



The Basis of Socialism is the Human being ...

Socialism is the movement to restore human being's conscious will.

Mansoor Hekmat
1951-2002

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In real life, people have to act

Third Camp TV interview with Hamid Taqvaei, WPI's Leader, on the Manifesto against US Militarism and Islamic Terrorism

Patty Debonitas: In the Third Camp Manifesto against US Militarism and Islamic Terrorism, you raise six specific



points, which I would like you to address. The first point you raise is: 'No to war! No to economic sanctions!' As you said, 2006 when this was written was at the height of the crisis but the point is still very relevant to the situation today.

Hamid Taqvaei: Yes,

and, of course, economic sanctions are already in place.

Patty Debonitas: And we have seen what sanctions mean for people in Iraq; it has been quite terrible.

Hamid Taqvaei: Yes. The first point was written exactly against that.

And, as you said, it still makes sense, because the economic sanctions

are already to some extent in place, and there will be even more resolutions, later. Furthermore, the threat of a military attack is not over yet. Now the US authorities and the Islamic regime are involved in negotiations, but at the same time the US government has made it clear that the

A snapshot of WPI June 2008 activities

Siyavesh Azeri, WPI's International Relations Committee Secretary

In June 2008, the Worker-communist Party of Iran was active in a number of important campaigns.

One of the most striking events of the month of June was perhaps the strike of the workers of Haft-tape Sugarcane Factory that continued for more than 50 days. In a number of instances, workers clashed with the police and security guards and eventually, on June 20, they virtually occupied the factory and threw the general manager out of the complex. Workers were strongly supported by their families and the people. News coverage concerning the strike was

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option of military action is still on the table. The threat still exists and therefore the first point of the Manifesto is valid.

We have to make people aware of what is actually going on in case they don't know. Although I think now most people all over the world know what terms like "exporting democracy" really mean, thanks to the experience in Iraq. But the other pole of the terrorist's war, i.e. political Islam is less known. Especially in terms of what Islam in power, as in Iran's case, has done to the people under its control. We have to expose to the world the brutal and aggressive nature of the Islamic regime of Iran.

Patty Debonitas: *As a sponsor of terrorism?*

Hamid Taqvae: Not only that, but more importantly, as a terrorist state against the people of Iran.

We have to explain to the people in the West that when politicians or intellectuals speak of Islamic terrorism (the way Bush talks about it, or even when intellectuals interpret it), they are only talking about the threat of terrorist acts sponsored by Islamist forces, for example the Iranian regime, in other countries. All they have in mind is tragedies like September 11, Bali,

London, and Madrid. But this is just one side of the story, and certainly not the main part. The fact is that the regime in Iran or Islamist forces around the world, in any country they happen to be, terrorise people within those societies. This has been going on in Iran, for instance, for the past three decades. But I have never heard a word from Mr. Bush or Mr. Blair or from any other head of state against the internal terrorism that such regimes subject citizens to on a daily basis. They have never officially condemned, say, the stoning of women in Iran or Afghanistan. Never!

Patty Debonitas: *Barbara Bush said, I think a week after the US invaded Afghanistan, how lucky Afghan women would be because through that military action they were going to be liberated.*

Hamid Taqvae: But now they have stonings under Karzai as well.

Patty Debonitas: *Absolutely.*

Hamid Taqvae: It is still the same thing! They have gotten rid of the Taliban, but the regime they substituted it for is not much better as far as, for example, women's rights are concerned. And the same is going on in Iran, of

course. They are also killing people everyday. They are executing children. They arrest youth under eighteen, keep them in jail for as long as they need to turn eighteen, and then execute them. That is what is happening in Iran, routinely. I am aware, of course, that organisations such as Amnesty International condemn it, but politicians, the governments that seem to be against Islamic terrorism, won't even mention it. They won't even go anywhere near there! As I said, when they talk about Islamic terrorism, in fact they talk about the concrete clashes they have had with it in Iraq, Lebanon, New York, London, Madrid, and so on. They never talk about what is happening in Tehran, that is, what kind of life the Iranian people are actually languishing under.

Patty Debonitas: *Possibly two reasons. One is they accept the Islamic Republic as the 'legitimate' government of Iran, so they are not going to start attacking other governments as such.*

Hamid Taqvae: They want to change that government, but they won't criticise it!

Patty Debonitas: *Absolutely. And they are probably not so interested in the people. I think that is the real*

issue.

Hamid Taqvae: In my opinion, it is deeper than that. I think politically, even ideologically, Western states share the same standpoint as the Iranian regime. They are thinking along such lines as, for example, dividing societies into different religious, ethnic, and even tribal sections and dealing with governments as representatives of these divisions from pre-civil-society! That is the policy implemented by the West in Iraq and Afghanistan. The government the US and its chief ally, Britain, have helped to bring to power in Iraq is not much different to the Islamic regime in Iran.

Patty Debonitas: *Let's go to the second point: 'No to US militarism! No to political Islam!' We have already talked a bit about this. You wrote: 'The civilised world is not represented. They [i.e., the two poles] must be driven back.' Why have you singled out these two poles of terrorism, because there are obviously also other groups or acts of terrorism?*

Hamid Taqvae: The reason is that now we are confronted with the conflict between *these two* as the most powerful, internationally organised and expansive terrorist forces that

have for the past three decades brought nothing to the people of the world except death, destruction, and regression. People in the West or even all over the world may ask themselves which side they should take over the other. As if we have to support one of them against the other. Some people in the West, those who have had enough of Bush's policies, for example, may reason to themselves that they should only be against Bush's policies in Iraq. And that means, presumably, that any force that is against Bush and his policies is good! That is why we have forces in the West who call themselves 'Left', but are supporting Hezbollah in Lebanon, Ahmadinejad in Iran, and similar forces around the world! By saying 'No to US militarism! No to political Islam!' we aimed to confront this type of thinking.

Another way of thinking - examples of which you do not, of course, see too many of in the West - is found with some people in so-called Islam-stricken countries like Iran, where people are in fierce opposition to the existing Islamic rule, and may therefore decide to side with the opposing side, the Western power, i.e., pure aggression, in order to get rid of the savage regime. As hard as

it may seem to believe, these people are a small minority in Iran who have come to the conclusion that the US side is the right side; and even bluntly add, so let it invade us! They have no problem with invasion, they just want to get rid of the regime, and that's a fair price to pay according to them!

So, that's why we had to have the second point in the Manifesto which declares we are against both terrorist camps. After all, who says we have to choose the lesser of two evils when we have our own, third force? We have to get mobilised, organised, have an organised movement against both of them. Humanity is not being represented by either side. That is what this point says. It says that individual human beings, as well as humanity at large, the civilised world, are not represented by either pole. We are against both of them, and have our own voice. We are very powerful. If you want to go for it, you'll see that we can create a movement much stronger than the political Islamic movement or the new liberalism, multiculturalism and the postmodernist movement. That is the freedom and equality movement, if you like. That is the real, third force. So, the second point states that we do not have to choose between the

two equally anti-human camps. We can, and should, reject both, and mobilise our own movement, the movement of civilised, secular, egalitarian humanity, in opposition to them.

Patty Debonitas: *When you go to anti-war demonstrations or political events, there is a lack of alternatives. People were happy to see our Third Camp stalls. They were delighted that they had finally found a movement that was not waving a Hezbollah flag or supporting the US.*

Hamid Taqvaee: I think supporting others instead of representing your own radical and independent policies is a very bad tradition that we have had in the so-called Left movement in the West for many years. It's not a new thing. We saw such a Left throughout the Cold War era. Traditionally, for 60 or 70 years, the Left in the West has believed in a twisted logic that you have to choose between two poles of an opposition and support one of them against the other. We have also seen the same sort of thing in the so-called rainbow movements. We have not, for a long time, had in the West a socialist party or a Left movement that ever said we should have our own independent goals; we don't have to support somebody

against somebody else all the time! We have to create our own force against whatever we think is wrong.

From my perspective, it doesn't matter what kind of relations opposing camps have. They are both outside of the people's camp. People in the street cannot behave like politicians - make manoeuvres, compromises, and so on. The beauty of the people's force is that it is in the streets. It doesn't have to compromise; it doesn't have to play act like politicians. In the same way as a revolutionary movement can't behave like an MP. In the street you have to go for whatever you think is right and whatever is in the interest of the majority of the people, which is what the Third Camp says. It's a call upon the people of the world to be independent, to have their own banner, have their own slogans, have their own political goals, and go for them, start doing something about them.

We want to swim against the current of this tradition in the Left in Europe as well, and tell them to create their own, 'Third' movement against whatever they think is against the people. Against whatever is not right. You are not politicians; you are not creating a new parliament. You are creating a new movement, a

new mass movement. Mass movements have different mechanisms, different rules. They have to have ideals. People won't pour into the streets in order to cheer the lesser of two evils. No one will do that. They do, however, vote within the narrow, imposed boundaries of parliamentarism in this way. There the choice is, for example, between Labour and Conservative, and people choose, accordingly, between those two. But when the people take to the streets they go for their unrestrained ideals. That's what the Traditional Left does not realise, especially in the West, and that is why they are always so marginalised. They can't even secure a seat in the parliament, not because they don't want to, but because they don't represent the people's ideals.

Patty Debonitas: *And people don't believe in them.*

Hamid Taqvae: People don't believe in them and call them the lunatic Left, because they *act* like lunatics! So, this Third Camp, in its entirety, can, from this point of view, be considered a critique of, or an alternative to, this sort of Leftist movements.

Patty Debonitas: *Let's move on to the next point, the nuclear disarmament of all states.*

You said here that neither Iran nor the US nor any other state should have nuclear weapons and that the states that have the largest stockpiles of nuclear weapons are not competent authorities to judge on the nuclear capabilities of other states.

Hamid Taqvae:

Again, it is very straightforward. I mean we have already had a huge nuclear disarmament movement during the Cold War. But today we have nothing, because, with the conclusion of the Cold War, the situation has changed. When I was giving a speech at a meeting in Vancouver, Canada, a couple of years ago, I saw this type of Left selling papers headlined 'The Islamic Republic of Iran has the right to be a nuclear state.' Why? According to them, since the US has nuclear weapons, so should other states! It is hard to believe, but it is a reality today. Forty of fifty years ago, however, progressive people, not just Leftists, were vehemently against nuclear weapons everywhere, no matter which country had or didn't have them. Nobody would argue that because the US has nuclear weapons, then Iran should have them too!

We are against the nu-

clear project of the Islamic Republic of Iran because we are against nuclear weapons, period! When the US says the Islamic regime of Iran has no right to nukes, nobody accepts that as sound judgement, because they know the US is itself the only state that has actually used nuclear weapons against hundreds of thousands of civilian people in Japan. So, who is the US to say Iran has or doesn't have the right to have the bomb? The West's judgement will be acceptable to the people around the world only when Western powers have disarmed themselves of their stock of atomic armaments in their entirety. But the people know that won't happen. So, the only way to achieve the goal of universal nuclear disarmament is the universal movement of the people, that is, to get people mobilised against the whole entity of nuclear weapons across the world. And that is what the third point of the Manifesto is all about.

Patty Debonitas: *In 2007, the Trident, the nuclear programme of the UK, was renewed, and passed in the parliament. That means new nuclear weapons, more money for more nuclear weapons and the renewal of nuclear weapons. What are the chances?*

Hamid Taqvae: It is not only Western countries. Other, so-to-speak Third World countries like India, Israel, Pakistan, have nuclear weapons but because they are allies of Western powers nobody criticises them. That's a double standard. What people want is nuclear disarmament everywhere, all over the world.

The question is not if it is possible or not, or as you put it, "what are the chances?" People cannot possibly afford to put the question this way. Their very existence is at stake here! They have to do something about it!

If it is against the people's wishes, if it is a nightmare for everybody and it *is* a nightmare for everybody, so the right way is to talk about it, mobilise and create a movement against it, and put an end to it. Doing something about that which is wrong is the very philosophy of being an activist. Activists don't sit back and look at all the governments out there and think, oh, look at all those governments all over the world; they are so powerful; I can't do anything! Neither can people afford to think this way. It is a necessity. One has to do something about it. This urge comes from outside, from real life. It is not

just an 'idea.' The idea comes from a real life situation. In real life situations people have to act and *do* something about their lives; their own lives, the next generation's, and so on.

Patty Debonitas: *The next point in the Manifesto is "Attacks on civil liberties in the West in the name of the war on terror must stop!"*

Hamid Taqvaee: Civil liberties have been attacked in the name of fighting Islamic terrorism. When I wrote that, the EU resolution opposing the 'defamation of religion' had not yet been passed. They aim to make it clear to people of the world - from secularists to atheists to hundreds of millions of people living under Islamic rule and fighting it - that they are standing, with all their might, alongside religion, in general, and Islam, in particular. With this resolution, freedom of speech, as we knew it in the West, is something of the past because, as I have already said, the main characteristic of freedom of speech is the right to criticise religion. Freedom of speech, provided you do not criticise religion, is just an empty phrase! It really does not make any sense! You can criticise, let's say, the way people dress, of course. But we have

always been free to do that, even in the Middle Ages, whereas the basic meaning of freedom of speech is the right to criticise that which is 'sacred.' Freedom of speech gives me the freedom to talk, in any form I wish, about the things you think I shouldn't touch! That is its very essential meaning. And now, with that resolution, the remnants of freedom of speech in the West have been swept away.

But, they have done much more than that in the form of increasing controls on the population at large. In Britain, for instance, they have come up with the right to legally detain someone for up to thirty days without charge. That has been a serious attack against the basic civil rights of people.

Also, if you have a name like Mohammed or you look like somebody from the Middle East, it doesn't matter how many hundreds of years your family has lived in the West, you can, under this or the anti-terrorist law, be stopped, searched, and detained without anyone even knowing, and the next thing you know you have been in jail, under constant interrogation, under legal torture, for six months!

I am, rather, surprised that there have been such heavy blows to

the fundamental rights of the people in the West, and yet nobody protests. You don't see any mass mobilisations worthy of mention, as if everyone in the West has believed the official, clichéd fable of the 'Muslim hordes are coming!'

Indeed, the threat of 'the enemy outside' has always been a good excuse for states to encroach on people's basic rights. We can see that phenomenon very clearly at war times, for example. Because of the war you, supposedly free citizens, shouldn't talk even freely with your neighbours. You shouldn't criticise the government. You can't come and go freely. Why? Because the country is in a war situation. It's the same here. They say we are in a war against terrorism, so, people, be quiet! And they will make sure you remain quiet, using brute force, if need be. And we are talking much more than detention without charge here. Let's not forget that the US Congress just recently legalised the use of torture in interrogations of alleged terrorism suspects. They torture people to protect 'national security.' According to their logic: 'we torture a few people to save many more.'

So, I raised the fourth

point of the Manifesto because of these heavy blows to freedoms and also increased surveillance and control of citizens, severe curtailment of the freedom of movement, violation and/or denial of the rights of immigrants, and many others, which are the commonest forms of attack on people's civil liberties in Western countries. That is why it says in the Manifesto that the very basis of civil rights and civil liberties is in danger in the West, because of the conflict between the savage poles, because of the opportunity this conflict has provided for Western states to severely curtail freedoms and seriously increase their control over the citizenry.

When the people in the West are mobilised against the Political Islamic movement, it is not just a defence of people in the Middle East, but it's in their own interests as well. Because the best way to get rid of US militarism, the bullying, the death and destruction, is to, in the first place, get rid of the Political Islamic movement in its entirety, that is, both the terrorist and non-terrorist factions of it.

The head of this political Islamic movement is the Islamic Republic of Iran. If the people in Iran are currently en-

gaged – or, more precisely, have been engaged for the past 30 years - in the most unequal, bloody battles against the head of such a movement as a global menace (just like its rival, of course) then there is no excuse for not mobilising the people against such a menace. Therefore, our message to the people in the West, hereby and in point 4 of the Manifesto, is, do not let governments attack your rights and freedoms! You desperately need your rights and freedoms, should you want to stand any chance of defeating, not only Islamism but politicised religion in general.

Patty Debonitas: *Point five of the Manifesto states: We actively support the struggle of the people of Iran against a military attack and against the Islamic Republic of Iran. It says that for 30 years now the people of Iran have been fighting against repression. Would you like to expand on that?*

Hamid Taqvae: We wanted to say two things here. One was to say that Islamic terrorism is not only what the Iranian regime does outside of its borders, but, on the contrary, and for the most part, what it does within Iran and with the people of Iran. That's one thing. The other is that the

people in Iran have never been only the victims of but also robust fighters against this regime. They have fought this regime continuously from the day it came to power 30 years ago. This movement has enormously grown and matured over three decades now.

So, this point tells the people of the world that the people in Iran are not in the same situation as the people in Iraq or Afghanistan were before the US-led invasion. In those countries we didn't have a movement like this against Saddam or the Taliban. But, in Iran, it is quite the opposite. In the history of Iran the number of workers' strikes is at a new re-



cord high. Also the way the students' or women's liberation movement resists and fights. So this point says there is a struggle going on by the people of Iran against the Islamic Republic, and that people in the West should support it.

Patty Debonitas: *The sixth point is that the Islamic Republic must be expelled from the international community.*

Hamid Taqvae: That is our alternative. If CNN had come to interview me and was to ask what Western governments should do, I would say it would be to not recognise the Islamic Republic as a legitimate state because it is not one. It doesn't represent the people of Iran. It is, as a matter of fact, killing them on a daily basis. Every day of its thirty-year-long rule is tainted with some kind of crime against humanity. Its officials must be put on trial in international tribunals. The people of Iran are against that

regime in its entirety, so it is not a legitimate regime, and it should not be recognised as one. Just in the same way as the South African regime

was, at the time of apartheid, increasingly isolated under the pressure of the people's anti-apartheid movement around the world, and thus more and more weakened. The regime in Iran must meet the same fate in the same way.

Patty Debonitas: *So the regime has to be isolated?*

Hamid Taqvae: Politically. We have to mobilise for the closure of its embassies around the world, for its expulsion from the UN, from all bodies of the international community. Our call in the Third Camp to the people of world is this: do not let Iranian politicians in your countries, and do not allow any negotiations with them. Boycott this barbaric regime. Isolate it. Expel it from one and all international institutions. If that becomes a reality, I guarantee that the people of Iran will get rid of the regime in a very short time. It is not a legitimate government. Do not recognise it! That is what the people of Iran want from the people of the world. Again, it can materialise only as part of the mass movement our Manifesto proposes.

The above interview is an edited transcript from Third Camp TV, which can be seen on www.newchannel.tv/englishTV/Thirdcamp.html.

It was initially edited by Jamshid Hadian.

17th anniversary of the Worker-communist Party of Iran November 2008



**Down With Islamic Republic!
Long Live Socialist Republic!**

Workers in Iran need international support

TV International interview with Bahram Soroush

Maryam Namazie: *We just heard about the horrendous news of four workers - two men and two women - who*

were carried out on several of the workers. But there was a tremendous outcry, both inside Iran and internationally, by labour and human rights organisations. Then the government was forced to re-

it's being meted out against workers and labour activists. Some will say it shows the strength of the regime. Others will say, well actually it's because of the strength of the labour movement in Iran.

and labour organisations. They want the right to strike, decent pay, everything workers around the world are fighting for, but which are repressed violently by the regime in Iran.

Maryam Namazie: *Some would say that workers' protests everywhere are repressed to some extent, especially when there is a real threat. Is there a difference though with the situation in Iran?*

Bahram Soroush: There are certain things which are common with workers throughout the world. But we should remember that conditions in Iran are severely repressive. So to organise a strike takes a lot of courage, organisation and skill...



ILNA

Photo:Ali Rafiei

have been sentenced to flogging for participating in May Day events. Can you elaborate on that? What is the background to that?

Bahram Soroush: It is outrageous, but it is true. This is not the first time either. Last year 11 workers received sentences of flogging and prison terms for taking part in May Day rallies. The sentences

voke all the sentences. However, once again this year the court in the city of Sanandaj has sentenced four other workers to be flogged from 15 to 50 lashes and to several months' imprisonment.

Maryam Namazie: *Flogging is quite normal in Iran as a form of punishment for various so-called "offences". It's quite recent though that*

Bahram Soroush: It shows the desperation of the regime that it has to resort to such methods. It has tried everything to silence the workers' movement, but has failed. It is now facing an even stronger workers' movement. Worker's expectations have risen. They are organising better and on a wider scale. They are demanding unions

Maryam Namazie: *Especially when you sometimes hear about national strikes, strikes that have been taking place across various cities; it is quite astounding then, isn't it?*

Bahram Soroush: It is. In terms of the number of strikes, I can say that Iran is unique compared to anywhere else in the world. And just a fraction – if any – of the

Freedom, Equality, Worker's Rule!

news of that is reported in the state press. We should also remember that going on strike is illegal in Iran. So that gives one a sense of proportion and scale. For example, Kian Tyre workers and Haft Tappeh sugar cane workers have been on strike for several months now, conducting a brave fight in the face of massive repression. Each May Day, workers come out to hold their independent May Day rallies, which each time is suppressed. So there is this continuous struggle going on between workers, on the one hand, and the employers and the regime, on the other; a regime, moreover, which is one of the most savage, repressive and anti-working class in the world. However, the consciousness among the workers, their mobilisation, their expectations, the growth of socialist and revolutionary ideas is such that the regime sees that as a threat.

Maryam Namazie: *So is that why the government comes down so heavily on them?*

Bahram Soroush: Well, it is both for economic and political reasons. Economically the regime is in a critical situation. So they are trying to put the burden of the crisis on the workers by cutting wages, not paying

wages and by worsening the working conditions. Workers in many, many factories, which I think is also unique in the world, have not been paid for months - some even for over a year. So demanding payment of unpaid wages is one of the most common demands in Iran which links hundreds of thousands of workers together. But also politically, the regime sees the growth of a workers' movement which is articulating its demands even more clearly and organising despite the repression, as a threat. For example, workers are forming unions despite the fact that forming a union is illegal in Iran. Nevertheless, they are doing it, sometimes under other names, and by finding different ways of organising.

Maryam Namazie: *Is the flogging of workers linked to, for example, the nine people who have been sentenced to stoning and the mass executions that are taking place? Is there a link to all of this?*

Bahram Soroush: There is a link in the sense that they are aimed at creating a climate of fear and intimidation.

Maryam Namazie: *So is it working? Obviously not, it seems.*

Bahram Soroush: It is

not. Of course, it is claiming a lot of victims, but there are also a lot of protests that are going on. The workers' organisations, the Worker-communist Party are organising and mobilising. This is a regime that has no choice. It is in an impasse: it can't go forward or back. It has to do something in order to survive; to clutch at anything; to try harsher repression. But it is futile. This is what they have tried in the past thirty years, which has only led to even greater popular hatred and protest. That's why we can very accurately speak of the desperation of the regime; a vulnerable regime, which could at any time face a massive movement of the people that will topple it, and get rid of it.

Maryam Namazie: *Listening to you, people and organisations like the Socialist Workers Party, George Gallo-way, people who consider themselves progressive and Left, who support the regime, who support political Islam in various ways, are silent at these brutalities that are taking place. What would you say to them?*

Bahram Soroush: Well, there isn't much to say to them. They are on the same reactionary side as the Islamic regime. They are not silent. They are ac-

tively supporting the Iranian regime and, thereby, condoning the executions, the repression, and this horrific nightmare that is the lot of the people in Iran. They have their own political mindset. But whatever it is, it is reactionary, right-wing and rotten. There is nothing Left or progressive about them. To be Left you would be on the side of people, for their rights, for progressive values, against discrimination, etc. These people are on the side of one of the most reactionary and fascistic regimes in the world. Imagine siding with Hitler's regime against people, against Jews, against socialists, against workers, against women, against gays. It is precisely that. Whatever their pathetic justifications, this is the actual stance that they have taken. They are bankrupt and isolated. We should not waste a second talking about them. They are 'have-beens'. The vast majority of the people around the world know what the Iranian regime is like, and that's why it's not at all difficult for us to mobilise people internationally. Millions of workers around the world have mobilised through their unions, through their organisations in condemning the Islamic regime in Iran and in supporting the workers' movement, jailed labour activists

and the people in Iran. And they can't wait till this regime is overthrown and buried.

Maryam Namazie: *Some would say it is better not to oppose the regime in Iran whilst there is a threat of US military action on Iran; once that is over then we can focus more on rights' violations of the Islamic regime?*

Bahram Soroush: The Islamic regime in Iran has been reactionary from day one; for thirty years. The protests against this regime began just a few months after it came to power as soon as people realised their revolution had been hijacked. But there was a bloody repression. The revolution was drowned in blood. Tens of thousands of socialists, labour activists and other political dissidents were executed. The fight by the people was going on before Bush was even a governor anywhere. This struggle has nothing to do with the latter years' sabre-rattling of the US government against the Iranian regime. In fact the Islamic Republic owes its birth to the active and calculated support that the US and other Western governments provided for the

Islamic movement in Iran and the region because they didn't want the revolution in 1979 to develop into a Left-wing, a socialist revolution. Rather than that, they supported the Islamists. This struggle by the people of Iran has been going on for thirty years, and it is not going to stop now just because some crazy monster in the US in

can be very good friends, just as they are with Saudi Arabia and with so many other reactionary governments. The American government is looking for a repressive regime which is friendly with the US.

Maryam Namazie: *One final question. Obviously protests - whether in Iran or internationally*



the shape of Bush and the neo-con gang is speaking against the regime for its own reasons, or because the SWP or George Gallo-way want it! The US government's hostility towards the regime in Iran is not because this regime executes people; it is not out of concern for human rights. It is essentially because of the nuisance that the regime has been creating for the US' policies in the Middle East. As soon as the Iranian regime stops that, they

- have an impact. What can people do to stop the flogging sentences of these four workers?

Bahram Soroush: They can write or circulate a petition in their unions, at their workplaces. They can send a simple email and spread the news. A lot of unions of course have been following these cases in Iran, and many of them have been very quick to respond. But it is very important to have as many people as possi-

ble protesting against these sentences; to flood the offices of the Islamic regime in Iran with emails of protest, of condemnation, and to post the news on websites; to say out loudly that workers are being flogged; that this is slavery; that this is unacceptable; that the regime in Iran is so savage that it flogs workers for defending their rights, for taking part in a rally to celebrate International Workers' Day. This should not be tolerated. Everybody should protest against it. This protest makes a difference.

The Iranian regime is in a vulnerable state. The severe repression is not a sign of its strength, but of its weakness and increasing desperation. It will be knocked down and swept aside by the people. But this struggle needs a lot of support by the people around the world to succeed.

The above was a TV International interview with Bahram Soroush on August 13, 2008.

TV International programmes can be viewed here: www.newchannel.tv/englishTV/TVInternational.html

Workers of the World Unite!

→ reported extensively by New Channel TV and the WPI's international campaign in defense of the striking workers contributed largely to promoting awareness about their struggles both in Iran and abroad. The Management of the Haft-tape Sugar Cane Factories had to surrender to the demands of the workers and the strike ended victoriously.

The protest organised by the WPI - Organisation Abroad at the main office of the International Labour Organisation on June 6 to protest the presence of the delegates of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the ILO general assembly was yet another important action.

Tens of protestors gathered in front of the ILO's office and chanted slogans against the Islamic Republic and in solidarity with the struggles of workers in Iran. Hundreds of communiqués and pamphlets were also distributed among passer-bys and the delegates participating

the assembly. A delegation from the Worker-communist Party of Iran also attended the general assembly of the ILO.

An important campaign of the WPI, which continues up until today, is the campaign to acquire sponsors for New

Channel TV. Many activists and Party sympathizers as well as people, both from within Iran and abroad, participated in the campaign through their donations. In an historical event, workers of Mahshahr Petrochemical Complex joined the campaign of sponsoring the New Channel TV.

The month of June was also the month of the 30th Plenum of the Central Committee of the Worker-communist Party of Iran.



Channel TV. Many activists and Party sympathizers as well as people, both from within Iran and abroad, participated in the campaign through their donations. In an historical event, workers of Mahshahr Petrochemical Complex joined the campaign of sponsoring the New Channel TV.

We call on all humanitarians and libertarians, socialists and commu-

nists of the world to join this campaign and to financially support the New Channel TV.

The Plenum was held during June 6-9, 2008. A number of resolutions, the most important of which was "Resolution Concerning the Tension between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the US" was adopted unanimously.

The month of June also marked the victory of the international campaign to free Javanmir Moradi and Taha Azadi. The Worker-communist

Party of Iran had launched an international campaign following the arrest of these labour leaders on May Day.

The campaign included numerous actions and protests in front of the embassies of the Islamic regime, contacting international labour and human rights organisations and providing protest letters and resolutions condemning the attacks of the Islamic Republic against labour leaders, activists and worker organisations.

Another important campaign, which still continues, is the international campaign to save the life of Farzad Kamangar.

Farzad Kamangar is a schoolteacher that was arrested a while ago and was accused of cooperating with illegal opposition organisations. In line with the international campaign to save him from execution, the WPI's activists organised picket lines, protests, information desks in different countries around the world and contacted government officials and the media in European countries.

The Basis of Socialism is the Human Being

31st Plenum of the Central Committee of the Worker-communist Party of Iran held

The 31st plenum of the Central Committee of the Worker-communist Party of Iran was held during 28-30 November 2008. A majority of the WPI's Central Committee members and advisers along with a number of Party cadres were present. The plenum began with the Internationale and a minute of silence in commemoration of those who have fallen in the path of freedom and socialism, including Mansoor Hekmat. Hamid Taqvaei, Secretary of the Central Committee, then delivered the opening speech.

In his speech, Hamid Taqvaei spoke about the Islamic regime of Iran's critical situation, the Party's advances and especially the increasing relations between the Party and the Iranian people, thanks to New Channel TV. He maintained that the party could and should challenge the Islamic Republic and appear as the political alternative and force representing the people. He stressed that the Party should go beyond its current agi-

tation and organising activities and rely on its influence and base among the masses, appear as the alternative political force in society that can stand against the regime and push the Islamic Republic back in various

arenas.

Following Hamid Taqvaei's speech, Asqar Karimi, Chair of the Executive Committee, presented an all-inclusive report of the Party's activities between two plenums. The report included the activities of New Channel TV, organisational activities inside Iran, international campaigns and activities, and a financial report. Asqar Karimi, in his report, referred to this period as an exceptional one with very important achievements. Mostafa Saber, Chair of the Political Bureau spoke next about the crucial role of New Channel TV

in the future of WPI and the society at large and stressed the importance and urgency of raising financial support to continue and expand the Party's activities.

Following a discussion on these items, the ple-

intellectual issue. Documents pertaining to the plenum will soon be published in Persian.

Hamid Taqvaei was unanimously elected as the Secretary of the Central Committee and 21 members were elected to the WPI's Political Bureau, namely, Mina Ahadi, Abdollah Asadi, Mohammad Asangaran, Siamak Bahari, Sima Bahari, Fateh Bahrami, Shahla Daneshfar, Mohsen Ebrahimi, Morteza Fateh, Farshad

Hosseini, Keyvan Javid, Asqar Karimi, Khalil Keyvan, Navid Minayi, Maryam Namazie, Kazem Nikkhah, Mostafa Saber, Hasan Salehi, Soheila Sharifi, Issam Shukri, and Bahram Soroush. The Political Bureau held a short session after the plenum and unanimously elected Mostafa Saber as its chair. The plenum ended after 3 days of discussions with a closing speech by Hamid Taqvaei.

Translated and reprinted in English by the WPI's International Relations Committee.

