

Trial of Workers or Trial of Any Class Protest?



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“The slogan of bread, jobs and freedom is a communist slogan.” Judge Moghiseh

Following the defeat of the glorious workers’ struggles in the autumn of 2018, the era of bourgeois revenge began. The bourgeoisie had to take revenge for 28 days of class struggle, when its grandeur had been broken. The arrested workers and their supporters were forced to confess under torture, while, the following day in front of the bourgeois parliament, they chanted, “Documentary, torture has no effect!”[1]. The launch of Islamic Councils at Haft Tappeh Company, which also failed, was a reassertion of the bourgeoisie’s power.

Prisoners from the labour protests and their supporters after their temporary release told the story of life in prison, which was too much for the bourgeoisie. So, they were arrested again. The security forces also harassed the families of labour activists. The Haft Tappeh labour activist families were repeatedly summoned and interrogated by the Ministry of Intelligence. Inside the prisons, political prisoners, including labour activists, were also placed alongside criminals to harass them. As a result, several inmates arrested on 1 May were subjected to persecution by criminals. In line with such a dirty policy, Alireza Shir Mohammadi, one of the political prisoners, were eventually killed by criminals.

The Islamic bourgeoisie has a great deal of experience in desecrating and torturing political prisoners. It was during this time that Amir Hossein Mohammadi Fard and Sepideh Gholian went on hunger strike to defend their human dignity and their fellow prisoners in protest at their inhumane conditions. Although their hunger strike has resonated in the community, it has also severely endangered their health. Sepahan explains the reason for the hunger strike as a struggle tool:

“The hunger strike is not my choice. But, in prison, this is the only prisoner tool to break the silence, albeit at a limited level.”

We understand the inhumane conditions of these dear ones; but, at the same time, we believe that the militants need to be physically fit to carry on the fight with more energy. The conditions in prison are intended to make us physically weak, but we should not be further weakened in order to reduce the power of the struggle, which is what the rulers want.

Eventually the bourgeoisie decided to put the workers and their supporters on trial and published the news. This is not a trial of workers but a trial of every class protest. It is not inconceivable that “action against national security” is among the indictments of all those tried. In capitalist society, class protest is a protest against the security of capital, and this is a huge crime, both in dictatorial capitalism and in capitalist democracy. The bourgeoisie handed over the trial of the workers and their supporters to one of their notorious criminals and the main butchers of political prisoners (one of the butchers of the 1988 massacre in fact), Judge Moghiseh (Nasserian), in order to authorize severe measures, so that no one else would think of protesting.

On 3 August 2019, workers' activists and their supporters Esmail Bakhshi, Ali Nejati, Sepideh Gholian, Asal Mohammadi, Sanaz Allahyari, Amir Hossein Mohammadi Fard and Amir Amirgholi appeared before Tehran's 'counter'-revolutionary court behind closed doors to demand that capital punishment be imposed on wage slaves and defenders of those slaves. At the same time as the workers' trial, the security forces effectively occupied the courthouse and prevented the families of the prisoners and those who came to support the prisoners from entering. Despite these restrictions, some were able to make their way to the courthouse, where some were arrested by the security forces.

On the first day of the notorious court, the indictment was read out by all the prisoners, but Judge Moghiseh sent out all the prisoners except for Ishmail Bakhshi, who remained in court as the first defendant. Judge Moghiseh inflicted offensive treatment on the course, saying to Bakhshi that "the slogan of bread, jobs and freedom is a communist slogan". Following a verbal altercation between Judge Moghiseh and Ismail Bakhshi, the trial was abandoned and rescheduled for the next day, when court proceedings were conducted in the same way. Apparently, the bourgeoisie's notorious court did not proceed with its intended goals and, at present, is discouraged from pursuing it.

The political apparatus on the left of capital also proclaim that the trial of labour activists is an attack on the freedoms of expression, association and striking, and that it reduces class protest to the level of protest against dictatorship. One of its most radical phrases is expressed below:

"To prosecute labour and political activists is an assault on the freedoms of expression, association and striking." [2]

Most embarrassing is the paper solidarity of trade unions and syndicalists who refer to it as class solidarity. The international trade union network of solidarity and struggle, consisting of 80 unions and syndicates, wrote a letter to the criminal Khamenei calling him the "Supreme Leader" and "Your Excellency", sending a copy to one of the butchers of political prisoners (Ibrahim Raisi). They urged criminals to abide by the international treaties they have signed, stating:

"The trade unions, the signatories of this letter, strongly condemn the unbearable repression and harassment of the Iranian trade-unionists and labour rights activists. They call on the Iranian regime to respect the international conventions ratified by its government, including freedom of association, gathering, strike and collective bargaining."[3]

Workers in chains!

These unions or syndicates in their own countries, implementing the most anti-labour policies against the working class and their solidarity is only paper solidarity, pure propaganda. We just have to rely on our own class power and the power of our class around the globe.

In class battles, we can only rely on our own class power. This is not the trial of several workers who have been jailed in protest at their working and living conditions; rather, this is a trial of class protest. The trial of the bourgeoisie must be turned into a class indictment action against the bourgeoisie itself.

Firoz Akbary
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Notes:

[1] The documentary featured "confessions" of labour activist Esmail Bakhshi, Ali Nejati and journalist Sepideh.

[2] http://www.azadi-b.com/J/2019/08/post_1173.html

[3] http://www.laboursolidarity.org/IMG/pdf/2019_-_7_-_27_-_iran_repression_et_harcelement_envers_les_syndicalistes_et_les_militant.es_des_droits_des_salariees_-_engl_fr.pdf