

SOCIALISTS *MUST NOT* CALL FOR IMPERIALIST GOVERNMENTS TO INTERVENE IN IRAN

Today in Iran there is a struggle for power between different forces. Amongst the Iranian masses there are many who are fed up with unemployment and poor wages and with the terribly oppressive restrictions on women's rights. Unfortunately, at this time, much of the opposition to the current government is channeled into a rival faction of the theocratic regime – a faction that is just as committed to maintaining the current capitalist order as are its rivals. Moreover, while this opposition led by Mousavi promises modest liberal reforms on women's rights and social questions it is softer on Western imperialism than the Ahmadinejad government. The fact that the pro-Mousavi forces accept and even solicit support from the imperialist powers guarantees that this opposition can in no way be progressive. It is the imperialists – that is the ruling classes of the rich capitalist powers like the U.S., Germany, Britain, Japan and Australia – who are the main oppressors of the world's toiling peoples. They are the primary warmongers in the world. Furthermore, it is imperialist exploitation of poorer countries – whether through superexploitation of labour, plunder of natural resources or manipulation of markets – that reinforces poverty in those countries and creates the conditions for oppressive regimes that persecute leftists and trample on women's and minority rights.

Unfortunately, some in the Australian left are now calling on imperialist countries to actually increase their intervention into events in Iran. These socialist groups demand that



Guantanamo Bay, U.S. torture camp. Capitalist rulers of the U.S., Australia, Britain, Germany etc are hardly a force for bringing “democracy” to Iran or anywhere else for that matter.

the Western capitalist powers become a force for bringing “democracy” to Iran. For example, a Socialist Alliance leaflet titled “Stand With Free Iran” that was distributed at the June 26 Canberra rally to support Iranian workers arrested on May Day **concludes** with the following call:

In addition, we want the Australian government to take a stand in support of democracy in Iran.

At a minimum the Rudd government must:

- condemn the Iranian regime's repression of the protests
- demand the release of all political prisoners, including union leaders and activists
- demand the regime sends the Iranian National Guard back to barracks and de-commissions the basji shock troops
- demand that the regime hold fresh elections, with international observers

To call on the capitalist Australian government to “take a stand in support of democracy in Iran” is harmful to the interests of the Iranian masses and indeed to the toiling classes of the whole world. There are several reasons why:

- The ruling classes of the rich capitalist countries, including the Australian rulers, are the most reactionary force on the planet. Whenever these powers intervene abroad, whether militarily or diplomatically, it is always to position themselves better to further increase their exploitation of poorer countries. This is the case no matter what pretext the imperialists give for their interventions. So, partly under the guise of bringing “human rights” to Iraq and Afghanistan, the U.S. and Australian forces have killed tens of thousands of civilians, tortured people in hellholes like Abu Ghraib and Bagram Air Base and devastated these countries. In the Pacific, Canberra regularly meddles to ensure that governments there follow neoliberal economic policies and reliably allow Australian corporations to plunder the region's natural resources.

Similarly, any political intervention by the U.S. or Australian rulers into Iran's affairs, no matter how it is dressed, can only be against the interests of Iran's working class masses.

- The more that the powerful Western capitalist powers fly into Iran's political crisis while sporting the colours of opposition to the existing regime, the more likely it is that leftist opposition currents there become sucked under the wing of imperialism – and thus become rendered worse than useless as a force for pushing Iran in a truly progressive direction.



East Timor, 2006: Australian troops in action after the Australian government “took a stand for democracy” in East Timor by despatching its military to grab Timor as its own, exclusive neocolony.

- Even without egging on by left groups, the capitalist powers are already politically intervening into events in Iran under the guise of supporting “democracy.” Thus Socialist Alliance’s appeals to capitalist governments “to take a stand” on Iran, **only serve to help these governments and their agencies to mask the imperialist motives behind their interventions.**
- If capitalist powers get away with interventions into Iran it only encourages them to do the same elsewhere as well. So if the Rudd regime wins domestic backing for meddling in Iran’s political affairs, this will only make it pumped up to ride even more roughshod over East Timor, Indonesia and South Pacific countries.
- When left groups appeal to the Australian capitalist rulers to act as a force for “democracy” abroad this has the effect of dampening class struggle militancy here amongst those that they influence. Why? Because the capitalist ruling class here is portrayed as being relatively better than regimes abroad. Furthermore, since the regime here is invested with the potential to be a progressive, “democratising” force elsewhere, hostility to the capitalist regime here is diminished.
- Imperialist political diktats to Iran could well be a stepping-stone to a future U.S.-led military strike on her. The danger of a war on Iran is especially real,



April 2006: A heavily armed Australia soldier patrols Honiara, the Solomon Islands’ capital, following Australia’s military invasion of the Solomons in 2003. All Australian cops/troops out of Afghanistan, Iraq, East Timor, the Solomon Islands and NT Aboriginal communities now!

because U.S. president Obama has continued where George Bush left off in threatening Iran. It is true that Socialist Alliance has, to its credit, stated its opposition to a military attack on Iran. Yet its calls on Western capitalist governments to politically meddle in Iran can only aid the drive towards an imperialist military assault against Iran.

The highly fluid situation in Iran cries out for a pro-working class, pro-women’s rights movement that is firmly anti-imperialist and squarely opposed to *both* the rival ruling class camps. An important part of the way that leftists in the imperialist countries can assist the development of such a movement is by opposing any intervention into Iran by the predatory rulers of their “own” countries. The capitalist rulers of the U.S., Britain, Australia, Japan, Germany etc are the main force holding back the liberation of the world’s oppressed masses.