



**'The basis of socialism is the human being... Socialism is the movement to restore human being's conscious will.'**

**- Mansoor Hekmat**

*The great Marxist thinker and leader of the Worker-communist Party and worker-communist movement, 1951-2002*

## The Ascent of Islamic Reaction in the Turkish Elections

**Fateh Sheikh**



The ascent of the Islamic Party of 'Justice and Development' in the Turkish elections of 3 November is the result of the critical and des-

perate situation in that country and will further the crisis and desperation. The vast majority of the votes cast for this party are votes of disdain cast against the military-police, fascist, corrupt to the core and oppressive ruling government; it's a protest vote against economic impoverishment and the dreadful agony of shattered capitalism. The leadership of this newly formed, rural and staunchly right-wing party knows that it owes its victory to the frustration of the general voter with its failed rival parties, and not to its ideol-

ogy, programme, strategy and policies. Before anything else and before being a sign of a turning point for Islam and against a (secular) non-religious system, the election is a sign of the anxiety of voters, pressed between the ruling nationalist reaction and Islamic reaction in Turkey's politics.

Currently, the main dilemma of Turkish society is the economic crisis and increasing impoverishment of the workers and the masses of de-

**Page 2**

## Student and Youth Protests in Iran Continue

**14 November 2002**

On Wednesday 13 November 2002 student and youth protests continued. More than 4000 students took part in a demonstration at the Amir Kabir University (The Polytechnic). There was an over 2000 strong demonstration outside the university. Security forces and 'plain-clothed' thugs prevented people from entering and leaving the university. The student's slogans included: 'Iran will not become Chile!', 'Free all Political Prisoners!', 'Khamanei Shame on You, Relinquish the Helm!', 'Khatami, Khatami, Resignation, Resignation!', 'Down

with Tyranny!'. And 'Down with the Taliban both in Kabul and Tehran!'

The extensive student and youth demonstrations have added a new dimension to the Islamic regime's crisis, intensifying the factional war. Both of the regime's factions fear the growth of such protests. They recall the nightmare of 8 July. They caution and warn the youth. Khamanei foolishly threatens that he will bring in the Islamic thugs. Khatami asks for calm and the containment of the demonstration. Both factions call these protests 'dangerous'. The recent protests have quickly spread and



been aimed at the totality of the regime. The slogans of these demonstrations and the reaction of the regime's factions indicate the potential and the power of the protests.

The regime is striving to keep the demonstrations within the

University and prevent it from pouring onto the streets. The 2nd Khordad supporters (so-called reformists) are trying to control and contain the protest within the university and limit

**Page 3**

## The Ascent of Islamic Reaction in the Turkish Elections, from page 1

prived people. It has now been many years that the prospect of any economic development in this country has vanished. The governmental crisis that caused the early election did not have any specific political cause. It was directly the result of a severe economic deadlock and bankruptcy. Re-arranging the political formation will not solve this economic crisis. The Islamic party of 'Justice and Development' alongside its absurd and empty hypocrisy about Islamic 'justice' turned its election publicity to 'development'; following the outcome of the elections, with obvious haste it hurried to reassure its allegiance to IMF policies and its commitment to follow up the membership of the European Union in order to demonstrate that it is conscious of the major issues facing society. The question is whether this party's presence in the Turkish government will diminish or add to the deepening of the crisis. The test of and key to the future of this party therefore lies in the above question.

The problems of capitalist development in Turkey, however, are more fundamental, deep-seated and global and its solution is beyond the ability of this upstart, untested and reactionary party. Not only is this party incapable of resolving these problems, but the ascent of Islamic reaction – in any form or shape –

at the top of the Turkish government makes the prospects of resolving these problems even more complicated and far fetched. For instance, the Turkish bourgeoisie has for many years realised that Turkey's entry into the European Union unquestionably provides a chance of moving out of the crisis of development that has engulfed Turkey. Although Turkey is the oldest applicant for EU membership it is not expected to be given any clear assurance from the EU heads of states that are due to meet in the Copenhagen in December. Turkey, a NATO member, is and has been an unswerving ally of the west internationally and Israel regionally. However, the uncertain political future of this country and doubt about the long-term domination of western capital on the political and social atmosphere of Turkey has always been an obstacle in the entry of capital and in the EU decision to accept Turkey as a member. This obstacle is not particular to Turkey; in other Middle Eastern countries, an uncertain future and the contribution of political Islam in this uncertainty has created a major obstacle in the integration of this region in the global economy. The problem is that in the current international environment, apart from existent problems, the presence of an Islamic party at the helm of Turkish politics will be an additional

ill fortune and a bolt from the blue for ailing capitalism in this country.

Apart from these, at home, this party, as a reactionary movement on the far-right of the Turkish establishment could impose dreadful retreats on the society, which could be perceived by some sections of the establishment (including the army) and international capital and specifically the IMF as valuable for a period. For being allowed to remain in power, this party could present the bourgeoisie with the following gifts: in the economic field: sending women to their homes, in the political field: adding a dose of Islam to the 'secularism' of the state machinery and in the cultural field: expanding Islamic, oriental and rural culture in the modern, urban and European environment of society. The ascent of this Islamic party will once again revive the dirty dealings of the international bourgeoisie with Islam in the well-known format of the reactionary problematics such as good and bad Islam, a shaved and groomed Islam against 'fundamentalist' Islam, Islam's compatibility with democracy, secularism and modernity(!), as well as cultural relativism and in brief turn Islam into a pole in the bourgeoisie's ideological contest against the working class and deprived people.

However, based on the hith-

erto historical development of Turkish society, the role of this party and generally Islamic reaction in the politics of Turkey is a temporary and transitional one. Political Islam has no chance in Turkey. Even the capitalist way out of the crisis of impoverishment in Turkey is by distancing from Islam both culturally and politically. With the fall of the Ottoman Empire after the defeat in the First World War, the Turkish bourgeoisie managed to steer Turkish society into an era of modernity and compatibility with Europe and the west by structurally breaking from Islam and not by modifying the Islamic Caliphate rule. Today, even if the Turkish bourgeoisie wishes to, it is unable to return Islam at the helm of society and turn society into the unrealised dream of Jamal-al-din Asad-Abadi.

From the view point of the working class and the left in society, one must emphasise that the crisis-ridden and desperate Turkish society, more than ever before, requires a socialist alternative to save it from the vicious circle of military or Islamic reaction's rule. Turkish society, the development of the class struggle, the liberation of the workers and the dispossessed will badly need a lucid and powerful socialist force. With all our power, we must assist the ascendance of such a movement.

**Read Mansoor Hekmat's Works on**  
[www.wpiran.org/english](http://www.wpiran.org/english).

## Student and Youth Protests in Iran Continue, from page 1



ISNA/PHOTO: HAMID FOROOTAN

it to the death sentence of Aghajari. The protest must not limit itself to revoking Aghajari's sentence alone. The regime's policy of execution must be smashed through and through. Revoking Aghajari's death sentence, the freedom of all political prisoners, the immediate end to capital punishment, the

unconditional freedom of expression are the most fundamental issues which must be emphasised in these protests.

The Worker-communist Party of Iran calls on freedom-loving people to join these protests. This round of struggles can force the regime back and put an end to capital punishment and stoning.

**NEW:** WPI publishes Weekly Summary of Press Releases issued by the Worker-communist Party of Iran every Friday.

Edited by: Fariborz Pooya

To see, visit: [www.wpibriefing.com](http://www.wpibriefing.com) or [www.wpiran.org/English](http://www.wpiran.org/English).

### For a Better World

A TV Program by Ali Javadi  
Via Satellite, Channel 1

Tuesdays, In Persian  
8:30pm Tehran time

[Ali\\_Javadi@yahoo.com](mailto:Ali_Javadi@yahoo.com)

### Listen to **Radio International**

In Persian, Daily

on 41 Metres, 7490 Kilohertz

8:00 - 8:45pm Tehran time

or on [www.radio-international.org](http://www.radio-international.org)

## Support WPI Campaign against Execution

Recently, tens of people have been hanged from cranes and stoned to death in public by the Islamic regime in Iran. Join the Worker-communist Party of Iran in demanding an end to executions in Iran. You can support the campaign by sending the following to the Islamic regime's president, Mohammad Khatami at e-mail:

[khatami@president.ir](mailto:khatami@president.ir):

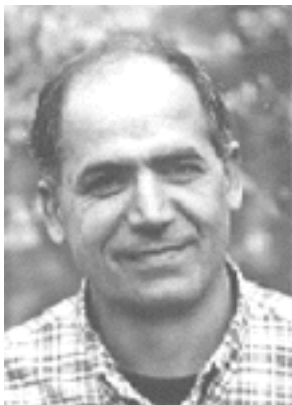
'I strongly condemn the Islamic Republic of Iran for its recent executions, stonings, torture and suppression and demand an immediate end to all forms of execution, torture and suppression.' Send a copy of your protest letter to [wpipr@ukonline.co.uk](mailto:wpipr@ukonline.co.uk).



sardar 02

# Join an International Movement against Executions in Iran

**Asqar Karimi**



The Islamic Republic of Iran has commenced a new wave of executions to instil terror and force the protesting people to retreat. In its 24 year rule, the regime has committed one of the biggest massacres in contemporary history in order to suppress the 1979 Iranian revolution. The execution of more than hundred thousand political opponents, including children and youth, is part of its record. Murder is an inseparable part of this regime's identity. Islamic rule is unimaginable and impossible without execution and torture.

The Islamic Republic of Iran is about to fall. In its desperation and to instil fear among the people who have come to the fore to overthrow it, the Islamic regime has turned to more executions. Following a relative reduction in the number of executions in the 90s, this policy has once

again been stepped up in the last two years. In recent years, the accused have mainly been sentenced for selling narcotics or committing murder in show trials. The purpose of these executions, however, is entirely political and aims to frighten and warn the protesting people that the Islamic regime has the capacity of mass executions. Public hanging from cranes and the public flogging of youth aid in this purpose. Moreover, in recent weeks and months, there have been an increasing number of executions of political activists, protesters who have been arrested during demonstrations, ideological opponents and those accused of blasphemy and insulting Islamic sanctities.

In this situation, organising an international and comprehensive movement against all forms of executions in Iran is vital. The regime is fragile; with the support of a consistent and extensive movement, it can be forced to retreat. It is the duty of all

workers' organisations, progressive political parties, civil rights institutions and progressive personalities to recognise this urgency and fight Islamic rule and executions shoulder to shoulder with the progressive struggle of the people of Iran.

Join the Worker-communist Party of Iran's international

campaign against the new wave of executions launched and support the people of Iran against Islamic rule. We must defeat this new policy of the Islamic regime. With the defeat of this policy, the Islamic Republic will be weakened vis-à-vis the people's movement for its overthrow.



WPI, Office of International Relations, BM Box 8927, London WC1N 3XX, England.

Tel: +44 (0) 07719166731. Fax: +44 (0) 870 1351338. [www.wpiran.org/English](http://www.wpiran.org/English). [www.wpibriefing.com](http://www.wpibriefing.com).

[wpi.international.office@ukonline.co.uk](mailto:wpi.international.office@ukonline.co.uk). [wpipr@ukonline.co.uk](mailto:wpipr@ukonline.co.uk).