

Against the Wage

ATW NO 2- Friday August, 19 2005

Editorial

Against the Wage (ATW) is a newsletter that originally we aimed to publish every 2 weeks, however due to our limitations, the newsletter will be published monthly. For the next several issues, interviews with various worker-activists around the world are being arranged. *Against the Wage* is trying to open up a discussion among Communist-activists and against the wage labour system of the working class movement around the world. This is a step towards opening a much-needed study of the difficulties and barriers of the movement to achieve the unity, agreement and militancy of the internationalism of workers against the capitalist system. *Against the Wage* has arranged some interviews with a number of worker-activists and communists around the world with this goal in mind.

This issue contains two interviews. Mohsen Hakimi, a member of the 'Coordinating Committee to Form Workers Organization' in Iran is being interviewed. Mohsen is a grassroots activist who expresses a practical, down-to-earth perspective and has practical experience with the working class movement in Iran. He provides a critique of the reformist tendencies -

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Interview with Mohsen Hakimi member of the "Coordinating Committee to Form Workers Organization" in Iran

1. *You are one of the founders of the "Coordinating Committee to Form Workers Organization" in Iran. Before we start, I suggest you give us an overview of this 'Committee', specifically referring to its goals, politics, and directions related to the working class in Iran.*

The main goal of the 'Coordinating Committee to Form Workers Organization' is to form an anti-capitalist organization of the working class all over Iran. This goal, as it is mentioned at our identification document named 'On Coordination Committee to Form Workers Organization', is being achieved through the following ways:

- To pave the way for forming a culture and a spiritual willingness for workers to be organized in a variety of ways such as the uses of propaganda and agitation, to help with the spreading of trade, cultural, artistic and sport organizations of workers; to support the actions and struggles of workers such as strikes, workers control, etc.
- To help with the forming of a workers' organizations in production and service centres in order to connect and coordinate their activities through the transfer of their experiences and achievements to each other.

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First International as a Subject Needs to be learned

The working movement in the 21st Century needs to learn from the First International. This task, of course, without aiming to return to the past can be a learning point due to the necessity of a critique. With respect to the directions and solutions of the social left reformists in which it is dominated during our period of class war - a war between the Bourgeois and Proletariat. The process of regression of the anti-capitalist movement of the working class in the 20th Century, every where and step by step, was the process of the dismissal of its goals, traditions, and the practical directions of the First International.

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Interview with Per. Henriksson Activist in the workings movement of the Sweden

Against the Wage is trying to open up a discussion among Communist-activists and against the wage labour system of the working class movement around the world with this goal in mind.

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syndicalism and sectarianism - and their influences politically and economically among the working class and their demands. He also provides a rational commentary on the possibility of an American invasion to Iran. As Mohsen mentions, the possibility of the invasion is weak but with a new cycle of radicalism, the possibility of the 2 sides of the war turning against this new radicalism is a greater possibility.

Per Henriksson of Sweden is the second interview. He discusses his efforts as a communist at both the theoretical and practical level of organizing in Sweden. He also comments on the possibilities of forming councils for organizing.

ATW is very interested in learning about workers' struggles around the world so that we can share information about organizing and the struggles that workers are facing in every corner, but ultimately ATW wants to be a voice of solidarity for the worker. Currently in South Africa where gold mining has for a long time been a rich industry for the country, the miners have been on strike. Approximately 100,000 miners, about 75 % of the workforce, went on strike over pay, thus bringing South Africa's gold production to a halt.

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**Interview with
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- To provide the grounds in which the current underground activity of worker-activists can be transformed to an open form of activity for mobilizing worker-masses into an all-embracing workers organization in different ways, including the provision of conditions for the presence of the influential and well-trusted worker-activists in the open domain of class struggle.

- To call on the founding body of the all-embracing anti-capitalist workers organization of Iran to provide a public assembly, approve the fundamental documents and elect the organizing bodies.

2. *You have spoken on different occasions about the anti-capitalist movement of the working class as well as the importance of the workers movement to be organized. How does this movement distinguish itself - in daily practice including the struggle to meet the immediate and current demands - from syndicalism and sectarianism? For instance, the struggle for increasing wages, social assistance, housing, health, education, political freedom or against unemployment, against child labour, addiction, corruption, discrimination etc. From your point of view of the workers movement and the general direction of the anti-capitalist movement, what makes the essential difference between this*

struggle and that of the syndicalists and sectarists ?

The reformist tendencies including syndicalism and sectarianism in the struggle for the immediate and current demands of the workers, confine and tie themselves to the acceptance of the capitalist framework, and do not allow worker masses to move outside the capitalist box. Syndicalists' perspective about the current demands of the workers is that they allow the workers struggle for achieving these demands to continue only to the point where there is no opposition to capitalist laws and order. Sectarists also merely want the worker masses, on the one hand, only to struggle for reform and, on the other hand, to help them to seize the power. They recognize the struggle for social revolution of the working class as long as it is limited to the monopoly and expertise of the 'Professional Revolutionaries' - that is being formed separately from the worker masses - and they want the masses to build an organization only in the economic context, and in the context of the political to help them to seize the power, either by joining their political group or party as an individual or through the lever of the same economic organization.

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The National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) has started the largest gold mining strike in 18 years and is calling for between 8 and 12 % wage increases. According to the estimates of the union, this action will cost the mining companies about £12 million a day in lost production.

Currently the workers earn approximately £190 per month and often work more than 2 miles underground in narrow, sweltering tunnels. Despite apartheid there is still huge resentment over continuing inequality. Many thought that with the nationalist apartheid movement, the quality of life would improve for workers. In fact, life has worsened and degraded further for the working class. This is a huge illusion created by a reformist nationalist agenda. These workers should not only receive the wage increases as per the union request, but ultimately control and have decision-making powers over the means of production and any profits. *Against the Wage* stands in solidarity with these workers.

Recently there have been a new series of protests in the Kurdish region of Iran. These began when the Iranian regime tortured, murdered and displayed a person's body in public by parading it through the town for everyone to see. This action led to many protests in several cities in the Khurdish region.

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None of these tendencies, neither sectarists nor syndicalists, recognize the workers' struggle for achieving the current demands as essentially anti-capitalist.

The difference between the anti-capitalist tendency of the working class in Iran - which is manifested now in the Coordinating Committee to Form Workers Organization - and the reformist tendencies is that the anti-capitalist tendency recognizes the current struggle of the working class as anti-capitalist. The starting point of the 'Committee' to provide materials for the anti-capitalist organization, is this kind of struggle for current demands. This struggle, by its very nature, is anti-capitalist. For instance, in the struggle for wage increases and in the workers attempt to access this or that percentage of wage increase, naturally, the workers call into question the bosses and the government. The workers question why they oppose or disagree with the wage increase while the managements or bosses' salary and bonuses are so high? (Workers usually express this discrimination by the proverb "the donkey works and the mule eats".) Why do they refuse to increase the wage while billions of Rials (Iranian currency) are spent on security? Why do they reject the percentage of wage increase while they spend tonnes of money to build jails for imprisoning youth who are addicts? Why do they reject the wage increase while millions and millions of dollars are spent on military for war and suppression? - Etc.. The

implication of this correct and just questioning of the capitalists is that the workers, while struggling for the wage increase, tell the capitalists and their defending government that you are spending from our pockets. That is, the workers are saying to the capitalists that all of their spending of expenses is coming from the wealth which they produce. Therefore, the worker in the struggle for a wage increase proclaims to the capitalists and their defending government, that it is their right to make a decision about how to use the wealth they created. This has no meaning other than they are challenging the mode and order of capitalism. The starting point and at the same time the strengths of the 'Committee' is this kind of challenging capitalism by the worker masses in their own current struggle. The 'Committee' converts this objective and material context of anti-capitalism to its own starting point in order to promote the struggle of working class and to organize these masses into an anti-capitalist organization with the horizon of abolishing wage labour.

The reformists' view on the workers struggle in terms of the wage increase is completely different. They oppose any kind of seizure of the wealth that has been produced by the workers, they do not recognize that this is the right of workers but they know it as a capitalists' right, and they only demand from the capitalist and the government that some - and of course a very low - percentage of this wealth be given to the workers, Continued on page 7

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The latest news from the 'Committee' was that five people were killed and many more injured in the city of Saquez during the protests. Currently many Khurdish cities are on general strike due to this severe and disgusting brutality. The Saquez people have taken to the streets in solidarity with the other cities. They occupied the city, took over government buildings and offices and faced retaliatory attacks by the government.

Additionally, Mahmoud Salehi, one of the spokespersons for the 'Committee' was arrested by a special guard commander who asked him to be quiet and do nothing and then released him one hour later. Mahmoud protested against these requests, and then, the same night, the workers' grocery co-op was attacked and seriously damaged. We should not forget about what is going on in Kurdistan as it is not a struggle beyond class. This is a class struggle and when this struggle intensifies other nationalist currents try to either identify themselves with this struggle or to restrict the struggle to their own agenda. All of this cruelty and vicious violence and murder occurring in Kurdistan now must be condemned.

Against the Wage invites contributions from all workers. The sharing of ideas, experiences, both in organizing and in the workplace in general, will continually bring to fruition the goals and vision of *Against the Wage*. ☆

First International...

Syndicalists and Sectarists and all the social bourgeois have hidden the feeling of their dislike to have a dialogue in order to learn and be educated by the First International experiences which carried the torch of anti-wage labour around the world. To talk about organizing the working masses against capitalism is something bizarre to them. The International workingmen's association during its short lifetime had some weak points but its strong points in the current historical condition are a light in our period of the class war. Our attempt here only is to re-review one more time some of these unforgettable lessons and their experiences of the working class. Some of their lessons are:

1. The nature of anti-capitalism of the First International

The International working association was a manifestation of the initiation of the most united and conscious of the pioneers of the working class for organizing their current movement against the essence of capitalism. The declaration of the First International towards the working masses, 'process of work' of their current society proclaimed the target of the class war. This declaration is the opposite of the point of view and the tradition of the left in the 20th Century. It does not transform communism as a holy idea due to the dissolving of the working class into democracy or unionism or nationalism/anti-imperialism. In fact, it describes communism as a grassroots movement whose aim is to deeply change the current

situation. This declaration looked at the condition of buying and selling the labour force profoundly and builds its essential critique, programs, and what has to be done with the deep context in relation between labour and capital as well as anti-capitalism of the current international working class. The essence and the linkage of all the discussion and the program of the First International, was between the Proletariat political economy and the Bourgeois political economy - a war between the army of the wage labour against the wage slavery. The outlook of the First International towards the "immediate demands of the Proletariat" neither was at the 'level of revolution', nor was it a secret name in order to exit from the anti-wage movement, nor was it a permission due to slaughtering communism in front of syndicalism, reformism, or nationalism but its directions were to takeover ditch by ditch the capitalisms' front line. The First International emphasized the overthrow of the bourgeois barrier and it was not like the 'populists democrat's' call for overthrowing any regime. In fact, it emphasized smashing one of the bourgeois' resistance and to make a path for the wage labour army to cross the ups and downs of this war in order to abolish wage-slavery and establish communism. The reason that the First International was international was it was against wage labour and the following international was not international because none of them were either against wage labour or representing the working class as whole.

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2. Quarrel over sectarianism and unionism

Marx in the letter to Friedrich Bolte on the 3rd year of the foundation of International wrote; "The International was founded in order to replace the Socialist or semi-Socialist sects by a real organization of the working class for struggle. The original Statutes and the Inaugural Address show this at first glance. On the other hand the Internationalists could not have maintained themselves if the course of history had not already smashed up the sectarian system. The development of the system of Socialist sects and that of the real workers' movement always stands in inverse ratio to each other. So long as the sects are (historically) justified, the working class is not yet ripe for an independent historic movement. As soon as it has attained this maturity all sects are essentially reactionary". (Marx and Engels correspondence November 23, 1871)

Marx also on the internal controversy of the International workingmen's association, as far as is related to the unions, clearly has asserted, "...the working class ought not to exaggerate to

themselves the ultimate working of these everyday struggles. They ought not to forget that they are fighting with effects, but not with the causes of those effects; that they are retarding the downward movement, but not changing its direction; that they are applying palliatives, not curing the malady. They ought, therefore, not to be exclusively absorbed in these unavoidable guerilla fights incessantly springing up from the never ceasing encroachments of capital or changes of the market. They ought to understand that, with all the miseries it imposes upon them, the present system simultaneously engenders the *material conditions* and the *social forms* necessary for an economical reconstruction of society. Instead of the *conservative* motto, "A fair day's wage for a fair day's work!" they ought to inscribe on their banner the *revolutionary* watchword, "Abolition of the wages system!". (Value, Price and Profit)

The International in the course of its existence has maintained its tasks and politics which had emphasized on the two above points. Marx's critique on Unionism and its politics has become a content of one of the association's declarations. On the quarrel over sectarianism, the international agreement due to rejecting the resolution has been provided by the 'Mazzini' clique. It's obvious the contrary and critique of the worker international foundation against sectarianism. It should be emphasized on this point seriously that the unity of the whole class against capitalism was the main grounds of existence of the First International. The situation of Marx and Engels as well as other communist pioneers of the working class movement to build the unity

among groups, guilds, societies, unions in the Europe and put this unity based on anti-capitalism for abolishing the wage labor was one of the most important of the First International lessons for all workers.

3. Worker structure and anti-bureaucracy

The 'Communist' parties and the worker apparatuses in the 20th Century, to a large extent, have been a part of the social, civil, and order of capitalism. Such parties and groups neither have been a container of the working class struggle against capitalism for abolishing the wage labour of the working class, nor have they been a container of the working class participation and the demonstrating determination of the worker masses in the course of maintaining working class expectations, goals, or politics. The reason for the obscurity of these parties on some occasions, were not because of the lack of worker body but it was their irrelevancy with the class movement and the anti capitalism of the working class. The establishment of governmental capitalism under the name of 'Communism', 'People of Republic', democracy, or obtaining 'The rights of nations to self-determination', or building the 'National independent industry', has nothing in common with socialism and the movement of abolishing capitalism. It's obvious that the realm of activity or political and social structure of these movements is not to achieve the goals, politics, demonstrating determination, or the finding of solutions for the worker masses.

First International...

In fact, on the contrary, there is a wide realm of recruiting a soldier from the workers in order to keep the army of people or guerilla of the national movement in which they are representing the governmental capitalism. It's possible that even the workers to a large extent are involved inside of the apparatus of these movements but only as the masses that must listen to some elites and nothing else. In that realm, the determinations of elites determine and dominate every thing and it is not the workers who determine any politics or directions. The fundamental work, internal relation and political structure of the First International were very different from these elements. In the First International, the masses, selling their labour force, were not enforcers and act as objects of some party elites. On the contrary, they played the main role of every event. The main foundation brick of forming the International indeed was based on the massive presence of workers in Europe, the emergence of the working class in different countries, the revolt of the workers in Poland, the radical and passionate rising of the workers in England in support of abolishing slavery in America, in support of the revolt of workers in Poland, the internationalist emergence of the masses in France in support of workers in other countries, or in one word, challenging capitalism by the workers. The First International was a manifestation of the populist national movement

under the name of communism. It was neither a shadow of any master ideas or the flag man of any schools, nor was it inspired by a heroic determination that carries out human destiny. On the contrary, all of its existing philosophy was extracted from the point of view of anti-capitalism of the worker masses in Europe. And that's why the First International truly and indeed for this reason - firm determination - was representing the selling of the labour force. However, Marx and Engels played a major part in the First International since it had been formed until the end but throughout they played a role parallel to the most ordinary worker. Their acceptability and verbal influence had nothing to do with being Marx or Engels as special characters that were famous, rather it was owed to their radicalism and revolutionary materialism of being anti-capitalism. Some events such as the long conflict in the Geneva Congress regarding the right of participation of the French workers resulted in the rejecting response from the Congress with respect to their attending the Congress because of a lack of being elected directly from the organized workers of that country. This is a situation demonstrating the lack of being organized in France. Also, the rejection of the majority of the Luzon Congress due to inviting Garibaldi, and the congress emphasized that he could participate as a rank and file or as a representative of the Italian worker and not anything

else. There are many examples in the First International of the direct participation of workers on programming, and the politics on maintaining it.

4. Escape from two apparatuses - the party and mass organization

One of the destructive traces of influence of the people's movement and reformism in the worker movement is the issuance of permits for forming the party for gathering the elites and pioneers in one place and another one for the workers. This division is rising profoundly from the bourgeois point of view with respect to the working class movement. Here, the party is similar to an army staff headquarters and the mass organizations are like soldiers standing at attention of the headquarters. The imposition of this division and the breakdown of the Proletariat class war are the elements of establishing governmental capitalism and demolishing the movement of abolishing wage labour of the worker masses. Replacing the wage slavery system by true worker socialism is impossible without organizing the masses on a broad scale, and the numerous terms of these selling labour forces throughout the anti-capitalist movement, and without the presence of the masses in the struggle against capitalism in every aspect of social life.

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not of course to prepare the workers spiritually or materially to conquer the ditches of capitalism, but to work more and better for the capitalist. Obviously, the result of this approach is to form an organization that does not aggravate capitalist laws and order or to promote the idea that the capitalist system is unchangeable or, at best, to attack the capitalist system in a far and imaginary future. This is the organization the reformists are following up.

3. The 'Committee' has proclaimed that it is not a workers organization but it is an anti-capitalist organized group of worker-activists to organize the workers movement in the direction of a struggle with capitalism. Do you not think that the 'Committee' even at this level needs an anti-capitalist proclamation of the fundamental demands of the working class? I'd like to emphasize that Against the Wage absolutely does not support any platform which makes or writes a program as it is a norm in the lefty sect. I mean, to write a fundamental proclamation of the current workers movement as a step towards the unity of the struggle for all workers with an anti-capitalist character. Does it need to propagandize this proclamation?

Undoubtedly, the all-embracing anti-capitalist organization of the working class of Iran must have

a platform or a proclamation that reflects the fundamental demands of the working class. The activists of the 'Committee' now can endeavor to write the draft of this proclamation either as an individual or as a collective. Providing this draft does not need that much work, because the skeleton of it has been said in the resolutions of May Day in the last two years. But, I think, the provision of the final draft of the proclamation for approval in the public assembly is the responsibility of the founding body of the anti-capitalist organization which will be formed among the influential and well-trusted worker-activists. The final goal of the 'Committee' is to build this body and when this goal is reached, the 'Committee' will be dissolved.

4. Thousands of workers in different parts of Iran have supported your call for forming a workers organization. The 'Committee' has talked about forming workers' organizations in production and service centres. What's the workers support for forming this organization and what's the common attempt for making this organization transpire all over Iran?

The response, readiness and welcoming of workers to be organized in the production and service centres is very high. These thousands of signatures are a very small example of the readiness and support. But, in order to help to build this organization, at first, the activists

who are willing to join the 'Committee' and are in touch with these centres, should be organized in the 'Committee'. The link of the Committee with the working masses, who want to be organized, is the worker-activists in different parts of Iran. Therefore, the 'Committee's concern now is organizing the worker-activists who are leaning to be organized in the 'Committee'. Thus, our recent job in the 'Committee' is to organize the worker-activists who are ready to be organized into the 'Committee'. At this moment, the 'Committee' organization stretches itself so that the organized worker-activists in the 'Committee' can spread its goals into the different provinces of Iran. As this happens, the building of a workers organization in production or service centres becomes feasible.

5. One of the goals of the 'Committee' that has been proclaimed is to call on the founding body of the all-embracing workers organization of Iran to provide a public assembly, approve the fundamental documents and elect the organizing bodies. And by forming this founding body, the 'Committee' will be dissolved. Also, you have mentioned that to reach these goals in a period of struggle is necessary to pave the way for forming a culture and a spiritual willingness for workers to be organized in different-

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sectors as well as to transfer the current underground activity of worker-activists to an open form of activity. Would you explain more about this process and the content of these activities and their obstacles during this process?

As I mentioned, the duty of the 'Committee' is to provide the grounds for anti-capitalist organization across Iran. The first step that needs to take place is the forming of a culture and a spiritual willingness for workers to be organized in a variety of ways; such as propaganda, agitation, publishing a newspaper - to help to build the different organizations such as economic, guild, cultural, artistic and sport organizations and the 'Committee' actively participating in protests and strikes of the workers for organizing them around the current and daily demands. It is because the seeds of being organized grow from the current workers struggle. The next step is to connect and coordinate different organizations that here or there have formed or will be formed. At the same time within these steps, there is one essential task that has to be done and that is to help to transfer the current underground activity of the worker-activists - which is inefficient and sterile - to an open form of activity for mobilizing worker-masses. The truth is that, in different places the worker-activists are not so free to organize the workers. This is both due to a shortage of backup or layers of worker-activists which can give some

securities and self-confidence in order to guarantee and compensate those who might get fired or arrested, and also due to the survival, toughness and damaging nature of an outlook which has been inherited from the non-workers left, an outlook which even the anti-capitalist worker-activists are not immune to. These two factors work as a break right now and to some extent are obstacles for the advance and spreading of the 'Committee's' area towards forming a large specter of the activists who are well-trusted and have a base among the workers. In the case of the first factor, we are of course consciously trying to overcome it, but we must also wait for time to pass. Pure will cannot solve the problem, because the materials to build such a backup that would both ensure the relative security of the anti-capitalist worker-activists and compensate the probable loss of these activists due to being fired and/or arrested are mainly young workers who in spite of enjoying a high dissenting and anti-capitalist spirituality, and also strong knowledge and consciousness, are not yet well-trusted and influential worker-activists. The second preventing factor too requires a consistent critique of the non-worker lefty's point of view which is dying hard. The non-workers lefty has made some of the worker-activists into penetrating agents of this or that lefty group in order to recruit this or that worker. This kind of outlook of the non-workers lefty has made some activists do leafleting and act

like a soldier standing at attention. In a word, this outlook has acted as a denial of the worker identity of some worker-activists and has changed them to sectarian-ideological activists. It's obvious that this kind of activist who lowers himself/herself to a situation where he/she knows his/her duty not to organize the workers movement openly against capitalism but to whisper around to recruit this or that worker to act as a decoration for this or that lefty group - this is due to the inevitable attempt to hide himself/herself as a sectarian-ideological activist, whether in discussion with the workers or against the bosses and management, he/she always stutters and is not able to openly involve with the class war even like an ordinary protesting worker, let alone a well-trusted and influential worker-activist. Let's pay attention, my point does not mean that the condition in order that these activists change to real worker-activists is to leave this or that lefty group. Belonging to this or that lefty group or even any group, organization, and party is the inalienable right of any worker or worker-activist, and nobody has the right to take away these rights. All discussion is that this belonging must not and could not be an obstacle of appearance as a worker-activist in the open field of the class war. This is completely possible if the belonging to this or that-

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lefty group be separated from the open action for mobilizing the workers movement and the **first one be dependent on the second one**. The real meaning of this condition is not to distance oneself from being a part of this or that political group or to leave the group, but rather **distance oneself from sectarianism** - this means that they should wash the hands of this desperate attempt to form a workers movement to any sectarian frame.

With the occurrence of the first and second goals of the 'Committee' as well as the third goal which overcomes these obstacles, without a doubt, the workers movement in Iran will have a variety of worker-activists who have bases and are well-trusted. With the gathering of these activists and from their core the founding body of the all-embracing anti-capitalist organization will be elected. This body in the meantime provides the drafts of the fundamental documents and a public assembly for approval of these documents and election of the organizing bodies of the organization.

6. *It is around 2 years now that the American bourgeois government talks about the possibility of invading Iran. With respect to the current situation around the world, the international class balance between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, disputes between different parts of the bourgeoisie and the process of global capitalist crises continually worsening and other similar*

factors, how does one estimate the possibility of this invasion? In case of invasion, what's your message to the working class in Iran and the workers movement around the world?

I think, the invasion of Iran by United States is a possibility but it is a weak one. For two reasons: first of all, the situation in Iran is different from the situation in Iraq or Afghanistan at the beginning of the invasion of those countries. There is a situation in Iran that in case of any invasion it might turn against itself, against US or any other warmongers. It's because, the society of Iran has endured immense calamities from the capitalist system and there is a rotating process to the radicalism. This situation was neither in Afghanistan nor in Iraq. If this radicalism gets organized with its goals, it is possible that the invasion of US to Iran turn against itself. In the radical situation, there is a possibility of either open or hidden compromising of the two sides of the war for suppressing this radicalism and that is more likely than the American invasion to the Islamic Republic. The second reason is the situation of the U.S. America does not have the same strength at all that it had when it invaded Iraq, especially at the time of the Afghanistan invasion. The fact is that the US is trapped in Iraq and the situation of Iraq weighs so heavily on it. The new terrorists' attacks that recently are taking place on a broad scale show the incapacity of the U.S. to attain its own goals. However, in spite

of all of our calculations and analyses, if war occurs, the way of confronting it and for preventing any interruption to society, even with this level of civilized society is only and just only to build an anti-war pole that relies on civilized humanity against both sides of the war. Undoubtedly, in this situation, we will try our best to make the working class the flag-bearer of this pole. My message, with respect to this situation, to the international working class movement, is to provide practical support to the anti-war movement in Iran and spread the front line of this anti-war movement across the world with the aim of terminating the raid of imperialists and any other warmongers.

7. *Our last question is about the 'transfer' resulting from the recent new presidency happening within the structure of the bourgeois government of Iran. What are the consequences on the working class movement which is in the process of struggling to organize against capitalism?*

I think no part of the bourgeoisie and its defending government in Iran is able to make even a temporary reduction to all of the miseries that have been imposed on the workers. Undoubtedly, since Iran has immense income from oil, it is a rich country. And if, suppose, there was a determined, decisive and visionary bourgeoisie in Iran that could fight against the primitive political super-structure, there would be a chance that this wealth be directed, to some

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problem is that this assumption is impossible; the lack of this kind of bourgeois is embedded in the capitalist system in Iran. The immense wealth of this society not only accumulates more capital and brutally exploits the working class, but also due to its primitive political super-structure, not even a tiny bit of the wealth trickles down to the workers and the people. For this reason, on the one hand, the working class has no choice but to fight against this system. On the other hand, the only thing that the bourgeoisie has with its government is to

suppress all of the dissent and protest of the worker masses. The transfer that is taking place in the government these days can only make this suppression worse. But as I mentioned about the possibility of the American invasion to Iran, here, also suppression works as a sword that might turn on itself. The truth is that going back to the 1980's or the 1990's in Iran is impossible for obvious reasons; the widespread number of radical protests with radical demands by the people does not allow for definite suppression of the movement.

In fact, the Iranian regime for reasons which do not need to be explained, no longer has the power to instigate more suppression. Due to the ongoing ramifications of the previous suppression during the periods mentioned above, the Islamic Republic is not able to return to those kinds of suppression. However, there is the possibility of short-term suppression. But a final suppression and changing the society to a silent cemetery is impossible. ☆

The political Kurd activists must be freed

Among the current arrests in the Kurdistan (Iran), numbers of political activists including Roya Toluei, Azad Zamani and Jalal Ghavami-activists from the city of Sanandaj - have been arrested. On Sunday August 07th, 2005, Borhan Divargar - the backer worker who was laid off and was also one of people who got arrested on the May Day, 2004 in Saqez - was arrested at his place in Saqez. The officials, who arrested Divargar, even took his computer and other personal belongings of his.

We condemn the arresting of these activists and in general all of the arrest of the Kurdistan people because of protesting the recent slaughters in this province and we are demanding that they all be freed unconditionally.

**Coordinating Committee to Form Workers Organization
August 8, 2005**

First International...

The point of view that commands the division of the party and the worker masses organization in fact, dismisses the worker movement from the axis of struggle with capitalism and wage labour. This vision confines the worker masses struggle into a syndicalist term. Programming the political and socialist struggle is the capability of the party's elites. The real meaning of this condition is that the first one is a policy maker and the second one is the follower and enforces the policy. This perspective has the same relation due to the programming of work and the social order and as a result, is nothing but governmental capitalism and has been called socialism.

The workers, in order to maintain their own class struggle, need an organization that brings the full class forces including the pioneers or non-pioneers, productive or not productive, man or womyn, employed or unemployed, all as one body against

Capitalist domination on our work and lives and against the essence of wage-slavery. The First International was the first successful example of such an organization. Looking into the different and large realms of the International intervention with respect to organizing the workers struggle in the different countries against the essence of the existence of this system is a great sample of this reality. The dependency of every political premise movement of the Proletarian economic emancipation was one of the fundamentals of the forming of that society. This means that the International views on all aspects of the social-economy, and the political struggle of the workers must be adopted from the essence of opposition to buying and selling of the labour-force. The struggle for political freedom from the perspective of the proletariat interest class is the struggle against the powerful rope and domination of the production order, political, and social of capitalism. The attainment of any social right or rights depends on taking a hard

strike on civil life and the rules applicable with the re-production of social capital. In the realm of International work struggle for the wage, with struggle against the war, against the lack of social rights of citizens, against unemployment, against the bourgeois government, against syndicalism and reformism, against the lack of rights for womyn, child labour – are all the connected realm of the struggle against capitalism and abolishing capitalism. The continuity of all of these realms and protests in all of the front lines of anti-wage labour needs the organizing of the worker movement everywhere in one single container of the class struggle. Communists, only from the inside of this single container and united together are able to, on one hand, be pioneers and activists of the current struggle of its own class struggle and on the other hand, have the strong and firm relation, be effective and fruitful in terms of actions, thoughts, struggle, while organizing for anti-capitalism. The First International was the manifestation of this view of organizing the working class. ☆

**Interview with Per.
Henriksson
Activist in the workings
movement of the
Sweden**

1. *With respect to the organizing of the workers movement do you think workers need two different apparatus? One being a container for an economic struggle and the other one containing a political struggle? How do you see the party specifically Lenin's party?*

No. I don't see the use of different types of organizations along the separation between 'economical' and 'political' struggle, since *class struggle* is *social*. Lenin's notion of the party was fitted to the ascending capitalism in Russia, applied from the capitalist apologist Kautsky. The notion that the working class cannot by itself obtain a revolutionary consciousness, but merely a trade-unionist consciousness, and therefore is in the need of a middle class vanguard party is one expression of the defeat of an immature proletariat, of an immature capitalism (i.e. a capitalism not yet consolidated in a world-wide scale; not yet really dominating the workers and 'society', but merely *formal*).

The *actual* or *real* movement and struggle of the working class produces its own organization as content and not merely as form. Thus a variety of different organizations are produced and defeated (including recuperated into capitalist instruments) during the course of history (= class struggle). These organizations are both 'practical' and 'theoretical', even if on the immediate level there appear, partly due to the capitalist division of work, schematically more 'practical' and more 'theoretical' organizations and other initiatives.

2. *During last two centuries (19th and 20th), the working class movement in both Europe and North America has had two different directions within its own struggle. In the 19th century, the movement, in general, had carried the flag of socialism which was a struggle against capitalism and the wage system. However, in the 20th century, we witnessed how the workers movement fell into the course of syndicalism, social democrat, Russian communism, Euro-communism, or generally speaking reformism or social bourgeois. The socio-economic context of these two different directions has*

emphasized the bourgeois imperialist production, the defeat of the October revolution, the emergence of social democracy and the welfare state. Without a doubt, these are factors that have had a huge impact on the workers movement around the world during the 20th century. But the main point here is that these factors have changed, social democracy has shifted from centre to the right where many brutal policies have been implemented on the poor. The welfare state has shifted to the point where huge cutbacks are made and which is taking away all of the workers' achievements such as unemployment security, welfare and disability assistance. Russian communism has collapsed. Global capital unleashed all its brutality on the workers where starvation and unemployment have become the norm and so on. All of this misery is occurring yet there is still no emergence of the western working class force against capitalism and the wage system. You as a communist, how do you see this current situation? And what essential component(s) is/are lacking here for the emergence of this workers movement?

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The current situation, both globally and in Sweden where I live, indeed appear as rather unsatisfactory for a communist like me. And indeed it is – for the protagonists of the ‘old’ workers’ movement, part and parcel of the capitalist system and (therefore) with no perspectives of the future. *At best*, they long for a past gone forever (the post-world war II era) with its ‘class compromise’ based on the accumulation of capital, and, however defeated, proletarian class struggle. What is pretty obvious, is the fundamentally undermining of the objectivist and determinist perspective of orthodox ‘Marxism’ – the objective conditions are ripe, but still no sign of any overt revolutionary proletarian movement (at least not if measured by the yardsticks of the ‘old’ worker’s movement). The communist movement is really “now hidden” (Marx) and ‘faceless’, however not dead, not at all (the latter since we still live under the pressure of capitalist exploitation).

What is lacking is impossible to say, short of general explanations such as the absence of a

generalized proletarian class struggle in all domains of our proletarian experience. The ‘refusal’ of the working class today often lacks a perspective of the future (i.e. a communist, and even a revolutionary, perspective). Indeed, what is certainly not missing is a vanguard party, or a ‘proper’ trade union apparatus. As I said before, the class struggle, as it is waged (and not-waged) at this historical situation, is its own organization.

3. Related to the above question, for you and the worker radical left in Canada what kind of activities and essential tasks are on your agenda? What do you say about the current working class struggle? its daily demands? Syndicalism as an alternative to be organized? Expectations as well as the horizons of the working class movement? And what kind of social practices are you carrying out at this moment?

(Well then, for me it’s Sweden...) Apart from acting in the everyday struggles and endeavours, I am part of (both inside and outside of the factory-gates – I have just been sacked after 8 years at a middle sized metal factory) an effort, together with (only) a handful of comrades, to produce communist theory for today in the form of a ‘theoretical’ journal, both

based on past ‘personal’ experiences and the history of capitalism and class struggle. I’m also involved in a ‘factory newsletter’ sporadically and limitedly circulated where we, and our comrades, are present (which include the Internet). What is on our agenda is a practical struggle *and* clarification of the communist perspective. The current working class struggle, as I said before, is really hidden and (partly therefore) hard to estimate. Its explicit demands do not really say anything about the desires of the proletarians in struggle – the real ‘demands’ are always made practically. Syndicalism – whether you mean unionism in general, or even so called ‘militant’ unionism, or historical syndicalism (such as the Spanish CNT and anarcho-syndicalism) – is a capitalist mode of organization of labour as a commodity (labour-power), and has nothing to do with revolution or communism. Nothing has changed with the unions, qualitatively, for the last 70 years. Some 90% of the workers in Sweden are ‘organized’ in unions, but it only means unemployment insurance and a formal right to the strike funds (funds not decided by the workers, but by the union apparatus, in the end Social democracy and... the State).

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One can also note the interest in communist theory and activities on the Internet where young people from the most remote villages are discussing, reading and writing about communism, Marx and class struggle of today and of the past. The practical outcome of this is yet to be seen!

4. *During the 20th century Unionism has become not only the negotiator of capitalism and the working class but also has become a part of the social product of the system. Worker-activists should have what kind of organization? Around this issue what are they doing in general? And if you believe in council movement – what are the essential features of this movement and its relation to working class socialism? Do you think working class council organizing as a unionism or do you see it as an alternative in order to organize the social, political and production order?*

Apart from being and taking part in the practical struggle of the workers (which in fact *is* the organization of the proletariat, as I said before), I think links and networks are vital for worker-activists and communists to communicate and circulate information and experiences, at least as a start. How, *and if*, it formalizes in the near and relatively distant future it is impossible to say, if one wants to escape formulas of the past history of class struggle. Organization of the workers in councils is ambiguous, since it is very closely tied to the class composition of 20th Century capitalism before WWII with its concentrated and large factories, and thus workers' collectives. I think it is more likely to take the form of social soviets not tied to one specific factory, but organizing the entire class in an area. When it comes to structure and organize future, communist, production of the lives and means of subsistence of the future 'men', one might think of some sort of council organization, but given the notion of communist production as the disappearance of the enterprise form it is difficult to see whether the council

form is adequate or not. It all depends on one's definition of the term. The council communism of the 1920s was tied to that specific historical era and cycle of class struggle, even if we may use some of its practical and theoretical experiences for our struggle today.

5. *What's the relation between your attempts as an activist for organizing the anti-capitalist movement of the working class and the unity of internationalism of the working class?*

By taking part in this interview as an example, I and my comrades are trying to establish contacts and links with communists and revolutionary proletarians in other countries. We try to take part in different networks that circulate news and experiences from the class struggle in different countries and regions. We also translate the stuff we write in the 'theoretical' journal into (at least) English to make available our theoretical efforts.

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6. *Communism is an internal movement, spontaneous inside of the working class. Communism is not an idea at the end of an oppressive history and an ideal above the current working class struggle. The Proletarian must fight on a different front with the bourgeois, from fighting for a wage, or social welfare, to freedoms, political, civil etc. The working class during this battle with capitalism has its own directions and solutions. In fact, communism is a movement of abolishing the wage labour. **What do you think has to be done in order to change the current rail of working class in Canada to the rail of anti-capitalism and anti-wage labour system, or in other words I mean, the emergence of***

*working class
communism from social
democrat, and
reformism?*

Well, the proletarians (as a class, whereof I am but one part) has practically to find out and experience – and more and more they do, however often without being able to articulate it – the dead-end of reformism in all its brands. All class struggle, not the least the communist struggle and movement, starts from the needs of *real* ‘people’, and initially, when there is ‘room’ for it, they struggle for reforms (economical, but also political, etc), with or without a revolutionary perspective (most often the latter, quite natural, due to the fact at the dominating ideas are those of the bourgeoisie). From this a communist movement *may* evolve. It is always there, potentially, though. In many countries of the West, particularly so in Sweden, the political ‘face’ of capitalism is that of Social Democracy – so it goes without saying that

it is no alternative for the proletarian struggle.

For communists and revolutionaries (as moments of the communist movement) it is vital with theoretical discussion and clarification, *and* to take part practically – in a conscious way – in the everyday struggle of the proletarian class. Theory for the sake of theory, as in the bourgeois sense of theory, is of no use; nor ‘practice’ for the sake of practice as in the (also bourgeois) vanguardist, activist, anti-intellectual sense, that at first sight may seem like a more preferable road to take, but in the end only is the opposite side of the bourgeois ‘theorist’s’ coin. This is reflected in what I said before, that there is no use of two separate sets of organizations (political and economical). ☆

**Per Henriksson,
Sweden, August
2005**

On “Coordinating Committee to Form Workers Organization”

The ‘Coordinating Committee to Form Workers Organization’ is not a workers organization. This committee is an organized group of worker-activists struggling to meet the following aims:

1. To pave the way for forming a culture and a spiritual willingness for workers to be organized in a variety of ways such as propaganda and agitation, to help with the spreading of trade, cultural, artistic and sport organizations of workers, to support the actions and struggles of workers such as strikes, workers control and etc.
2. To help with the forming of workers’ organizations in production and service centres in order to connect and coordinate their activities through the transfer of their experiences and achievements to each other.
3. To provide the grounds in which the underground activity of worker-activists can be transformed to an open form of activity for mobilizing worker-masses into an all embracing workers organization in different ways including the provision of conditions for the presence of the influential and well-trusted worker-activists in the open domain of class struggle.
4. To call on the founding body of the all-embracing workers organization of Iran to provide a public assembly, approve the fundamental documents and elect the organizing bodies. By forming this founding body, the ‘Coordinating Committee to Form Workers Organization’ will be dissolved.

The ‘Coordinating Committee to Form Workers Organization’, in line with its fundamental principle in defense of freedom of forming any kind of workers organization, welcomes any independent workers organization to be built - this is the inalienable right of workers. However, the kind of organization for which the Coordinating Committee is struggling is an anti-capitalist organization which is formed with the workers own power without any permission from the government. This organization also includes the vast majority of worker-masses, and while participating actively and consistently in the daily workers struggle to obtain this or that workers demand, goes beyond the acceptance of capitalism and combats to abolish all misery in the present human lives: poverty, starvation, unemployment, lack of rights, sex work, addiction, corruption, discrimination and etc. Undoubtedly, the best structure for this kind of organization is a council structure. But the ‘Coordinating Committee’ does not restrict anti-capitalist organization to council organization. We believe that other forms such as committees, societies and workers syndicates are also able to be anti-capitalist. Thus, and in order to spread the front of working class struggle against capitalism, the ‘Coordinating Committee’ knows itself as a vehicle for all activists who are struggling in different forms to build anti-capitalist working class organizations.

Coordinating Committee to Form Workers Organization

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