitted to leave the country after his release, but chose to remain in Tehran with his wife and newborn daughter. He reassured his worried family and friends that he was now an open book to the Iranian government and there could be no further rationale or pretext to detain

The New Hostage Crisis

Why Iran's rulers imprison people they know are innocent

him.

Over the last two years, he regularly met with his minder from the Ministry of Intelligence. Aware of the fact that the government was monitoring all of his activities and communications -- including e-mail and telephone conversations -- he kept a very low profile and exhibited great caution.

During this period, Kian and I regularly exchanged e-mails. He urged me to read his favorite book, Polish writer Czeslaw Milosz's brilliant novel, *The Captive Mind*, which examines the moral and intellectual conflicts faced by men and women living under totalitarianism of the left or right.

On the 30th anniversary of the fall of the shah we debated the successes and failures of the 1979 Islamic Revolution, and he told me he believed that the former outweigh the latter. Hardly the worldview of a subversive counterrevolutionary.

Even amid the massive popular uprisings following the tainted June 2009 presidential elections, Kian remained cautious and unmoved, steering way clear of any political activity and continuing to meet with his minder.

On June 14, two days after the election, he wrote me an email saying, "I'm keeping my head down ... I have nothing to add to all the reports that are here." In the same e-mail, Kian even expressed skepticism about the opposition's accusations of electoral fraud, saying he had seen "little hard evidence."

A few weeks later he was arrested, bafflingly, on charges of helping to plan the post-election unrest.

Given the government's intimate familiarity with the benign nature of Kian's activities and communications, it appeared he was simply needed as an unfortunate

pawn in the regime's campaign to portray indigenous popular protests as orchestrated by foreign powers. Though the unrest gradually subsided, we went from counting Kian's detention in days to weeks to months.

Along with dozens of other prisoners, dressed in pajamas and sandals, he was forced to participate in humiliating show-trials that were broadcast on official state television. Hard-liners used Kian to attack their reformist opponents, inventing fantastic claims that he was the link between former President Mohammed Khatami and OSI founder George Soros.

Though his face looked visibly different, haggard, his two-year old daughter Hasti ran and kissed the television screen when she saw his image. His wife sobbed.

When our courageous mutual friend, Canadian-Iranian *Newsweek* reporter Maziar Bahari, was finally released from Evin after four months, we thought it boded well for Kian. These hopes were dashed by Tuesday's almost comically harsh sentence. 15 years!

The over-the-top severity of the sentence makes it eminently clear that this case really has little to do with Kian, and everything to do with Iran's negotiating posture toward the United States. A disaffected contact in the Iranian foreign ministry -- the vast majority of whom were thought to have voted for Mir Hossein Mousavi -- bluntly confirmed my suspicions. "*Eena daran bazi mikonan*," he told me. "These guys are just playing."

While neighboring Dubai and Turkey have managed to build thriving economies by trading in goods and services, Iran, even 30 years after the revolution, remains in the business of trading in human beings. In addition to Kian, Iran is now holding at least five other American citizens against their will, including three

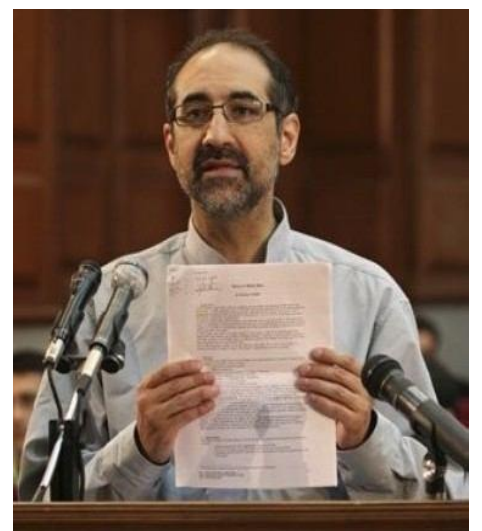
young hikers -- Shane Bauer, Sarah Shourd, and Josh Fattal (an outspoken Palestinian-rights activist) -- detained in June along the Iran-Iraq border in Kurdistan.

What, if anything, Tehran seeks in return for these human subjects is unclear, and frankly it's a difficult issue for Iran to broach, given that it undermines the accusations the regime has concocted. That said, the official line can often change abruptly, and for no apparent reason. After Iranian-American journalist Roxana Saberi was sentenced last year to eight years in prison (on preposterous charges of espionage), she was summarily released a few weeks later.

Until recently, it was accepted wisdom that the uptick in Tehran's repression of its own citizenry and detention of U.S. nationals was merely a reaction to the hostile policies of the Bush administration. This thesis is being quickly disproven as the Obama administration's hands-off approach to human rights in Iran proves equally unsuccessful in getting the regime to improve its practices.

Whether Republican or Democrat, U.S. officials are often puzzled by the detention of dual nationals, and unsure how to react to them. Do U.S. statements and/or diplomatic efforts help or hurt the cause of the detainees?

Based on the experience of several Iranian-Americans who have served time in Evin -- including esteemed scholar Haleh Esfandiari, Saberi, and peace activist Ali Shakeri -- we know that thoughtful public statements from U.S. officials coupled with behind-the-scenes intervention were helpful to their cause.



TOP 10 BOOKS (2009)

The Opposite of Love

by **Julie Buxbaum** Emily, a successful young Manhattan attorney, should be overjoyed when her boyfriend seems on the verge of proposing. Instead she finds herself abruptly ending her happy relationship for reasons she can't even explain to herself. As her world gradually starts to unravel there are laugh-out-loud moments but also times when the reader may be moved to tears.

Bad Traffic

by **Simon Lewis** Inspector Jian, a Chinese cop from the Siberian border, thinks he's seen it all. But when his student daughter phones him frantic for help, he is pitched into an alien and frightening world – the mean streets of rural England. He needs to hunt down a gang of ruthless people traffickers and he needs to do it fast, but he has two problems: no English and no cash.

Imagine This

by **Sade Adeniran** Lola is a nine-year-old child who is wrenched from all that is familiar and thrust into village life in Nigeria, a culture so alien and removed from her childhood in Kent, that she is left bereft and adrift.

The Fantastic Book of Everybody's Secrets

by **Sophie Hannah** Sophie Hannah, already well known for her acclaimed crime fiction and award-winning poetry, serves up these contemporary tales of the unexpected with a relish rarely matched since the offerings of Roald Dahl. The more comic the scenario, the scarier the consequences...

Vicky Had One Eye Open

by **Darryl Samaraweera** Vivid, honest and heart-wrenching, this novel chronicles how a patient, Vicky, and her family deal very differently with her lapse into a coma. Vicky's Sri Lankan family struggles to cope with the traditional closeness of their family unit, made increasingly claustrophobic by the confines of the NHS. Tensions amongst the waiting family rise, whilst Vicky openly invites the reader into her mind.

Random Deaths and Custard

by **Catrin Dafydd** Sam Jones is a perfectly ordinary Valleys girl. Except for the random deaths, that is. Random deaths she only just manages to avoid. Narrowly escaping decapitation by the kitchen cupboard, concussed by a fall on the bus, then saved from choking on a fish finger by a complete stranger on her doorstep, she begins to see her life as a succession of near misses.

Wild

by **Jay Griffiths** *Wild* is the product of Jay Griffith's journey to find a childhood view of wilderness. She spent seven years on the book and to complete her journey she gave everything that she had – time, money and energy. Her search took her from the freedom fighters of West Papua to icebergs where polar bears slept, from kindly cannibals to sea gypsies, and finally it yielded a sweet surprise, the knowledge that "what is savage is in the deepest sense gentle, and what is wild is kind".

Season of the Witch

by **Natasha Mostert** *Season of the Witch* tells the haunting story of a man who gets drawn into the mysterious world of two beautiful witch sisters who are practitioners of the lost, ancient Art of Memory. Part murder mystery, part love story, this novel is wholly original in both theme and scope and takes on big themes.

Fifteen Modern Tales of Attraction

by **Alison MacLeod** In *Fifteen Modern Tales of Attraction* you will meet lovers, would-be lovers and lovers gone wrong. You will discover modern life laid bare and the literature of the past re-imagined. You will travel from the Brighton seafront to the Nova Scotia coast. You will be in Ikea one minute and in the Hayward Gallery the next...

Catch a Fish from the Sea (Using the Internet)

by **Nasreen Akhtar** Insightful and gripping, this is the true story of the realities of searching for a lifetime partner using the internet. It is the powerful memoir of a thirty-something British Muslim woman of Pakistani origin who embarks upon a remarkable journey of the self, society, soul and love.

IT'S ME, HUMAN

If I were a vixen, the starling of tree

I would rip so

As if I was a partridge headed in the snow

Would ripped by

If I were a sickle, the middle of the wheat

I would break so

As if it weren't bread

Would break mine

If I were Creator, the complex law

I would release so

As if I'm a creature

Lawbreaker, ripped and broken

But, I'm a hawk bell leaning on goat's neck

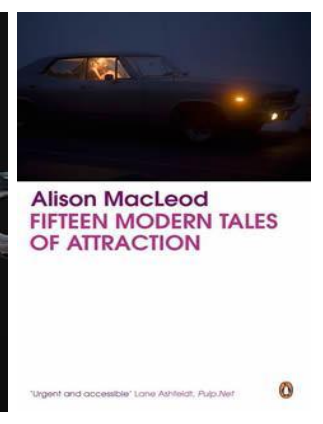
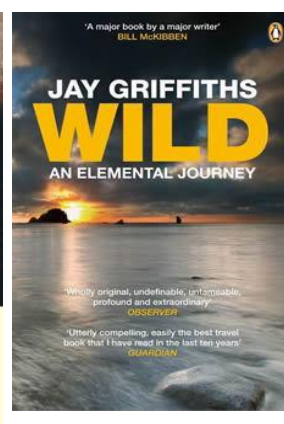
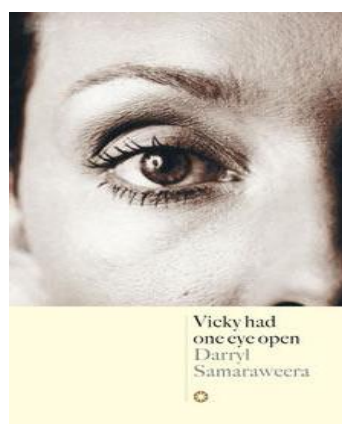
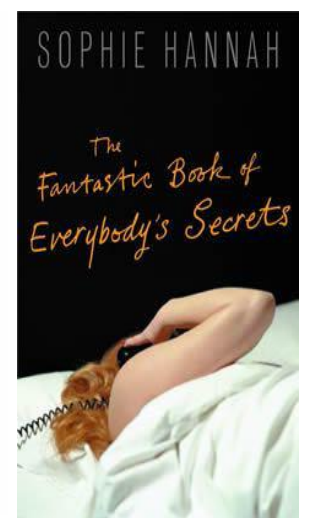
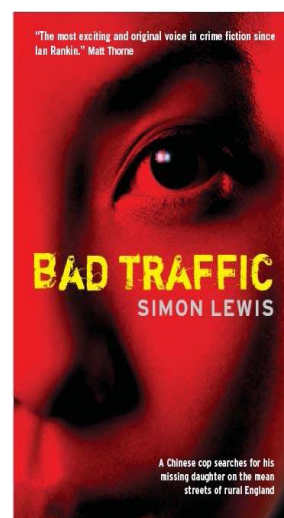
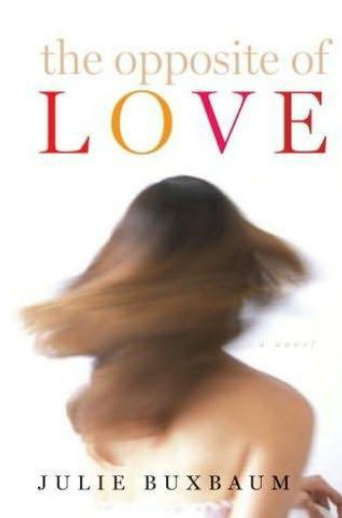
Hear me

Conquering of the tops

I would repeat thousand times...

Poet: Bahare Sh

DESCRIPTION: Goat: icon of human-capricorn zodiac sign



Shahin Najafi



Shahin Najafi was born in 1980 in [Bandar-e Anzali](#) in [Gilan Province](#) of [Iran](#). He studied [sociology](#) in university, but failed to obtain a degree after expressing a desire to learn sociology from within society rather than a classroom.

Originally working as a poet in Iran, he was also trained in both [classical](#) and [Flamenco](#) style guitars. He also began working with several [underground music](#) groups in Iran. Under pressure from the Iranian government to remove the political messages from his music, he immigrated to Germany in 2005, and began performing with **Tapesh 2012**.

The group was well received by the Iranian community and media, in part due to Najafi's socially and politically charged lyrics. He left the group at the beginning of 2009.

Najafi's songs are a mixture of protests against [religious governments](#), poverty, [sexism](#), censorship, and [drug addiction](#). The song *The Power Of Students In Iran* focuses on harassment encountered by progressive students in Iran, while *We Are Not Men* is a response to the government's attempts to suppress the burgeoning movement to secure [equal rights](#) for women.

Frida is a 2002 biographical film which depicts the passionately professional and private life of the [surrealist Mexican painter Frida Kahlo](#). It stars [Salma Hayek](#) in her [Academy Award](#) nominated portrayal as Kahlo and [Alfred Molina](#) as her husband, [Diego Rivera](#).

The movie was adapted by [Clancy Sigal](#), [Diane Lake](#), [Gregory Nava](#), [Anna Thomas](#) and [Edward Norton](#) (uncredited) from the book *Frida: A Biography of Frida Kahlo* by [Hayden Herrera](#). It was directed by [Julie Taymor](#). It won [Oscars](#) for [Best Makeup](#) and [Best Original Music Score](#) (recipient: [Elliot Goldenthal](#)).

"Frida" begins with the [traumatic](#) accident Frida Kahlo suffered at the age of 18 when a car trolley collided with a bus she was riding. She is impaled by a metal pole and the injuries she sustained plague her for the rest of her life. To help her through convalescence, her father brings her a canvas upon which to start painting. Throughout the film a scene starts as a painting, then slowly dissolves into a [live-action](#) scene with actors.

Frida also details the artist's dysfunctional relationship with the [muralist](#) Diego Rivera. When Rivera proposes to Kahlo, she tells him she expects from him loyalty if not fidelity. Diego's appraisal of her painting ability is one of the reasons that she continues to paint. Throughout the marriage, Rivera cheats on her with a wide array of women, while the [bisexual](#) Kahlo takes on male and female lovers.

The two travel to [New York City](#) so that he may paint the mural *Man at the Crossroads* at the [Rockefeller Center](#). While in the [United States](#), Kahlo suffers a [miscarriage](#) and her mother dies in [Mexico](#). Rivera refuses to compromise his [communist](#) vision of the work to the needs of the patron, [Nelson Rockefeller](#);

FRIDA

as a result, the mural is destroyed. The pair return to Mexico, with Rivera the more reluctant of the two.

Kahlo's sister Cristina moves in with the two at their [San Ángel](#) studio home to work as Rivera's assistant. Soon afterward, Kahlo discovers that Rivera is having an affair with her sister. She leaves him, and subsequently sinks into [alcoholism](#). The couple reunite when he asks her to

welcome and house [Leon Trotsky](#), who has been granted [political asylum](#) in Mexico. She and Trotsky begin an affair which forces the married Trotsky to leave the safety of her [Coahuacan](#) home.

Kahlo leaves for [Paris](#) after Diego realizes she was unfaithful to him with Trotsky. When she returns to Mexico, he asks for a [divorce](#). Soon afterwards, Trotsky is murdered in [Mexico City](#). Rivera is temporarily a suspect and Kahlo is incarcerated in his place when he is not found. Rivera helps get her released.

Kahlo has her toes removed when they become [gangrenous](#). Rivera asks her to remarry him and she agrees. Her health worsens, including the amputation of a leg, and she ultimately dies after finally having a [solo exhibition](#) of her paintings in Mexico.



Natalia and Leon Trotsky arriving in Tampico, Mexico, January 9, 1937, greeted by artist Frida Kahlo, center.

1688: The First Modern Revolution

A new history of the Glorious Revolution of 1688 labours too hard to prove that it was every bit as bloody as France in 1789 or Russia in 1917.

The future's orange

Thomas Paine, in his *Rights of Man* (1791), predicted that interest in the Glorious Revolution of 1688, "however from circumstances it may have been exalted beyond its value, will find its level. It is already on the wane, eclipsed by the enlarging orb of reason, and the luminous revolutions of Amer-

ica and France. In less than another century, it will go, as well as Mr. [Edmund] Burke's labours, 'to the family vault of all the Capulets'."

In this regard at least, Paine has proved a poor prophet. Since 2006, three new histories of the revolution of 1688-89 - when the Catholic James II was replaced as monarch by his Prot-

estant daughter Mary and her Dutch husband, William of Orange - have been published. Add to this Liza Picard's work on the Dutch influence on 17th-century English culture, Michael Barone's account of the revolution's impact on American history ...

[Continued on pg 21]

Does Obama really deserve the Nobel Peace Prize?

By: Elham

Everybody with a foot in the news world has gone bananas over Obama getting this year's Nobel Peace Prize, so why shouldn't I add my two cents? I am from a nation whom has been deeply effected by president Obama's recent actions and just wanted to yell out my input from a roof top, but saw *The Bridge* as a better source of communication.

Speaking from the Rose Garden President Obama announced that he would accept the Nobel Peace Prize. The president said that he does not view it as a recognition of his own accomplishments, but as a call to action for the international community to confront global issues.

The Norwegian Nobel Committee announced its decision to award President Barack Obama the 2009 Nobel Peace Prize for "his extraordinary efforts to strengthen international diplomacy and cooperation between peoples." The decision, a surprise to many, appears in large part to be based on Obama's campaign for the U.S. presidency. The deadline for nominations was February 1 meaning that Obama was nominated before serving his first eleven days in office.

An excerpt from the will of Alfred Nobel, the founder of the Nobel Prizes, instructs that the Nobel Peace Prize should be awarded "to the person who shall have done the most or the best work for fraternity between nations, for the abolition or reduction of standing armies and for the holding and promotion of peace congresses."

So how does Obama stand up against this criterion set by Nobel? Unfortunately not well.

The prize comes at a time when Obama has had little success in the way of creating or sustaining peace. The new president is currently debating Gen. Stanley McChrystal's recommendation to increase troop levels in Afghanistan due to increased U.S. casualties. In Iraq, 124,000 U.S. soldiers remain in armed conflict.

Further, the growth in U.S. military expenditures has continued. On Tuesday, the U.S. Senate approved \$636 billion in military funding, \$3.9 billion less than the White House requested. The propensity for armed conflict does not appear to be abating, which makes Obama a very odd choice for the Peace prize.

In the last few weeks, the Israeli-Palestinian peace talks have all but frozen under Obama's leadership, and the threat of nuclear Iran appears to make our current president mimic the words of our last one.

Put bluntly, President Obama does not deserve the Nobel Peace Prize. The current president lacks any significant accomplishment on the matter of conflict resolution with the exception of his beer summit on race relations earlier this summer.

The matter of international or domestic peace is the result of a body of work - not something accomplished in nine months. Obama now stands in a league with only two other African-Americans who have won the Noble Peace Prize: Dr. Ralph Bunche and Dr. Martin Luther King. A review of their work for domestic and international peace towers over the largely symbolic accomplishments of our current president.

There may be a time when President Obama is deserving of this award, but for now, he will have to try his best to live up to it.

As for my reaction, I'm with the many voices who think this is a way, way premature, and also with those who think Obama's best move would have been to [decline it peacefully](#), while saying he would be thrilled to be deserving at some later date., which by seeing his actions so far I highly would doubt that. The Nobel Committee might have felt dissed, but I believe he would have won enormous plaudits elsewhere.

Why is the prize ill-chosen? Because we all know that "talk is cheap," and thus far that's mostly what Obama has offered us. We're getting out of Iraq (though maybe not completely), but George W. Bush had already signed the deal to do that before he left office. We *aren't* getting out of Afghanistan any time soon. He's given a great speech in Cairo, and then whiffed on the follow-through towards Israeli-Palestinian peace. He's given another nice speech about eliminating nuclear weapons, but anyone want to bet on whether he delivers on that particular pledge? America's image is improved (except in the Middle East), but I can't think of a single conflict that has gone away (or even significantly decreased) since he took office. So far, his main tangible foreign policy achievement was getting the Olympic Committee to unite in rejecting Chicago's bid and awarding the games to Rio!!

More importantly, this award risks discrediting the prize even more than some earlier choices. We don't know what Obama will be forced (or will choose) to do in the rest of his presidency (which could last another 7+ years) and if he ends up escalating any existing conflicts or heaven forbid-starting a new one, it will make a mockery of the whole idea of the prize. I wouldn't be surprised if this award doesn't generate more than a little resentment around the world, especially if U.S. foreign policy changes less than many people still hope it will.

Finally, the Peace Prize is awarded by the Norwegian Nobel Committee, and all the Norwegians I've talked to thus far think it was a bizarre decision. One Norwegian friend had a simple explanation: the chairman of the committee is Thorbjorn Jagland, a former president of the parliament who is apparently something of a running joke in Norwegian political circles and famous for boneheaded statements.

Consider this a handshake congratulations to President Obama. The Nobel Peace Prize is nothing short of a tremendous honor.

With that said, I agree with the people questioning the reason. Yes, he's changed the way our 'president' is viewed. Going from Bush to Obama is perhaps the most drastic scenario possible. But he hasn't seen any of his plans come to fruition....yet

So far, and this is coming from the award presenter himself, Obama's presidential campaign "Hope and Change" has taken him to Infinity and Beyond. The man presenting the award said Obama was given the award because he represents hope and change.... notice he doesn't cite something accomplished or finished or tangibly beneficial.

At this moment in time, no, Obama does not deserve this prestigious award. Somewhere down the road? Sure. I absolutely think he will accomplish things and be the most deserving candidate. But now? I'm sorry. He falls ever so short.

In any case, I'm putting in for next year's peace prize now. I haven't done anything to deserve it either, but what if I promise to write a great book or article in the next twelve months that will substantially contribute to world peace? In fact, I'll even promise to retool as an economist and put a mathematical model in the piece, so that I'm eligible for two prizes, not one. OK?

From pg 1(**The United States and the Islamic Republic are using a weapon of mass destruction against the workers of Iran**)...

I speak for the masses, the class of workers and community generating people that have no capital other than the power of their work for sale. Poverty, unemployment, the high cost of living and inflation are nothing new in Iran. The people of Iran have for years lived with economic pressure, but in recent years the crisis ridden economic situation together with the failure of international policies in dealing with West have created very difficult circumstances for the Islamic Republic. These circumstances have advanced to the point where the government has fired its own fatal bullet. The legislative parliament of the Islamic Republic has in recent weeks approved a plan for "targeting subsidies". This occurrence is precisely the other side of a coin that is multiplied in America. Congress has finally approved the plan for "wider economic sanctions".

The aim of the plan approved by the Islamic Council is the eradication of "government subsidies" in the sale of energy such as oil and gas and petrol and electricity...and in addition some basic food stuffs. It has been predicted that in implementing this plan a figure in the region of 20 billion dollars (a quarter of the country's annual budget) will impose directly in the cost of living of the masses. The removal of subsidies is not a phenomenon particular to the Islamic republic but a common Bourgeois exercise for the so-called "efficient" economic function of the government. A directive that Ahmadinejad intends to implement so that the economic burden and budget deficit falls on the shoulders of the hardworking masses. But the other issue is that this plan corresponds with other bourgeois streams without consideration to political matters.

From multiple national-Islamic streams to pro-West nationalism to conservatives, from Dariush Homayoun to Khatami and Raf-

sanjani and Bani Sadr...all are in favour of this plan and this can be concluded from their queuing in front of the working class. Meanwhile the Islamic Republic is busy killing humans in the economic and welfare wheel in a far more lethal and inhumane way and it's not without reason that the entire so-called streams are sitting silently.

But Washington will put another plan - for "wider economic sanctions" -into action. US Congress with this decision that was apparently made in the face of Iran's nuclear program, will put the people of Iran under the most severe economic and social pressure so that in the end through the people's remonstrations it can be victorious at high level economic and political discussions. The direct outcome of approval of both these plans is unbearable pressure for the people of Iran. Economic sanctioning is a weapon of mass destruc-



tion, a weapon that is used by both poles against the people. The outcome of economic sanctions in the not too distant past and in Iraq show that close to 5,000 children and elderly lose their lives each month because of the effects of such sanctions. This figure should be multiplied for a 10-year period to see the effects of these weapons of mass destruction more clearly. Just as economic sanctions did not succeed in weakening Saddam Hus-

sein's government, they will not succeed against the inhumane policies of the Islamic Republic, but instead open the hands of the mafia gangs and government factions to loot the people all the more. Years of treatment against workers and various industrial sectors by the Islamic Republic -

The outcome of economic sanctions in the not too distant past and in Iraq show that close to 5,000 children and elderly lose their lives each month because of the effects of such sanctions. This figure should be multiplied for a 10-year period to see the effects of these weapons of mass destruction more clearly...

particularly in recent months - are testament to the country's economic mafia. A mafia that was even drawn into pre-election television debates, and whose cases became the subject of discussion in front of people's eyes. As a result of the current situation, every day a large section of the news is devoted to the workers and this alone is a small corner of the common pain that every day resounds and punches and rebels from the dilapidated low ceilings of the lower classes of society. Iran's workers know well that they must stand against inhumane policies and with their own

worker action with inhuman sentences, against the most diligent members in the community, making itself the most damned of all time in its downhill slope. Before this the Islamic Republic had issued flogging and prison sentences to workers in Sanandaj. Their crime was the participation in International Worker's Day on 1 May. The Islamic Republic by suppressing syndicate leaders like Mansour Osanloo and Ebrahim Madadi for the strike action of bus drivers, has shown that it will stop at nothing in its attack of workers and their rightful demands. But in recent days there is different news in the papers. Yes, more prison sentences for worker leaders and this time the syndicate leaders of Haft Tappeh Neishekar, who in recent years have represented well the workers' struggle against the government. The Islamic Republic has issued prison sentences for these workers. Their crime is establishing syndicates and organizing strikes in an effort to collect their overdue wages. This is a clear and shameless attack on the workers that must be answered by people nationwide.

A few days ago the workers of Ahvaz Pipeworks and Wagon Pars took to the streets in protest against anti-worker laws and non-payment of overdue wages. Setting fire to tyres and taking control of the roads surrounding the town and factory, they sounded the siren of the workers revolt. Though insignificant and reactionary slogans may be heard these days, the breath of the workers' fight for their rights with national organization gives hope for the future of the workers' movement. Workers' protests are of the most popular forms of protest in society as we have witnessed in recent days when the people of Ahvaz in their hundreds joined the workers' protest, shouting slogans against the policies of the government. Before this, in the run up to elections the workers announced that they would not participate in the elections and that they believed that they would not take place in democratic conditions to the benefit of the majority.

[Continued on pg 20]

From previous pg9 (**The United States and the Islamic Republic are using a weapon of mass destruction against the workers of Iran**)...

When Moussavi visited the south of Iran, workers carrying countless placards announced that all the election candidates were of the same ilk and that none had a distinguishable programme for the welfare and improvement of workers' conditions. Therefore not only would they refrain from taking part in the elections but they also take exception to the status quo. As such the workers' presence on the streets cannot be on account of the reformists and representatives of Moussavi and Khatami and seized in the name of the green movement. The desires of this movement were clearly stated on 1 May, International Worker's Day. I will end this piece with a statement from the Free Workers Union of Iran, which expresses and represents the workers' voices directly:

Iranian Workers' May Day Resolution

The present financial crisis and its destructive consequences for the working class around the world is yet to spread its ominous shadow on the everyday life of the Iranian workers; But the injustices they suffer is nothing but the outcome of the rule of the Iranian capitalist class.

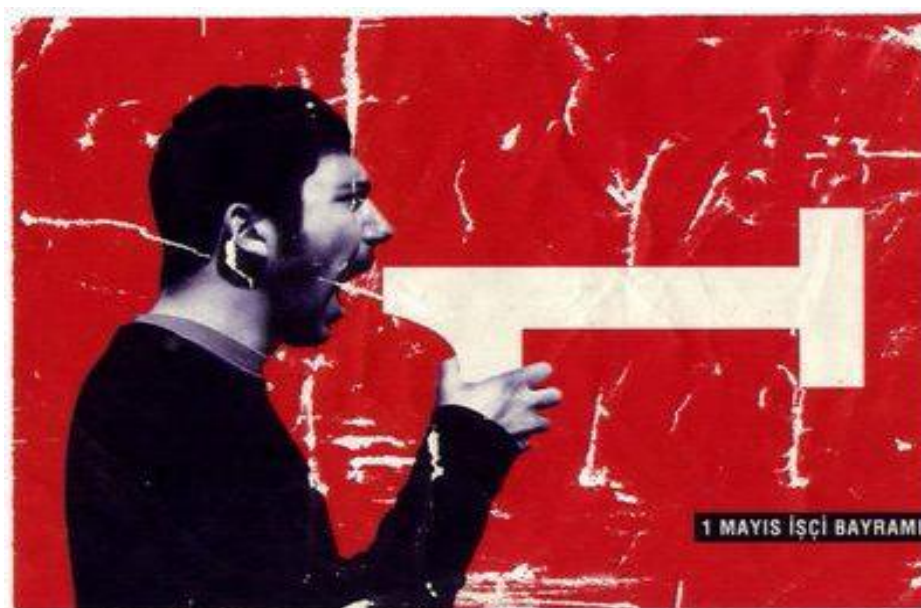
Injustices such as:

Wages that keep workers under the poverty line, Widespread layoffs, Withholding of workers' wages for months, Imposition of temporary and blank contracts on workers by companies, Imprisonment and flogging of workers in order to inhibit disobedience and resistance, The absence of fair and legal contracts.

These are not problems that have emerged in Iran with the new wave of economic crisis. Such injustices have existed in Iran for many years and the crisis is deepening every year. We shall not keep quiet in the face of such abhorrent and inhumane practices, and will not allow them to infringe upon our rights any more than they already have. We are the principal producers of wealth in the society, and we deem it our lawful right to live according to the highest standards of living.

1 May is an international day of solidarity among the working class and a day of workers around the world's struggle against the oppressive rule of capitalism and an expression of their desire for a world free of oppression and exploitation. This year the working class is celebrating May Day as the world capitalist system is mired in an increasingly destructive economic crisis and is struggling to free itself from this quagmire by any means possible.

The present economic crisis has demonstrated the inability of the capitalist system to deal with its problems, having found no alternative but to transfer the brunt of the crisis onto the shoulders of the working class around the world. This bears witness to the fact that in the post Eastern Block era and the declaration of the end



of history by the decadent capitalist world, there remains no other alternative for the working class and the civilized world but to free itself from the inhumane capitalist relations of production.

We deserve a decent lifestyle and we will make sure we alleviate these problems by forming unions, which are independent of government and company influence, and by our ongoing solidarity.

Therefore, our workers demand the following as a minimum programme to take effect immediately:

1-Job security for all workers and the abolition of temporary, blank and newly-formulated contracts.

2-We consider the minimum wage set by the high council of labour as the imposition of gradual death on millions of working

class families, and we insist on the immediate increase of the minimum wage on the basis of workers' legitimate demands, conveyed by workers' real representatives and their independent unions.

3-The Formation of independent workers' unions, the right to strike, protest, free gatherings and free speech are our legitimate rights, and these demands must be granted unconditionally as the inalienable rights of all workers.

4-Workers' unpaid wages must be settled immediately and from now on, this exercise must be deemed a criminal act, prosecutable in the courts of law and the consequences enforced.

5-Firing of workers by using various excuses must stop and all those sacked, or newly entering the job market, should benefit

from employment insurance suitable for a decent living standard.

6-We demand equal rights for men and women in all aspects of economic and social life and we demand the abolition of all existing discriminatory laws.

7-We demand a decent pension plan for all retirees and we condemn any discriminatory practices in the payment of these pensions.

8-We firmly support all the demands put forth by teachers, nurses and all other hard-working white collar workers, and we consider ourselves their ally in their struggle. We also demand revocation of Farzad Kamangar's death sentence.

9-As seasonal and construction workers are deprived of the necessary social insurance rights, we support their struggle to achieve their humanitarian rights and a decent living.

10-Capitalism is the driving force behind child labour. We demand that all children, irrespective of their gender, ethnicity and religion, be able to benefit from equal educational, health and hygiene opportunities.

11-We demand the release of all incarcerated workers from prison, including Mansour Osanloo and Ebrahim Madadi, and the revocation of all judgments rendered against them, and an end to the arrests and harassments of workers.

12-We hereby pronounce our support for all freedom-loving and equity seeking movements, such as the student movement and women's movement, and we strongly condemn the arrest and imprisonment of their activists.

13-We are part of the international working class movement, and as such, we condemn the random sacking and the double exploitation and harassment of Afghan and other migrant workers in Iran.

14-We are grateful for international working class support for our struggle in Iran, and we are their allies in solidarity with their struggles against the hardships imposed by the capitalist system.

15-1 May must be declared a civic holiday in the Iranian calendar and any ban on May Day celebrations must be revoked and prohibited.

Long live May Day!

Long live the international solidarity of the working class!

May 1, 2009

May First Committee

Syndicate of Workers of Tehran

and Suburbs Vahed Bus Com-

pany Syndicate of Workers of the

Haft Tappeh Sugar Plantations

Free Union of Workers in Iran

Founding Committee of the Syn-

dicate of Builders and Decora-

tors

Collaborative Council of Labour

Organizations and Activists

Coordinating Committee to Form

Workers' Organizations

Committee to Pursue the Estab-

lishment of Free Work-

ers' Organizations

Women's Council

Centre for Workers' Rights in

Iran

...

Saeed Valadbaygi

Reformists and the Coup Government Cooperate in Keeping the Protesters Inline

By: Ramin Rahimi

In the last days of the initial period of Anti Coup demonstrations (June 12th to August 17th, 2009) the slogan, “Independence, Freedom, Iranian Republic” began to echo in the demonstrations. This slogan of the people was a direct response to the reformists, whom by forming the “Green Path of Hope” Party, were intending to prevent the people’s demands to surpass the framework of the Islamic Republic regime, and the channels that can be contained by the regime’s inner-circles. However, the people, by chanting this slogan had bluntly declined the reformists’ proposed goal of the “Execution of the Islamic Republic’s Constitution in Totality” and showed that their aim is to replace the Islamic regime with a democratic order. (1)

After the August 17th, when the daily demonstrations turned in to an apparent “calm”, gave both sides of the regime (the Coup Supporters & the Reformists) an illusion that the street demonstrations will give way to more accepted forms and this slogan will fade away from the minds of the people. But, pervasiveness of this slogan in the Ghods Demonstration – i.e. Jerusalem’s day (September the 18th) – woke the statesmen out of their fantasy and showed that during the period of “calm”, not only the people have not forgotten the demand of over-passing the Islamic Republic, but also, they have combined it with the rejection of submissive and surrendering attitude towards the suppressing forces, replacing it with more aggressive street tactics of attacks and counter attacks to protect the protest lines. These defensive actions of our militant people and the youth in reaction to the police and thugs’ brutality, shook both sides of the regime in their foundations and alarmed them that if they do not change their approaches, there will be nothing left to compete for.

From the morning after the Ghods’ demonstrations, speakers

of both wings of the Islamic Republic, frightened of what can happen on the “Pupils’ Day” (November 3rd) demonstrations, ascended to the top of their religious stands and tribunes to condemn this slogan and the “destructive” actions and call on the people to change the struggle’s direction by respecting laws and the Constitution of the Islamic Republic. Funny, is the fact that the first broadcasted statement in this regard came from the chief of security, Ahmadi Moghadam, clumsily admitting to the Special Units’ ineffectiveness and added: “We do not have a problem with the Green Movement or any other movement that would protest within the limits of the law, or even outside of it, as long as they do not act chaotically. But, if there will be commotions leading to disturbance, then the security forces will act firmly.” With this speech, he offered the Reformists some leverage to convince the people that if they want to prevent repression, then, they must refrain from radical demands back into the framework acceptable to the regime. On the other hand, in two Friday Prayer sessions after the security chief’s speech, Ahmad Khatami and, Janati (2 coup supporters) directed their speeches to the people chanting the “Iranian Republic”, threatening them with the accusation of “War on God” and the verdicts of execution. Right along such threats, and the retreat of the security force chief, on the coup supporters’ side, the reformists also started to move along the same direction. First one who brought the matter under attention was Mir Hussein Mousavi during his 12th and 13th public messages. Here, we read in “Ayandeh” website, bonded to the reformists, reporting of the Mousavi’s messages: “Hearing caustic slogans \during the Ghods (Jerusalem) Day demonstrations from people who were presenting themselves as Mousavi’s supporters and members of the Green Movement has caused some of the country’s concerned elements to be worried; in his recent texts, Mir Hussein Mousavi has warned that

the protesters might fall into a dangerous structure breaking traps and has explained about his move that: “These statements and the previous actions and statements were meant to keep people’s struggles within the system’s framework and not to fall into traps of these structure breakers... we cannot forsake our duties to prevent its happening in order to please the ones who cannot see this hazard, the same way that without proving our dedication to people’s demands and speaking on their behalf in our speeches we cannot invite them to calm.”

Now, it has been over two weeks that political observers are convinced that on November 3rd – Pupil’s Day – there is going to be yet another mass demonstrations in the capital city and, all over the country by the people. Genuine and influential groups have announced their support for demonstrating on this date with calls of participation to their supporters. As of today, only few days more than two weeks is left to this action. Both wings of the regime are aware that asking people not to attend is futile. Hence, as we get closer to this event, both of the regime’s Coup Supporters and the Reformists, increase their efforts to effectively impress the people to limit their struggle and demands to the framework of the Islamic Republic Constitution and to a tolerable level of action. The Coup Supporters’ stand is quite clear. Verbally they have retreated in front of this slogan and the radicalization of the tactics used by the people in Ghods (Jerusalem) day, and as Ahmadi Moghadam indicated they are ready to respect popular right of assemblies under the condition of keeping them within system regulations. Although we know better than to believe such claims. The repressive forces on November 3rd – be it people’s chanting is limited in saying “Allah o Akbar” and “Ya Hussein, Mir Hussein,” or they escalate to the level of saying “Death to Khameneyi (The Leader)” and “Down with Islamic Republic” they will act as they have previously done.

Meaning, wherever they are stronger than the people, they will brutally take the offensive; and, wherever confronted with a mass concentration of the people, they shall hide in allies and passageways.

However, on the Reformists side, day by day, they will expand their activities, relying on their mass media, and that of their Western Countries’ supporters’, propagating even greater lies and empty promises to fool the people in to submission.

The most shameful lie is the claim that if slogans such as “Iranian Republic” and, other slogans that indicate a departure from the Islamic Republic dictatorship is chanted, then, the repressive forces will find an excuse to violently attack the demonstrations. As if when these slogans were not used and people’s actions and demands were within the autocratic regime’s laws, then the suppressive forces did not attack the demonstrations. Even a single primary school student cannot be fooled by such a lie. The repressive forces were murdering the people when their slogan was only “Where’s My Vote?”, , they killed , tens of individuals, such as Neda and Sohrab, using sniper shots from the rooftops of the buildings, just to create terror to discourage peoples’ participation in peaceful protests. There are many more individuals that their whereabouts are unknown since the very first days of the protests. They are sacrificed for believing in reformist illusions. Khameneyi (The Leader) ordered shootings in the crowd when Mousavi and Karoobi’s suggestion of “Silent Demonstrations” was carried out by the people. With further research and investigation we can see that the retreats in suppressions and killings and finally verbal retreat of the coup government began after the slogans and demands were elevated to the levels of rejecting the totality of the Islamic Republic and the change of tactics to confronting the repressive forces.

From previous pg(**Reformists and the Coup Government Cooperate in Keeping the Protesters Inline**)...

Making such fallacious claims are the evidence for insincerity of the reformist forces and its leadership toward the people, who count themselves as members of the Green Movement. Since, the others were already aware of their ill wills, as individuals and a group, and had no illusions of their leadership to follow their directives. Thus, such sayings are only to deceive the people who have faith in their veracity. We advise that group of people to come out of this illusion and influence and stand beside the majority of the people, taking decisive steps toward democracy.

But the most important of these lies is the claim that people who chant "Iranian Republic" are only a small number of the people and

political activists whose line is dictated from abroad and chant incompatible slogans. This lie is intended to deceive the new comers to the movement, since whoever that was in the Ghods day demonstration knows that how widely the slogans calling for Islamic republic's downfall and specially, call for "Iranian Republic" was chanted. This also indicates how these liars are on the same boat as the coup supporters. Since, until yesterday, and even now, they have been making such allegations against the reformists themselves. The story of Ahmadinezhad calling the demonstrators as "Twigs and Dusts" dependent to the foreign powers is still young and fresh in everybody's mind.

Another one of these false claims of the reformist media and their mercantile writers is that chanting the radical slogans causes schism in the ranks of the people

and will lower the number of participants in the protests. This is the complimentary propaganda to their last claim. Then again, to whoever participated in the demonstration on Ghods day, it was clear that these slogans were chanted by almost all the participants, and not only did it not cause division among them, but raised the level of the unity of the people against the current regime's forces. There is only a very few number of the ones in power and their bought out reformist cadres and agents, who have separated themselves from the people's majority through opposing such slogans. Our suggestion to them is that to prevent disunity and tension among the masses to stop their false propaganda and respect people's will and demands.

Anyhow, as we are getting closer to the November 3rd Demonstration, the false claims and lies of

the regime leaders (Coup Supporters and Reformists) and their lackey writers will become more disgusting in nature and diversity. Therefore, through relying upon experiences we have gained during these struggles, we must strive to broaden its popular base; by calling out to the oppressed classes, the toilers and popular movements, which are already involved in their separate struggles, to join ranks in these central and national political protests. We should go forward with more organized steps and clearer demands, rejecting all calls to compromise by the reformists and coup supporters.

Down with the Islamic Republic!
Bread, Housing, Freedom, Soviet Republic!
<http://nedaanews.com/English/?p=135>

Former opposition candidate Karroubi beaten during visit at media fair

On Friday, heavy skirmishes took place between supporters and opponents of the Iranian opposition leader Mehdi Karroubi. As reported by news agency ISNA, the fights began when Karroubi arrived at a fair in Tehran, and his supporters chanted slogans. As a result, the defied candidate of the presidential elections in June had to leave the premises, and apparently he also got beaten.

Photos show the cleric without his white turban and with a red scratch in his face. According to news agency Mehr, the police did not arrest anybody, and claimed that Mr Karroubi's appearance at the fair had caused the fights.

The European Union on Friday expressed concerns about the human rights violations committed by the Iranian government in the context of the controversial presidential election of June 12. The Swedish EU Concil Presidency in a statement condemned the "continuing arrests" of journalists and human rights activ-



After leaving the media fair, a supporter of Ahmadinejad threw a shoe at Karroubi

From pg 16 (**1688: The First Modern Revolution**)...

and the translation into English of much important research by scholars from the Netherlands, and you could be forgiven for thinking - incorrectly, if this particular reviewer's sales are anything to judge by - that the history book-buying public has an insatiable thirst for all things glorious and revolutionary.

So, is there space in this crowded field for Steve Pincus's hefty new tome? The short answer is yes, because what Pincus offers is not yet another narrative treatment of the 1688 revolution's causes and consequences, but instead a lengthy, interpretative essay that stakes a claim for England's last 17th-century revolution as the world's first modern one. This might make the book a less-than-ideal entry point for the uninitiated, but its ambitious scope should secure it a broad audience. And that is because Pincus is moving into territory resembling more that of the late sociologist and political scientist Charles Tilly than the narrow, parochial furrow ploughed by most scholars of later-Stuart Britain.

According to Pincus, England's revolution of 1688-89 established the fundamental pattern followed by all uprisings since, from France in 1789 to Cuba in 1959. Pincus suggests that modern revolutions do not represent the clash of the

progressive with the traditional, nor even the replacement of one mode of production with another. Rather, they are the product of the conflict between rival modernisation movements, culminating, usually violently, in the profound transformation of the state.

In the case of England, the rival teams of modernisers were made up of James II and his Catholic advisers on one side and the Whigs and their Dutch helpmeet William of Orange on the other. According to Pincus, James idolised Louis XIV and sought to create a modern absolutist state, and an accompanying empire, along French lines. Though outwardly he pursued the goal of religious toleration, the authoritarian James really had little truck with religious pluralism and made no secret of his dislike for the Huguenot refugees who had flocked to English shores in flight from Louis's persecutory policies.

[Continued on Pg 25]

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At this year's World School of the International Marxist Tendency held at the end of July, Alan Woods delivered a speech on the nature of the present crisis of capitalism, in which he deals with the relationship between the economic cycle and the class struggle, and also looks into what kind of recovery we can expect, considering the enormous contradictions that have accumulated within the system.

The economic cycle and the class struggle

The world is experiencing the deepest crisis since the 1930s. Trotsky pointed out that one of the most difficult and complicated tasks that faces Marxist analysis is to answer the question, "Through what phase are we passing?"

There is no such thing as a final crisis of capitalism. The boom slump cycle has been a constant feature of capitalism for almost two hundred years. The capitalist system will always eventually get out of even the deepest economic crisis until the system is overthrown by the working class.

This is evident. But the concrete question is: how do they get out of the crisis and at what cost? And the second question is: what is the relationship between the economic cycle and the consciousness of the working class? Trotsky explained many times that the relationship between the economic cycle and consciousness is not an automatic relationship. It is conditioned by many factors, which must be analysed concretely.

There are two marvellous articles by Trotsky that deal with this question: "[Flood-Tide](#)," which you will find in "The First Five Years of the Communist International". The other article of fundamental importance was written in 1932, that is to say, during the deep crisis that followed the 1929 crash. It is called "The Third Period of the Comintern's Errors" (January 8, 1930). These two articles deserve to be discussed thoroughly at every level.

The Crisis of Capitalism and the tasks of the Marxists – Part One

It is an elementary proposition of dialectical materialism that human consciousness is innately conservative. Most people don't like change. They resist new ideas. And they will cling to the existing forms and ideas of society until they are compelled to abandon these ideas on the basis of the massive hammer-blows of events.

The present situation of world capitalism reminds one of what Trotsky said in 1938.

"Objectively speaking, the conditions for world Socialist revolution are not only ripe and mature, but they're rotten ripe!" The situation has revealed its bankruptcy from a historical point of view. That is clear to everybody. And yet we are left with a contradiction, a paradox. If this is true, why is it that the forces of Marxism still remain a tiny minority?

The answer to that question is very simple. Consciousness is lagging far behind the objective situation. The mass organizations of the working class are lagging far behind the real situation.

Above all, the leadership of the proletariat is lagging far behind the objective situation.

These factors did not drop from the clouds, but they have been conditioned by decades and generations of capitalist economic upswing, of full employment, relative improvements of living standards. This has been the position, particularly in the advanced capitalist nations, not for a short time, but for a period of over fifty years. That is what conditions the consciousness of the working class in Britain, in France, in Spain, in the USA. Of course the conditions in the so-called "third world" are different.

Consciousness of the working class

It is a very serious mistake for revolutionaries to confuse what

we understand with how the masses see things. Most workers, you must understand, the masses, don't have the same consciousness as the Marxists. The first effect of a deep crisis, a deep slump - and this is a deep crisis - as far as the masses are concerned, is shock. The workers are stunned, traumatized, and they don't understand what is happening.

Most of them believe that the crisis will be temporary. They draw the conclusion that if they pull in their belts, make sacrifices, put their heads down, eventually things will get better and they will go back to the previous conditions. From the standpoint of most ordinary people, this is a fairly logical assumption. This crisis appears to be something



abnormal, something out of the ordinary. And people want to get back to the "good old days".

The "leaders" of the working class, the trade union leaders, the Social Democratic leaders, the former Communists, the Bolivarian leaders, all encourage the idea that this crisis is something temporary. They imagine it can be solved by making some adjustments to the existing system. And when we talk of the subjective factor, the leadership, we must also understand that for us the leadership of these organizations is not a subjective factor. It is an important part of the objective situation, which for a time can hold the process back.

Of course, this idea of the reformists, that all that is needed is more control and regulation, and that we can return to the previous

conditions, is false. This crisis is not a normal crisis, it is not temporary. It marks a fundamental break in the process. That does not mean that there cannot be a recovery of the business cycle. That is inevitable at a certain point.

At this moment in time, the bourgeois economists and politicians, and above all, all the reformists, are desperately seeking some sort of revival to get out of this crisis. They look to the recovery of the business cycle for salvation. They are constantly talking about the "green shoots" of recovery. But so far the "green shoots" are extremely weak and almost invisible.

The measures which have been taken by all the Capitalist governments in the world, from a standpoint of orthodox capitalist economics, are completely irresponsible. The only explanation for these measures is panic. The ruling class is terrified of the social and political repercussions of the economic crisis. That is why they are pumping vast sums of money into the economy and they are creating huge unprecedented levels of debt. As everyone knows, sooner or later debts must be repaid. That in itself is a recipe for a gigantic crisis in the future.

What kind of "recovery"?

It is absolutely clear that some kind of recovery in the business cycle is inevitable at a certain point. But it is equally clear that it will not solve any of the problems facing capitalism. On the contrary, it will prepare a newer and deeper economic crisis, and above all a deep social and political crisis. The bourgeoisie is desperately trying to recover the economic equilibrium, which has been shattered by the collapse of the last year to eighteen months. The problem that they face is that all the measures that they have taken to restore the economic equilibrium will completely destroy the social and political equilibrium.

[Continued on next pg]

From previous Pg ([The Crisis of Capitalism and the tasks of the Marxists – Part One](#))...



There is an interesting article by Trotsky, written in 1932 — at the very lowest point of the economic crisis — called “[Perspectives for the Upturn](#)”, where he refers to the effects of the economic crisis on the consciousness of the masses. He says the following:

“Discontent, the wish to escape poverty, hate for the exploiters and their system, all these emotions which are now suppressed and driven inward by frightful unemployment and governmental repression, will force their way out with redoubled energy at the first real signs of an industrial revival.”

It is a very concrete question. Workers see the factories are being closed, their jobs are at risk, their families are at risk, the trade union leaders don’t offer any alternative. So temporarily this has a restraining effect on strikes. But when there is even a small upturn, and they see that the bosses are no longer sacking people but taking a few people on and the order books are beginning to fill up, this can act as a powerful stimulus to the economic struggle.

For example, there is world overproduction in steel. There’s “too much steel” (for the limits of the capitalist system, that is). This is related to a sharp fall in the production of cars. There is something like a thirty percent excess capacity in the automobile sector worldwide. And excess capacity is only another way of saying overproduction. The car manufacturers are selling off their surplus stocks, closing factories and sacking workers. But once they finish running down the stocks, there will be a certain small im-

provement, which will serve to embolden the car workers to take action.

Let us take a historical example. In the United States, from 1929 to 1933, there were no strikes. No movement, except riots of the unemployed. But when there was a slight upturn, in 1933-1934, there was the beginning of a huge wave of strikes and factory occupations, including the Minneapolis strike which was led by the Trotskyists.

That had an immediate effect on the mass organisations in the United States. It led to the creation of the CIO, the Congress of Industrial Organizations, which was a breakaway from the old craft unions, the American Federation of Labor. The CIO was a very radical union that organized previously unorganized sections of the workers. And we will see the same process again.

In the same article Trotsky writes that a revolutionary must be patient. Impatience is the mother of opportunism as well as ultraleftism. He also writes that every Party member must be obliged to join the trade unions. He stresses the need for the revolutionaries to establish closer links to the mass organisations, above all the unions. That is no accident. In a crisis, the workers feel the need for the mass organisations to defend their interests, and these organisations will be affected by the crisis.

Blindness of the bourgeois

Trotsky said in the [Transitional Programme](#) that the bourgeoisie is tobogganing to disaster with its eyes closed. These words could have been written yesterday. The bourgeois understands nothing; they don’t know what’s happening. They are in a state of panic. That is why they are taking these irresponsible measures. It is a sign of desperation.

This again is no accident. Lenin pointed out that a man on the edge of a cliff does not reason, he doesn’t think rationally. And the most ignorant and stupid section of the capitalists are the bourgeois economists. For the last twenty years they bragged and boasted that there would be no more boom and slump, that the cycle had been abolished. It is an actual fact, that in the whole of the previous period, for decades, the bourgeois economists never predicted a single boom and never predicated a single slump.

I might add that the same thing is true of Marxist economists. Over the years I have heard many wonderful theories put forth by many clever economists who claim to be

able to work out how to predict the cycle. I’ll tell you something: I wish they were right and that they would tell me the formula, in private. We could make a lot of money. But sadly, I have to say that for as long as I can remember, our own guesses at the specific movements of the economic cycle more often than not were wrong.

That is not an accident. Economics is not an exact science. It never has been, and never will be. All you can do is to explain the broad underlying processes and make an educated guess concerning the timing of events. Nevertheless, we are entitled to have a little laugh at the bourgeois economists. They worked out a wonderful new theory called the “efficient market hypothesis.” Actually, it’s a very old theory, there’s nothing new about it. It amounts to the old idea that: “Left to itself the market will solve everything. It will balance itself out. As long as the government doesn’t interfere, doesn’t distort this beautiful market mechanism, sooner or later everything will be ok.” To which, John Maynard Keynes issued the very celebrated reply, “Sooner or later we’re all dead.”

I can’t resist giving two quotes from prominent bourgeois economists, which are a confession of bankruptcy. Barry Eichengreen, a prominent economic historian, now writes: “The crisis has cast into doubt much of what we thought about economics.” And here is Paul Krugman, who was given the Nobel Prize for economics in 2008, only last year: “*For the last thirty years macroeconomic theory has been spectacularly useless at best, and positively harmful at worst.*” So that’s it: they confess that they haven’t got the faintest idea about economics, or anything else.

The whole system is breaking down. And now they try and comfort themselves with talking about the “green shoots” of recovery. Yet if you look at the figures you see that the US economy is continuing to decline, especially in the industrial sector. Although the fall seems to be less steep than it was.

Debt

I have got here the figures of the IMF. They have projected a recovery for 2010. This is a guess, it will probably be wrong, but I will mention these calculations anyway. Here is their wonderful perspective for next year: United States 0.8 percent growth; Japan 1.7 percent (which if you know anything about the history of Japan, is very poor); China (which has pumped huge resources into stimulating demand)

8.5 percent, and the European Union, a continued fall of 0.1 percent.

So what we are facing here in the best case scenario is an extremely feeble recovery, which will be accompanied, not by an improvement in living standards, but by ferocious attacks on living standards, cuts in public spending, and increased taxation which will fall on the working class and the middle class. Is this a scenario for social peace and stability? A recovery with those characteristics will serve to infuriate the working class and that will be accompanied by a wave of strikes and general strikes, you can be sure of it.

Let us deal now with the question of debt. The fact of the matter is that the bourgeoisie, particularly in the United States, is so terrified of the effects of a deep slump that it has been pumping in money and resources in a desperate attempt to avoid the slump getting any bigger. According to the IMF, the gross public debt of the ten richest nations by 2010 will be 106% of the gross domestic product. In 2007 it was 78%. That means an increase of extra debt, in three years, of *more than nine trillion dollars*. This is an incredible state of affairs. It is without precedent in the whole of history. And it cannot be sustained.

In the 1930s, Hitler resorted to similar policies through a massive programme of arms expenditure. In the USA, Roosevelt resorted to the New Deal, which, by the way, did not solve the crisis in America. What solved the problem of unemployment in America was not the New Deal but the Second World War. And the same is true for Germany. Hitler had to go to war in 1938, because if he hadn’t done so, the German economy would have collapsed. That was the fundamental reason for the Second World War: the imperative necessity of German capitalism to solve its problems at the expense of Europe.

Hitler solved the problem by the simple expedient of invading Europe and seizing all the wealth of France and its other imperialist rivals. However, the perspective of war now is ruled out. Nowadays, the European capitalists are in competition with the United States. Who is going to fight against the United States? The very idea is a joke. There cannot be a world war under these circumstances. Of course, there will be small wars all the time. Iraq was a small war. Afghanistan is a small war. There is a small war in Somalia. But a major war between the major powers is ruled out.

[Continued on next Pg]

From previous Pg ([The Crisis of Capitalism and the tasks of the Marxists – Part One](#))...

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I said that these figures of debt were unprecedented, but what I should have said is unprecedented in *peace time*. War is a different matter. After the Second World War, the public debt of Britain was 250% of gross domestic product. And America had a debt of over 100% of GDP. That was a result of the Second World War. But they solved these debts by an enormous economic upswing after 1945. I won’t go into the reasons for it because we’ve stated the reasons for this in previous documents (See Ted Grant: [Will there be a Slump?](#)).

The post-war upswing lasted for about thirty years (until 1974). But that is no longer on the agenda. No one is suggesting such a perspective. The bourgeois economists are all agreed that it will be a long and painful process to struggle out of the mess which they’re in now. And because they can’t go to war, all of the contradictions must be reflected internally in a ferocious class struggle. That is the real perspective for the next period.

The enormous accumulation of debt means years and decades of deep cuts and a regime of permanent austerity. We can express this as a kind of equation: the ruling class of all countries cannot afford to maintain the concessions that have been given for the last fifty years but the working class cannot afford any further cuts in their living standards. That is a recipe for class conflict everywhere. In the advanced Capitalist countries (including countries like Sweden, Switzerland, Austria) class struggle is on the agenda. *This perspective is the best perspective from our point of view.*

ABOUT WRITER

Alan Woods (born in [Swansea, Wales](#) in 1944) is a [Trotskyist political theorist](#) in the British [Labour Party](#). He is one of the leading members of the [International Marxist Tendency](#) and editor of the "In Defence of Marxism" website, [Marxist.com](#). In response to the [United States-backed coup attempt of 2002](#) in [Venezuela](#), he was an important figure in founding the [Hands Off Venezuela](#) campaign.

He was born into a working-class family with a strong [Communist](#) tradition. At the age of 16 he joined the [Young Socialists](#) and became a [Marxist](#) joining the [Militant tendency](#) within the [Labour Party](#). He studied Russian at [Sussex University](#) and later in [Sofia \(Bulgaria\)](#) and at the [Moscow State University](#) (MGU). He his wife and two small daughters, moved to [Spain](#) in the early 1970s, where he participated in the struggle against the [Francisco Franco](#) dictatorship, ^[citation needed] and speaks several languages, including Italian, English, Spanish, French, German and Russian.

From pg 21(1688: The First Modern Revolution)...

Similarly, England's Catholic king sought to weaken the independence of parliament, altering the political make-up of boroughs and corporations to ensure, he hoped, the election of pliant royal yes-men. In his American territories, too, James dissolved the representative assemblies of the New England colonies and placed them under the government of a hand-picked royal governor. Trade would also become a monarchical monopoly, with the king seeking to extend the grip he held over the slave trade through his involvement in the Royal African Company.



The Whigs, meanwhile, looked over the North Sea to the Dutch Republic for their political inspiration. They wanted to create a modern state based on commerce, not land, and sought religious toleration not only to protect tender consciences, but also because it was believed to be good for business. (Tolerant societies such as the Dutch provided refuge for skilled workers, such as the French Huguenots, fleeing intolerant rulers.) Likewise, the political analogue of a commercially successful nation was an open, participatory polity, responsive to economic interest groups and with a free press that would ensure the availability of the best economic information at all times.

Although ultimately the Whig modernisers were the victors, Pincus is keen to stress that their victory - given James's position of relative strength - was far from the preordained outcome that many contemporaries believed. The post-revolutionary state was not, he

contends, a moderate political fudge. Ending his discussion proper with an account of the outcome of the failed assassination plot against William in 1696, Pincus sees a nation transformed in its economic and foreign policy outlook and now officially wedded to Lockean ideas of rule by contract and consent.

Pincus marshals an impressive array of evidence to support his case - indeed, he has done an astonishing amount of archival research - and the book, though long, is compelling and forcefully argued. However, the argument is so bold that parts of it are less than convincing. For example, James II may have admired the government of Louis XIV, but it is not clear

that he was really attempting to erect a French-style monarchy. For one thing, his policies in North America - most notably the creation of the Dominion of New England - more closely resembled those of the Spanish vice-royalties than French colonial government.

In fact, in many respects, James's domestic policies followed those of his brother Charles II: the use of borough and corporation charter revisions to pack parliament, or the strategic employment of "declarations of indulgence" (toleration by royal prerogative). Overall, Pincus struggles to find a smoking gun that would show definitively that James or his advisers had a pre-prepared Gallic blueprint for a new kind of English state. Similarly, while it is true that some historians have underestimated the violence of the revolution of 1688-89 in England and Wales, the claim that it was more bloody than the French Revolution seems hard to sustain. Indeed, Pincus can come to this conclusion

only by including in his calculations British casualties from William III's European campaigns. It is never quite clear why he thinks he needs to show that the upheaval was so very nasty, except that this might elevate it to the status of the acknowledged mass bloodlettings in France or Russia.

The extremes to which Pincus pushes his argument are, however, one of the main attractions of his book. Not for him the cautious humming and hawing of so much academic writing. Pincus is, to re-deploy J H Hexter's description of Christopher Hill, a "lumper", not a "splitter". As with Hill, one might accuse him of taking a selective view of the many sources he consults - did people in the late 17th century really care that much about political economy? But, like Hill, he also manages to write in a way that is both contentious and thought-provoking. This is not the definitive history of the 1688 revolution, but it is a book that will prompt intense historical debate for many years to come.

By Steve Pincus

THE SHOW

Write on: The Silent Plaything and Hands behind the Scene

From the right side of crowded hall, rises trumpet yells

Spot-light showed reddish of the velvet curtain

Puppet (1): black-dirty-bold

Puppet (2): pallor-passionate-thoughtless

And ...

Puppeteers seem as the show

And Audiences seem as the tickets

And ticket sellers as their advertisements

And advertisers as ...

UH!

Dynasty of seemly, strangely likelihood!

Write on: Travelling Circus

Drums exciting hails heard this time

A fleshy man with upraised eyebrows and mustache

Walked through the circular square

Incessantly stalked by the spot-light

And absorbed people in his steps and dark blue clothes

Cage (1): lions and addicted felidae

Cage (2): white rabbits with red eyes

And ...

Tamed animals seem as the magicians

And Audiences seem as the rabbits in the hat

And ticket sellers as their advertisements

And advertisers as ...

OH!

Dynasty of seemly, strangely likelihood!

Write on: Red and Golden Medals

Who's that man lying flabbily as a piece of meat smoking his cigar?

His closet smells damp

You can feel badge of merits among his striped suites

While mum tries to fill up your pocket with nuts

Caused you not falling in love with Hitler or Oedipus complex

Character (1): sadistic

Character (2): masochistic

And ...

Children seem as their parents

And Schizophrenia seems as disorganized parents

And baby births seem as the ticket show

Here's ticket seller mentioned about advertisers: "say: Silencio"

-Silencio!

Poet: Bahare Sh

*DESCRIPTION: Silencio: The Spanish Word for silence .Used to quiet various size groups of people in a fast effective manner.