

Québec Solidaire rallies behind imperialist powers' campaign of aggression and provocation against Iran

Louis Girard
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Québec Solidaire, the party of the pseudo-left in Quebec, is fully backing the hypocritical campaign that the imperialist powers are mounting against the Islamic Republic of Iran over its violations of democratic rights, especially those of women.

In promoting this campaign, Ruba Ghazal, a Québec Solidaire Member of the National Assembly (MNA) of Palestinian origin, has worked closely with legislators from the other three parties of the Quebec capitalist establishment. That is with the ruling right-wing, Quebec chauvinist Coalition Avenir Québec (CAQ), the pro-independence Parti Québécois and the federalist Quebec Liberal Party. All of these parties have staunchly supported Ottawa's participation in Washington's wars of plunder and conquest over the past three decades, including the current US-led NATO war against Russia.

Ghazal set the tone by tabling a motion in the National Assembly earlier this month "to condemn the violent repression of demonstrations and human rights abuses committed by the Iranian theocratic regime against its people since the death of the young Kurdish woman, Mahsa Amin." Unsurprisingly, the motion was adopted unanimously.

Behind a tone of moral superiority typical of that assumed by the polished thugs who serve as the political representatives of American, Canadian and European imperialism, the motion completely ignores all the crimes committed by the United States and its allies, including Canada, in the Middle East and around the world.

The *World Socialist Web Site* is implacably opposed to Iran's bourgeois nationalist, Shia clergy-led regime. It presides over ever-widening social inequality, mass poverty, and systemic corruption and ruthlessly represses the struggles of the working class. It consolidated its reactionary rule by hijacking the mass progressive, anti-imperialist movement that overthrew the brutal, Washington-sponsored dictatorship of the Shah in 1979 and by suppressing all independent working-class and leftist organizations.

However, the crocodile tears shed by Ghazal, who boasts of speaking "with one voice" with her imperialist friends in "support" of Iran's women, should deceive no one.

Where is the outrage of Ghazal and the QS leadership at the

decades of US war threats and provocations against Iran, including economic sanctions directly responsible for food, medicine and medical equipment shortages that have cost tens, if not hundreds of thousands, of Iranians their lives?

Where is their indignation over Washington and Ottawa's long-standing alliance with Saudi Arabia, whose despotic rulers deny their subjects the most elementary democratic rights and whose absolutist state systematically discriminates against women?

Where are the QS led protests condemning the crimes perpetrated against the men and women of Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya and Syria, who have seen their countries ravaged by the wars waged by Washington and its allies, with the full support of Ottawa and Quebec, for the control of raw materials and geostrategic advantage?

To the extent that Québec Solidaire has spoken about these wars, it is in order, as in the case of Iran, to use its "left" image to give credence to the "human rights" pretexts advanced by imperialist governments to justify their aggression.

QS is playing the same role vis-à-vis NATO's war against Russia in Ukraine. It tabled a motion at the beginning of the war, also adopted unanimously by the National Assembly. That resolution denounced Russian "aggression," while completely ignoring NATO's—and, above all, Washington's—role in instigating the conflict through NATO expansion and the 2014 fascist spearheaded coup against Ukraine's then pro-Russian government, and its long-standing preparations to confront Russia militarily in order to subjugate it and seize control of its vast geostrategic resources.

If QS has remained silent on the war in Ukraine ever since, it is not just because it is a provincial, parochialist party that has little interest in anything happening outside the borders of Quebec. More fundamentally, it is because its position is in no substantive way different from, let alone opposed, to the imperialist warmongering that has gripped the entire Canadian and Quebec ruling elite.

Like its ostensible political opponents in the federal Liberal and provincial CAQ governments, QS has not breathed a word about the reckless and provocative actions of NATO that

threaten to trigger an all-out war between NATO and Russia, one moreover fought with nuclear weapons. It has likewise remained silent on Canada's role in this escalation, with its massive arms shipments to Ukraine, its deployment of Special Forces inside Ukraine, and its intelligence support for Ukrainian attacks targeting Russian forces.

Commenting on her motion on Iran, Ghazal said: "We will have to do everything in our power to ensure that the revolution does not falter and that this infamous regime falls." These words expose the real aim of the "pro-women" propaganda campaign in which QS is involved—that is, to prepare the ideological ground for the overthrow, by military means if necessary, of the Iranian regime, which is perceived by US and Canadian imperialism as being hostile to their interests.

Ghazal and Québec Solidaire represent affluent sections of the middle class that long ago made their peace with imperialism. Having gained a comfortable position in the capitalist system, they fear and oppose any mass movement against the established capitalist order. Their role is to keep mounting social opposition among the working class and youth within the framework of capitalist politics and to seek to revive the discredited nationalist program of Quebec independence, so as to divide Quebec workers from their class brothers and sisters in English Canada, the US and beyond.

QS barely talks about the struggles of the working class in Quebec, let alone the rest of Canada or internationally, and works with the trade union bureaucracy to suppress them. In its foreign policy, QS defends the interests of the Canadian and Quebec ruling class. It supports not only NATO's war against Russia, but also Canada's growing role in the US military-strategic offensive against China. Going out of its way to present itself as "respectable" to the ruling class, QS has sent its motion on Iran to the UN, a US-led imperialist agency.

Québec Solidaire's pro-imperialist position on Iran also serves to further exposes its reactionary project of reshuffling the borders of North America to create a third imperialist state, a capitalist *République du Québec*. In 2019, QS officially adopted the position that an independent Quebec should have its own army. A key reason given for this was that an independent Quebec would need to reassure Washington that its territory would be sufficiently regimented and patrolled to ensure it did not become any kind of threat to US interests, within the context of "the rise of countries that could rival the United States, such as China."

Through its complicit silence, QS supports the massive 70 percent increase in military spending announced by Trudeau's federal Liberal government in 2017 and the purchase of tens of billions of dollars worth of military equipment, including new fleets of warships and fighter jets.

The pro-imperialist policies of Québec Solidaire and the wealthy social strata it represents are an international phenomenon. All the "sister" parties of QS at the international level defend the predatory interests of their respective national

ruling classes: SYRIZA in Greece, the Left Party in Germany or PODEMOS in Spain. The latter, which is in a coalition government with the social-democratic PSOE, one of the two traditional governing parties of the Spanish ruling class, has imposed a budget with the largest increase in military spending in Spanish history.

One final point must be made. By lining up with all the other parties in the National Assembly in the name of the "democratic rights of Iranian women," QS is standing in solidarity with parties that have fueled anti-immigrant chauvinism for more than a decade, particularly towards Muslim women. The Coalition Avenir Québec (and the hard-right Action Démocratique du Québec which it absorbed), the Quebec Liberal Party and the Parti Québécois have all encouraged or imposed legislation that prescribes what Muslim women can and cannot wear.

In the name of "secularism" and upholding "Quebec values," these laws deny the small minority of women who wear the niqab or burqa access to public services, including health care (Bills 62 and 21), and prohibit the wearing of the Islamic headscarf (hijab) by government employees deemed in a "position of authority," such as tens of thousands of female teachers (Bill 21).

These chauvinist laws and the reactionary debates from which they emerged have fueled the growth of extreme right-wing forces and xenophobia. Muslim women who wear the hijab have spoken out about how their daily lives have been gravely disrupted, including through the loss of their jobs, forced career changes, fear of leaving their homes, verbal assaults, etc.

QS has always presented the right-wing initiated and fomented debate over "defending Quebec values" and "state secularism" as "legitimate," and covered up its real objective—to divide the working class and make immigrants the scapegoats for the immense social crisis caused by the capitalist system. Thus, while posturing as a defender of the women of Iran, the pseudo-left Québec Solidaire is itself fully complicit in a reactionary backlash against the Muslim women of Quebec.



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