

## Party of Labour of Iran (Toufan) Interview on Syria

*The English Facebook page of the Party of Labour of Iran (Toufan) has interviewed the comrade in charge of the office of the foreign relations of the Party, Comrade Jaafar Paknia, on the situation in Syria.*

*Q. Comrade Jaafar, thank you for the time you are spending with us for this interview. As you know, due to the Russian aerial bombardment and the destruction of the bases of Daesh (ISIS) and other terrorist groups, the balance of power has changed in Syria. The regime of Basher Assad has gone on the offensive and its forces have advanced significantly. The Turkish government of Erdogan has violated international norms and regulations and has frantically bombarded the bases of the Kobane Kurds and has declared its opposition to any autonomy for the Syrian Kurds. How do you evaluate these new developments in Syria?*

A. The adventurist policy of Erdogan's government, a government that is sunk in the dream of the revival of "Great Ottoman Empire", and that shamelessly interferes in the internal affairs of the countries of the region has faced disgraceful defeat. This is clearly a sign of political shortsightedness of the present leadership of Turkey. By sending the Syrian refugees to Europe, Erdogan wanted to pressure the European governments to agree with his policy of toppling the legal and legitimate government of Assad and to pretend that only through NATO involvement in Syria and its support for terrorist organizations and eventually through the overthrow of the Syrian government it is possible to stop the influx of refugees to Europe. Erdogan's inhumane conspiracy has become a policy of instigation, war, and destruction in the region. This policy was rejected by the European governments, and consequently Turkey's short-sighted policy faced a dead end. Erdogan asked for three billion Euros from the European countries as blackmail to stop the influx of refugees to Europe.

The gains of the Syrian army against Daesh through Russian bombardment are increasing daily. These gains have encouraged the people in the Daesh-controlled regions to resist and to participate in the war against the terrorist organizations. ISIS has chosen the "flight" over "Heaven". These terrorists are returning to their homelands by the scores. The imperialist-trained Daesh and Jihadists have spread their terror campaigns to their motherlands. Though France has fallen victim to the terrorist operations, it has not stopped interfering in the affairs of the Middle Eastern countries. The Western imperialist countries that supported Daesh and other terror groups in killing 300 thousand Syrians will not escape these terror campaigns. Turkey itself will fall victim to Daesh's terror campaign soon.

The government of Erdogan that continues the criminal fascist suppression and bombardment of PKK and the Kurdish people is extremely frightened by the recent victories of the Syrian government over the terrorist groups, and it is asking Saudi Arabia and Qatar to jointly dispatch their armies to Syria to "fight" Daesh. What a joke! What a lie! These countries have been supporting, training, arming, and financing ISIS for the past 5 years. Even Barak Obama and NATO and EU officials are hesitant about the effectiveness of Erdogan's adventurist policies. The armed forces of Turkey enter Syria only for the purpose of destroying the democratic achievements of the Kobane Kurds and to fight against the Syrian army. This is obviously in violation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Syria.

*Q. Some hold the opinion that Russian bombardment of Daesh has made the situation worse and has killed many civilians, that Russia's objective in its rivalry with the US imperialists is to preserve and strengthen its interest in Syria and the region, and that Russian interference in the Middle East is an imperialist act that should not be supported. What is your opinion on these issues?*

A. Before we talk about the class nature of the Russian establishment, we must clarify the nature of the war that is being waged in Syria and the Middle East. We must analyze the reasons why the Western imperialists headed by the U.S. and their lackeys and allies in the region such as Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Turkey, etc. want to overthrow the legal government of Syria. Isn't this policy of aggression against Syria consistent with the doctrine of establishing the "Greater Middle East"? Isn't this the continuation of the policy of military aggression against Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya, etc? Isn't this policy in the interest of Zionism and world reaction? Do China and Russia desire to disintegrate Syria and split it into pieces?

It must be emphasized that Syria has political independence and therefore has the right to freely seek help from any force or country in order to preserve its national independence and territorial integrity. This policy of seeking assistance is not new in the struggle of the people of the world. In the war that is imposed upon Syria, the condemnation of the Western aggressors and their regional allies must occupy the first place. These aggressors are seeking the total destruction and disintegration of Syria. Furthermore, their objective is not limited to the overthrow of Assad's regime but to the suppression of Lebanon's resistance movement, aggression against Iran. And the dispatch of terrorist forces to the borders of Russia will come next. The U.S. strategy of "New World Order" is to weaken and remove the allies of China and Russia, to subdue these two imperialist rivals, and to impose its hegemony on the globe. The fact is that Eastern imperialists presently do not have the necessary military power or preparation to wage war on the Western united military forces of NATO led by the U.S. In the present condition, it is NATO that has military superiority and violates and threatens the independence, territorial integrity, and the rights of nations to self determination. Western imperialism, headed by the U.S., is the source of all present wars and is responsible for the flight of millions of people from their homelands in the Middle East, Horn of Africa, Yugoslavia, and Ukraine.

Russia and China vetoed the U.S. proposal in the UN Security Council and have expressed many times their opposition to the bombardment of Syria. This is a positive stand, as were the stands of Germany and France in opposition to the U.S. invasion of Iraq. It is clear that behind these stands and oppositions lie economic and political interests and motives. A political party, while clarifying the nature of the war and of the forces involved, must adopt its tactic. The independent state of Syria, as any independent state, can make use of the present world contradictions to preserve its independence; otherwise it will not overcome the aggression imposed on it. One may simplify a complicated political question and raise a general political slogan and put his mind at ease by declaring war on all forces involved and then watch the development of the events. This is not a responsible conduct and it is inconsistent with Marxism and Leninist tactics. Our Party emphasizes that we must defend the independence and territorial integrity of the countries that face imperialist military aggression. This defence is a defence for rights of nations to self determination by their own people.

We must add that Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and Turkey's opposition to Syria is over the export of natural gas from the region to Europe. Iran, Iraq, and Syria planned for a ten-billion dollar project for the construction of a pipeline to export Iran's natural gas to Europe starting in 2010. In 2012, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed by these three countries. Two weeks later, armed clashes started in Syria. Armed terrorist groups were sent to Syria through its northern and southern borders. Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey utilized their means to overthrow the regime of Assad. Qatar now fights for a bigger share of market for its natural gas, and Saudi Arabia and Turkey want the gas pipelines to pass through their countries in order to become a broker for the export of Qatar's natural gas to Europe and to collect transit fees.

Q. *Western media claim that Russian bombardments of Syria have killed many thousands of innocent people and that Russia is responsible for the continuation of the war and the migration of hundreds of thousands of residents. What are your views on these?*

A. Western media lie about the events in Syria and also fabricate stories consistent with the official line of their governments. The Russian fighter jets bomb the bases and positions of Daesh and some other terrorist groups, and have significantly weakened Daesh's grips on the regions under their control. Russia displayed satellite pictures of stolen oil tankers going from Syria to Turkey. Daesh sells the stolen oil to Turkey at a low price, and Turkey offers it to the world at the market price. Russian jet fighters bombed many hundreds of these oil tankers.

Assad's victories over Daesh and over the conspiracies and plots of the Western imperialists are very bitter for Turkey, Saudi Arabia, the U.S., and the Western media. These conspirators try to disrupt and hinder the fight against the terrorists who have destroyed Syria. European countries that are vulnerable and are threatened by the terrorist actions want to stop their losses. They see that their policy of toppling the legal government of Assad has faced defeat and that their hopes are dashed though they, with the help from reactionary regimes of the region such as Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Turkey and Jordan made use of everything they could including the violation of the UN Charter and of the rights of nations to defeat Assad. Now they are interested in reduction of tension in the region. They see the reduction of tension in the region as useful to their interests and to the normalization of relation with Russia. The government of Erdogan that used Daesh of Arab, Turk, Turkmen, Chechen, Dagestan, and European nationalities to attack Syria now sees that the terrorist forces are on the run and are facing defeat followed by another defeat. Erdogan, with the hope of occupying and annexing northern Syria to Turkey, has invented a Turkmen national minority in Syria that wants to join Turkey. Turkmen who are allies of Daesh and who behead Arabs and Kurds are Erdogan's brothers and friends and are defended as "non-terrorist" opposition. The Russian jets are making these terrorists martyrs for Erdogan. And of course, the jets that make these Turkmen martyrs have to be shut down by the non-terrorists provided that the U.S. has expressed its consent. With the defeat of Daesh, the Syrian Kurdish forces are gaining strength, and Erdogan is losing hope to split Syria. Obama and Erdogan play a sly and hypocritical role in the fight against Daesh.

In the present situation, Russians and Assad's army have no interest in bombarding the civilian regions. We should mention that long before the Russian military involvement in Syria, more than 150 thousand terrorists from 80 countries, financed by Saudi Arabia and Qatar and the U.S. and Europe, were mobilized to destroy and attack Syria. Now they are defeated and are on the run. The Western news media tries to instigate public opinion against the regime of Bashar Assad by engineering lies and distributing Photoshopped pictures.

*Q. What is the future of the regime of President Assad? What stand the people are taking in this situation?*

A. As I have mentioned several times, the U.S. objective is to overthrow the regime of Assad in the frame work of "humanitarian involvement". The U.S. imperialists and their allies want to divide Syria into four regions; a Sunni region in Damascus and its suburbs, the Druze region in Golan Heights, the Alavi region in Antakya region, and a Kurdish region in north eastern Syria. This would make Syria a weak, dependent, and fragmented country that serves the strategic interest of the U.S. and Israel and their allies. The silence of the so called human rights organizations on the violation of the rights of nations by the U.S. imperialists shows the hypocrisy of the fake human rights organizations.

It must be said that the overthrow of the regime of Bashar Assad by the hands of the Syrian people led by the working class and for the purpose of establishing freedom, social justice, and the preservation and deepening of independence of Syria would be a revolutionary act that serves the people of Syria and of the entire region. The toppling of the Syrian regime by the imperialist powers is neither in the interest of the Syrian people nor in the interest of the people of the region. Parties and organizations that have not learned from the experience of the occupations of Iraq, Libya,

Afghanistan, and others and that are still repeating the theories of “fight against all reactionary forces”, and resolving “all social contradictions” at the same time understand neither tactics nor revolutionary politics. They are sunk in the Trotskyite quagmire of a “fight against two reactionary poles”. These forces do not serve the people. On the contrary, they sabotage the national and liberation struggles of the people against imperialist aggression and invasion. It is the responsibility of the revolutionary and progressive forces to resolutely expose these deviated and decaying political currents that damage the movement under the name of “communist” and “left”.

Today, the Western imperialists see that a significant section of Syrians, due to the destructive actions of the dark force of Daesh, have lined up behind Assad’s regime and that not by any means will the Syrian people “rise up” against the “dictator”. The U.S. imperialists and their allies are forced to talk about peace (!), but in practice they beat the war drums on all fronts.

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