

Military Resistance 10A22

**A Loathsome Tyrant Totters:
“Defected Troops In Two Suburbs
Of Eastern Damascus — No
Farther Than Four Miles From The
Old City — Held Their Ground For
Hours After Fighting Government
Forces”**

**“Armed Clashes In The Eastern
Suburbs Of Damascus Have Jolted
Many In The Capital”**

**“The Country’s 11-Month Old Uprising
Now Is Lapping Up Against Syria’s
Biggest And Most-Important City”**

The business elite, including a younger generation who had built their profiles along the image of a young and reforming Mr. Assad, are moving abroad — but quietly. They are increasingly critical of what one young entrepreneur called “the chaos in the decision making.”

A recent supporter of the president, he now says: “You can’t wipe away blood with reforms.”

JANUARY 27, 2012 By NOUR MALAS and BILL SPINDLE, Wall Street Journal
[Excerpts]

DAMASCUS—In a country roiled by protests and violence, Syria’s capital remains an island of determination to go about life as always.

But the country's 11-month old uprising now is lapping up against Syria's biggest and most-important city.

Armed clashes in the eastern suburbs of Damascus have jolted many in the capital into acknowledging a conflict that — until last week — had swept through suburbs but otherwise remained as much a YouTube phenomenon for them as for outside observers.

On Thursday, defected troops in two suburbs of eastern Damascus — no farther than four miles from the old city — held their ground for hours after fighting government forces.

Activists said the military stormed Douma, another close suburb, after the armed opposition temporarily took over the town last week.

In a hotel lobby, businessmen fielded phone calls appearing to describe a government counteroffensive in Douma after the military had lost control.

“Empty words,” one of them said, brushing his hand in the air and dismissing the news as a myth.

But as the protest movement edges closer to the capital each week, the violence on both sides becomes more difficult to ignore.

At a border post just a mile in from Lebanon, customs officers complain about the winter chill and growing power cuts at home — a commonplace grievance for their Lebanese neighbors, but a hallmark of how quickly life has changed for the roughly five million people living in Damascus and its suburbs.

“Last week it was two hours a day, this week four hours every day in the dark,” one officer says, plugging an electric boilerplate into a corner to help warm the concrete room.

The unrest has penetrated households far from the protest hubs.

Many neighborhoods now experience regular power cuts, with the government saying it is unable to transport fuel to power plants amid clashes and sabotage on some of the routes.

Hotels are closing. Those still open have shut entire floors. Cut off by sanctions from credit-card providers, they accept only cash.

Once-bustling restaurants that booked reservations weeks in advance now welcome walk-in diners.

International schools, the first choice for many of Syria's elite families, are closing as expatriates and, increasingly, the locals themselves, pick up and leave.

The economy, along with confidence, has gone into free fall, despite a nearly continuous succession of emergency meetings between government and business leaders to save it.

“How long can we cope? It’s hard to know,” said Nabil Sukkar, an economist who recently moved his consulting business into the basement of his home to reduce costs.

The welcoming expression of a housewife in her living room in Damascus’s old city drained away as she took note of prolonged negotiations between the military and armed regime opponents who last week wrestled control of Zabadani, a resort town no more than a half-hour drive from the capital.

For many, the critical political position — stripped bare of arguments on the pace of change and how necessary the government’s military campaign against opponents has been — is loyalty to President Assad.

Damascus is the public face of support for the president.

At one roundabout, a digital billboard quotes lines from the president’s last speech. Behind a crystal-sharp image of Mr. Assad on the Damascus University podium briefly run the words: “I won’t give up responsibility.”

Rumors of secret and planned defections among business leaders abound.

But in private, and some more public conversations, many at the very least remain resigned to supporting the regime as the best way to avoid chaos. Many are vehemently committed to President Assad, even some who readily admit frustrations with the lack of change over the decade since he succeeded his father.

One merchant in the restive district of Midan described how he joined openly defiant crowds: On a Friday a few months back, he allowed a handful of protesters inside his shop to escape the thick clouds of tear gas unleashed by riot police.

He said he helped a teenager stumbling around with a bloodied face wipe up and sit down until he could safely walk down the street.

Within days, he found himself detained by security services for assisting the demonstrators.

Outraged, he joined the protests the next Friday, he said.

Other merchants in the neighborhood described a similar dilemma.

Regime opponents pressure them to close their stores in solidarity with the protests. If they do, security services break down the doors and force them to open, they said.

“Either way it’s bad for business,” said Omar, another shopkeeper, who shut his copper workshop in a suburb where the opposition has called several general strikes.

He said he pre-emptively built an iron gate around his home, three streets away from Midan. “It’s chaos there already. Everyone is afraid what comes next.”

Ministry employees say they have worked weekends since what many in the government dub “the events” — likely unknowingly using an ominous term used in Lebanon to describe that country’s 15-year civil war.

To be sure, grievances that ignited protests in Syria's rural south or across the overcrowded suburban belt aren't totally concealed from the capital.

In one government office, a young man — looking at the floor in embarrassment — pleaded with the secretary for a meeting with the minister. Saying he hadn't heard back on his request for weeks, he was told the appropriate committee was looking into the matter. "The committee never got back to me," he said quietly. "You know it will never get back to me."

The newly unemployed, people out of jobs as business slumped this year, drink tea on sidewalks and discuss "the security situation," another common description for the violence roiling many of the country's other cities. Locals estimate some 70,000 people were laid off in the private sector last year. Social and family networks have kept people partly employed, but even those are starting to wear thin under the business freeze and sanctions.

The business elite, including a younger generation who had built their profiles along the image of a young and reforming Mr. Assad, are moving abroad — but quietly. They are increasingly critical of what one young entrepreneur called "the chaos in the decision making."

A recent supporter of the president, he now says: "You can't wipe away blood with reforms."

Pressured by the opposition to take a stand, and by regime insiders — many of them current or former business partners — to show more vocal support, they are forced to go about their business ever more quietly.

Others pack up and leave.

In his office, one businessman mocked the paranoia by looking over his shoulder through the window before peering through the wall across the room to say — "We don't care to be on either side. We just want to get to and from work."

DO YOU HAVE A FRIEND OR RELATIVE IN MILITARY SERVICE?

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AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Foreign Occupation “Servicemember” Killed Somewhere Or Other In Afghanistan: Nationality Not Announced

January 25, 2011 Reuters

A foreign servicemember died following an improvised explosive device attack in southern Afghanistan today.

“Three British Nationals Who Were Near The Governor’s Compound Were Injured When The Blast Went Off”



Attack near the governor’s compound in the city of Lashkar Gah

January 26th, 2012 By Nick Paton Walsh, CNN

Three people were killed and at least 30 injured after an explosion near the governor’s compound in the city of Lashkar Gah in southern province Helmand.

The area was being protected by British soldiers.

A car bomb caused the blast and the target appeared to be an armored vehicle driven by foreigners, said Daoud Ahmadi, a spokesman for the governor.

A spokeswoman for the British Foreign Office said three British nationals who were near the governor's compound were injured when the blast went off.

**IF YOU DON'T LIKE THE RESISTANCE
END THE OCCUPATION**

Danish Soldier Kills Baby In Afghanistan

Jan 26, 2012 AFP

A Danish soldier accidentally killed a baby when he was destroying a roadside bomb in the southern Afghan province of Helmand this week, the Danish military said on Wednesday.

'When the Danish soldier on Monday was blowing up an improvised explosive device (IED), three civilian Afghans were unfortunately hit by fragments, and one of them was killed,' the military said in a statement.

'The wounded are a couple, whose infant was killed in the event,' it added.

It said the bomb had been discovered by the Afghan army, which had called in the Danes to destroy it.

Danish forces have launched a probe into how the three civilians had come into harm's way, the army said, noting that when destroying an IED, a security zone is established around the blast site.

**POLITICIANS CAN'T BE
COUNTED ON TO HALT THE
BLOODSHED**

**THE TROOPS HAVE THE
POWER TO STOP THE WARS**

“Voila, Mais Oui, C’est Un Drone -- Standez Vous La Pour Un Moment Et Pas De Movez.”



Paris January 27, 2012: France’s President Sarkozy positions Afghanistan’s President Hamid Karzai, as they meet to discuss recent killing of French soldiers by an Afghan soldier in Karzai’s army. REUTERS/Philippe Wojazer

MILITARY NEWS

“Researchers Have Determined That A Soldier Who Deployed To Iraq Is Now Carrying Particles Of Titanium, Iron And Copper In His Lungs”

Jan 27, 2012 By Patricia Kime - Staff writer, Army Times [Excerpts]

Researchers at Stony Brook University Medical Center in New York have determined that a soldier who deployed to Iraq is now carrying particles of titanium, iron and copper in his lungs.

Open lung tissue biopsies done on troops who deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan have been shown to sparkle with crystalline material, as noted by researchers Dr. Robert Miller of Vanderbilt University and Dr. Matthew King of Meharry Medical College, Nashville, Tenn.

But until now, scientists have not determined exactly what the particles were. “I was at a barbecue speaking to my colleagues and learned that a method to identify the material was available just down the road at Brookhaven National Laboratory,” Szema said.

He sent the biopsy slides to the laboratory, which used its National Synchrotron Light Source, a facility-sized machine that uses bright beams of x-rays, ultraviolet and infrared light for research, to analyze the material.

“The patient had hot spots all over his lungs,” Szema said.

The soldier, identified as a laundry staff supervisor in Iraq and Kuwait, had been diagnosed with nonspecific interstitial pneumonitis, a type of pneumonia that can't be categorized into existing patterns, as well as bronchiolitis.

The soldier said he had not worked around grinding apparatus or industrial paint, both common sources for occupational exposure to the metals, but admitted to breathing in airborne dust from “the laundry facility, improvised explosive device blasts, sandstorms, burn pits and the occasional cigar.”

THIS ENVIRONMENT IS HAZARDOUS TO YOUR HEALTH: ALL HOME, NOW



A U.S. soldier patrols in the eastern city of Jalalabad January 19, 2012.
REUTERS/Omar Sobhani

ANNIVERSARIES

January 26, 1784: Prophetic Anniversary: Ben Franklin Says The Imperial Eagle Is A Thieving Piece Of Shit



Carl Bunin Peace History January 21-27

Benjamin Franklin, noting the bald eagle was “a bird of bad moral character” who lived “by sharpening and robbing,” expressed regret it had been selected to be the U.S. national symbol. In fact, Franklin was critical of the bald eagle for its habit of scavenging for food and stealing from other birds.

“You may have seen him perched on some dead tree, where, too lazy to fish for himself, he watches the labor of the fishing-hawk, and when that diligent bird has at length taken a fish, and is bearing it to its nest for the support of his mate and young ones, the bald eagle pursues him and takes it from him,” Franklin said.

January 27, 1969: A Strike For Liberation

Carl Bunin Peace History January 21-27

In Detroit, African-American auto workers, known as the Eldon Avenue Axle Plant Revolutionary Union Movement, led a wildcat strike against racism and poor working conditions at Chrysler.

Since the 1967 Detroit riots, African American workers had organized groups in several Detroit auto plants criticizing both the auto companies and the UAW leadership. These groups combined Black-Power nationalism and workplace militancy, and temporarily shut down more than a dozen inner-city plants.

The most well-known of these groups was the Dodge Revolutionary Union Movement, or DRUM. They criticized both the seniority system and grievance procedures as racist. Veterans of this movement went on to lead many of the same local unions.

January 27, 1847: Citizens Defeat Slavehunters



SOJOURNER TRUTH.

Carl Bunin Peace History January 21-27

Since 1832, Michigan had had an active antislavery society.

Quakers in Cass County, Laura Haviland in Adrian and former slave Sojourner Truth in Battle Creek were only a few of the many Michiganians who worked on the Underground Railroad—an informal network that assisted escaping slaves.

Southern concern over the Underground Railroad will lead Congress to pass a more stringent Fugitive Slave Law in 1850. In 1854 opposition to the extension of slavery prompted Michiganians to meet in nearby Jackson to organize the Republican Party.

Several hundred citizens of Marshall, Michigan, helped former slaves escape to Canada rather than be returned to their “owner” by bounty hunters. Adam

Crosswhite and his family, escaped Kentucky slaves, were tracked to the abolitionist town of Marshall by Francis Troutman and others.

Both black and white residents detained the bounty hunters and threatened them with tar and feathers.

While Troutman was being charged with assault and fined \$100, the Crosswhites fled to Canada. Back in Kentucky, the slavemaster stirred up intense excitement about “abolitionist mobs” in Michigan.

**Happy Anniversary:
January 28, 1989
To The Committee Of Soldiers’
Mothers Of Russia:
“Hundreds Of Mothers Organised By
CSMR Went To Chechnya To Take
Their Sons Away From The War”**



Carl Bunin Peace History

“...for their courage in upholding the common humanity of Russians and Chechens and opposing the militarism and violence in Chechnya”

CSMR was founded in 1989 and officially registered the same year by 300 mothers of soldiers, whose initial aim was to campaign for their sons to return home early from military service in order to resume their studies.

They succeeded in bringing home nearly 180,000 young men for this purpose.

The mothers had been horrified by what they saw and learned about conditions in the armed forces: the regular beatings, abuse and humiliations, the lack of food or other necessities, the effective slavery imposed in the 'construction' battalions which comprised about 30 per cent of military manpower.

Their demands were for thorough reform of military structures, reform of the armed forces on a democratic basis, an end to forced labour in the construction battalions, demilitarisation of the justice system, the establishment of effective civil control over the military and legislation to provide for an alternative civil service.

In 1990 some of these demands, including partial demobilisation of the construction battalions, were conceded by President Gorbachev, but in general the situation did not improve.

CSMR set up a Rehabilitation Centre for soldiers who left the army for health reasons. Its activities expanded and diversified to include the organisation of human rights education for conscripts and their parents, dealing with individual complaints concerning human rights violations, regular inspections of military units, the working out of legislative proposals and the organisation of non-violent public protests.

In November 1994 the war in Chechnya broke out and, as CSMR put it, "the peaceful time for the Committee was over".

They opposed the war from the start, both in itself and for the threat it posed to the new Russian democracy.

Their new activities included dealing with individual complaints from soldiers and their mothers, running a weekly 'School for Conscripts', supervising the special military unit for the rehabilitation of so-called 'deserters', which is under the aegis of the CSMR, as well as participating in working groups of the State Duma (parliament).

In the first six months of the war, the Committee received letters from up to 200 people a day and in the same period nearly 10,000 people brought their complaints in person.

Hundreds of mothers organised by CSMR went to Chechnya to take their sons away from the war. They negotiated with the Chechen army and obtained the release of 'prisoners of war'.

CSMR organised a remarkable 'March of Mothers' Compassion', bombarded the Russian government with statements and petitions, and campaigned for the young men who refused to serve in Chechnya, declaring themselves conscientious objectors.

Most controversially, they started a campaign encouraging mothers to support the right of their sons to refuse military service - and they travelled abroad to support the idea of an International Tribunal on Chechnya.

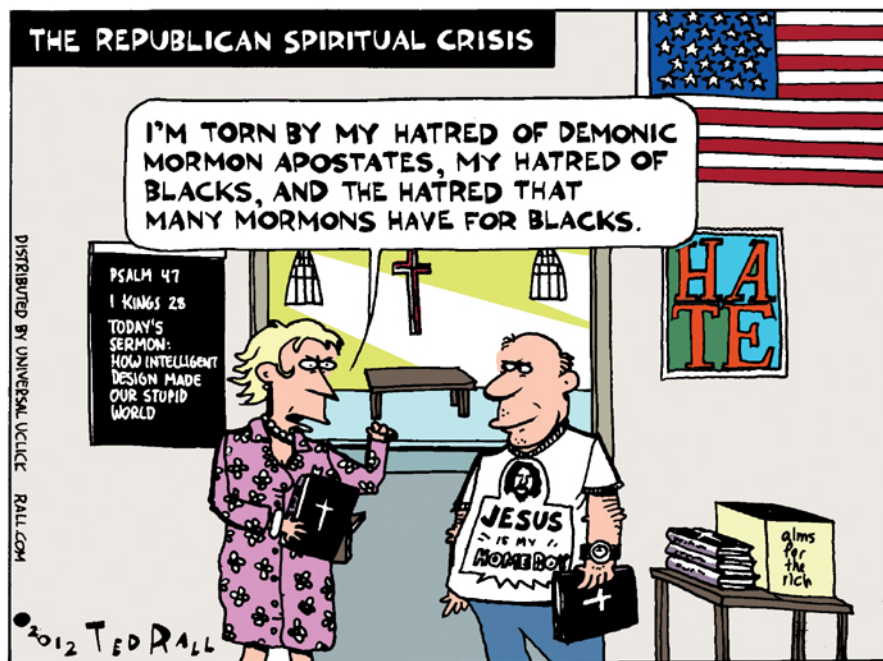
The founders of CSMR were five women - two engineers, a journalist, a teacher and an economist. An all-volunteer organisation with no regular budget, CSMR now acts as the umbrella group for 50 regional organisations of soldiers' mothers and liaises with others.

In 1995, CSMR received the Sean MacBride Award from the International Peace Bureau and an award from the Norwegian Committee on Human Rights.

“The mothers’ love, the mothers’ aspirations to defend their children, turned very soon into conscious human rights activity... The soldiers’ mothers understood that to defend their children they have to change the State and society. Their call for human rights in all the military power structures meant a call for democracy.”
- Ida Kuklina

Contact Details:
Committee of Soldiers’ Mothers of Russia
4 Luchnikov Lane, Door 3, Room 32, 103982 Moscow
Russia

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



Missing One Shoe, The Prime Minister Runs Away From The Original Australians:

“Either You Respect Us As A Sovereign People Or Piss Off Out Of Our Country”



Australian Prime Minister Julia Gillard is escorted by body guards and police through a crowd of protesters following a ceremony to mark Australia's national day in Canberra, Australia, Jan. 26, 2012. Some 200 supporters of indigenous rights surrounded a Canberra restaurant and banged its windows on Thursday while Gillard and opposition leader Tony Abbott were inside officiating at an award ceremony. (AP Photo/Lukas Coch)

January 28, 2012 By Dennis Shanahan and Matthew Franklin From: The Australian [Excerpts]

THE spark for the riot near the Aboriginal tent embassy that threatened Julia Gillard and Tony Abbott came from the Prime Minister's own office when information was passed to protesters about the Opposition Leader.

One of Ms Gillard's media advisers, Tony Hodges, resigned last night after conceding he had disclosed Mr Abbott was at The Lobby restaurant, next to the tent embassy, and information was passed to protest organisers.

Ms Gillard and Mr Abbott were surrounded by about 50 angry protesters at a medal presentation on Australia Day after a meeting outside the tent embassy was incorrectly told Mr Abbott had said that morning the 40-year-old symbolic embassy should be torn

down. The crowd was told Mr Abbott was attending a function next door, which led protesters to go to the restaurant, bang on the glass walls and threaten the Prime Minister and Opposition Leader.

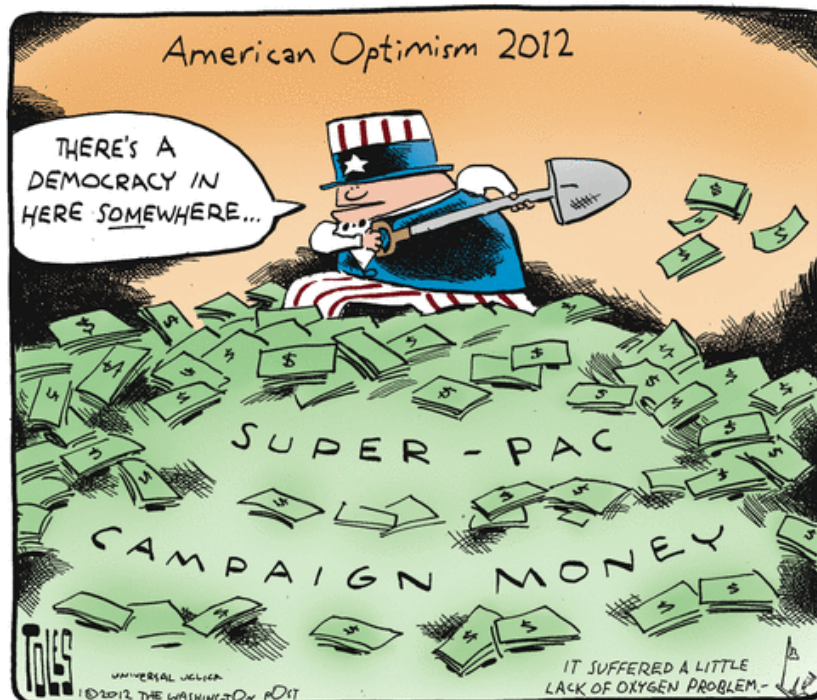
Ms Gillard fell over during the rescue as federal police and her bodyguards rushed the two leaders past protesters to a car.

The protesters were unapologetic, marching on parliament to burn an Australian flag amid a developing debate about whether the embassy, set up as a symbol of the struggle for Aboriginal land rights, should be dismantled.

As Ms Gillard sought to contain the political fallout, there was further tension at the tent embassy, where protesters asserted their sovereign rights, derided non-indigenous people as “boatpeople” and demanded a treaty.

Activist Paul Coe said: “Either you respect us as a sovereign people or piss off out of our country.”

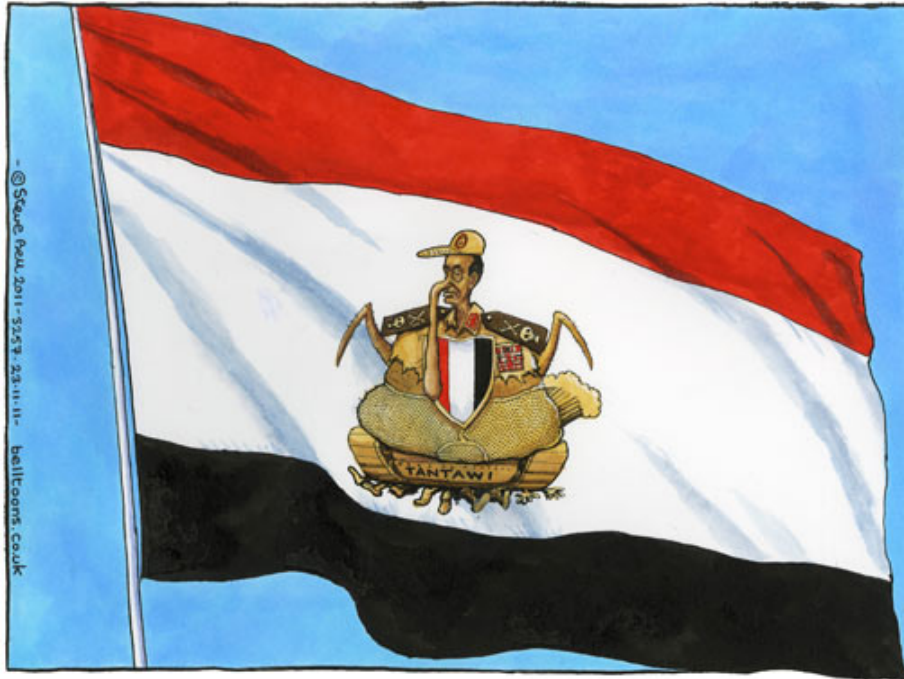
CLASS WAR REPORTS



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“300,000 People Entered Tahrir” “The Resounding Chant Was ‘Down, Down With The Military Regime’”



26 Jan 2012 Bel Trew, Ahram Online

As the first anniversary of the Egyptian revolution draws to a close, hundreds of thousands of protesters remain in Tahrir Square, which saw a bigger turnout today than on 11 February of last year – the day that longstanding president Hosni Mubarak stepped down.

Reports suggest that from the marches alone, 300,000 people entered Tahrir, coming from Mostafa Mahmoud Mosque and from Cairo's Ramses, Ghamra, Shubra and Giza districts.

The Egyptian security forces were noticeably absent.

Despite promises that they would participate in Tahrir, the ruling Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) appeared to have cancelled their proposed celebrations.

The black-clad Central Security Forces, who battled protesters in clashes in November and December, also vacated the streets, allowing people to demonstrate unhindered.

However, later in the afternoon, Prime Minister Kamal El-Ganzouri made a speech thanking and commemorating those killed and injured in the revolution. He also thanked Egypt's newly-elected parliament, the police and the SCAF.

Morale in the square was high.

"For those who think the revolution is over, have a look at the streets right now," said Ahmed, 27, a student, who took part in the Mostafa Mahmoud march.

"It's very beautiful. Today shows how many people still think there's much left to be done," asserted Nasser, 42, a driver who was one of the thousands who had to pause on Qasr Al-Nil Bridge because Tahrir was too full. While people waited on the bridge, protesters recited prayers for the revolution's fallen.

The Maspero Youth Coalition donated a large wooden obelisk inscribed with the names of slain protesters, which was carried along the march from Shubra.

A two-metre long effigy of SCAF chief Hussein Tantawi, meanwhile, was transported during the Mostafa Mahmoud protest.

Although the day remained peaceful, there were nevertheless tensions between those demanding the immediate end of military rule and those who came to the square solely for the anniversary festivities.

Friends and relatives of protesters killed during last year's January 25 Revolution were reportedly angered by the Muslim Brotherhood, which staged a marriage on its podium in front of Omar Makram Mosque, located adjacent to Tahrir Square, saying that today was not a day to celebrate.

"In the marches, we're the believers of the revolution, not the celebrators," said Karim, 32, who works in marketing and made the distinction between the marches and particular groups in the square who see the revolution as having ended. "But I'm optimistic – today has shown that, although there's still the ruling military council and the parliament, there continues to be street action and individuals protesting for our rights."

Although the resounding chant was "Down, down with the military regime," today's events were unique, with Egyptians' motivations for visiting the flashpoint square varying widely.

"We're here to celebrate the fall of the regime and the passing of the year," said Naglaa, 35, who wore the niqab, or full Islamic face veil.

"My friends and I are going to wait until June and trust the SCAF to hand over power; we have no doubts they will do this. We think the demands of the revolution are being met: for example, we just had our first free and open parliamentary elections."

The Muslim Brotherhood, which said it would vacate the square at 4pm, was still very much in evidence five hours later. The Islamist group had publically distanced itself from anti-SCAF sit-ins in November and December, but were out in full force: their podium continued to lead the festivities, playing patriotic songs.

“The Muslim Brotherhood was pressured by the authorities not to participate in November and December,” claimed Ali, 47, an Imam at a Cairo mosque and member of the Brotherhood’s Freedom and Justice Party, (FJP), which swept recent parliamentary polling.

“But now the FJP is here to put pressure on the SCAF to accelerate the transition of power and to speed up Mubarak’s trial.”

Many demonstrators wore masks bearing the likenesses of slain activists such as Khaled Said, Mina Daniel and Sheikh Emad Effat. Others wore “V for Vendetta” masks, in reference to the revolutionary graphic novel and to protest assertions by the Muslim Brotherhood that those who wore them were anarchists.

As the afternoon wore on, one group of marchers set out for Maspero, the Cairo district that is home to Egypt’s State Television building and which last October was the scene of a bloody crackdown by the military on a Coptic-led protest march.

As of 9:30pm, around 500 protesters remained at Maspero, with some calling for a sit-in on Twitter. “Maspero is important for several reasons,” said Nazly, 28, standing outside the media building. “One is that it is a propaganda machine against the revolution and against revolutionaries. It is involved in spreading state lies.”

Some protesters are expected to stay overnight.

“We need to stand by – not only tonight, but for the coming two nights, until revolutionary demands are met,” asserted Gamila Ismail, an independent parliamentary candidate who joined the Mostafa Mahmoud march, retracing the route she took one year ago.

The April 6 youth movement and the National Front for Justice and Democracy, for their part, have both announced plans to stage an open-ended sit-in in Tahrir Square.

As of press time, however, other revolutionary movements and parties that participated in Wednesday’s demonstrations had yet to declare whether or not they would participate.

“I’m not sure, as we head towards Friday, how peaceful it will remain,” Ismail said. “We took the same route today, but this year we’re different – we’re more confident and we expect more. Today was very successful.”

Troops Invited:

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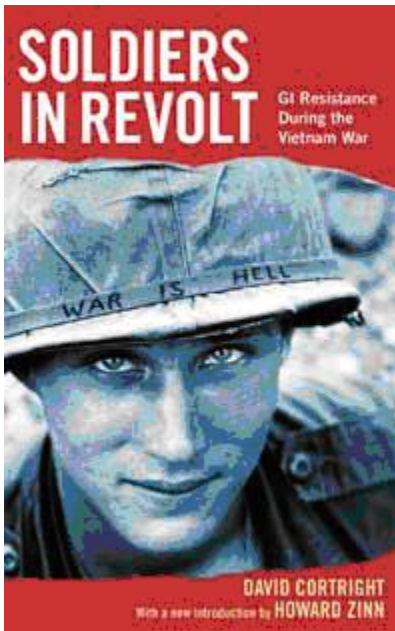
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