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TRANSLATIONS FROM RAHA'I
(LIBERATION) AND OTHER
PUBLICATIONS OF THE
ORGANISATION OF COMMUNIST
UNITY.

On June 23, 1981, with the publication of number 81 of Rahai, the O.C.U. announced that they would begin to publish Rahai more frequently under a new format designed "for disseminating the news of the people's struggle." As planned, the subsequent issues have carried news of resistance and struggle taking place in different parts of Iran as well as shorter analytic and political pieces. This decision followed the increasing repression and censorship carried out by the regime in recent months - especially after the June mass anti-regime demonstrations in Teheran and other cities. Rahai Translation Group plans to continue the quarterly publication of the English edition of Rahai keeping the focus on timely analytical and theoretical pieces. A final note: the new graphic appearing on the cover of this issue first appeared in Rahai, no. 85 (July 2, 1981). It has accompanied the main article in each following Rahai.

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Bani Sadr's Promise: The New Illusion

AFTER THE MOJAHEDIN'S MASSOUD RAJAVI AND FORMER IRANIAN PRESIDENT BANI SADR APPEARED IN PARIS RATHER UNEXPECTEDLY A COUPLE OF MONTHS AGO, RAHAI RAN TWO ARTICLES ON THE REASON AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS JOINT VENTURE AND THE IMPORTANCE OF BANI SADR'S SO CALLED "PROMISE" (PLATFORM) WHICH INITIATED A MORE OPEN COALITION BETWEEN THE MOJAHEDIN AND MR. BANI SADR. THESE ARTICLES WERE ENTITLED: "BANI SADR'S PROMISE OF FREEDOM: A NEW ILLUSION" AND A LOOK AT BANI SADR'S PROMISE OF INDEPENDENCE, FREEDOM AND ISLAMIC REPUBLIC" WHICH APPEARED IN RAHAI, NO. 96 (AUGUST 13, 1981) AND 99 (AUGUST, 27, 1981) RESPECTIVELY. THESE TWO LENGTHY AND COMPREHENSIVE ARTICLES, IN ADDITION TO ANALYZING THE JOINT DEPARTURE OF RAJAVI AND BANI SADR AND THE SIGNIFICANCE OF BANI SADR'S "PROMISE", ALSO DEALT WITH THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE DEPARTURE, THE "PROMISE" AND THEIR IMPACT ON THE LEFT OPPOSITION IN IRAN. THESE TWO ARTICLES PAY PARTICULAR ATTENTION TO THE IMPACT THAT THE DEPARTURE AND "PROMISE" WILL HAVE ON THE LEFT, SINCE THE ARGUMENT IS MADE THAT THE "PROMISE" MAY CAUSE NEW DIVISIONS AMONG THE ALREADY DIVIDED LEFT AND THAT PERHAPS IT WILL CONFUSE EVEN FURTHER THE ALREADY CONFUSED LEFT. BOTH ARTICLES PAY A GREAT DEAL OF SPACE THE VARIOUS PROBLEMS FACING THE IRANIAN LEFT AT THE PRESENT TIME. IT IS IN DEALING WITH THIS POINT THAT THEY MAKE THE CONCLUSION THAT THE IRANIAN LEFT, IN GENERAL, SEEMS TO BE LACKING A COHERENT LINE OF ANALYSIS AT THE PRESENT TIME. SINCE THESE TWO ARTICLES ARE NOT DIRECTLY RELATED TO THE JOINT VENTURES OF BANI SADR AND THE MOJAHEDIN, THE PRESENT ARTICLE WILL IN THE MAIN CONCENTRATE ON THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THESE TWO INCIDENTS. IT NEEDLESS TO SAY IS BASED ON THE ANALYSIS PROVIDED BY RAHAI NO. 96 AND 99.

Several weeks ago the Mojahedin's Massoud Rajavi and former President Bani Sadr appeared rather unexpectedly in Paris. The departure of Bani Sadr, who was impeached in the summer and was sought after, was by no means inconceivable. But many were surprised to hear the news of Rajavi's presence in Paris. The Iranian left seems at the present time to be at a critical juncture and in a state of confusion, which reflects a crisis in the theoretical framework needed to analyze its activities. We are therefore rather interested in the evaluation of the impact Rajavi's open move with Bani Sadr (as a representative of the bourgeoisie in Iran) will have on the struggles of the opposition in Iran and on the divisions already existing in the left.

The street demonstrations of June 20 showed that the opposition had moved without preparation. This does not refute the fact that it is necessary to aim blows at the regime, but it is the responsibility of the organizations to have foresight. It is simple-mindedness to think that by a street attack the regime would fall. This lack of preparation caused Rajavi and Bani Sadr to search for a solution. Their joint departure from Iran not only indicated that the left is not the only unprepared part of the opposition but also showed that the left has been left out of the picture. The Mojahedin have decided to seek the solution in cooperation with the bourgeoisie rather than the left.

Regarding the departure of Rajavi and Bani Sadr, some fundamental questions must be asked. What was the purpose of it? Why was it publicized? What did Rajavi want to imply when he accompanied Bani Sadr? Of course, the Mojahedin and the person of Rajavi justified this action by arguing that the purpose was to pursue certain negotiations. But negotiations with what forces? What kind of negotiations cannot take place in Iran but must be pursued in Paris? Why does Rajavi have to be present? More importantly, why can't they leave Iran secretly in order to pursue their negotiations in Paris? Were all the borders of Iran closed to other leaders of the Mojahedin?

Although these questions might seem unanswerable, we think they are not that difficult. For example, an answer might be provided by arguing that Rajavi accompanied Bani Sadr to Paris as a means of giving a certain message to various Iranian and non-Iranian forces. As we know, for several months now, the Mojahedin's position has been somewhere between the progressive forces on the one side and the "liberal" forces (i.e. the non-Islamic Republic faction of the capitalist faction) on the other. Also, the Mojahedin have always been accused of being socialist (leftist) and religious at the same time. The original writings of the Mojahedin (prior to 1979), which condemned private property, alienated the prosperous strata of the Iranian population as much as it attracted the lower layer of the petit bourgeoisie. These sorts of positions undermine the existence of a very broad front which the Mojahedin think they need in order to seize the state, especially, since such positions would not be accepted by Iranian and international (European social democrats, etc.) supporters of Bani Sadr. Therefore, from the point of view of the Mojahedin, these radical positions had to be changed. Therefore, Rajavi (representing the Mojahedin), by accompanying Bani Sadr, was making a significant gesture and announcement.

From this point of view, this departure has a symbolic significance. Various statements of Rajavi and the Mojahedin definitely indicate a move to the right. Certainly they imply a desire to mobilize various forces not on the left. Even if some forces on the left will also support the Mojahedin, they will welcome it - since it is rather obvious that the Mojahedin have hegemony and will be the main actor on the stage.

In the previous issues of Rahai we have often discussed the illusion of the Mojahedin created by certain forces on the left. While recognizing the past struggles of the Mojahedin (pre-1979) and their struggle against the Islamic Republic Party, one faction of the Islamic regime, we have often stated that the Mojahedin contributed their utmost to create the "illusion of the Imam" and later on, when rejected by Khomeini completely, to create "the illusion of Bani Sadr." Let us not forget that these persons who are criticizing Khomeini so harshly today are the

same persons who were some time ago praising Khomeini's "anti-imperialist" struggles; they also are the same ones who were depicting Khomeini as a man of some degree of holiness. The Khomeini of yesterday is not different from the Khomeini of today. But what seems to have changed are the Mojahedin, whose holy man of yesterday has become a murderer (which Khomeini has been undoubtedly for a long time). The illusion they are creating today is not less disgusting than yesterday's. They are depicting the commander (Bani Sadr) of the bloody attack on Iranian universities (April, 1980) as the spokesman of "freedom lovers," and the one (Bani Sadr) who announced over Iranian TV that women should wear the veil because their hair is sexually arousing to men as a modern, progressive and sophisticated man.

In the past issues of Rahai we frequently spoke of the rightward move of the Mojahedin and their support from Bani Sadr - and they denied it. Their move of today is the natural outcome of the past decision of the Mojahedin which was predictable and was more or less predicted by us. The Mojahedin are developing and expanding their illusion of Bani Sadr, and certain forces within the Iranian left (perhaps the Fedaii's "minority") are creating an illusion regarding the Mojahedin. They are in essence at the service of the Mojahedin's strategy. They seem to resemble those alienated who seek their key for liberation on the keyring of others.

Bani Sadr's Promise and the Formation of an Anti-Fascist Front

Mr. Bani Sadr has written a "promise" (platform) and the Mojahedin are supposed to create the National Resistance Council. The aim of this "promise", which is written in the usual arrogant and self-praising language of Bani Sadr, is to establish the kind of Islamic Republic which others could not establish. Is the left (or part of it) going to accept such a "promise"? If so, are they seeking a cabinet post when Bani Sadr and the Mojahedin create another Islamic Republic? Are they once more going to bring another Islamic Republic to power through their shortsightedness?

Some may conclude from this argument that we are opposed to anti-fascist fronts and that we have abandoned

our previous position. Not at all. But we believe two points must be made. Firstly, Marxists do not join an anti-fascist front unconditionally. Secondly, we must evaluate whether the National Resistance Council is in fact anti-fascist.

We believe an anti-fascist front should be composed of various forces which are opposed to the establishment of fascist rule. The platform of such a front, which is exclusively anti-fascist and promotes the fight for freedom, is prepared by all the forces involved. Also, in no way should active participation in such a front negate or contradict separate and independent activities of the individual forces involved. The platform of an anti-fascist front does not determine the nature of the coming regime, since the future government will be determined by a mass-based decision-making body - a popular referendum, a constitutional assembly, etc. A very important point is that various left forces must form some sort of coalition before joining the front so that they can demand to have certain of their demands reflected in the program of the front, and this program should not contradict their goals for the present stage of the struggle. They cannot accept a certain position simply because a majority wants it - this would mean negating the existence of the left.

Let us compare the above-defined front with Mr. Bani Sadr's "National Resistance Council." This will reveal how nonsensical are the statements of those who, as a result of the necessity of struggling in an anti-fascist front, advocate working with Bani Sadr's council. Mr. Bani Sadr and the Mojahedin are attempting to create an Islamic Republic. Mr. Bani Sadr has determined his "promise" (platform) and has delegated "authority" to his future prime minister (Rajavi) for its implementation. Then they request that others for the sake of "fighting fascism" bend their backs and face all sorts of dangers to form the steps of the ladder necessary for the climb to success of this "National Resistance Council." And certainly those of us not accepting such a "front" would be accused of not fighting fascism.

We have advocated anti-fascist struggles from the beginning of Khomeini's regime. And since then we have been

regarding anti-fascist struggles as an important responsibility of communist forces and elements. Our accusers on the contrary were regarding the fight against fascist atrocities of the Khomeini's regime as a sign of liberalism. They had forgotten that liberal forces are not consistent anti-fascist fighters. To the contrary, as a matter of principle, communists are supposed to be the most determined and the most consistent anti-fascist fighters. Shouldn't we keep in mind that Bani Sadr also collaborated with other elements of the Khomeini regime in denying the people the most basic rights? Why is it that these forces on the left are not trying to unite the actions of the left against fascism before thinking of joining a genuine anti-fascist front (and not Bani Sadr's) later on? What are the obstacles to the way of forming the front of joint anti-fascist activities on the left? We don't find important theoretical or practical obstacles to justify this inactiveness. We warn the left that joint activities on the left must come before any sort of front with non-communist forces. This kind of joint activity can attract many of those who otherwise would be attracted by Bani Sadr.

Some argue that the participation of the forces on the left in Bani Sadr's front guarantees the leftward shift of this front. This is only a lie, or at least an illusion. First of all, participating in Bani Sadr's front or supporting it prevents the opportunity of exposing both the bourgeoisie and the petty bourgeoisie and creates this illusion for the masses that Bani Sadr is their "savior." Secondly, a front having Bani Sadr as a leader cannot raise radical slogans. Bani Sadr's "promise" shows this very clearly. We believe certain forces on the left (Minority Fedaiis, Workers Way, etc) which in their words or their actions were (at least at the beginning) in favor of such a front will accomplish nothing but changing the left into a useless and worthless appendage of the forces of the bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie. The possible victory of Bani Sadr will treat all of us the way Khomeini's victory treated us before. This is sheer opportunism and pragmatism.

Earlier, we argued that an anti-fascist front must

consist of various forces who are opposed to the establishment of fascist rule. Does Bani Sadr fit this category? Did he oppose the fascism of Khomeini's regime in his capacity as: first a member of Khomeini's Revolutionary Council, second as the Minister of Foreign Affairs, then as the Minister of Commerce and Economy, then as the President of the country, and finally as the President and Commander-in-chief of the armed forces? Not at all. Bani Sadr accepted Khomeini and his regime and helped to install the fascist regime which he himself became a victim of later. In his capacity in all of the above positions, Bani Sadr not only did not fight fascism but even helped its growth in Iran. For example, he was instrumental in the final writing of the Constitution which denies the sovereignty of the people, minorities, etc. He did not oppose the closing of leftist and non-leftist newspapers and the complete suppression of the press; he did not oppose the monopolization of the government-owned TV and radio and its use as a means of lying and propagandizing against progressive forces; he did not oppose but even helped to start the fascist campaign against women, national and religious minorities; he did not oppose but even helped the Islamic Republic Party and its thugs to start a violent and bloody attack on the universities which finally led to the closure of the university system; and he agreed with Khomeini in his campaign to prove to the masses that the Mojahedin are not even Moslems. Therefore, in no way does he deserve to be involved in an anti-fascist front, let alone drafting its platform ("Promise"). Therefore, the left must not join such a front, and it should even expose it.

It is unfortunate that the Mojahedin, who for years struggled against the Shah's regime and imperialism, should be in a coalition with Bani Sadr. The fact that Bani Sadr is an alternative accepted by liberal and social-democratic forces internationally means that support for him is support for his international backers. Even if the masses will accept the Mojahedin's justification of this cooperation, it is wrong because it is not in accordance with the principles that revolutionary democrats should adhere to. We are certain that eventually the masses, those who are fighting the fascist rule of Khomeini today

will find out and therefore break with such pragmatic thinking. This kind of thinking is in violation of the principles that the martyred founders of the organization fought for. *

THE GENESIS OF NEW FACTIONS

The following article appeared in Rahai, Number 87, July 9, 1981. It discusses changes in the Iranian ruling class following the revolution of 1979, the special nature of capitalist factions in Iran as compared to those elsewhere, and finally the implication of Bani-Sadr's falling out with the clergy in terms of the possibility of a form of state capitalism in Iran.

Within the entire social movement in Iran today, political upheavals and transformations move with particular speed and suddenness; any lack of clarity or ambiguity on the part of those attempting a comprehensive analysis of these changes will result in a confusion of dead-ends. We have seen, and continue to witness, frightening examples of vague and abstruse analyses from the majority of leftist organizations. But this article is not meant as a critique of history and we are gratified to see that a significant section of the Iranian left has come to conclusion that the slogan: "Both ruling factions are enemies of the working people and defenders of capitalism," is accurate and has held true. The democratic aspirations of one faction have been just as much a fabrication as the anti-imperialist strivings of the other. Now, if the social situation in Iran could be frozen until the left gradually limped to this conclusion, there would be no cause for alarm. But it is at best a pathetic tragedy, and at worst criminal, that the left is only now realizing this point, and at a time when the issue has lost its immediate relevancy. Substituting past factional formations for today's scene is ridiculous. We must investigate the recent changes as they fit into and relate throughout the

present circumstances.

In a previous Rahai article, ' "Liberals" and Liberals', we discussed the political-economic structure of the social forces in Iran and their uninstitutionalized nature. The relation between ideological trends (superstructural) and infrastructural factors are very indirect and obscure because of a lack of tradition, interpenetration, and effects not necessarily caused by conditions in Iran. In the metropolitan capitalist centers, the conservative or liberal capitalist is directly influenced by what is good for his specific capital, its strategic position, the type of industry it is a part of, etc. As a rule, stockholders in military industries will not be liberals, and non-military stockholders will certainly not campaign for the government to allocate the greatest share of the budget to military industries. Metropolitan capitalist societies and their respective factions have their own particular traditions. But in the societies of the periphery, where capitalist relations have recently established their dominance and, more importantly, the development, system and movement of capital is determined to a great extent by dependency and the needs of imperialism, capitalism lacks an independent tradition and the factions are very volatile and unstable.

Before the 1979 uprising, we identified two principle capitalist factions in Iran: the bureaucratic - military faction and the private capitalist faction. The bureaucratic-military faction also included private capitalists connected with the royal court. After the uprising, the bureaucratic-military faction disappeared from the social scene. Some of this capital, along with its owners, was destroyed while the rest gave up their independent social identity and found a foothold in the newly forming factions. The capitalist government in Iran came to represent a coalition of the bourgeoisie and the petit-bourgeoisie. In this coalition, the representatives of the petit-bourgeoisie gained political dominance. This is evident and we have discussed it in the past: in all societies the possibility exists that a section of the bourgeoisie, for political and economic reasons, will carry the banner of the petit -

bourgeoisie and claim to be its representative. In Iran we witness this in the concrete. This phenomenon has a long historical precedent, especially in 19th century Europe. Even in previous centuries one can find many examples. Many princes led peasant and serf movements claiming to represent their interests. It is natural that this "representation" lasted only until the new prince attained power, when again the peasants and serfs would be oppressed.

In any case, the new coalition that emerged in Iran in 1979 indicated the formation of new social factions and came to face the conflicts and contradictions that we have all witnessed. The bourgeois faction representing the former private faction's capital, along with the section of the bureaucratic-military faction that had lost its independent identity, gradually lost its political position. Forced into retreat, this faction increasingly assumed a more "liberal" posture. At the moment that these changes were taking place, the petit-bourgeoisie who had a share in power, and their bourgeois "representatives", began to conquer a variety of political positions, one after the other. Regarding material well-being, and in some cases the accumulation of capital, the petit-bourgeoisie edged closer and closer to their goal of being grand bourgeois. The complete political victory of this faction could be secured only through terror and repression. The translation of this political power into economic power could only be achieved likewise. The tendencies already existing within this faction - fascist tendencies - necessarily became more widespread. In the past few months, this situation has led the two factions in the Iranian state to appear as fascist and "liberal." To the extent that economic bases existed for these factions, they were hidden by this false appearance. The conflict that existed between them was the conflict of deteriorating factions. Out of the melting pot that followed the uprising, the factions that emerged were in daily contention to capture political and economic power. The "liberal" faction has now lost political power and we must see what this means.

Future perspectives:

When one of the two feuding factions leaves the scene, the other ceases to exist as it did before; it is in effect negated. Emerging as the unchallenged force on the social scene and in the state structure made the petit-bourgeoisie's dreams all that more realistic. Classically, the petit-bourgeoisie in conquering the state structure and its power will direct the society towards state capitalism. This is what the petit-bourgeoisie wants and what the revisionists support as the road of non-capitalist development. Nasser, the Algerian National Front, Qaddafi, the Ba'athists, and many other compositions of the petit-bourgeoisie are instances of this tendency. But:

The petit-bourgeoisie in power or, better said, state capitalism, is a step or a stage on the road to the appearance of the bourgeoisie, entering through the back door. In the most complete form of state capitalism, the bureaucratic sector forms the nucleus of the new capitalist class. The accumulated wealth of this sector finds its way to becoming capital. The state structure which supposedly belonged to all the petit-bourgeoisie falls into the hand of a certain part of the petit-bourgeoisie, whose members become fewer in number and acquire more powerful positions with each passing day. These new, powerful ones find no hindrance in the transferring of their wealth and power to the private non-governmental sector. The private sector, obtaining its subsistence from state sources eventually establishes its own independent existence. It is only a matter of time until this new economic power, according to its own needs, brings about the necessary transformation in the state structure. What happened to Egypt during the Nasser-Sadat era, if not the most outstanding, is at least the most obvious instance of this unavoidable transformation. Ba'athist Iraq and the government of Algeria show instances of this passage, while Ba'athist Syria is only a step behind Egypt.

This path, as we said, is that of the most complete form of state capitalism once the petit-bourgeoisie has come to power. Yet, even supposing that the present re-

gime in Iran can come out of its crisis, this is not necessarily the path that will be followed here. The composition of the ruling elite in Iran - also in the Islamic Republican Party - contains strong tendencies against state capitalism and towards private capitalism. These tendencies will not allow a Nasser-type state capitalism to be established. Even if some form of state capitalism is established in Iran, its movement towards private capitalism will be much quicker. State capitalism in Iran will aim at the stratification of the capital of the "liberal" sector, not of all capital. Furthermore, it will only satisfy that much of the "liberals" capital which cannot, through swindling, be transferred to the pockets of the private capitalists who are connected with the regime.

This movement presupposes the fact that this regime can survive its present crisis, which is itself open to discussion. It is, however, necessary to consider this future perspective for any discussion regarding the political lines of the left organizations. We must realize that our battle is not only with fascism as one face of capitalism. If today everyone has reached the conclusion that "Both ruling factions are enemies of the working people and the defenders of capitalism" is an accurate slogan, then we must follow policies which will not allow one faction of the bourgeoisie to use us in their fight against the other faction. We cannot wait for future developments before determining our policies. We must consider future alternatives and prepare our political program in such a way that the terrible past confusions are not repeated. New coalitions, fronts, and united actions must be prepared, based on a perspective of the future direction of the social movement and not from populist subjectivism.

Have the left organizations in Iran theoretically analyzed these possible future perspectives, or do they still wish to move on only a day-to-day basis? ■

THE PRESENT POLITICAL CRISIS & AND THE TASKS OF THE LEFT

THE FOLLOWING ARTICLE WAS WRITTEN IN THE SECOND WEEK OF JUNE 1981 (RAHAI, NO. 80) AT THE HEIGHT OF THE INTERNAL CONFLICTS WITHIN THE REGIME, JUST BEFORE BANI SADR FLED IRAN. IT IS A VALUABLE DESCRIPTION OF THAT IMPORTANT TIME. THIS IS REFLECTED IN PART BY THE ACCURACY OF ITS PREDICTIONS COMPARED TO WHAT HAS ACTUALLY COME TO PASS IN IRAN SINCE IT WAS WRITTEN.

The general conditions of our society portend crises and important events. Even though the conflict within the ruling factions - the upper classes - did not appear as an immediate result of the pressure from below reflecting the class struggle of the workers and other toiling masses, it is a reaction to the politico-economic crisis of society and the worsening political conditions. In this power struggle Bani Sadr, as the most important leader and representative of the bourgeois faction of the ruling classes, has been defeated by his rivals of the [Islamic Republic] Party and has lost control of the most important institution of power - the army.

Of course, this outcome was predictable. During the recent past and especially the past two to three weeks, the internal contradictions and conflicts of the ruling classes had reached its climax and the opposing parties had come to the point of no return, making the possibility of any new compromise and agreement unimaginable. The opposing parties had entered the final battle and each side intended to bring down the other from the realm of the power hierarchy.

This outcome was finally realized. The faction of Beheshti and Co., this time with the open support of Khomeini, acted to remove the nonfundamentalist rival, the "President and Commander-in-chief," from the command of the armed forces. Now they are planning his removal from the Presidency and his trial.

Meanwhile, a great number of dissatisfied masses came to the streets and, in the absence of a left social alternative and as a result of the illusions created by

some of the political forces, showed their hatred of the ruling classes and its dominant faction by defending Bani Sadr. The presence in the streets of the dissatisfied [masses] who were, of course, unorganized and disorderly, directly challenged the government's order banning gatherings and demonstrations. The presence last week of the masses on the scene and the persistent confrontations with agents of the Islamic Republic Party and its club wielding "masses", in many aspects were reminders of the clashes and political turbulence before the February '79 uprising. This turbulence will continue in the coming days. However:

1) Bani Sadr, defeated by his rival in the power struggle and deposed from his post as commander-in-chief of the armed forces, was pushed out of the power circle. Though the commanders of the army renewed their allegiance to Islam and the "Imam of the faithful," the army in its totality is the same Aryamehr [i.e. royal] institution, an important and from many aspects determining factor. The upper echelons of the army hierarchy especially, more than being supporters of the Islamic Republic leaders, support the capitalist system in Iran and follow the interests of world capitalism and its governments, especially the United States. The army as an institution in the service of the ruling bourgeoisie, even in the absence of Bani Sadr, is and will continue to be present in the hierarchy of power. The recent statements of Khomeini and his insistence that "political issues should not be discussed in the army," even though indicative of his fear that the army would side with Bani Sadr, in essence nourish the hopes of consolidating the bourgeois hierarchy and the noninvolvement of the army in political matters. In reality this has no meaning other than the further domination of the Royalist commanders and officers over the movements of their institution.

On the surface the army is an outside observer, loyal to the Islamic Republic regime. But we believe this is only an appearance. The presence of the army as a bourgeois institution is becoming more evident in the political equations. On the other hand the participation of some elements of the army - of course as individuals, not as the army - in the street gatherings and clashes of the

last week and the extensive discussion of the political issues in the army garrisons (in spite of the attempts by the commanders to discourage it) reveal a fact that will leave its stamp on social movements of the future. Also the continued war with Iraq, especially with the low morale of the army at the front (which has worsened since the removal of Bani Sadr from the post of commander-in-chief of the armed forces), increases the role of the army in the political arena irrespective of a victory or a defeat.

2) Though the recent wave of struggle and turbulence has been scattered and unorganized, occurring mainly in response to the political conditions of the day, yet it can't be ignored by the revolutionary forces, especially the communists. With the removal of every rival of the Islamic Republic Party from the ruling circle and considering the organized plans for suppression of progressive and revolutionary forces to consolidate the ruling circle, the progressive and revolutionary forces must confront the regime in power and struggle extensively against it. The present struggles, however, are carried out in a democratic (anti-dictatorial) framework and against the [Islamic Republic] Party faction and the Faghih's [supreme leader's] rule. But if correct political positions are taken, this struggle will eventually direct itself against the totality of the ruling regime. The protest actions of the people reflect the pitiful socio-economic and political conditions. People rightly consider the regime responsible for the shortcomings. So we should encourage the mass struggle and direct it against the totality of the ruling circle and the whole present system.

Here propagandizing the left alternative and drawing a line with the liberals together with an active presence in the arena of the day-to-day social turbulence and struggle and giving direction to these struggles are among the most important duties of the revolutionary and communist forces. The mission of the communists in posing the left alternative is necessary to prevent the deviation of the masses toward the poles of the ruling circle. If the communists do not present their demands - even though presently they are not a social alternative - they cannot expect to ever attract and absorb the masses in the future.

3) It is our belief that at the present time the need for the unity and coalition of the left forces to neutralize the aggressive plans of the regime and to prevent the consolidation of oppression and suppression has become more urgent. At present the unity of action on the basis of a political program or platform or any other form of political cooperation has become an undeniable necessity. So why don't we step forward? What are the obstacles in the way and why can't they be pushed aside? Again and again we have expressed the need for unity of action of the left forces and have taken some steps on this path. Other forces have said much about this. So why can't such steps turn into a real unity of action of the left?

For example, we pose this question to the Fedayee ["minority"] comrades again: "Why don't you take practical steps forward when you recognize the need for unity of the left forces and have repeatedly stated it? What is your problem? In an editorial in No. 112 of your newspaper you have unexpectedly evaluated the condition of the left realistically and talked of the necessity of the formation of a "third bloc" (the left). You believed that "the Iranian revolutionary movement has been left many miles behind the mass movement and the rapidity of the developments." You stated that "the revolutionary organizations, dizzy and confused, have been only witnesses to the events. And finally you add that "the revolutionary organizations can play an active role in the present critical conditions and also influence the positions and tendencies of the revolutionary democrats such as the People's Mojahedin only by the creation of a revolutionary pole."

Why is it that you don't move in the direction of forming such a "third bloc," the "revolutionary pole" discussed in your article? You are ready. We are also ready. Many other revolutionary left forces that at least have common views about many political assessments and follow the same tactics would be with us also. If such slogans and statements made by us or you are not materialized, is there anyone else to be blamed for the results and complications of the continued disunity and division among the ranks of the left forces?

We repeat our frequent past invitations to the left forces. We are prepared to spare no effort in our goal to realize a left coalition. How about you? Respond to the masses and to your supporters. We repeat again that the formation of a bloc of left coalition is the only correct way to confront the reactionary rule. It is also the only real way for the left to become a social alternative. As long as the left is not united, remains divided and lacks a separate line, as long as the left does not participate in the arena of the political struggle as a single body, not only can it not have a determining role in the direction of the struggle, essentially it would lack the necessary characteristics for preparing a principled ground for some cooperations with other forces such as the Mojahedin. In the absence of a left social alternative, the Mojahedin will move to the right. This is nothing but the plain law of the social struggles, especially in relation to the movement of (radical) petite bourgeoisie.

4) The recent aggression of the regime against its rival faction and the resulting closure of some newspapers will not be limited to its rival. The regime plans to severely suppress the revolutionary forces and the revolutionary communists. This aggression is only the beginning in the regime's plans for complete consolidation of its powers without the presence of any rival. The plan of the regime for consolidation can't exclude organizing oppression of the progressive forces. So we should be prepared. The formation of an independent line of the left and thereafter cooperation with the Mojahedin are essential and determining steps in the confrontation with the regime. But what should we do until that time? If in spite of our real wishes the left is not united and the Mojahedin continue to take the position of defending Bani Sadr and the "liberals," what should we do?

We believe that in the present circumstances the regime is much more isolated than at any previous time. The great mass of the dissatisfied is much larger than the regime imagines. The threats and the pleading of "the leader" are actually the result of the weakness and the isolation that has befallen the regime. The regime, in the words of its leader, states that the marching and

protests, the resistance and the movement are "against the exact orders of the Koran," or against Islam and "against the clear order of God." Still the masses come to the field of struggle, thus openly ignoring the orders of "His excellency the leader" and "the representative of the Imam." These masses have no leadership or organization yet. The left alternative is unfamiliar and remote for them. Though the masses have a strong tendency toward it, the right alternative is burdened by many questions and ambiguities. (Note the last message of Bani Sadr on June 13 which invites the rivals for "coordination" and "execution of the law", and also note Bazargan's ridiculous communique about nonparticipation of the "Freedom Movement" in the National Front's march a few minutes after the Imam's mournful speech.)

In response to the struggle by the masses the government wants to silence the dissatisfied masses and by using several calculated attacks stop their struggle. Under such circumstances the left should be actively present in the scene of the movement of the masses. It should participate in an extensive campaign to present the left alternative by distributing leaflets, writing slogans, taking part in the street discussions, etc. The left should show that it is not a passive witness. The fact that today's political scene has become very much polarized, with some groups shouting in defense of Bani Sadr and others defending Beheshti and the rule of the Faghih does not mean that the left forces should step aside and leave the involved masses in support of this or that faction of the ruling classes.

Actually the masses have not come to the streets for these factions. The present state of affairs must be changed. This is not possible without the participation of the communists and their supporters in the daily political activities and the presentation of a left alternative. At the same time we should remember that the rule without a rival of the Islamic Republic Party requires more concrete direction of the struggle against it and the acceleration of the attacks against its rule.

5) About the tactics of the struggle:

We believe that propagandizing the resistance and struggle to the end among the people, encouraging the

people to fight the regime's program and laws, resisting the attacks by the bands of mob and lumpen elements and neutralizing these attacks and, if necessary in response to the regime's attacks, taking part in attacks against the regime, are among the most important tactics of the daily struggle. The spirit of the struggle of the masses should be kept high and social turbulence encouraged. By heightening the struggle the decline in the wave of the struggle should be prevented. This requires the organized participation of all the revolutionary organizations. A decline in the wave of the struggle and a low spirit in the masses no doubt would signal the beginning of widespread oppression and naked suppression by the regime. So we should heighten the struggle and continue the political atmosphere of the day. In this way we can prevent the passivity of the masses and their leaving the scene of the struggle, which is the prerequisite for the new plans of the regime for suppression that aims for its final consolidation.*

UNITED ACTION OR UNITED FRONT

THE O.C.U. HAS WRITTEN NUMEROUS ARTICLES AND PAMPHLETS ON THE IRANIAN LEFT: TRACING ITS HISTORY AND PROBLEMS, CRITICIZING ITS PRACTICE, AND FINALLY ATTEMPTING TO DEFINE ITS TASKS. THESE ARE, IN FACT, TOO NUMEROUS TO CITE HERE. TWO RECURRING THEMES THROUGHOUT ITS DIALOGUE WITH THE LEFT, HOWEVER, HAS BEEN O.C.U.'S PLEA FOR AN ACTIVE ATTEMPT TOWARDS PRINCIPLED UNITY AND RELATEDLY, FOR A TOTAL REJECTION OF STALINIST CONCEPTS AND TACTICS. "UNITED ACTION OR UNITED FRONT" (RAHAI, n. 85, 7/2/81) CONTINUES THIS DIALOGUE UNDER PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES FOCUSING ATTENTION ON THE "PAYKAR" AND "FEDAYEE MINORITY" ORGANISATIONS, TWO OTHER LEFT ORGANISATIONS ACTIVE IN IRAN TODAY.

. . . A look at the publications of many left organisations shows that today, unlike before, most in one way or another, have come to accept the need for united action. There are now fewer instances of open sectarianism and self-aggrandisement. In the past few weeks, two important advances have been made, both an outcome of the intensification of repression by the Islamic Republic: first, the emphasis on the necessity for united action and second, an understanding of the importance of democratic struggles. While these are definite advances, if remaining ambiguities and problems are not attacked head on, these advances will remain superficial and formal - advancing us only to another dead end.

To start with, we must ask why it took the left so long to comprehend the importance of democratic struggle in the first place. Must each and every individual in this country be subjected to tyranny a hundred times over before the communists realize that they must struggle for freedom? When we were publishing repeated pleas on this

issue, there were not few organisations and groups who, content with having a book stall in this street or that back alley, thinking they were "free", condemned us to "extremism" on the issue of freedom. These forces were so distant from the political environment of society and the political changes taking place; so completely wrapped up in their cocoons; so deeply emersed in their perverted communist - read Stalinist - theories, that they repeatedly negated the human need for freedom and development as inseparable parts of the meaning of social justice and social freedom. Only when the guns had been put directly to their heads did they realize that yes, freedom is not such a bad thing after all. If these forces were the only ones active in society at this time, it might have even been amusing to observe them but this terrifying backwardness emerged at the time when other forces in this same society were deceitfully raising the banner of "freedom" and were mobilizing hundreds and hundreds of people around it. In Rahai, no. 46 (Sept. 1980) we discussed this problem and finally in Rahai, no. 56 (Dec. 1980) we wrote:

... it is not an exaggeration to say that the most important factor making Bani-Sadr what he is today was the Iranian left. It is the Iranian left that allowed him and his kind to become the only actors "fighting" for the cause of freedom... this Iranian left has made the cause of freedom appear to be that of liberalism ...

The revolutionary Iranian left must stand up against these bad teachings and distortions. Freedom is not the slogan of the liberals. It is a real slogan of the communists. In capitalist society, the communists do not condone the fascists' closing of liberal newspapers. The defense of the press - even the liberal press - is essential. The Iranian left ... must not fear the heckling of fascists disguised as leftists ... By raising the call for freedom, they must express their own demands, mobilize and help those who are rebelling against repression, and disarm the

liberals.

And finally:

He who abandons the barricades of freedom and hands them over to the liberals is the one who serves liberalism, not he who remains and fights and shows that the communists are the most freedom-loving individuals on earth.

These warnings were repeatedly left unheard until the day came when the Paykar organisation, for example, learned that:

It has thus come to pass that the masses, disturbed by growing repression and unaware were pulled under the false and anti-revolutionary banner of liberalism raised by the liberal bourgeoisie.
(Paykar, no. 110,

One must ask: were not you and those that agreed with you on your view of freedom part of why it "came to pass". . . . What have you to say today to those people whom you have described as "unaware" What did you do to make them aware ?

. . . . Was it really "necessary" that we should have gone on under the influence of non-communist Stalinist teachings, seeing moment by moment the deception of the people by the liberals, until finally on the unexpected night of June 15th be forced to claim that: oh no, the "unaware" masses have gone under the banner of liberalism?

Certainly, as a result of the heavy share it had in hurting the communist movement in this respect, Paykar will be moved towards self-criticism, at least superficially, in the near future. If the past is any indication of the future, however, this criticism may come in the form of laying the blame on this or that real or imagined tendency in the Fedayee Majority or Minority organisation. In other words, the old story of "it wasn't really me but my hand" will continue. When the ability for self-criti-

cism does not exist, it is unavoidable that recourse will be found to such methods. In any case, whether this new discovery is real or superficial, its proclamation is nevertheless a step forward...

But the understanding behind the need for unity on the part of many organisations presents several problems. As an example, consider the argument put forth in Kar, no. 114, under the title, "On Forming a Front". In this article, the Fedayee comrades, in answering the questions raised by forming a front, present explanations based on an unclear and ambiguous perspective.

The comrades claim:

Despite the need for the unity of revolutionary forces, the conditions are not yet present to do so.

or:

Unity in action of the revolutionary forces is a step towards creating the suitable conditions for forming a front.

and, elsewhere:

Those forces who share a common immediate goal and a common enemy must agree to a revolutionary program.

This shows that the comrades have a vague notion of certain concepts and definitions and under some kind of populist influence, constantly are led to blur the distinctions between different social forces. Let us explain.

Suppose that under the influence of an intensified fascistic atmosphere, the need for unity amongst left and revolutionary democratic forces arises. . . . Fine. Under these circumstances, what else can we call such a front which aims to struggle against fascism, other than a front against fascism? Is the front under consideration by the comrades such a front or something else? If it is, then you should explain what are the pre-conditions and the

obstacles towards forming an anti-fascist front.

We don't find any such explanations because the aim of the comrades for forming a front is unclear. Thus, when many have asked Kar the vague question of why it does not form a "front", the comrades have only been able to answer, more vaguely, that, "the conditions for forming a front do not exist."

We feel that the conditions for forming an anti-fascist front do in fact exist today with one qualification. The left forces - the communist forces - must first bring about a unity or coalition between themselves and then enter into discussions with non-communist forces. Any and all kinds of one to one and separate discussions between communist forces and other forces will only lead to the hegemony of non-communist forces, in whatever kind of front, and here specifically in an anti-fascist front.

Comrades! First, we must build the house. Until then, that is until the left organisations have not learned or do not want to enter into serious discussions with one another and present a common program, non-communist forces will have the right to claim leadership.

How can you explain to the people the fact that the left organisations, supposedly of one family and all claiming to be communist, cannot come together; that they are so conceited that each demands in return for its own cooperation, the exclusion of another. And yet, they hope to join together under the catalyst of the "revolutionary democrats". Don't the people have a right to call these organisations childish and immature and to not trust them? Don't the revolutionary democrats have a right when entering into separate negotiations, to promote what is only in their own interests?

Comrades! at the beginning it is necessary to build a left alternative. If it is not yet possible to become a social alternative, it is still necessary to build, present and publicize a united left voice. The people of this land must first come to know what the left represents. The revolutionary democrats must come to know that before them stands a firm union. All this is not unattainable. Over and over again we have written about its necessity and the existing possibilities.

And what responsibilities would this anti-fascist

front have were it to be formed? This front would partake in anti-fascist struggle. If this seems obvious, it is not. The comrades, for example, do not realize that an anti-fascist front does not make a revolution; that before making a revolution, one must know what kind of revolution one intends to make. In your opinion, what would a "unity of revolutionary forces" actually aim to do? What kind of revolution would it work towards? Amongst the revolutionary democrats which you would include, let us take the example of the Organisation of People's Mujahedin.

Do you, or we, or for that matter anybody else know the kind of revolution that the Mujahedin seek? Is it an Islamic revolution, a socialist one, "new democratic", "national democratic", or something else? We don't know. Your supporters also don't know. Do you the leaders of the organization know? Are you ready to make an Islamic revolution with the Mujahedin? They believe in Islam and want that Islam, in a democratic way, rule society. Do you want this?

You will undoubtedly ask as others will, which Islam? You may say, that the concept of Islam held by the Mujahedin is completely different than that of the present regime. Yes, we agree. But specify what kind of Islamic Republic you are willing to fight for.

As for us, we do not accept any kind of Islamic Republic, any religious state or religious leadership. We will not struggle for such nor make a revolution to bring it about.

We respect the democratic tendencies of the Mujahedin and are ready to fight alongside them for democracy and against fascism. But we also know that their revolution is not our revolution. Of course, they too know this well. Therefore, what kind of a "revolutionary front" are you considering that would allow you and other communists and the Mojahedin to partake in "a revolutionary program usually called a front"; to make a kind of revolution the nature of which is not at all clear?

Comrades! Before the uprising, you criticized us for our understanding of the role of the clergy and our description of the clergy as reactionary and fascist. You

said we were being ultra-leftist. At the time when we published, "The Role of the Clergy in Seeking Power" and warned the left that this group would turn on us and after the revolution make us their target, the Iranian left was too confused and immature to see or want to see such a reality.

But what about today? Is there anyone to be found today who is a leftist and doesn't accept this? And if we have learned from experience does this knowledge only relate to the past or can it not be also useful for the present and the future?

Comrades! We can unite with the revolutionary democrats against fascism. We can form an anti-fascist front with them, we can even form an anti-imperialist front because they are anti-imperialist. But we and they cannot make a social revolution together because both of us do not agree on one kind of social revolution. It is not simply a question of definitions - it is one of theories and perspectives. We must be exact. We must know what it is that we want so that we can specify the road to it.

When you wrote an open letter to the Majlis, we became very worried. When you criticized yourselves for doing so, we were in turn relieved. You claimed that the reason for your mistake was "zigzags and backwardnesses" and the absence of "a clear policy and program". Your honest approach was commendable, but comrades, whatever the reason may have been, who in the end is responsible? What fault do the people and your supporters share who only witness such things. You were honest and confessed the truth. Others have not had the honesty nor the courage to do so on many occasions. But what now? Is backwardness a virtue? Are we some kind of non-social forces who by simply acknowledging our weaknesses become purified?

Comrades! Neither you, nor we, nor Paykar, nor the Worker's Way, nor any other group or organization can by itself eliminate backwardnesses. A remedy should accompany a diagnosis. Only our unity can bring about that "clear policy and program" of which you speak. You cannot do it alone. No one can. Before another catastrophe falls upon us, let us try to eliminate our incompetencies.

History will not forgive those who did not try to do away with weaknesses. And here lies the difference between "criticism" and "confession".*

The Bill of Retribution

THIS ARTICLE APPEARED IN RAHAI #76, MAY 21, 1981. THIS BILL OF RETRIBUTION HAS SINCE BECCME LAW.

During the month of Azar, 1359 (November-December 1980), a secret document came into our possession entitled "The Bill of Retribution and its Regulations" with 55 articles and the signature of Ayatollah Qodusi, former 'Attorney General' of the Islamic Revolutionary 'Courts of Justice' (who was recently killed by a bomb). Our organization, without delay, examined this shameful and anti-human document in its official publication, Raha'i and in the course of four issues (57-61), unmasked another manifestation of the medieval nature of the Islamic Republic regime.

Recently, the High Judicial Council has 'perfected' the Bill of Retribution (BR) with the addition of 144 new articles to the original text, just as medieval and anti-human as the first. The 144 additional articles relate to: "retribution through dismemberment", "punishment for consuming alcohol", "punishment for fornication and adultery", "punishment for sodomy", "punishment for lesbianism" and so on. More explicitly, there are decrees relating to "the chopping off of hands and feet," the shattering of teeth," " the severing of ears, noses, tongues, and lips," "the gouging of eyes from the socket," "lashing" and "stoning". Detailing the savagery and cruelty which is contained in every line of these articles, cannot be accomplished within the space of a single leaflet, but requires the writing of several articles. Here, only as an example, we may mention that the "punishment of lapidation"

(torture and death through stoning), from the point of view of the reactionaries of the Islamic Republic, is so important that they have devoted 57 of the Bill's articles to deal with this form of punishment. We know that, a few months ago, before the drafting of BR, the reactionary cleric, Hojjatoleislam Fahim, the chief magistrate of the Islamic Revolutionary Court of Kerman, had put on a savage exhibition of stoning and more recently, dismemberment, as well.

According to BR, one can apply the lash before stoning (Art. 100, 110) and the stoning of persons in cases of illness and pregnancy legally presents no difficulty (Art. 97, 105); one can even condemn "religious and officially recognized minorities" to the torture of stoning, despite differences in religious law. Since the dreadful display of "lapidation" should not be completed quickly, "the stones must not be so large that the person is killed with only one or two" (Art. 116). On the contrary, it is necessary that the person be tormented and the barbaric scene of torture be extended sufficiently so that the sadistic, depraved criminals may be provided with ample opportunity to fully enjoy this medieval show of horrors.

As it was said, almost five months ago, when the first section of the BR (which was still being kept under lock and key by the reactionaries of the High Judicial Council) reached us, we didn't wait a few months like the 'liberals' and 'freedom-lovers',¹ who published the text without commenting on it, but instead, we knew that our duty was to expose, immediately, its ultra-reactionary and anti-human character, and during the course of a series of articles, which focused on the BR, this pretentious nonsense they call a legal document and also to elucidate, with documentation and analysis, its three principal characteristics:

1. The combination of class oppression and medieval savagery. BR manifests its class character in the most brutal and shameless manner. It is a bill which is 100% to the benefit of the "the haughty" and to the detriment of "the needy".² According to this bill, a male, moslem murderer, if he is wealthy, can be exempted from any type of punishment and freed immediately, with the payment of a "mulct" (blood money), however such an option will never

exist, almost without exception, for the majority of our people, especially, for the workers and impoverished.

In the BR, for individual killing and massacres of communists and the laborers of society, abundant 'legal and canonical' grounds have been anticipated. The perpetrators of these murderous acts against individuals or groups are not considered to have committed any crime, but rather, with the extermination of individuals who "according to religious law deserve to be killed," are performing their pious duty. In every line of the BR, the abhorrent aspects of class society are evident in the most arrogant and unveiled manner. These gentlemen, who, for purposes of demagoguery, continually speak of 'spiritual matters' and label communists adherents of 'material thin things' (their understanding of materialism as a philosophical approach) have repeated, at least once, the term "mulct", in many of the articles of their bill of Islamic justice. For the jurists of Islam, a price can be placed, not only upon human dignity and respect, but even upon the life of a human.

2. The flagrant denial of the rights of women and religious minorities. A woman, under Islamic law and the Islamic Republic, is one half of a person, under the best of circumstances (if she be a moslem), and in other circumstances, i.e. in the event that she be a "tributary infidel" (Christian, Zoroastrian or Jew), or even worse, if she is "non-tributary" (follower of other religious sects or if she is a "pagan"), then she is not considered to be a human being, and thus can easily be subject to Islamic ritual slaughter. This sort of killing is canonically sanctioned and, in some cases, it is even required as a religious duty. At no time is the murderer of a woman, even though she be a moslem, deserving of the punishments of retribution, because, as it was mentioned above, a woman, in the best of circumstances, is still half a man (person).

3. The ordinances inherited from the dark ages of savagery and barbarism. In the BR, as it was in the period of savagery and barbarism, crime is considered to be a

private matter, and has no relation to society. The High Judicial Council imagines that a crime, with all of its complications in the capitalist world of today, can be resolved and settled in one short meeting, the same way it was 1400 years ago. Judging from BR, it seems that in the distant past, in the deserts of Arabia, in some Bedouin tribe, a murder took place and the murderer was apprehended. The murderer, the "avengers of the blood," and the religious magistrate sat together, and in one session, decided whether the murderer should pay a "mulct" (blood money) for the victim (if he is wealthy) or if he should be beheaded with a 'sharp sword' (if he is poor).

And so today in Iran we witness such speed, such clarity, and such simplicity - coupled with complete stupidity!

Militant Comrades!

The reactionary regime of the Islamic Republic, having produced so much destruction, desolation, bloodshed, unemployment, inflation, vagrancy, poverty, starvation and homelessness in these last two years, and having perverted and debased the glorious revolution of the oppressed masses, is still not satisfied and now wishes to turn the public squares of our cities into medieval circuses, with the staging of savage exhibitions of lashing, severing of ears, noses, lips, tongues, hands and feet, gouging of eyes from the socket - as a deterrent to others.

While exposing the two years of crimes of the Islamic Republic in repressing the workers, peasants, women, revolutionary and progressive forces, and ethnic and religious minorities, let us also attempt to extensively expose the contents of this bill, which is another manifestation of the ultra-reactionary and medieval nature of the "Islamic Republic," to the judgement of public opinion both in Iran and throughout the world. ■

Notes:

¹Here 'liberals' and 'freedom-lovers' refers to the secular supporters of the Islamic regime from among the bour-

geoisie, their best representatives being Bazargan and Bani-Sadr.

2. 'The haughty' is a translation of the term mostakberan and 'the needy' of the term mostaz'afan. The use of these terms by the ruling elite after the revolution serve to conceal the economic realities of class society in Iran.

Excerpts...

WE ASKED SOME OF THE SUPPORTERS OF THE O.C.U. TO SUBMIT EXCERPTS FROM RECENT ISSUES OF RAHAI THAT WOULD BE OF INTEREST TO OUR READERS. HERE ARE SOME OF THE PIECES WE RECEIVED.

ON THE MUJAHEDIN

As the largest organized power of the opposition, a middle force such as the Organisation of the Iranian People's Mujahedin (OIPM) which simultaneously enjoys a degree of leftist radicalism, a religious cover and the "realistic approach" of the "liberals", has played a significant role in the recent developments of our society. Nevertheless, at the present time, the OIPM is not able to act as an alternative to the ruling power by itself. Nor does it appear that the OIPM plans to have an independent role in Iran's future struggles. This lack of independent political activity may be observed in the Mujahedin's choice of political allies - bearing in mind the fact that the OIPM's class base does not form an independent social force.

. . . In decisive confrontations - such as those in Kurdistan, in the resistance against the government's closure of universities, and in the street clashes on the occasion of May Day - the Mujahedin left the communists to face the reactionaries on their own. It is true that the Mujahedin's peculiar political line prevents them from an open alliance with the left, but they have also avoided any undeclared participation in the campaigns of the left in the last two years and have not even launched any similar campaigns independently. However, the OIPM has been a principle participant in meetings sponsored by Bani-Sadr and Bazargan while its sympathizers have been advised not to take part in meetings organized by the

left. Undoubtedly, one of the reasons for this behavior of the Mujahedin is their estimation of the (weakness of) radical left. But this is a purely pragmatic calculation on their part which not only overlooks the left's potential for growth but even goes against the OIMP's own declared principles. In the Mujahedin's version of socialism (i.e. "the unitary classless society"), the anti-exploitation forces (communists) must logically occupy a more prominent place than the "liberals". But in practice, we see that it is the liberals - not the left- that enjoy the Mujahedin's support in major political struggles. This pragmatic consideration has already produced its negative consequences. The Mujahedin's contribution to the creation of illusions about Bani-Sadr is among the most important of these. (Rahai, no. 74, May 7, 1981)

ON THE LEFT IN IRAN

None of the left organizations in our society is a worker's organization. These organizations have not emerged from the struggles of the working class nor are they the products of the activities and growth of workers' syndicates and councils. In fact, the opposite is the case. These organizations are gatherings of communist elements, basically from petty bourgeois backgrounds who at best have left their own class to join the proletariat which in turn has a long way to go before becoming a class - for - itself. This is a fact which taken by itself is neither good nor bad. The history of every left organization in Iran is a testimony to the truth of the above statements and there are no exceptions. The reasons for this phenomenon cannot be fully elaborated here. But it may be mentioned that in general, in the countries of the periphery, the existence of imperialist exploitation and oppression is a key factor in the development of certain forms of (social) consciousness prior to a (corresponding) development in objective social conditions. In such societies, due to the impact of imperialism - and not necessarily under the influence of the working class movement - many conscious elements from the

non-proletarian strata develop left-wing tendencies. This, however, takes place under conditions of backwardness in social and production relations which do not yet permit the proletariat to become a class-for-itself. Thus appear communist tendencies which are not the products of the working class in a given society, but reflect the specific and historical struggles of the proletariat at an international level . . . (Rahai, no. 79, 6/11/81)

ON THE CORRECT APPROACH TO FACTIONAL STRUGGLES WITHIN THE STATE AND THE QUESTION OF DEMOCRACY

We believe that in the power struggles of Iran, the "democratism" of bourgeois liberals is as phony as the "anti-imperialism" of the reactionary fascists. . . However, when factions of the ruling power are engaged in a struggle (for their own reasons) and thus each prevents the other from stabilizing their domination, conditions exist for the growth of mass struggle and the emergence of a left alternative. Therefore, when considering the case of unity vs. conflict among the ruling factions, it is their conflict which is beneficial to the cause of the people . . .

In our society, in addition to the left forces, various other groups of people are suffering under political repression. These groups will be won over by the liberal forces if the left fails to call upon them and prove to them in practice that the genuine democrats are in fact the communists . . . It is correct and possible to show people that the communists - and not the liberals - offer true democracy. It must be shown that the communists are the most resolute opponents of repression, torture, and censorship. Those who miss this point and equate the communist struggle for democracy with liberalism, do not understand the ABCs of political struggle . . . contrary to the Stalinist-terrorist organizations that equate socialism with repression, we believe that without democracy, socialism would be no more than a "working class" copy of fascism. Those whose conception of socialism is based on the Stalinist logic of bullets, prison and exile

for all political opponents, in fact have no understanding of proletarian democracy. (Rahai, no. 64, 2/19/81)

ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE PROLETARIAT
AND ITS LEADING PARTY

We believe that the establishment of the leading party of the proletariat is impossible without transition through a specific stage of class struggle against capitalism (in which) the working class evolves from a class-in-itself and learns from the concrete experiences of its own struggles. This process involves the absorption of socialist consciousness by significant sections of the working class - learning both from (sources) outside of and in their own day-to-day struggles. It also requires the engagement of the working class in political struggle against the entire ruling power in such a way that it can form its own powerful and independent rank in the political arena and thus directly and consciously influence the trend of the general political struggles in a given society. The existence of the above conditions can give a material basis to unity within the communist movement of a society.

In other words, the party is formed from within the struggles of the working class through a merger of socialist theory and the proletarian movement - not according to a preconceived theory or scheme for revolution. Of course it is possible to form a (non-proletarian) communist organization with the aim of uniting it with the working class movement. A "party" may also be formed in a similar fashion. But it cannot be the "leading" party of the proletariat since the pre-condition for such leadership is an organic link with the working class movement. The proletariat must be able to understand this "leadership" in its day-to-day life. The party must gain the role of "leadership" or "representation" in the class struggle through its function in the concrete struggles of the workers, otherwise this "leader" would be hopelessly lost in the attempt to substitute itself for the class. We already have too many of these kinds of "parties"

in Iran. The "Tudeh Party" (pro-Russia), the "Socialist Workers Party" (Trotskyist) and the "Party of Toilers" (Maoist) are all trying to "lead" the proletariat according to their own programs, in the absence of a true proletarian program formed and put into practice by the class conscious workers themselves . . . (Rahai, no.79, 7/11/81)

ON THE POLISH QUESTION

. . . In Eastern Europe, the demand for the formation of an independent labor union is a very significant political demand. The call for the establishment of "new autonomous unions that truly represent the working class" (Article I of Solidarity's demands) in fact means that the workers of Poland are to a large extent aware of the fact that the existing institutions in their country do not represent their true interests and that truly representative organs must be controlled by the workers themselves - not by others who became the "caretakers" of the proletariat and act in its name. At the same time, the independence of the new Polish union brings the workers together in a united confrontation with the employer. This is significant not only because it creates class solidarity among the workers, but also because in these East European countries, the state itself is the employer . . . This means a confrontation between the proletariat and the entire political apparatus of society. Such a confrontation will rapidly raise the level of understanding among the workers of the nature of the social system. . . . The workers of Poland are still organizing and learning from the experience of their struggles. . . Unfortunately, the existing tendencies in the leadership of "Solidarity" do not offer promising political positions. The most progressive known tendency at this level - i.e. progressive in comparison with the Church and other Catholic groups, etc. - is the "Committee for Social Self-Defense". But even this committee offers a reformist alternative. . .

. . . While the achievements of the Polish workers

can only be fully safeguarded and expanded through the grasping of the fact that Eastern Europe needs something more than "economic reform" and "democratization". In fact, even the present demands of the Polish workers can only be fully realized and institutionally guaranteed by a social revolution.

Thus, to proceed in the above direction, it is first necessary to develop and strengthen the workers' (political) organizations and raise their political consciousness. . . . to extend the working class movement to other East European countries and in particular to the Soviet Union - otherwise any hope for victory would be an illusion.

In other words, and here may lie the irony of the situation, while the spreading of the worker's movement to other East European countries would threaten the power of the Soviet state and push the latter toward military intervention, there can be no victory for East European workers without the expansion of their movement - which will thus inevitably clash with the repressive forces of the status-quo. The question posed here then, will be to determine the precise moment of this clash so that it may be most favorable to the proletarian movement.

What is certain, however, is that if the existing movement in Poland extends further and becomes more politically aware and mature, then it can pose a serious potential threat to the anti-proletarian forces that dominate the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. It will thus become a prelude to the establishment of socialism in these societies. That, however, will not be possible in the absence of the collective effort of Soviet and East European workers and the active support of the proletariat in western Europe. (Rahai, no. 65, February 26, 1981) *

YUSEF

continued from the back cover

In 1979, Yusef became a member of the O.C.U. In the same year, after passing the general examination in mathematics, he entered Shiraz University. During his short period of participation in the student movement in Shiraz, he emerged as one of the activists. During the Spring of 1980 fascist attacks on the universities organized by the regime, Yusef was arrested along with others for his part in the resistance struggle at Shiraz University. As a result of the physical and psychological tortures he suffered during his detention, the regime was forced to send him to a hospital from which he escaped and once more joined the struggle.

In the summer of 1980, Yusef was sent by the O.C.U. to Kurdistan to take part in the struggle there as well as to undertake military training. This past spring, he went to Esfahan to work there.

It is now clear that Yusef suffered extensive torture during his second arrest that led to his death. His body retrieved by his family, showed signs of barbaric treatment: a broken jaw, the total blackening of all his fingers, whip lash marks on his back, severe burns all over his body -- in one place (on his right side), the words "Allah Akbar" ("God is Great"), were seared into his skin. In the opinion of doctors who examined his body, he did not die as a result of bullet wounds (although such wounds were to be found on his body). Rather, it appeared his death resulted from a severe blow to the testicles. Thus he was tortured to death and in an attempt to cover up, the Pasdars shot five bullets into his body after death.

This is how Yusef came to be martyred along with hundreds of other revolutionaries, for the "crime" of defending working peoples' rights and for struggling for socialism, at the hands of blood stained reactionary regime of Khomeini. His memory will live on. It will not be long before the Iranian oppressed peoples shall seek revenge for his blood and that of the thousands of others murdered in struggle for freedom from the capitalist regime of the Islamic Republic. (From Rahai, no. 104, Sept. 24, '81)

ABULFAZL & MANOUCHEHR

continued from the back cover

Manouchehr was born in 1954. In 1975, after finishing high school, he entered Tabriz University to study philosophy. He was drawn to communism during this time and took an active part in the student movement. During the fall closing of the university in 1978, he returned to Hamedan, his home town, to organize opposition to the Shah's regime.

After the revolution, once the universities were reopened, Manouchehr joined the "Pishgam" organization in Tabriz. He worked on the publication activities of "Pishgam". After a while, along with others, he left "Pishgam" to form the O.C.U. Supporter Group in Tabriz. He later became the O.C.U.'s organizational liason in Urumia and took on a part of the responsibility for printing and distributing O.C.U. literature in Tabriz.

Abulfazl was born in 1958. In 1976, he entered the Radio and Television Institute. After a year, he came to the conclusion that his school environment was not conducive to sustained political activity. He then changed schools and entered Tabriz College. Along with Manouchehr he joined Pishgam and later formed the Supporter's Group in Tabriz. After a while, he accepted responsibility to help in getting the organization's literature to Kurdistan.

After the universities were closed by the regime, Abulfazl stayed in Tabriz and continued his political work, for a while acting as a liason for the city of Zanjan and also taking charge of a team printing house.

The families of both Manouchehr and Abulfazl undertook a long fruitless search for their sons after they were captured. They only learned of their deaths when Keyhan printed their names amongst a list of 37 "smugglers" that were executed. They immediately went to retrieve the bodies from the authorities but confronted only bureaucratic and malicious stalling tactics. Finally, the family of Manouchehr went to the Tabriz Cemetery where they were told the body had already been buried. After

much difficulty the body was exhumed. They found it had not been properly prepared for burial; Manouchehr's blood stained clothes were still on him. They discovered that there were no bullet wounds on his body, but both his legs were broken from the thigh down and his jaw was shattered. Three of his fingers on one hand were dismembered. Finally, they found a bullet wound in his mouth. The families have still not gotten permission to retrieve their sons' bodies.

Less than ten days after Dastanbou and Salehi were murdered, the regime's agents were discussing different methods of torture and execution in a Majlis (Parliament) meeting of July 20th....In the last 80 days alone, nearly 1600 revolutionaries have either been executed or died in armed struggle against the regime. Khomeini's butchers have broken, burnt, and severed the arms and legs of many. They have put out their cigarettes on many human bodies. But the daily flights of the regime's agents - big and little - to "Allah" is the best evidence that these barbarisms have had no lasting effect and will not in the future. The rotten sacred rope that Khomeini and his rule clings to is unraveling.

Although Manouchehr and Abulfazl will not be by our side when that day comes, their memory will never leave us. We will continue their struggle and that of thousands of other communists around the world who sacrifice their lives for freedom and social justice, for socialism." (From Rahai nos. 97, 103 (July 29 and Sept. 17, 1981)*)



Yusef



Abulfazl



Manouchehr

***YUSEF YUSEFFI**

On Friday, August 28, 1981 the Prosecutor's Office in Esfahan announced the execution of Yusef Yuseffi. Yusef, an active member of the O.C.U. was arrested in the end of June during a body search in Esfahan. He was carrying O.C.U. literature.

Yusef was born in 1957. After finishing high school in 1975, he came to the United States to continue his studies. He quickly became active in the student movement here, during which in 1977 he came into contact with the Communist Unity Group and began his first organized work with them. The next spring, Yusef returned to Iran to take part in the growing people's movement against the Shah. With several others, he helped form several new organizational cells in Shiraz. continued on page 41

***ABULFAZL SALEHI**

& MANOUCHEHR DASTANBOU

On the 30th of June 1981, in Tabriz, Manouchehr Dastanbou and Abulfazl Salehi were captured by the Pasdars while distributing an O.C.U. leaflet concerning the murder of Said Soltanpour by the Islamic Republic. Five weeks later, the news of their execution appeared in the regime's newspapers. continued on page 42