

Letters opposing the arrest of Iranian students

4 February 2008

The following letters were sent to the World Socialist Web Site denouncing the arrest of over 40 left-wing students in Iran. The letters have been sent to the Iranian Interests Section in the United States.

Those arrested are part of the group Students for Freedom and Equality. In December, the group organized an independent demonstration to denounce US war plans and the Iranian government. More than 30 students were arrested after the demonstrations, and another 10 were arrested on January 15. (See "Iranian government intensifies crackdown on left-wing opposition")

Some students have been released on bail, while others have been unable to meet the extremely high bail fees of up to \$100,000. Other students, including alleged leaders of the group, are not eligible for release and have not had contact with friends or family outside of prison. Some students have said they suspect that these prisoners are being tortured to elicit televised confessions.

In recent days, there have been more clashes between students and police forces at a Tehran University dormitory complex. The clashes were initially over poor conditions at the facility, but later turned into a demonstration against the government. Students chanted slogans for the release of those arrested. The protests lasted for three consecutive nights. One political science student was later arrested in response to these protests.

The WSWs calls on its readers to send letters of protest to the Iranian Interests Section in the United States at requests@daftar.org. Please send copies to the WSWs.

Dear Sirs:

I am a friend of the Iranian people and an opponent of imperialist aggression against Iran. I have constantly and publicly opposed all threats of the American attack against the Islamic Republic of Iran since the revolution of 1979, and especially those of the war criminal George Bush and his accomplices in both the Republican and Democratic Parties.

It is according to the same principles of democracy and equality that I am now demanding that you release immediately and unconditionally from prison the students, members or supporters of the Students for Freedom and Equality in Iran, listed below, as reported in the *World Socialist Web Site* on January 28, 2008.

Arrested in January:

1. Amin Ghazaie
2. Bijan Sabagh
3. Soroush Dashtestani
4. Anahita Hosseini
5. Morteza Eslahchi
6. Bitá Samimizad
7. Behzad Bagheri
8. Morteza Khedmatloo

9. Soroush Sabet
10. Mohammad Pourabdollah
11. Mohammad Zera'ati
12. Farzad Hasanzadeh
- Arrested on December 5:
 1. Saeed Habibi
 2. Peyman Piran
 3. Mehdi Gerailoo
 4. Nader Ehsani
 5. Behrooz Karimizadeh
 6. Ali Salem
 7. Ali Kolaie
 8. Abed Tavaneh
 9. Sadra Pirhayati
 10. Saeed Aghamali
 11. Keyvan Amiri Elyasi
 12. Hadi Salari
 13. Amir Aghaie
 14. Soroush Hashempour
 15. Mehdi Allahyari
 16. Majid Ashrafnejad
 17. Reza Arab
 18. Mohammad Saleh Aboman
 19. Sohrab Karimi
 20. Farshid Doostipour
 21. Javad Alizadeh

I further demand that you drop charges against the following students who have only exercised their democratic right to protest.

1. Anoosheh Azadbar
2. Ilnaz Jamshidi
3. Roozbeh Safshekan
4. Roozbeh Amiri
5. Farshid Farhadi Ahangaran
6. Milad Omrani
7. Mohsen Ghamin
8. Nasim Soltanbeigi
9. Amirhossein Mehrzad
10. Mahsa Mohebi
11. Saeed Aghakhani
12. Okhtai Hosseini
13. Arash Pakzad

None of these young people have committed a crime. In fact, it is you who are abrogating the human rights to free speech and assembly by imprisoning them, and, allegedly, by torturing them.

I demand that you bring to trial all those who have mistreated these students while in custody, including those responsible for isolating them, threatening them, and physically abusing them, as well as all

members and leading personnel of security forces who have intimidated or threatened their families.

Sincerely,

AI

New York, NY

28 January 2008

I write to demand the release of the 40 and more students arrested in the recent wave of protesting against the right wing methods of the hardliners in your Iranian government and the criminal war plans of US imperialism. Whether you agree or not, your government is lining up and holding hands with the White House war criminals that have Iran's rich oil deposits squarely in their sights. They will begin their assault on Iran as soon as a suitable pretext is manufactured that is believable.

The students have a right and responsibility to oppose this and all forms of oppression, backwardness and inequality. Why shouldn't they be congratulated as outstanding creative citizens struggling against a repressive apparatus to take society forward? Other students and workers should respond.

There are many too, in the international communities including prominent Hollywood actors and directors who have not forgotten the arrest of Iranian filmmaker Tahmineh Milani by the powers that be in Iran. She faced possible execution for her artwork, her opposition to the inequality of women, and the stultifying intellectual and social life imposed. Milani's case is indicative of the repressive regime the students are fighting.

JC

Sydney, Australia

28 January 2008

I demand the immediate release of the students unjustly arrested by the government of Iran on December 5 and in January. These students have committed no crime. They have no links with exile groups. They have rightfully voiced their opposition to war and the Iranian government.

Louis Girard

Canada

28 January 2008

On January 15, the Iranian government arrested 10 members of Students for Freedom and Equality in Iran (also known as the Radical Left) and another 2 members on January 24. They are being held in Evin prison along with 21 members arrested on December 5. Their crime was that they questioned the Iranian Government.

Opposed to United States militarism and advocates of the Iranian people, these young students have done nothing to justify the brutal response of the Iranian government. This undemocratic and unnecessary act of repression will only exacerbate the hostility of the Iranian people and people around the world. The imprisoned members of Students for Freedom and Equality in Iran must be freed immediately and cleared of all charges.

Thank you for your attention,

Terrence McGovern

South Yarmouth, Massachusetts, USA

28 January 2008

To the Iranian Interests Section in the United States:

I am a teacher in the United States. I learned from the International Students for Social Equality of the arrest of over forty Iranian students since December 4, 2007. While I deeply oppose the sanctions and threats against the Iranian people by the government of the United States, the Iranian government's violation of the democratic rights of

its young people serves only to aid the reactionary and imperialist policies of the United States and its allies against Iran. As these students have denounced the war plans of US imperialism, charges of their being linked to attempts to destabilize Iran on behalf of imperialism are false. There is clearly no justification for the Iranian government's own reactionary actions against the students, other than fear of the opposition its policies have engendered in the Iranian population. Instead, the Iranian government is identifying itself with the kind of attacks on democratic rights that the Bush Administration carries out against the people of the world, as in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as against the American people.

The reports that the students have been abused and tortured require an immediate release of the students. Justice demands that the government of Iran end the persecution of Iranian students.

Sincerely,

Harvey Lichtman

28 January 2008

I would like to state my concern about the reported arrest of students by the Iranian authority and the brutal crackdown on domestic opposition. Therefore, I call on the government of Iran to release all students arrested immediately, and all charges on these students must be dropped.

These students have committed no crime. They have done nothing but voice their entirely justified opposition to war and the government of Iran.

Lastly, I call on the authorities to ensure that all people in Iran are able to peacefully exercise the rights to freedom of expression, association and assembly without fear of harassment, intimidation or arbitrary detention, in line with international human rights standards.

Yours sincerely,

RK

Malaysia

29 January 2008

Dear Sirs,

It is with great anger and disgust that I write this letter to your Section. These jailed Iranian students have committed no crime whatsoever. Instead what they have done is an inspiration, not only to me, but to students and workers all over the world. In a country that postures as "anti-imperialist", these youth were arrested for opposing not only the theocracy of Tehran, but the imperialist government of Washington as well. No prison or any amount of violent coercion can stop the radicalization of students and youth that is taking place not only in Iran, but all over the world. All charges against these students should be dropped and the students must be released immediately!

Sincerely,

KM

USA



To contact the WSWs and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact