



Iranian student protests attacked by the police

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Student protests in Iran have met with serious violence by the police and Revolutionary Guard.

Almost six months after the greatest mass movement to shake Iran since the 1979 revolution, and despite waves of brutal repression, the dictatorship has failed to quell protests.

Today, 16 Azar/7 December - Iranian Students' Day - saw a day of protest, continuing a tradition which started in 1953, when three students at Tehran university were killed by the Shah's forces, months after a CIA/MI6-backed coup restored him to power.

Today many more students face the bullets and batons of the police as the Iranian regime fights to hold onto power in the face of continued opposition.

16 Azar has become a focus for students' protests against the Islamic dictatorship. In the weeks up to this day, dozens of student activists have been arrested, with many more receiving threats by email. Hundreds of the hated basij security forces have converged onto campuses. Mothers protesting the detention of their children have been arrested. And now the regime is restricting internet speeds to choke off information and coordination.

Despite this intensified repression, all signs are that the determination of the students will prove stronger than the regime's intimidation. Students have invited parents to join their protests.

As events in Iran unfold, it is time for internationalists to renew solidarity with the Iranian democracy struggle. In Iran itself, it is vital that protesting students link their struggles in the universities with workplaces and with workers' districts.

The other question is what kind of change? the two most apparent options both hold terrible dangers. The first is an intervention by the West to facilitate regime change, something that would only place Iran under the chains of the West's control. Alternatively many people still march with pictures of Mousavi, the defeated election candidate earlier in the year. Mousavi represents more continuity with the current regime than change, he is not a friend of the workers and youth, but is only using them to leverage more power within the regime. The third option is the one that must be grasped by those who so desperately want change - a revolution and working class power in Iran as a step towards ending capitalist misery and the oppression of the clerical dictatorship.

Most of all, Iranian workers and youth need to begin building a revolutionary party to generalize and coordinate the struggle to overthrow the dictatorship. Without this the protests will only go half way, and as Lenin said, half a revolution is a failed revolution.

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