

# KOMONIST COMMUNIST

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## Bush's Defeat

### The Impasse of New World Order Policy in Iraq

The defeat of the Republicans in the Congressional elections in the United States on November 7, was the product of the impasse of the policies of world reactionary front led by the USA administration. The consequences of this impasse, on the back of the widening crack in the fragile consensus in the West and the ever increasing isolation of the US, will not be confined to the US and will reverberate over to Europe and the Middle East.

The Republicans' defeat did not come about as the result of a successful political campaign and the victory of the Democrats. The defeat of the Republicans came about rather as the result of the total collapse of the military and terrorist policies of the entire ruling class in the US. The immediate consequence of this political failure has produced the massacres, bombardments, destruction and the disintegration of the civil life in Iraq. Both the Democrats and the Republicans share the tenets of the US policy in Iraq and both share the responsibility of inflicting a total destruction on Iraq and obliterating the civil, social and cultural foundation of that country; and they also bear the responsibility for abating the emergence of the religious and ethnic sectarian groups.

The rejection of Bush's policies was a clear confirmation of the defeat of the gory New World Order policies and the crack in the camp of the reactionaries and the enemies of people. This crack and the admission of defeat should be seized upon by the civilised humanity against military

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Communiqué on the conclusion of the:

## First Congress of the Worker-communist Party of Iran – Hekmatist

The first congress of the Worker-communist Party of Iran – Hekmatist was held on October 21 and 22, 2006 in Köln, Germany. Over 260 delegates and guests attended this public event. The whole of the proceedings was also made accessible over the internet. During two days of intense debates and discussions a range of the most pressing issues facing the people of Iran and the world were dealt with and appropriate policies and decisions were adopted to tackle them.

The congress was opened by playing the internationale and observing one minute silence in commemoration of the those fallen in the path of socialism and freedom. The proceedings then continued with an opening speech delivered by Koorosh Modarresi, the leader of the WPI-Hekmatist, followed by a deliberation on a report prepared by the Organising Committee for the First Congress. The congress approved the report and the credentials of all the delegates. A number of delegates representing the Party organisations inside Iran were not, due to security consideration, able to attend the congress but were allowed to cast their votes via proxies. The congress then entered into its main business with a speech by Rebwar Ahmad, the leader of the Worker-Communist Party of Iraq.

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## Congress of Hope.

### Congress of re-engagement with the Society

*Interview with Koorosh Modaressi, the Leader of the Worker-communist Party of Iran – Hekmatist on the first congress of the Party. This interview was conducted by the Parto satellite TV programme on October 24, 2006. The interview was conducted in Farsi and the following is an excerpt from an English translation of that*



**Koorosh Modaressi**

**Parto:** Let us begin by asking how did you approach the congress? What was your expectation? What did you try to achieve?

**KM:** The expectation of the Party's leadership and myself is documented in all the papers that we have published in this regard. We were keen and determined to present and discuss all the major issues and concerns facing the Iranian society. We wanted to show how people can be delivered from the present dire situation; from the constant threats lingering over their heads; from the threat of US attack, the threat of sectarian civil war and the menace of the Islamic Republic. We were resolute in our attempts to deal with the real concerns facing the society as well as focusing on the Party itself. We wanted to, in a calm and collected manner and without being complacent, re-appraise our strength and weaknesses and establish what changes and developments are needed to meet the challenges confronting the country.

These were our expectations and we planned to hold a congress to show how our Party- a political Party as opposed to an ideological sect- must function. We wanted all the delegates and those interested in our

Party attend the congress and express their views. We

wanted all the delegates to freely debate our policies and cast their votes. We wanted to create an atmosphere for all to join our debates and discussions and provide them with an opportunity to find their political allies to turn their preferred policies into official party policies. At the same time we were eager to make sure that all the delegates, as a united body, will endeavour to implement the adopted policies and resolutions. We wanted the Party to focus its energy and as a united body implement the agreed policies and depart from the traditional marginal and sectarian political parties prevalent in the politics of the radical left. We were preparing and taking the practical steps to build a mass political Party in Iran. As far as these stated aims are concerned our congress concluded successfully. All the delegates left the congress fully charged and rejuvenated.

**Parto:** Building a mass communist political Party was very much a hot topic of discuss in the congress, why is this so important for you? For an observer, for a worker who is following this congress from afar how do you explain the significance of the emphasis on building a mass political Party?

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**KM:** Firstly there are a number of ideological leftist organisations around us that operate like a religious sect. People can only join these organisations if they share the same beliefs or follow a certain character. Secondly the kind of activities that these organisations are engaged in is such that the ordinary people are unable to participate and carry them out. Thirdly the function and the political life of these parties are not in anyway affected by the events in the society. They are seemingly “Workers’ Parties” but changes and developments within the working class do not have any impacts on these Parties. Cuts in workers’ wages for instance do not concern them. Their growth is not translated into the strength and unity of the working class. This is the disease of the leftist and so called communist organisations.

Overcoming this situation requires more than just a wishful thinking. We must do something about it. We must become a Party that people can join and express their views. The slightest disagreement within the traditional leftist parties leads to the eruption of an ideological revolution. In contrast with such organisations we need to build a Party where no one is demonised. A Party in which those who join it are not necessarily angels and those who leave it are not evils. In such a Party people get together to discuss their views, make decisions and unite as a single political body to bring about something positive in the society. Such a Party is not for self-indulgence. This Party is the Party of the collective political decisions and collective determination to implement these decisions. This is the only way to reassure the membership that there is no hidden agenda and our policies are those that have been debated, discussed and voted on and adopted by the official organs of the Party. This is the only way for a political party to grow.

In my opinion the congress brought us a big step closer to this reality. All those who observed our congress saw for themselves how the delegates and the participants were seriously and passionately involved in real debates and discussions to convince others and find their own political allies. And we all saw the determination and the resolve of all the delegates to carry out adopted policies.

**Parto:** There was not anything new about the resolutions and motions passed at the congress. Threat of the US attack; the overthrow of the regime; the workers’ disputes and the rest were issues that have been dealt with in the past. What was the big commotion?

**KM:** The big commotion was the congress itself. Our focus was on the society. All the problems and issues that you mentioned are still there. The congress once again in a clear and comprehensible way raised these issues. The congress once again focused on the latest developments in Iran and analysed all the aspects of these changes. We dwelled on the fact that why is it that the entire society is full of hatred contempt towards the regime and at the same time they are playing a waiting game. The congress also elaborated on the dangers of the possible US attack against Iran. We have, on many occasions, discussed this issue and further to simply condemning such an attack we need to be thinking about practical ways to deal with such a scenario. We have always stated that we must not allow Iran to become yet another Iraq. A disunited and insecure people and a people that lack optimism and confidence will be petrified of instigating any changes. It is very clear that no one wants to live in a place where they will be the target of the US bombs and are caught up in the middle of reactionary sectarian wars. The unleashed Islamists are even a bigger danger. Under such conditions optimism evaporates. We have always reiterated that it is not enough to just explain and interpret these situations. The congress tried to draw the attention of the party’s leadership to come up with practical solutions to these challenges; solutions to enable people to forestall such tragedies from materialising.

In summary the congress dealt with the issues facing the society and the working class and the dangers that are lying ahead for the people of that region. Our main concern was to stay focused on our struggle against exploitation and suppression and against the Islamic Republic on the back of these conditions?

**Parto:** The congress was presented with a report on the activities of the Party during the previous period. There were delegates who content with the progress of the Party and those who were dissatisfied about the Party’s performance. What is your view on this?

**KM:** If we measure our performance during the past two years against other traditional leftist organisations we should certainly award ourselves the Gold medal. What we have achieved in the past two years could not have been achieved in 20 years by other leftist organisations. We have built a Party that according to friends and foes has a visible influence within the political

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environment in Iran. We have achieved a lot in the past two years. This has been achieved through ceaseless efforts of our cadres from Tehran, Sanandaj and Isfahan to London, Stockholm and Los Angeles.

But the congress was adamant not to assess itself against other currents. But if we measure our success against what we should have done then we have a lot more to say. The congress time and again pointed to a window of opportunity that has presented itself to us; an opportunity for the working class and people of Iran to rid themselves from the menace of the Islamic Republic around a communist flag. However this opportunity can only be taken advantage of by reliable and creditable political parties. The congress highlighted the great challenges that are facing our Party and the people. We want to look straight into these difficulties with open eyes and try to find a solution. The congress tried to do exactly this.

**Parto:** I just had a conversation with one of the delegates and he told if he wanted to describe this congress in one word he would use the word "hope"; he preferred to call it the congress of hope. Do you agree with this description?

**KM:** Absolutely! We have been through a tough time. We went through a bitter experience and had to part our path from a leftist pole. We built our own Party. Today this entity is bigger than the other one. I have said this on previous occasions, that during the split in the Worker-communist Party of Iran, we were faced with a sinking ship and just managed to launch a rescue boat. We wanted to build an anchor in this desperate time for people to hang on to. Lots of people were sceptical. Many of those who joined us were not very optimistic. These factors have now changed. In the wider society not many people remember the birth of this Party. We have restored our link with the history of the Worker-communism. Even our political rivals pin their hope on us to combat the ethno centrists and nationalists. In short this congress opened up a new opportunity against the Islamic Re-

public and all the dangers that are threatening the country.

**Parto:** Would like to say a few words for those who could not attend the congress and those who are interested in your Party?

**KM:** Our key message was that this gathering was a congress about the Iranian society. It was about our Party as well. In another word it was about the Party and society. Our preoccupation is to establish a close and organic relationship between the Party and society. The success of the congress should be translated into a greater empowerment of people where they live and where they work. If we are present in a workplace this should be translated into stronger unity amongst the workers. The towns that we are active in should be immune from the nationalists. The university that we are active in should be freer. To use the Islamists as an example might help to explain what I am trying to say. Whenever the Islamists have the upper hand in an area one can feel their presence in the spread of veil on women and the sporting beard by men and other Islamic attires. The question we are pausing is what changes can we expect when the Hekmatist Party gains influence in a certain place.

The most important message of our congress was to refocus its attention on the society. We must be conscious about the impact of our activities on the lives of workers, children, women, and people in general. We must be aiming for improvements not only in the condition of the working class and better wages but in the real daily life. This is a parameter for becoming a political party. A party dedicated to social changes. A Party, that its growth is measured by the increase in respect for human values in the society. If our presence and activities in the society is not the catalyst for unity and hope then our existence or not would not be of concern. Again the main message of our congress was the return to the depth of the society, to become the leader of the society for a communist revolution.

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aggression and used as a stepping stone to create a better world.

In the absence of the united ranks of the progressive people the outcome of this defeat could well be exploited by the ultra reactionary right wing religious and nationalist forces. Without the united rank of the working class and the freedom seeking people around the world this defeat would pave the way for the emergence of yet another camp of reaction in the world.

The defeat of Bush and the impasse of the US led terrorist policies in Iraq must be used by the working class and the progressive movements to defeat all the reactionaries in the world. Bush and the US ruling clique and their allies are responsible for the destruction of Iraq and they must be tried for their crimes against humanity.

**Worker-communist of Iran-Hekmatist**

**November 13, 2006**

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The Party's progress report since its foundation in 2004 was presented followed by a round of debates and discussions. Following the report, the congress moved on to discuss the proposed motions and resolutions. The delegates then decided to put, amongst a large number of proposed motions and resolutions, the followings on the agenda:

- The Women liberation movement in Iran and the tasks of the Hekmatist Party
- The International situation and the state of Communism
- The Situation in Iran and the challenges facing the WPI-Hekmatist Party
- The political situation in Iran and the movement to overthrow the regime
- The threat of disintegration of the country and the ways to prevent it
- The political situation in Iran and the Hekmatist Party
- Call to people, political parties and political personalities
- Call for urgent expansion of the Freedom Guards in all cities and towns in Iran
- Expansion of cooperation between the WPI-Hekmatist Party and the Worker-communist Party of Iraq
- The need to intensify the struggle against ethnocentrism and federalism

A number of motions aimed at improving the operation and the function of the Party were also dealt with.

The full text of the resolutions and motions and other documents are available in Farsi and the English translations of these documents will soon be made available.

The congress was extensively reflected and well received within the Iranian and International political organisations. A delegation from Worker-communist Party of-Iraq led by its leader, Rebwar Ahmad; a delegation from Social Democratic Party of Iran; Yanar Mohammad the president of "Organisation of Women's Freedom in Iraq"; Mr Bijan Niabati an Iranian Political personality, Mr Faridoon Ahmadi from the Organisation of Iranian Fedaiian (Majority); Mr Hassan Eatamadi from the National League for Democracy in Iran; Reza Rahimi from the Revolutionary Council of Socialists of Iran (Hekmatist); Nico De Saux representative of Iraq Solidarite and a Marxist activist from France; Roberto Luzzi representing the editorial board of "Marxist Pages" in Italy; Giuseppe Brizzolati a communist and a leader of Fiat workers representing "Class Alternative Circle" in Italy and Orhan Dilbar From the Turkish Communist Paper KOZ.

During the course of the congress a number of fringe meetings and workshops were organised including: "The Party Organisation"; "Worker-communism in Europe"; "Iranian refugees in Europe". Iraj Janatie Ataie a prominent progressive poet also held a poetry reciting session.

The first congress of the Hekmatist Party was an open and magnificent gathering directly dealing with issues affecting the fate of over 70 million people living under the a despotic and medieval regime in Iran. The determination and the resolve of the congress was reinforced by two days of deliberations, the frank and sincere discussions of differing views and finally in the manner in which these policies and resolutions were debated and carried. The holding of the congress at this crucial juncture in the political life of the people of Iran and the content of the policies and resolutions and the way in which the delegates dealt with them was an indication- at the time when most of the opposition forces in Iran are suffering from lack of direction and inaction- of the emergence of a communist party with a clear vision that is challenging the Islamic Republic. The delegates, guests and those who followed the proceedings saw for themselves that this was a congress about the most pressing issues facing the people of Iran and all the efforts were directed towards addressing the challenges facing the society.

## Hijab: Voluntary or Compulsory!

Soraya Shahabi



### **There is no such a thing as Voluntary Hijab!**

For all women, hijab (the veil) universally and unquestionably signifies subjugation and servitude. It is so everywhere and in every case. It is argued that there are some adult women in Europe who 'choose' to wear the hijab. This is a seemingly sound 'legal' argument. In real life, however, few veiled adult women ever get to taste any degree of freedom of choice in any respect of family, married and social life, be it in clothing, social life, behaviour, or even a simple thing like food. Few adult hijab-wearing women have not experienced the fear and terror of Islamic environments hanging over their lives. They are not citizens with freedom of choice but human beings fearful of jack knives, deprived of social rights, subjugated, and alienated by the atmosphere of terror existing in Islamic patriarchal environments. Under such conditions, speaking of 'volition' or 'free choice' in dress is a travesty of these concepts. Choosing the hijab as a mode of dress by adult women is no more 'voluntary' than, for instance, the 'choice' to stay in family relations that abound in terror and torture. In fact, in today's world, the concepts of volition and choice have clear, comprehensible meanings. They can hardly be interpreted arbitrarily. However, these clear concepts are easily made obscure when it comes to the rights of women living in Islamic environments due to concessions made to religion and racism towards those born into Islamic environment..

It is not hard to understand the reason why women living in Islamic environments surrender. In Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Somalia where honour killings are daily threats to women's lives, speaking of choice in dress is an offensive joke. In Islamic environments where even women's breathing is measured, there are some adult hijab-wearing women who stop attempting to bring about change. 'Choice', or, more precisely, surrender, can be understood by reviewing the deprived childhood and adolescence of these women. They have simply surrendered in order to 'survive'. We know surrendered human beings want dignity to survive. They need to make themselves and others believe that they have some control over some corner of their lives. They 'deceive' themselves in order to be able to cope with the limitations. 'Voluntary hijab' of adult women is supposed to provide a sense of control over something in their life, as well as give a little self-confidence.

In fact, the surrendered justify their captivity and slavery and portray it as logical and tolerable in order to gain some respect in their lives. It is here that some racists take snap shots of the 'high' status of these victims, share in the victims' self-deception, justify their servitude and theorize this justification through cultural relativism. They say that the hijab is the 'free choice' of these women. This choice is made as 'freely' as the choice made by a European woman to remain in an abusive relationship! Legally, this choice is as legitimate as the choice and freedom to remain in a sadistic relationship!

### Child Hijab

The veiling of children is another matter all together. It is where discrimination and force are imposed on children. It is where society, the family, and adults attack children. The veiling of children must be declared illegal all over the world as a form of violence against children. Children do not have any type of 'voluntary' or 'compulsory' hijab. The deprivation of under-age girls from freedom of comfortable, prevalent, nice- looking clothing, despite any justification to the contrary, must be forbidden just as it is prohibited to cover their mouths, cuff their hands or blindfold their eyes. The former should be prohibited with the clarity of the latter. If one's conscience, public opinion or a 'contemporary' state categorically rejects the idea of allowing a group of young girls being paraded around one part of town with their eyes blindfolded, their hands cuffed, and their mouths duct-taped, then they should categorically not tolerate child veiling either. However, we have seen, and continue to see, that this is not the case. We have seen, and continue to see, how Western states like Sweden, Canada, Britain, and Germany have for years watched such parades without moving an eyelid. For such 'modern' states, the girls being paraded under the shroud of hijab, prior to being human beings and citizens, are 'immigrants', 'foreigners', 'outsiders'. They measure the rights of these 'immigrants', even if they are residents and citizens, with the yardsticks of nationality, religion, and ethnicity. Their rights are not covered by international conventions pertaining to human rights, women's rights, children's rights, elderly rights, criminals' rights and civil rights. Their basic rights are conditional to the religion, ethnicity, and traditions of their family and place of birth.. And they ▶ Page 7

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call this sickening hypocrisy 'respect for all cultures'. Cultural relativism is thus a practical platform for discriminating against girls and women. It leaves the life, education, and health of girls at the mercy of religious families, religious schools, and the ethnocentric values of the father. They have no belief in the universality of the rights of children or human beings. They are racist!

The veil is not just another kind of clothing; opposing it is not just defending the right to freedom of clothing even though it is put forward as such. It is not something that a woman decides to put on for a change one day and to take it off the next. It is not a costume put on a young girl who is going to a costume party! Veiling young girls teaches them that they belong to an inferior sex and should be ashamed, and that they are sex objects and must limit their physical movements. By the same token, young boys are taught they belong to the 'superior' sex, and that girls are inferior and sex objects. An unbridgeable gap is thus created and institutionalized between the two sexes at the expense of young girls' deprivation and young boys' 'empowerment'. That is when the license for violence against women is issued. This marks the beginning of 'sexual apartheid', the official subjugation of women during childhood and the nipping in the bud their potentialities to enjoy a happy, creative life. It marks the beginning of the process of making two unequal sexes out of two born-equal ones. This is the beginning of human alienation. The goal is to produce two 'deformed' sexes, i.e. superior and inferior, master and slave, bread-winner and dependent, strong and weak. Much more than an item of clothing, the hijab is a decree of prohibition enforced on young girls; it is a series of laws, threats and tools designed to subjugate and enslave them.

Child hijab is an extreme form of violence against children. Children are deprived of sports and movement. Girls are transformed into sex objects from the age of nine. Their 'coming of age' is celebrated and they are virtually prepared for all sorts of sexual abuse. They are robbed of their self-respect, self-esteem, ambitions, aspirations, and sexuality. They begin to see boys as inherently 'dangerous', rapists and cruel.

They are deprived of the right to freely socialise with boys and are perceived by boys as sex objects, weak, ignorant, wrongdoers who must be put under men's guardianship.

They are denied music, dancing, and skipping around, of practically all sports, and of certain fields.

Their freedom of personal taste is denied and divided into sacred and profane. In a nutshell, child veiling is a system of brainwashing girls and boys; it is a tool to marginalise half of society's children. It aims to alienate the two sexes. It must be eliminated.

**The Hijab and Honour Killings in the 'West'**

Western governments have paid so much 'respect' to the violations of girls' and women's rights in Islamic environments in their countries, that their contemporary and progressive societies have become 'unsafe' and slaughterhouses for a large number of girls and caused alarm among people. We know that they would continue to portray their society as 'safe' were there not progressive activists from protest campaigns opposing these atrocities.

The honour killings of young girls are not accidental. They are the natural product of the imposition of the hijab over the lives of young girls and boys in Islamic environments. One cannot be outraged by honour killings and at the same time ignore the roots and cause of these atrocities. Every decent person who reads about the tragic lives of Fadime, Sarah, Pela, and tens of other young girls will undoubtedly search for the cause. Islamic violence occurring in the centre of the 'civilised' West is no accident. These atrocities are not the result of desperation, poverty or addiction. These murders are official Islamic sentences for 'disobedient' women. If a father, brother and husband do not kill their 'wanton' daughter, wife, and sister, they will be stripped of their 'honour'. These are what they put in the heads of young innocent girls in Islamic schools and with the veil..

There is only one way to stop these atrocities. By giving them real protection, the killing of children and young girls in Islamic environments can be opposed. It is only by rescuing their lives, freedom, and education from the influences of Islamic environments that these tragedies can be efficiently prevented. This protection should undoubtedly begin with prohibiting child veiling. Children's rights as human rights are universal and must be applied to Islamic environments as well.

It is ten years now that the communists from Iran and Iraq have been saying that something must be done! Children and girls in Islamic environments must be helped. They must be able to enjoy the same rights as other children and women. We have said that the veiling of children and under-age girls must be prohibited.

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We have said that the veiling of children and under-age girls must be prohibited. Religious schools, which are the centres for teaching inequality between sexes, misogyny, discrimination, violence, and so on, must be closed. Mansoor Hekmat wrote extensively about the prohibition of child veiling ten years ago (Islam, Children's Rights and Hijab-gate, June 1997). If it is not right to deprive 'Mike' and 'Helen' from a life in which the two sexes freely mingle and socialise, and if it is not right to send them to religious schools, then it is not right to do so with 'Mohammad' and 'Nahid' who are born in an Islamic environment! If it is wrong to cover 'Rosa' or 'Julia' from head to toe in a shroud-like, dark piece of cloth called the hijab, then it is equally wrong to do so with 'Shahin' or 'Maliha'. If it is prohibited to teach children violence, inequality, and

patriarchal ideas in schools, then Islamic schools must be eliminated. Understanding these objective truths about the equality of human beings irrespective of sex, race, religion and nationality in the 'centre of civilisation' is being reached at the expense of the rights tens of girls in Britain, Sweden, Germany, Denmark and Canada.

'Immigrant' children and young girls are daily struggling for their rights as equal citizens. These rights, including the right to the freedom of clothing and socialising with members of the opposite sex, must be taken for granted like the right to breathing is. These rights cannot be taken away from a Swedish, German or British girl; it must be made impossible to do so in the case of those children and girls born into Islamic environments.

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The first congress of the Hekmatist party was also an important event in the process of building a mass social political communist party in contrast with the current sectarian and ideological leftist groupings. The kind of party that its openness and its healthy and modern mechanisms were characteristic of its social character.

Finally the congress elected, amongst 88 candidates a 52 member Central Committee. The elected members are: Abdullah Darabi; Abdullah Sharifi; Ali Abdali; Aman Kafa; Amjad Ghafur; As'ad Kosha; Asad Golchini; Asad Nodinian; Azam Kamguian; Azar Modarresi; Bahram Modarresi; Behruz Modarresi; Borhan Divargar; Dariush Niknam; Djalal Mahmoudzadeh; Esmail Waisi; Fateh Shaix; Foad Abdullahi; Hassan Ghaderi; Homayun Ghodazgar; Hossein Moradbeigi; Jamal Kamangar; Kaveh Sadri; Khaled Hajmohammadi; Koorosh Modarresi; Ladann Davar; Mahmoud Ghazvini; Malekeh Ezati; Maryam Afrasyabpoor; Mehrnoush Moosawi; Minoos Homaily; Mohammad Fatahi; Mohammad Jafari; Mohammad Rashti; Mostafa Asdapour; Mozafar Mohammadi; Nahid Riazi; Nasan Nodinian; Nasim Rahnama; Parvin Maazi; Rahman Huseinzade; Rahmat Fatahi; Rasoul Benavand; Rebwar Ahmad; Saeed Arman; Said Yaganeh; Salam Zijji; Saleh Sardari; Sasan Saeed; Soraya Khezri; Soraya Shahabi and Yanar Mohammad.

Following the formal conclusion of the congress the plenum of the Central Committee was held and Koorosh Modarresi was unanimously elected as the leader of the Party and a political bureau comprising of 21 members was also elected.

The Political Bureau in a separate meeting elected Fateh Shaix as the chair of the Political Bureau and elected an eight member Leadership Committee.

**October 26, 2006**

**Freedom, Equality, Workers' Rule!**



## **Campaign in support of, and for the protection of Afghan immigrants residing in Iran**

Deportation of millions of our fellow citizens, Afghan immigrants residing in Iran, has once again come up on the agenda of the Islamic Republic. After years of living and working in Iran, under harshest and least rights, Afghan immigrants are now facing the threat of deportation. The security forces have been organised to arrest and deport them with no rights or compensation what-so-ever. They are sacked from work and deported to Afghanistan along with the rest of their family members. Most unacceptable and demeaning of it all, is that deportations are carried out under the banner of jobs for Iranian workers.

Authorities are closing down those schools which Afghan immigrants have established with their own finances, in order to forcefully separate the children from their environment and deport them.

We are all well aware of the working and living conditions of Afghans residing in Iran. For years, the rights and respect of this section of our citizens have been most inhumanely trampled upon. They are not recognised as citizens and even worse, they are not recognised as human beings. The state, authorities, bosses, and in fact anyone who so pleases, offend them, and hardly anyone does in their defence, no protest action, no setting up of some centre, no calls for changes in legislations, ...

Not only are immigrant Afghans denied of any rights in the society, but oppressing and bullying them and even at times murdering them, do not get followed up by the authorities or considered as prosecutable offences. Afghan Refugees and immigrants are forced to work longer hours for less pay and have no right to protest. They are denied any rights to housing, education, trade, marriage, free travel, .... They are treated worse than slaves in ancient times. This must change. The deportation, suppression and bullying of Afghan immigrant must cease. Existing campaigns, societies, and centres in Iran must stand up in support of our fellow workers and do something. I would like to announce a campaign with such an aim, and hope that many societies and campaigns do form around this issue. I am ready to work with all those who wish to do something against deportations, and in support of Afghan immigrants.

The objectives of the campaign in support and for protection of Afghan immigrants are:

- 1- Preventing and stopping the deportation of Afghan immigrants
- 2- Residency and work permit for all Afghan immigrants
- 3- All Afghan immigrants must be officially recognised as citizens of Iran, and all applicants for citizenships must be given official documentations as Iranians
- 4- Abolishment of all discriminatory legislations in marriage, divorce, housing, trade, ... and all Afghan immigrants to be covered by the labour code and social welfare legislations
- 5- All schools and educational establishments to be duty-bound to enrol pupils from Afghan families
- 6- Any oppression, bullying or any form of offence against them must be made banned

I call upon all personalities, institutions and political parties to cooperate with this campaign, and please contact me.

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**10 November 2006**

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## **Iraq: A Ray of Hope Amidst Carnage and Chaos!**

Disaster and catastrophe are the words that are being used, even by the White House officials to describe the situation in Iraq. The extent of this tragedy is yet to be fully exposed and digested. What we hear from eye witnesses in Iraq defies the most pessimistic beliefs. The situation is worse than the worst case scenario. All the current players in Iraq are thriving on this nightmare. Criminal gangs, religious fanatics, ethnic and tribal groups seek their survival in the disintegration of the Iraqi civil life. The neighbouring states too are exploiting this situation to advance their own interests.

The working class in Iraq and indeed in the world are faced with a historic challenge. All other forces have failed. The working class in Iraq, in these testing times, is the only force that its survival and interests and advancements requires it to have a safe, secure, free and equal society. What bounds working people together overrides all other ethnic, religious and gender divisions. Can the working class defy all the odds and emerge as force capable of delivering the Iraqi society from this tragedy? The workers, the communists, socialists, women and youths and all the progressive people in Iraq need to present their plan to rescue Iraq and stop it from further slipping towards an abyss. The recent activities and developments within the Iraqi labour movement is a welcome development. The Iraq Freedom Congress has been instrumental in uniting the working class in Iraq, in key sectors and industries, around the need to end occupation and terror. The following two statements are indicative of the kind of efforts that the labour activists are making to salvage what is remaining from civil life in Iraq.

In these difficult times the Iraq Freedom Congress is the only hope for the people of Iraq. They need to be congratulated for the heroic work that they are doing at the moment and deserves our full support.

### **General Federation of Trade Unions in Iraq (GFTU-Iraq) Statement on the Merger with the Federation of Workers Councils and Unions in Iraq (FWCUI)**

GFTU-Iraq's first convention was centred on the following statement: "The unity of the working class is the path to salvage the Iraqi society from occupation and civil war."

We believe that without uniting our ranks, we cannot stop the vicious targeted revenge attacks of the terrorist and sectarian groups who have turned our lives upside down and our workplaces into military camps.

During the convention, we solidified our determination to end the agony and fears of Iraqis by joining the IFC to end the occupation and by forming the Safety Force to defend ourselves where we live and work.

By this statement we say to our comrades in the leadership of FWCUI (who participated actively in our convention and made it successful) that in order to change the political equation for the workers' interests we must become more influential and powerful. We thereby should unify our ranks and merge our organizations into a strong one.

We consider FWCUI to share the same prospects and aspirations as we do. We invite FWCUI to work together with us and to

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take all necessary steps to announce our unity and to join the IFC which has become a vehicle to unify the workers toward a world where there is no occupation and no terrorism, a world of freedom, prosperity and stability. Let us join IFC as one.

**Long Live the Working Class, Long Live FWCUI, Long Live GFTU-Iraq**

**The Executive Bureau  
General Federation of Trade Unions in Iraq (GFTU-Iraq)  
November 20, 2006**

**Under the Safety Force Protection**

**The General Federation of Trade Unions-Iraq holds its first convention and announces its affiliation with Iraq Freedom Congress**

**The leaders of IFC, GFTU-Iraq, and FWCUI raise their hands together, determined to salvage the society from occupation and civil war**

Under the protection of the Safety Force, the General Federation of Trade Unions-Iraq (GFTU-Iraq) held its first convention in Baghdad away from the Green Zone that is guarded by U.S. troops. More than 105 delegates attended the convention, along with 50 guests who attended to show support and solidarity. More than 40 invitees were unable to attend because of the blocked roads caused by explosions and civil war.

The IFC delegation was represented by Samir Adil, Abdalhadi Alfatlawi and Sajid Habib. FWCUI Kurdistan chapter was represented by Akram Chawsheen. FWCUI Basra chapter was represented by Ali Abbas. FWCUI Baghdad chapter was represented by Subhi Albadri, and Children Protection Centre was represented by Azad Ahmed. The guests came from different cities and provinces including Karbala, Sulaymania, Alexandria, Hilla, Mahmoodya, as well as Baghdad.

Samir Adil, IFC president, used his speech to call on the participants to unify their ranks and prevent the sectarian factions from breaking their unification. He mentioned that the sectarian and ethnic factions have presented their alternatives; the occupation also has presented theirs. "Therefore," said Adil, "we are today putting forward our alternative. Let's make this convention a political message to all factions, society and the world. We, the workers, have our own alternative for salvaging the society from occupation and civil war."

Letters of solidarity from Rebwar Ahmed, general secretary of the Worker Communist Party of Iraq, along with many other solidarity letters to the convention, were read.

Several landmark resolutions were issued on the Labor Code, the Constitution, the workers' rights of self defense and the formation of the Safety Force, the workers' role in determining the fate of Iraq, the abolishment of Decree 151 issued by the former regime that converted the workers into a civil servants, federalism, and the affiliation with IFC to be on the front lines with labor.

**Iraq Freedom Congress  
Media Centre  
November 18, 2006**

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Make attempts to stop the Islamic workers councils and the Labour House from interfering in labour disputes. Combating the claims of these state apparatuses to be representing the workers, both at local level and internationally. Oppose the setting up of these organs and boycott any "elections" to these organs; actively demand the dissolution of the Islamic councils and other Islamic associations as agents of the government and actively endeavour to expel them from workplaces

**- Direct intervention in political conflicts**

The workers' struggles for economic demands in capitalist societies take on an inherently political nature. In Iran, in the current political environment, the economic struggles of the workers become more crucial and prominent. Every dispute over pay and conditions will escalate into a battle over the survival of the Islamic regime. This is not sufficient. Under the current circumstances the workers need to consciously get involve in the political conflicts. Demands such as the freedom of all political prisoners; freedom to strike and to organise; freedom of association and organisation; freedom of expression and the media; equality between women and men; banning veil and the separation of religion from the state should all be incorporated into workers demands and struggles. The political disputes and the women, students and other urban unrests are all arenas that the workers must actively intervene and they offer the working class an ample opportunity to elevate themselves to become the leader of the oppressed and all those striving for freedom.

**- Active intervention to prevent the disintegration and the Iraqization of the society**

The disintegration of the fabric of social life and the Iraqisation of the society as a result of the conflicts amongst various factions of the bourgeoisie is increasingly becoming a frightening prospect. Different factions of the bourgeoisie from the US to various Islamic gangs inside and outside the Islamic Republic and tribal and nationalists forces of Persian, Kurds, Turks, Baluchis and Arabs not only have no trouble of creating a situation worse than Iraq but seek their own interest in creating such a situation. Fanning the religious and ethnic sentiments amongst the workers is an essential element of their strategy. The main force capable of putting up a barrier to this tragedy is the working class. The WPI-Hekmatist calls on all labour leaders and the communist activists to expose the nationalist and tribal forces and stop the propagation of national and religious identities amongst the workers. At the same time while fighting against the delusion towards the US and the right wing political groups and they need to redouble their efforts to topple the Islamic Republic. The labour leaders and the communist activists must prepare the working class to exercise their organised and direct power in work places and the neighbourhoods and thus contain and suppress those forces bent on bringing about chaos and carnage. A precondition of avoiding such a scenario unfolding is the organised power of the working class.

**- The Expansion of the Party organisation in work places and neighbourhoods**

The key to carry out all the above is the existence of a disciplined and organised ranks of the best and most active labour leaders and the communist activists on a national level. The WPI-Hekmatist calls on all radical and militant workers to join the ranks of the Party and build local branches and embark on mass recruitment in neighbourhoods and work places and strengthen their political and organisational links with the Party. This is a Party committed to fighting for "Freedom, Equality and Workers' Rule" and lay the foundation of a new society.

**Long Live Socialism!**

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Therefore:

- 1- The first congress of the Worker-communist Party of Iran – Hekmatist draws the attention of the workers to the current crucial historical conditions and the need for an organised and united presence in the political arena; intervening in all social issues and raising their demands for improving the living conditions of all workers and take the initiative and lead the struggles against destitution, the autocratic rule, suppression, gender discrimination and for the overthrow of the Islamic Republic. The WPI- Hekmatist believes that a rare historic opportunity has been presented to the working class to seize the political power and implement freedom, equality and the workers’ rule in Iran. The workers must immediately assume their role as the leader of the current mass movements aimed overthrowing the Islamic Regime.
- 2- The WPI-Hekmatist invites all the militant workers to join its ranks. The WPI-Hekmatist is the pole bearer of the class unity and is the advocate of the independent presence of the working class in the current epoch making times in Iran.
- 3- The WPI-H once again re-emphasises the importance of embarking on an extensive and comprehensive initiative to organise General Assemblies in all workplaces and enterprises. In the absence of established and effective workers’ councils; in the absence of any powerful and established mass organisations, the General Assemblies i.e. the planned and conscious gathering of the workers for collective decision making and providing leadership in disputes is the key to the advancement of workers economic demands and the mass protest movements. The General Assemblies are the most effective, reliable and continuous means of organising mass actions in times of oppression.
- 4- The Party calls on all communist activists to pursue the followings as priorities:
  - **Fight against destitutions – workers unity against unemployment**

Unemployment is the main cause of poverty amongst the working class. Unemployment is not just a problem for the unemployed workers. It is a constant threat hanging over the heads of employed workers and their families as well. Workers unity against unemployment is an effective measure in containing the power of the capitalists over the lives of the workers which could be done through raising the simple and straight forward demand for sufficient unemployment benefit for all individuals over the age of 16. Furthermore a consorted effort by the employed workers and specially those in the key industries for increase in the real level of wages and unemployment benefit and also attempts to unite the ranks of employed and unemployed workers, indigenous and migrant workers, and the unconditional defence of the citizenship rights of all migrant workers as well as active support for workers facing redundancies and those engaged in fight to secure the unpaid wages are the main elements of this call.

- **Movement for organising General Assemblies**

It is of vital importance that, in order to turn the General Assemblies (GA) into the direct organs of workers’ intervention, they are held regularly and routinely; decision making processes take place in the assemblies and the workers’ representatives are elected and answerable to the assemblies. It is also imperative that the activists of the GA movement and in particular the elected representatives of each work place establish links with other GA s in a district or amongst workers in the same area of trade and pave the way for forging solidarity and unity and instigating wider trade and regional actions.

- **Struggle to disband the Islamic labour councils**

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*The following resolution was unanimously adopted at the first congress of the WPI-Hekmatist held on October 21-22, 2006*

## **Working Class and the Political Power**

The current endemic political and economic crisis; the widespread opposition against the Islamic Republic and the prospect of its downfall or disintegration have placed the question of the political future of Iran before the working class. This is an historic opportunity for the working class to lead the movements for equality, for freedom and for a modern society in a bid to overthrow the Islamic Republic and thus win the trust and confidence of the disenchanting masses and the freedom seeking sections of the society for a socialist revolution.

The Worker-communist Party of Iran – Hekmatist calls on the workers, members and activists of the Party and all the labour leaders and communist activists to do their utmost to remove all the barriers preventing the emergence of the working class as a force capable of attempting at the political power and rising up to lead the entire population in their struggle to shake off the menace of the Islamic Republic and create a free, equal and humane society and lay the foundation of a socialist society.

Since:

- The unprecedented destitution, mass unemployment and widespread redundancies have instilled divisions between employed and unemployed workers, indigence and migrant workers and have turned job security into the main preoccupation of the workers. This situation has created a sense of wariness amongst the working class deterring them from raising radical demands to improve the living standard of all workers and intervene in the political events in the country.
- Despite the fact that the current workers' disputes are part and parcel of the general opposition to the regime, nevertheless these disputes are limited in their scope and confined to sectors threatened with redundancies and closures or aimed at settling outstanding unpaid wages and have not enjoyed the active support of employed workers. Furthermore these disputes are disjointed and can not provide a serious platform for initiating an effective campaign to improve the working conditions let alone a basis for a united class action.
- Despite the increasing use of General Assemblies as a means of mobilisation of workers, General Assemblies have not yet been established as a routine and permanent form of self-organisation amongst the workers and the workers still lack their real organisations and the organs of direct intervention.
- The Islamic Republic has adopted a policy of shunning away from direct confrontation with the workers and has resorted to a policy of time wasting and wearying out the workers and making full use of its security forces to intimidate, arrest and expel labour leaders and the communist activists. Furthermore the regime through its official Islamic councils in work places and the Labour House [*an official national institution for arbitration and supposedly promotion of workers, rights - KOMONIST*] is constantly engaged in undermining the demands and the grievances that have the potential of spreading to other centres and sectors and tries to contain them.
- And more importantly, since under the above conditions and in the absence of a political and organisational cohesion amongst the labour activists and labour leaders around a communist platform, the dominant tendency within the working class in the present situation remains on one hand one of total hatred towards the regime and on the other hand a state of wait and see and the lack of appetite for participation in the political affairs and organised intervention in the daily protest movements in the country.