

Celebrate Resistance & Internationalism

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

Join women of Iran & Afghanistan in their struggle against the women-hating Islamic Republic of Iran and the imperialist U.S. empire. Women from those and other countries will be protesting in Iran and Europe. We will march and rally in solidarity with them in the streets of Los Angeles!

**SATURDAY,
MARCH 7**

**1 PM RALLY & MARCH
PICO & WESTWOOD BLVD.**
Along Westwood Blvd. (West LA)

**5 PM RALLY &
NIGHTTIME MARCH
WILSHIRE & WESTWOOD BLVD.**
Through Westwood Village (West LA)

**FUNDRAISING CONCERT FOR IWD
PERFORMERS TBA • SAVE THIS DATE!
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 28 - 8 PM**
The New LADC - 514 S. Spring Street
Downtown LA, 90013

**INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY
COALITION, LOS ANGELES 2009**

**MASS MEETINGS NOW TILL MARCH 7 • SATURDAY
1PM • CAL STATE LA, STUDENT UNION LOBBY**

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W E WOMEN FROM IRAN will hold March 8—the International Women's Day—in clandestine meetings in Iran and in seminars and streets marches in Europe, letting the world know that we, who are facing one of the deadliest woman hating regimes on Earth (the Islamic Republic), will not rest till we break all our chains and achieve the emancipation of women and the whole of humanity from the clutches of the power systems dominating in Iran as well as the world. We will reject and expose the cynical claims of U.S. imperialists wanting to “liberate” us. We will call upon women and men from around the world to unite with us in our struggle. We also ask the people living in the U.S. to act in solidarity and support us in our difficult fight against our two enemies who are part of the same matrix: the Islamic Republic of Iran and U.S. imperialism.

It has been 30 years since March 8, 1979, when women in Iran launched their resistance against the theocratic state of the Islamic Republic of Iran. On March 7, 1979, the Ayatollah Khomeini—the leader of the one-month-old Islamic regime—declared Hejab (the Islamic head cover for women) to be mandatory. The day after, tens of thousands of women burst into the streets of Tehran in defiance. High school girls, university students, nurses, office workers, factory workers and housewives, joined by good number of men, chanted in angry voices: **We did not make revolution to go backwards!** Street fighting started between courageous women and Khomeini's fundamentalist thugs, the Hezbollah.

After hours of protest and street fighting, thousands of women, with torn clothes, broken umbrellas and tousled hair attended the March 8 International Women's Day celebration in Tehran University. Women who had been anti-Shah, anti-imperialist resisters since the 1953 CIA coup in Iran that put the Shah in power, or were involved in the student movement of the 1960s, opened the ceremony. One declared that the change of guard from the Shah to Khomeini has not changed the system, and that women's struggle for emancipation is extremely important for the whole society. Many women's organizations came into being. Women stood in line to sign up with the newly formed women's militant organizations. That is how our movement was born against the bloody oppression of a theocratic woman-hating state called Islamic Republic of Iran (IRI).

Oppression of women is the linchpin of Islamic theocracy in Iran. The religious state guarantees total patriarchy and full power of male >>>>>

relatives over women. Women have no rights to travel, to work, to education without consent of father or husband. Medieval penal codes ensure medieval moral codes. The Sharia-inspired Constitution and Islamic Punitive Laws provide legal backing for this situation. Every day, Hejab police arrest hundreds of women who defy Islamic Hejab. Every year women are stoned to death or hanged for being “disloyal” to their Sharia-recognised master-husbands. The Islamic watch dog, the Office of Harasat, is stationed in every university to enforce male-female segregation of the students and protect Islamic “teachers” from the wrath of the students.

In the past 30 years our struggle has continued: in the streets, in schools and universities, in factories and sweatshops, in prisons under torture, and in the household against enforced male power and tradition’s chains. Resistance is everywhere. But when you watch Western media coverage on Iran you do not see us! You only see and hear “nuclear” alarms and stupid and reactionary huffs and puffs by IRI officials and presidents.

More than half of the three million university students in Iran are women. This has helped to intensify women’s resistance against theocratic rule. Last year several important universities in different corners of the country were scenes of courageous protest by students against sexual harassment and advances of the Islamic “teachers” and members of Office of Harasat. But you don’t hear or see it in the U.S. and Western media. Women mine workers in southern Iran get shot by the IRI Revolutionary Guards while standing in the forefront of labor protests. But you don’t get to know it. September 2008 was the 20th anniversary of the big massacre of political prisoners (many of them revolutionary women) by the Islamic Republic of Iran. But nobody gets to see on their TV screens the heroic women and men who survived those massacres.

This approach by the powerful centers in the U.S. and its administration is meant to prepare minds and convince you that there are no people in Iran! There are no women breaking their chains. There are no students and teachers and workers rotting in prison for protesting the reactionary rule of IRI. So let’s bomb them and then “liberate” them.

Women’s oppression under U.S. occupation in Afghanistan and Iraq is equally ugly and bestial. In Afghanistan, honor

killing, stoning to death and forced marriage are rampant in areas under the rule of the U.S.’s Islamic Republic, as well as in areas under the Taliban. Afghanistan is run by pro-U.S. tribal chieftains, warlords and drug lords. Women cannot even show their face while walking outdoors. Since occupation of Iraq by the U.S., medieval rules of Sharia have come back to hound women, and at the same time thousands of schoolgirls have been thrown into the prostitution market in the Gulf countries, encouraged by globalization and U.S. occupation. This is how the U.S. war has “liberated” women of the Middle East.

Many people in the U.S. and around the world harbor false hopes about Obama. They argue that he has promised to be “different” than the Bush regime. But in fact he has promised to pursue U.S. wars in the Middle East. Of course he takes care to call his wars “good wars.” All right! During his campaign he wasted no time encouraging Israeli attacks against Palestinians in Gaza (which came on December 27, 2008) and dubbed it “self defense.” He even used imagery of his two daughters to justify such a crime, which should be called a holocaust. Unfortunately, soon we will find out that the greedy and war-hungry Imperialist system requires and can only produce bloody and ruthless leaders.

Let us be clear: We who have been in a kind of civil war with the Islamic Republic of Iran for the last 30 years are not fighting to trade one oppressor for another one. We are not fighting to liberate ourselves from the clutches of one outmoded social, ideological, political system like the IRI in order to let another outmoded system like U.S. imperialism replace it. The very workings of this system perpetuate misogyny and woman-hating religious fundamentalism in the U.S. and around the world. Nothing is a more deadly trap for the oppressed than to prefer one set of oppressors to another set of oppressors. There are no “good oppressors” vs. “bad oppressors.” We did not need GW Bush to “liberate us.” And we do not need the Obama-Hillary kiss of death! **But we do need and want the support of the people living in the U.S.!**

Let us celebrate International Women’s Day 2009 in the U.S. and around the world with a spirit of resistance and internationalism. **Let us bind together and dare to break our chains.**

***From Iran, Afghanistan, Iraq to the U.S.;
from China to the Philippines and Mexico,
Fight against Women’s Oppression!
No to the Islamic Republic of Iran!
No to U.S. imperialism!***

***No to the U.S.’s Islamic Republic
in Afghanistan! No to the Taliban!
Bush’s “War on Terror” &
Obama’s “Good Wars”
Serve the Empire!***

MARCH 8 WOMEN’S ORGANIZATION (Iran-Afghanistan) ~ 2009