

The wages, and the stand of reformism!

By Omid Khorram

Wage increase is the daily issue of labor struggles. Workers spontaneously turn to struggle against capital in various forms to increase wages, get rid of poverty and misery, homelessness and displacement. In the struggles of January 2018 and November 2020, although the unemployed workers were the main force of this labor revolt against capitalism, but, the low wages of workers cannot be removed from the causes of these labor riots. In recent years, in the two months before the beginning of the new year, various statements are made regarding the increase in wages, based on the rate of inflation. At first, there are differences between the statements of the right and left-wing reformism spectrum, but in the end, the differences disappear, and a common statement is getting issued. Among the reasons that lead to an agreement and convergence of right and left - wing reformism to a single position, the following can be listed: First, the basis for determining wages is the inflation rate, that is, the same category proposed by the government of capital. It's not a new thing that the institutions of capitalist governance link the increase in wages into the increase of inflation. In the 19th century, the bourgeoisie, in response to the struggles of workers who demanded an increase in wages, was saying that "an increase in wages equals an increase in inflation ". Marx, once in a speech for the workers, which was later written, showed that the increase in wages has nothing to do with inflation, but the increase in wages reduces the surplus value and profit of capital. That's the reason for the fallacy and deception of the bourgeoisie also. It should be noted that according to the official statistics of the Islamic regime of capital, the surplus value's rate, from the labor-force of Iranian workers is 1200%.

Second: The separation of the struggle for wage increase from the struggle against the wage-labor system, which is the fundamental origin of the poverty and misery of the working class.

Third: Separating the struggle for wages and improving living conditions from the struggle against the system of producing surplus value, gives this message of the bourgeoisie to the labor movement that the capitalist system is eternally permanent, which means a seal of approval on the existence of wage labor. Of course, they also give the workers the right to try to obtain the permission of the union and syndicate to bargain for a wage increase.

Fourth: The reformists by relying on the approach of class compromise and playing a role of mediator between workers and employers, establish the process of labor struggle and its demands in the direction of a peaceful compromise with the capitalist government.

Fifth: The reformists claim that: " want an opening in freedom to create an organization." But they, intentionally, are unaware that freedom is gained only by relying on class struggle with capital and capitalist state, and nothing else. This reformist approach is the unquestionable demand of the bourgeois factions, which is continuously broadcasted by the bourgeois mass media day and night. Some others insist that: "The plan to demand the abolition of the separation of the product of labor from the worker will cause the capitalist regime to panic ". But our question is whether the gatherings and sit-ins accompanied by silence and taking refuge in capitalist parliamentarians and collecting signature petitions during these years have had any result other than the indoctrination and determination of the bourgeois approaches for the labor movement? Some others believe that the workers are unaware and that socialist demands should not be raised in the labor movement. But our question to the

claimants of reformism and class compromise is that, do the workers who criticize and attack the economic and political institutions of capitalism, ! really do these workers lack awareness ?!

In short, the anti-capitalist workers of Iran and the activists of the movement of abolishing wage-labor, have said and written a lot about this and other important and vital issues of the labor movement. The struggle for wages is not separated from the struggle to break free from the wage labor system. The homogeneity and identity of the struggle for wages and the struggle for the abolition of wage labor arises from the fundamental and antagonistic conflict between labor and capital. The basis of wages should be determined based on the work product of the workers. As mentioned earlier, the production of surplus value in Iran's capitalist hell is 1200 percent. The living and livelihood conditions of workers in Iran are becoming more catastrophic day by day. It was reported in the news that some of the workers pawn their identity cards to get a loaf of bread for their own family!!!

The left or right-wing reformist approaches in the labor movement is the achievement of the Second International and later Lenin and the Bolsheviks in the labor movement that is in conflict to Marx's approach in the First International and the anti-capitalist movement.

Omid Khorram
Feb. 2021