

Thailand: throw out the generals

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While the PAD leadership of Thaksin's ex-friends, Bhuddists monks, monarchists and various bits of the ruling class, have welcomed the coup, it is clearly an attack on all democratic rights and especially on the workers' and peasants' movements

The military has banned all new political parties and meetings. The generals have said they will be in power for a year, write a new constitution and appoint every minister - all with the blessing of the king.

Thaksin was elected on an anti-IMF platform in 2001 and again in 2005, introducing debt relief packages for farmers and cheaper health care for the poor. But he also used his position to enrich himself and became involved in corruption scandals. There has also been an insurgency movement of Islamists in the south of the country, which has been badly for the Thai military.

The PAD, based on a mass movement of the urban middle classes, who had been heavily affected by a 50 per cent increase in household debt since 2001, forced Thaksin to dissolve parliament after two indecisive elections earlier in the year. The King then declared that new elections would be held in the autumn thus demobilising the mass movement.

The only power that can challenge the King and the army is the working class, supported by the mass of the peasants. The workers must fight for a general strike against the state of emergency. The general strike would pose the question of power - who controls society: the king and his army or the workers and their allies?

The masses should demand a constitutional assembly (CA) that would be a sovereign body. Councils of workers and peasants should be created to elect and control delegates.

The Constituent Assembly should

? Abolish the monarchy and the reactionary constitution of the generals and form ? workers and peasants? government.

? Confiscate the land of the landlords and give to the poor peasants and rural workers.

? Immediately end the reactionary war in the south and give the right of self-determination to the Muslims.

? End privatisations and the diktats of the IMF and World Bank. Nationalise industry and the banks under workers? control. Annul the foreign debt.

These policies can only succeed if they are made permanent and that means smashing the capitalist state and overthrowing capitalism. That is why the Thai workers urgently need a revolutionary communist party to fight for power.

Only a movement that breaks the power of the army and creates a workers state can end the cycle of corruption and military coups in Thailand.

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