

I am Thirsty

Two short statements from anarchists in Iran on the current uprising

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Contents

<i>Soheil Arabi: I am thirsty!</i>	3
<i>From the Federation of Anarchism Era</i>	3

Soheil Arabi: I am thirsty!

The People Want to Overthrow this System!

Listen. Listen.

This is a peaceful demonstration; why are you shooting at us? No one has taken the water away from you; no one has taken the land away from you! Why are you shooting at us? We say that peaceful protests are part of our rights. Water and land belong to our rights. To live is our right! We say we want freedom, but they (the regime) shoot at us!

Why do those who see the oppression of the people still show no suitable reactions, the appropriate response for solidarity and condemnation against oppression and killing? Even these are not enough to do! These tired and oppressed people want to be freed from oppression and tyrants. The people want to overthrow this ignorant and tyrannical regime. The least the people demand is the downfall of the corrupt, destructive, and tyrannical Mullah regime. Those who ignore the voice of the people, those who turn a blind eye to these crimes, are accomplices of these butchers! Listen. Listen. They cry, "I am thirsty!" And instead of giving back the water, which is their right, the heart is pierced with bullets! Behold those who target the thirsty with their bullets are the same religion-selling liars who take huge sums of money to blare their mourning of the thirsty lips of Karbala!¹ Behold. Behold. The earth is red with the blood of the people who wanted life and received no answer except bullets. Bullets, bullets, and bullets! Yesterday was Saddam's bullets and rockets; today is Khamenei's prison, batons, and bullets. Sheyban.² Execution. Bullet. Sheyban. Execution. Bullet. That was all that happened to us! It passed. It passed with incarceration and bullets, but we do not forgive. To avenge our children, we will fight until this vampiric regime is overthrown! And know that this intifada ends in the revolution! This insurrection ends with only one thing, and that is Freedom! Liberation from centralism, fascism, capitalism, theocracy, along with its accomplices! We do not want a central government. We do not want oppression and authoritarianism. We do not want tyranny and killing. We do not want the religion-selling fraudster and unfair distribution of wealth. We had enough of discrimination, turmoil, and ignorance! We only have one wish, which is life! A normal life. Normal life means Freedom, Human Dignity, Justice, and Equality! Normal life means the answer to "I'm thirsty" is not bullets! Listen. Listen. Today, there is only one way to prove your honor. Today, there is only one way to prove your honor by overthrowing this monster that calls itself the Islamic system.

—Soheil Arabi, 21 July 2021 Rajaei-Shar Prison in West Tehran.

From the Federation of Anarchism Era

A lot is happening at a fast pace with a deep background story. We will try our best to give a comprehensive summary... Since the beginning, the Islamic Republic of Iran had used fresh-water supplies as an authoritarian means to control the population. During the Iran-Iraq war in the '80s, IRGC (Iran Revolutionary Guard Corps) had an engineering corps to build bridges and infrastructure for the Basiji Militia and the other guard corps use during the war. Well, the

¹ He is referring to events of Karbala where the third Shiite Imam Hussein and some of his companions were killed without getting water in the battle with the army of the Caliphate, on October 13, 680 AD. The Iranian regime spends a huge amount of money every year, and mullahs cry the inhumanity of killing these innocent thirsty martyrs.

² Sheyban is one of the first cities in the current uprising in Khuzestan province and one of the first cities the regime attempted to suppress by opening fire on people.

war ended and these war veterans had nothing to do. Meanwhile, Khomeini died and Khamenei took over as the Supreme Leader, leaving the presidency seat vacant. Here comes Rafsanjani. He becomes the president of Iran and forms an IRGC construction firm with these former IRGC engineers to build Iran's infrastructure. One of these infrastructure projects was building dams. However, the regime quickly started using dams to redirect water to the agricultural fields of the high echelon members of the regime, IRGC commanders, and other loyal members. Rafsanjan pistachio is famous. Who owns them? Well, Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, the former president of Iran and one of the most powerful members of the regime in Iran, of course. In Iran, Mullahs are the authoritarian, bourgeois, & fascist all wrap up in one. So basically a water mafia. They filled their pockets by contracting themselves for construction & redirected water for their capitalist extraction. They also used restricting & opening the dam to flood the region as a means of suppression & punishment. Here comes the suppression section of the story. There is a large population of Arabs native to the Khuzestan region of Iran. Other ethnicities such as Lur, Kurds, & Fars have also lived in the region for centuries but the region is a majority Arab population. Before the discovery of oil in the region & attraction of the global colonial empires like the UK and the growing greed of Iran Qajar & Pahlavi monarchies, Arabs had an autonomous kingdom in the region. The destruction of their societies, suppression & subsequent ongoing genocide of Arabs in contemporary times started with Reza Shah, The founder of the Pahlavi dynasty. This continued during his son, Mohammad Reza Shah's reign and the Islamic Republic regime. However, this suppression of Arabs became more prominent during Mohammad Reza Shah because oil was nationalized and Iran became more dependant on its oil profit. Pahlavi monarchs were also racist and fascist pricks. Reza Shah changed the name of the country from Persian to Iran to make the connection to the "Aryan" stock of the region. His son wasted resources throwing extravagant parties celebrating the ancient Achaemenid empire. After the revolution, the racism didn't go away but was intensified by the religious sectarian tendency of the regime. Arabs in the region are majority Sunni living under Shiite theocracy. One of the major atrocities of the current regime is "The Black Wednesday", the massacre of peacefully protesting Arabs by armed paramilitary forces comprising of Iranian nationalists and Islamic Iranian regime-supporters. Also, houses in the Arab villages are being systematically destroyed in the name of "agricultural development" & "infrastructure." The flooding the region & restricting water tactics have been used by the regime for years. You can search "Ahwaz" & "water" or "flood". In the November 2019 uprising, the Khuzestan region & Arabs joined the uprising as well and the suppression was brutal. In one city of Mahshar, more than 150 people were massacred. IRGC Qods Force seems to have been responsible. By the way, Quds Force's former commander was Qasem Soleimani who was assassinated by the US forces. Parading his corpse in the city of Ahwaz was propaganda for the world but also a show of force to Arabs and others so that they don't get carried away celebrating his death. So, this is the summary of the undercurrent in the region before the current uprising. This year so far, we had the Saravan uprising (Baluchistan), the largest worker's strike (including oil industries) in Iran's history, the general election boycott, & Power outage protests. The regime restricted the water in the region, specifically for the Arab population since the middle of May. This act with global warming is destroying the ecology further and people have no water for the normal necessities, let alone during a global pandemic. So, the undercurrents surfaced and erupted. The protests started with Arabs in Khuzestan province in the cities of Ahvaz, Susangerd, Hoveyzeh, Mahshahr, and Shush. However, Lurs, Kurds, Turks, and others in other provinces are joining them. The regime opened the waterways to the city of Isfahan, Isfahan province to pla-

cate them enough so they don't join the uprising. The regime redirected the Zayandeh Rud's water for decades and the river bed is dry most of the year. The regime brought in tanks and opened fire on protestors to suppress the uprising. Many people were killed but the flame of the uprising is strong. They set fire to the tanks. They set fire to police cars. They are chanting (now mostly in Arabic) that they are not afraid. More & more people are joining in solidarity with the Khuzestan uprising. There is a good chance to this uprising becomes nationwide like 2019 uprising. Also, there are racist, nationalistic, & fascist currents that don't like this uprising is Arab-led and calling the protestors "separatists". Even the words "Khuzestan" & "Al-Ahwaz" are hot button issues. We, the anarchists, were called "separatists" by these nationalist pricks because we used "Al-Ahwaz" in our reporting. Imagine that! We. Anarchists. Being separatist? We don't get what part of no nation, no government of anarchy they don't understand. Well. We hope this was somewhat illuminating. The situation is changing fast. We are calling anarchists in so-called Iran to come to the streets and support the uprising. A important fact we forgot to mention was that Arabs in the region call themselves "Ahwazi" and the region "Al-Ahwaz" instead of official name "Khuzestan". Arab nationalists also use Al-Ahwaz. This is the source of tension from Iranian racists & nationalists.

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