

Iran Still Needs to Be Defended

As we write, the U.S. is massing its Air Force and Navy around Iran. All signs point to an armed conflict on a far larger scale than last year's 12-day war. With the force it has amassed, the U.S. is poised to wreak untold devastation on Iran.

This escalation is taking place only a few weeks after the theocratic Iranian regime unleashed a wave of bloody repression against its own people. In this context many leftists in Iran and abroad are wary of being seen to stand on the side of the Ayatollah.

This is understandable, but it would be a *disastrous mistake* to take a neutral stance, or even worse a pro-American stance, in a conflict. The examples of Iraq and Libya show that the U.S. rulers could not care less about democracy. Their aim is to pound all Iranian society into the ground in order to eliminate Iran as a counterweight to U.S. and Israeli regional dominance.

The tyranny of the mullahs *does* need to be ended, but it matters which force will do this. Bringing down the regime on American terms will be a disaster not only for the peoples of Iran but for the entire region and the world. The regime must be brought down by a *truly democratic and anti-imperialist movement of the Iranian masses*. Only this road can lead to genuine social progress in Iran and West Asia. It's by being on the front line of this struggle that communists can undermine support for the regime.

If the U.S. bombs Iran, the working class of the world must do everything in its power to *defend Iran*. Trump has been on a rampage against the oppressed everywhere. A defeat of the U.S. through military or popular action would finally halt his reactionary offensive.

Stop U.S.-Israeli tyranny over West Asia! Only the working class can free Iran! ■



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IRAN: THE REVOLUTION MUST BE ANTI-IMPERIALIST

Mass uprisings are shaking Iran. A dire economic situation and seething anger against the Islamic regime have brought the masses onto the streets. Protesters have been met with brutal beatings. At home and abroad, many predict that the days of Ayatollah Khamenei are numbered. In Washington and Tel Aviv, the imperialist war-mongers are salivating at the prospect of "regime change" and have threatened direct military intervention. Meanwhile, Roza Pahlavi, son of the deposed Shah overthrown in 1979, is actively making his bid to swoop in with the blessing of the U.S. and Israel.

The Iranian masses have every reason to rise in rage. The despotic Islamic regime must be brought down. But the anger of the people—as legitimate as it is—must not blind us to the fact that *who* overthrows the regime and *what* replaces it are of crucial importance. The truth is that if the regime is not replaced by working-class power, it *will* be replaced by a pro-U.S. puppet who will sell off the country and crush its people.

This is why the communist left must consolidate its role within the struggle, a third pole, against foreign imperialism, Israel, and all its henchmen committed to bringing down the Islamic regime. An anti-imperialist and working-class alternative of such an alternative, the only one to the regime is that of the proposition, including the Pahlavi monarchy, whose return would mean literally rolling back the wheel of history.

We Must Fight the U.S.

Faced with over 70% in food inflation, empty shelves, and a bankrupt ruling clique, many have come to think that accommodation with Western imperialism is not only a lesser evil, but the way to bring immediate relief to the sanction-stricken economy. This is a dangerous illusion. Conceding to the oppressor always leads to more misery.

The U.S. and Israel care only about maintaining their stranglehold on the region and have no regard for the fate of the population. Just look at Syria, Libya, Iraq, Afghanistan, and Palestine. Everywhere the U.S. and Israel have intervened to bring "freedom", they have laid waste to entire societies and destroyed their social fabric. Iran will be no exception.

There is no hiding that the Islamic regime uses these exact arguments to shut down any dissent and opposition. It presents itself as the only barrier against the country's plunder and brands all opponents as Zionist agents. As a result, many today turn their back on the program of anti-imperialism, thinking it puts them in the same camp as the regime. This is the wrong conclusion to draw. The Ayatollah is right that the U.S. and Israel want to turn Iran into a new Iraq. However, this does *not* mean that the masses must support the Ayatollah.

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