

Military Resistance 10B9

R.I.P.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=rFcnGLFGbL8

Athens Burning:

“‘Enough Is Enough!’ Said 89-Year-Old Manolis Glezos”

"They Have No Idea What An Uprising By The Greek People Means”

“And The Greek People, Regardless Of Ideology, Have Risen”



Anti-government protesters wave a Greek flag in front of the heavily guarded parliament in Athens' Syntagma square during a demonstration February 12, 2012.
REUTERS/Yannis Behrakis

Feb 12, 2012 Reuters [Excerpts]

Cinemas, cafes, shops and banks were set ablaze in central Athens on Sunday as protesters fought Greek police outside parliament, while inside lawmakers looked set to defy the rage by endorsing a new EU/IMF austerity deal.

State television reported violence spread to the islands of Corfu and Crete, the northern city of Thessaloniki and towns in central Greece.

A Reuters photographer saw buildings in Athens engulfed in flames and huge plumes of smoke rose in the night sky.

The air in Syntagma Square outside parliament was thick with tear gas as riot police fought running battles with youths who hurled stones and petrol bombs.

Terrified Greeks and tourists fled the rock-strewn streets and the clouds of stinging gas, cramming into hotel lobbies for shelter as lines of riot police struggled to contain the protests.

State NET television reported that trouble had also broken out in Heraklion, capital of the tourist island of Crete, as well as the towns of Volos and Agrinio in central Greece.

On the streets many businesses were ablaze, including the neo-classical home to the Attikon cinema dating from 1870 and a building housing the Asty, an underground cinema used by the Gestapo during World War Two as a torture chamber.

As fighting raged for hours, protesters threw homemade bombs made from gas canisters as riot police advanced across the square on the crowds, firing tear gas and stun grenades.

Loud booms from the protests could be heard inside parliament.

After days of dire warnings and threats of rebellion, parliament began debating a bill setting out 3.3 billion euros (\$4.4 billion) in wage, pension and job cuts this year alone, to secure funds Greece needs to avoid bankruptcy next month.

Many Greeks believe their living standards are collapsing already and the new measures, which include a 22 percent cut in the minimum wage, will only deepen their misery.

"Enough is enough!" said 89-year-old Manolis Glezos, one of Greece's most famous leftists. "They have no idea what an uprising by the Greek people means. And the Greek people, regardless of ideology, have risen."

Glezos is a national hero for sneaking up the Acropolis at night in 1941 and tearing down a Nazi flag from under the noses of the German occupiers, raising the morale of Athens residents.

"These measures of annihilation will not pass," Glezos said on Syntagma Square, visibly overcome by teargas and holding a mask over his mouth.

"Cops, pigs, murderers!" chanted the crowd.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

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

February 10, 2012 AP

A foreign servicemember died following an insurgent attack in southern Afghanistan today.

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

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

**“Even Dying Is Being Outsourced
Here”**

**Mercenaries Outnumber U.S. Troops:
“Many American Generals And
Diplomats Have Private Contractors For
Their Personal Bodyguards”**

February 11, 2012 By ROD NORDLAND, New York Times [Excerpts] Taimoor Shah contributed reporting from Kandahar, Afghanistan.

KABUL, Afghanistan — Even dying is being outsourced here.

This is a war where traditional military jobs, from mess hall cooks to base guards and convoy drivers, have increasingly been shifted to the private sector.

Many American generals and diplomats have private contractors for their personal bodyguards.

American employers here are under no obligation to publicly report the deaths of their employees and frequently do not.

While the military announces the names of all its war dead, private companies routinely notify only family members.

Most of the contractors die unheralded and uncounted — and in some cases, leave their survivors uncompensated.

Last year, at least 430 employees of American contractors were reported killed in Afghanistan: 386 working for the Defense Department, 43 for the United States Agency for International Development and one for the State Department, according to data provided by the American Embassy in Kabul and publicly available in part from the United States Department of Labor.

By comparison, 418 American soldiers died in Afghanistan last year, according to Defense Department statistics compiled by icasualties.org, an independent organization that monitors war deaths.

That trend has been growing for the past several years in Afghanistan, and it parallels a similar trend in Iraq, where contractor deaths exceeded military deaths as long ago as 2009. In Iraq, however, that took place as the number of American troops was being drastically reduced until their complete withdrawal at the end of last year.

And last year, more soldiers than private contractors died in Iraq (54 compared with 41, according to Labor Department figures).

Experts who have studied the phenomenon say that because many contractors do not comply with even the current, scanty reporting requirements, the true number of private contractor deaths may be far higher.

Qais Mansoori, 20, may have been among the uncounted.

An Afghan interpreter employed by Mission Essential Personnel, a leading provider of interpreters in Afghanistan, Mr. Mansoori was killed along with five other interpreters when Taliban insurgents overran the military base where the interpreters were staying in the Mirwais district of Kandahar Province in July 2010.

That attack, typically, was scantily reported, since no soldiers died — although the death toll was 17, including an unidentified American civilian, according to Afghan officials and Mr. Mansoori's friends and family.

Under the federal Defense Base Act, American defense contractors are obliged to report the war zone deaths and injuries of their employees — including subcontractors and foreign workers — to the Department of Labor, and to carry insurance that will provide the employees with medical care and compensation. In the case of foreign employees, which many of the dead were, survivors generally receive a death benefit equal to half of the employee's salary for life; American employees get even more.

There were 113,491 employees of defense contractors in Afghanistan as of January 2012, compared with about 90,000 American soldiers, according to Defense Department statistics.

Of those, 25,287, or about 22 percent of the employees, were American citizens, with 47 percent Afghans and 31 percent from other countries.

The bulk of the known contractor deaths are concentrated among a handful of major companies, particularly those providing interpreters, drivers, security guards and other support personnel who are particularly vulnerable to attacks.

The biggest contractor in terms of war zone deaths is apparently the defense giant L-3 Communications. If L-3 were a country, it would have the third highest loss of life in Afghanistan as well as in Iraq; only the United States and Britain would exceed it in fatalities.

Over the past 10 years, L-3 and its subsidiaries, including Titan Corporation and MPRI Inc., had at least 370 workers killed and 1,789 seriously wounded or injured through the end of 2011 in Iraq and Afghanistan, records show.

Other American companies with a high number of fatalities are Supreme Group, a catering company, with 241 dead through the end of 2011; Service Employees International, another catering company, with 125 dead; and security companies like DynCorps (101 dead), Aegis (86 dead) and Hart Group (63 dead). In all, according to Labor Department data, 64 American companies have lost more than seven employees each in the past 10 years.

For every contractor who is killed, many more are seriously wounded.

According to the Labor Department's statistics, 1,777 American contractors in Afghanistan were injured or wounded seriously enough to miss more than four days of work last year.

Marcie Hascall Clark began the Defense Base Act Compensation Blog after her husband, Merlin, a former Navy explosives ordnance disposal expert, was injured in 2003 while working for an American contractor.

She and her husband have spent the past seven years fighting for hundreds of thousands of dollars in disability payments and medical compensation.

"It was quite a shock to learn how little my husband's body, mind and future were worth," she said.

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

SOMALIA WAR REPORTS

“Al Shabaab Insurgents Attacked Somali And Kenyan Troops Stationed In The Southern Town Of Busaar”

Feb 12 2012 Garowe Online

Al Shabaab insurgents attacked Somali and Kenyan troops stationed in the southern town of Busaar, Radio Garowe reports.

The insurgents ambushed Transitional Federal Government (TFG) and Kenyan troops the fighting lasted for more than an hour with both sides using heavy artillery.

There have been no confirmations as of yet on the casualties the amounted from this battle in Gedo region, but local sources say that 10 people were killed altogether.

The town of Busaar is located in the region of Gedo which has become a new front in the battle against Al Shabaab. The Al Shabaab insurgents use guerrilla tactics against Kenyan, Ethiopian and Somali forces.

MILITARY NEWS

“Dereliction of Duty II:” “Senior Military Leaders’ Loss of Integrity Wounds Afghan War Effort” [The Full 84 Page Report By Lt. Col. Daniel I. Davis Now Posted]

[Thanks to Don Bacon, LTC, US Army (Ret), Vietnam & Smedley Butler Society:
<http://www.warisaracket.org/>, who sent this in.]

The report is now posted at: http://www1.rollingstone.com/extras/RS_REPORT.pdf

Excerpts:

“Senior ranking US military leaders have so distorted the truth when communicating with the US Congress and American people in regards to conditions on the ground in Afghanistan that the truth has become unrecognizable.”

“This deception has damaged America’s credibility among both our allies and enemies, severely limiting our ability to reach a political solution to the war in Afghanistan. It has likely cost American taxpayers hundreds of billions of dollars Congress might not otherwise have appropriated had it known the truth, and our senior leaders’ behavior has almost certainly extended the duration of this war.”

“The single greatest penalty our Nation has suffered, however, has been that we have lost the blood, limbs and lives of tens of thousands of American Service Members with little to no gain to our country as a consequence of this deception.”

DO YOU HAVE A FRIEND OR RELATIVE IN MILITARY SERVICE?

Forward Military Resistance along, or send us the address if you wish and we’ll send it regularly.

Whether in Afghanistan or at a base in the USA, this is extra important for your service friend, too often cut off from access to encouraging news of growing resistance to the wars and economic injustice, inside the armed services and at home.

Send email requests to address up top or write to: The Military Resistance, Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657. Phone: 888.711.2550

Troops Invited:

Comments, arguments, articles, and letters from service men and women, and veterans, are especially welcome. Write to Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657 or email contact@militaryproject.org: Name, I.D., withheld unless you request publication. Same address to unsubscribe.

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS



“At a time like this, scorching irony, not convincing argument, is needed.

“Oh had I the ability, and could reach the nation’s ear, I would, pour out a fiery stream of biting ridicule, blasting reproach, withering sarcasm, and stern rebuke.

“For it is not light that is needed, but fire; it is not the gentle shower, but thunder.

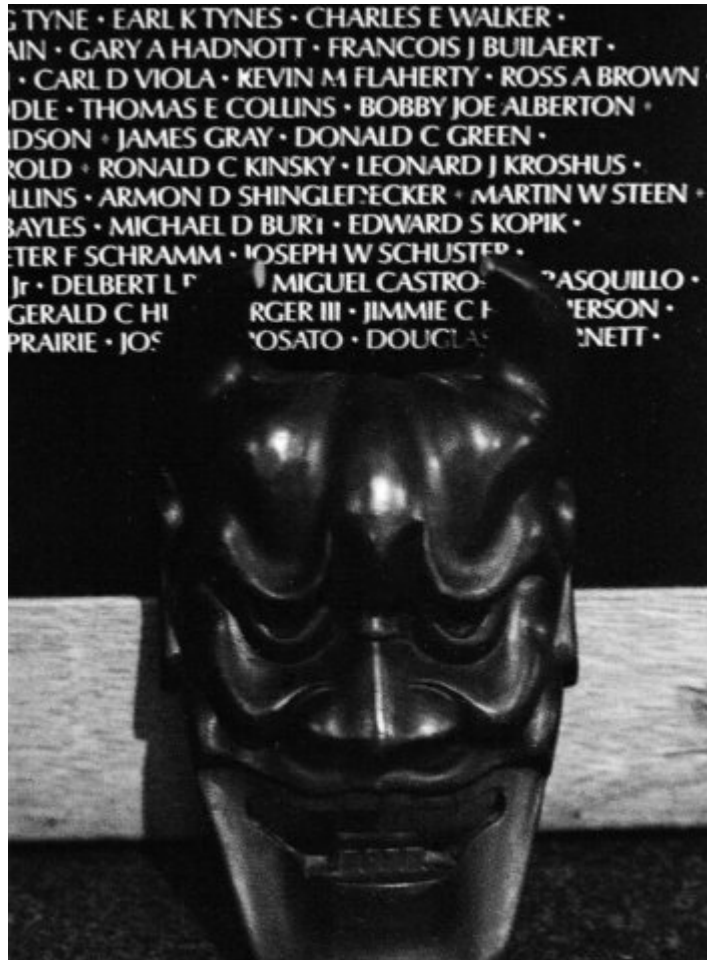
“We need the storm, the whirlwind, and the earthquake.”

“The limits of tyrants are prescribed by the endurance of those whom they oppose.”

Frederick Douglass, 1852

**Nothing has more revolutionary effect, and nothing undermines more the foundations of all state power, than the continuation of that wretched and brainless régime, which has the strength merely to cling to its positions but no longer the slightest power to rule or to steer the state ship on a definite course.
-- Karl Kautsky; ‘The Consequences of the Japanese Victory and Social Democracy’**

Nearer Than Breathing -- Closer Than Hands And Feet



An angry Vietnam vet leaves a devil's mask at the " Moving Wall," in Salem, Oregon
1989. Photograph by Mike Hastie

From: Mike Hastie
To: Military Resistance Newsletter
Sent: February 11, 2012
Subject: Nearer Than Breathing--closer than hands and feet

Nearer Than Breathing--closer than hands and feet

**When you shake hands with the devil,
the introduction is always cordial and polite.
That's because you speak the same language.
The truth is so well hidden.
It's like not seeing the word evil in the word
devil.**

Mike Hastie

Army Medic Vietnam
Participant

The most revolutionary
act is to name reality.
Paulo Freire

Photo and caption from the portfolio of Mike Hastie, US Army Medic, Vietnam 1970-71. (For more of his outstanding work, contact at: hastiemike@earthlink.net) T)

One day while I was in a bunker in Vietnam, a sniper round went over my head. The person who fired that weapon was not a terrorist, a rebel, an extremist, or a so-called insurgent. The Vietnamese individual who tried to kill me was a citizen of Vietnam, who did not want me in his country. This truth escapes millions.

Mike Hastie
U.S. Army Medic
Vietnam 1970-71
December 13, 2004

GET MILITARY RESISTANCE NEWSLETTER BY EMAIL

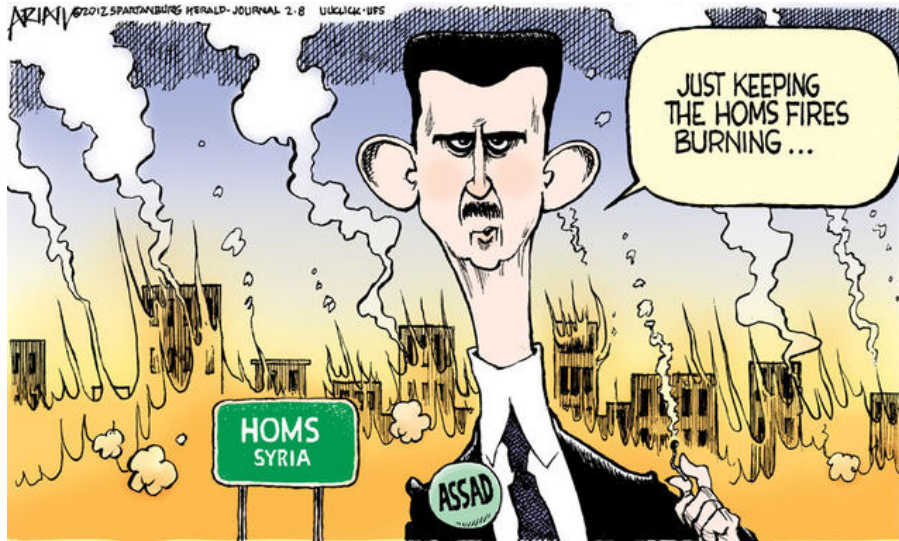
If you wish to receive Military Resistance immediately and directly, send request to contact@militaryproject.org. There is no subscription charge.

**“Bashar Al-Assad’s Regime Has
Operated As Israel’s Loyal
Border Guard”**

**‘Israel Is Not Willing To See A
Violent Regime Change In Syria’**

**“Neither Israel Nor The US,
Therefore, Has Aggressively Sought
To Remove Al-Assad From Power”**

“That Energy Is Reserved For The Drumbeats Against Iran”



The US and Israel are currently hiding behind the Russians (and to some extent the Chinese) in the UN Security Council. None of them have any interest in the removal of al-Assad from power.

Just as the “new” Yemen cannot be allowed to be a threat to Saudi Arabia, the “new” Syria cannot be allowed to upset the Israeli applecart.

February 3-5, 2012 by VIJAY PRASHAD, CounterPunch [Excerpts]

VIJAY PRASHAD is Professor and Director of International Studies at Trinity College, Hartford, CT. This Spring he will publish two books, Arab Spring, Libyan Winter (AK Press) and Uncle Swami: Being South Asian in America (New Press). He is the author of Darker Nations: A People’s History of the Third World (New Press), which won the 2009 Muzaffar Ahmed Book Prize.

Rehearsed statements filled the stale air of the UN Security Council on the last day of January.

The Arab League’s Nabil el-Araby pleaded with the Council to adopt a draft resolution on Syria furnished by the Moroccan delegation to the UN. The Moroccan resolution is based on a report by the Arab League’s human rights mission to Syria.

This draft called for an immediate cessation of violence in Syria and a national dialogue. “We are attempting to avoid any foreign intervention,” el-Araby told the Council, “especially military intervention.”

The Qataris are eager to install their allies in the Muslim Brotherhood to authority in the region.

They have funded the Brotherhood lavishly from Tunisia to Egypt. They would like to move their influence into the Mashriq, bringing their influence to bear against their principle enemy: Iran.

Here events are more complex than they will admit. It was all very well to toss out Qaddafi, whom the G7, NATO and the Gulf Arabs hated equally.

It is far harder to tackle a country that borders Israel.

The Arab League's el-Araby need not have been worried about the Security Council sanctioning intervention. This is not on the cards.

The Russians, burned by the example of UNSC resolution 1973 for Libya, are unwilling to allow any open-ended statement from the Council.

They seem to have come to terms with the reality that any Council authorization for intervention by anyone means military action by NATO. No other power has the military capability to act with the kind of force demonstrated by NATO.

Russia's UN Ambassador Vitaly Churkin approved the Arab League's mission as a mechanism to pressure the regime into a political dialogue with the opposition. In the midst of this violence, Churkin noted, talk of reform of Syrian institutions is a "theoretical conversation."

Churkin told the Moscow media that the Moroccan resolution was "missing the most important thing: a clear clause ruling out the possibility that the resolution could be used to justify military intervention in Syrian affairs from outside." Absent such a clause "we will not allow it to be passed." This is how we get to the idea of the Russian veto over international (namely, NATO) action in Syria.

But if the Russians are standing on principle, why is the United States not more aggressive on Syria?

Secretary of State Hillary Clinton noted, "Syria is a unique situation that requires its own approach, tailored to the specific circumstances occurring there. And that is exactly what the Arab League has proposed – a path for a political transition that would preserve Syria's unity and institutions."

On February 28, 2011, Clinton went before the UN Human Rights Council to offer the US position on Libya: "We have seen Colonel Gaddafi's security forces open fire on peaceful protestors. They have used heavy weapons on unarmed civilians. Mercenaries and thugs have been turned loose to attack demonstrators. Through their actions, they have lost the legitimacy to govern. And the people of Libya have made themselves clear: It is time for Gaddafi to go – now, without further violence or delay."

Why doesn't Clinton simply substitute al-Assad for Colonel Gaddafi and Syria for Libya?

Clinton sees the Syrian case as much more complex.

Why is Syria more “unique” than Libya?

In Beirut last month I asked Fawwaz Trabulsi (author of the 2007 A History of Modern Lebanon) just this question.

Trabulsi, who is starting a new journal called Bidayat, has been in touch with various currents inside and around Syria. He tells me that the problem for Syria is its location.

The Arab Spring has transformed the security arrangements carefully constructed by Israel (with US oversight).

The fall of Mubarak in Egypt leaves in doubt the 1979 peace treaty, and so raises questions about Israel's Southwestern border.

New energy in the Palestinian movement threatens the stability of the West Bank, and despite the pacification policy through settlements and walls, there is a sense that political fissures might open up at any point.

Lebanon and Israel remain in an uneasy state, with the border patrolled by a weak-kneed UN force (the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, deployed in 1978 should no longer have interim status).

This leaves Syria, where Bashar al-Assad's regime has operated as Israel's loyal border guard.

Israel is not willing to see a violent regime change in Syria.

There is simply no credible or reliable alternative to al-Assad.

Neither Israel nor the US, therefore, has aggressively sought to remove al-Assad from power.

That energy is reserved for the drumbeats against Iran.

Writing in the Israeli paper Haaretz, Zvi Bar'el writes that Washington and Tel Aviv do not wish the precipitous departure of al-Assad. “He is seen as a safety valve against a violent attack by Hezbollah on Israel or against its physical takeover of Lebanon. He has also made known his disagreements with Iran following the controversial visit of Ahmadinejad to Lebanon (in 2010).”

One member of the Israeli cabinet told the Washington Post, “We know Assad. We knew his father. Of course, we'd love to have a democratic Syria as our neighbor. But do I think that's going to happen? No.”

The US and Israel are currently hiding behind the Russians (and to some extent the Chinese) in the UN Security Council.

None of them have any interest in the removal of al-Assad from power.

To their minds, Syria should not have a Libyan solution but a Yemeni one: the violence will simmer, the opposition will tire, then al-Assad will be allowed to create a successor in name only who will retain the lineaments of the regime intact but will provide a new face for Syria.

Just as the “new” Yemen cannot be allowed to be a threat to Saudi Arabia, the “new” Syria cannot be allowed to upset the Israeli applecart.

MORE:

“The Claim That What Is Taking Place Is Simply A Western-Hatched Conspiracy Against Syria Misses The Mark”

“This Argument Reflects A Condescending View Of The Syrian People As Incapable Of Self-Mobilization And Completely Ignores The Social Crisis Faced By Syrians Under An Illegitimate Dictatorship”

“The Success Of The Syrian Revolution Will Depend On The Continued Self-Activity Of The Syrian Masses To Encourage Mass Defections From The Regular Army”

February 7, 2012 By Yusef Khalil, Socialist Worker [Excerpts]

Looking at the interests of the various players--the U.S./Israel, Russia/China, Iran, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, the Muslim Brotherhood--it is clear that Syria is at the nexus of an international power struggle, the outcome of which can affect the entire region.

Hafez al-Assad, the father of the current ruler, was adept at maneuvering Syria into precisely that position in order to get international consent as a state of regional significance.

Thus, the claim that what is taking place is simply a Western-hatched conspiracy against Syria misses the mark by a wide margin.

At best, this argument reflects a condescending view of the Syrian people as incapable of self-mobilization and completely ignores the social crisis faced by Syrians under an illegitimate dictatorship.

At worst, it shows a hollow understanding of anti-imperialism--one that opposes any struggle for self-emancipation against an absolute ruler who says something half-critical of the U.S., even while the regime carves out a mutually beneficial relationship with imperialism.

The real conspiracy at work isn't aimed at the Assad regime, but is directed against the Syrian people and their aspirations for self-determination.

Every power is hell-bent to deny them this and believes there is too much at stake in the outcome of the revolution to leave it up to the Syrian people.

The lesson here--as the Syrians already knew when they began their struggle 11 months ago--is that there is no external savior.

The success of the Syrian revolution will depend on the continued self-activity of the Syrian masses to encourage mass defections from the regular army--and to deal a blow against the regime by organizing working-class action in the factories and state institutions.

ANNIVERSARIES

February 13, 1968: The Anniversary Of Five Honorable Soldiers Who Stood Up

Carl Bunin Peace History February 11-17

Five soldiers were arrested at a pray-in for peace in Vietnam at Fort Jackson, South Carolina. Two were court-martialed for refusing to stop praying. The pray-in was repeated a year later.

February 13, 2011: Egypt: The Clock Is Running

[Comment: T]

[From Military Resistance: 2.13.11; 9B11]

The Egyptian February revolution has brought down the dictator.

The Egyptian people, long oppressed, have won a world-amazing political victory, and opened the way to wonderful possibilities.

But as yet there are only possibilities.

The material reality of the lives of the overwhelming majority of Egyptians who daily struggle to get enough to eat has not changed with the going of Mubarak.

One particularly murderous exploiter and a handful of his class allies have given up power, but the rest remain in their previous places, taking for themselves the wealth of Egyptian society.

They sacrifice a few of their associates to the revolution in a play for time to regroup and reorganize their forces.

The question opened now is which class will rule in Egypt, and that question will be decided in class warfare.

Preparation for a showdown in that war is beginning, hopefully on both sides.

Certainly those who consider the wealth of the society their private property are already preparing to insure their continued domination by armed force. This includes the members of the military general staff.

They are not all stupid, and some understand that if this revolution isn't put down, as soon as practicable, they risk losing everything.

The soldiers will decide the outcome.

The soldiers' choice will be whether to follow the orders of the generals, who will be defending their own personal wealth and privilege as well as that of their class allies, or to choose to defy their generals and go over to the Egyptian working class, and their allies.

Winning the soldiers from below requires careful organization within their ranks.

This is not work that can be postponed.

This work is best organized now, before an offensive against the Egyptian revolution is set in motion by its enemies.

MORE:

**Portugal 1975 -- A Revolution
Destroyed:
“The Far Left Had A Major Fault”
“The Revolutionary Left Had Neither
The Will Nor The Influence To Move
Rank-And-File Soldiers”
“This Is A Tragedy From Which We Must
All Learn”**

December 1985 By Chris Harman, Socialist Worker [UK] reprinted in February 11, 2011
Socialist Worker

Portugal was ruled by a full-fledged fascist regime for half a century, longer than anywhere else in Europe.

Opposition parties were banned. The only unions permitted were small, state-run craft associations. Armed police were used to break any strike. Working-class leaders were consigned to the jails of the PIDE secret police for 10 or 20 years.

The fascist state ruled not only over Portugal, but also over an immense empire in Africa. The colonies of Angola, Guinea Bissau and Mozambique provided abundant profits for Portugal's giant monopolies and jobs for its middle class.

On the morning of April 25, 1974, the citizens of Lisbon arose from their beds to find tanks patrolling the streets and normal radio broadcasts replaced by military music. Was the coup from the left or the right? The answer came when the radio broadcast a popular anti-fascist song.

People rushed out into the streets to fraternize with the soldiers, handing them red carnations.

Together, they tore down the emblems of the fascist regime, opened the prisons to free political prisoners and arrested known police informers.

The new government was headed by Gen. António de Spínola, an old reactionary who had fought as a volunteer in Hitler's armies during the Second World War. But his

government members were made up from all the underground anti-fascist parties, including the Communists.

And it soon became clear that power in the armed forces lay not with him, but with 400 junior officers who had actually organized the coup--known as the Armed Forces Movement, or MFA.

The army had turned against fascism for one simple reason--it was losing the colonial war in Africa. But there were big differences on how to react to this.

Spinola put forward the line of the big Portuguese monopolies. Their aim was to replace direct Portuguese rule by indirect rule based upon "moderate," CIA-financed movements in the colonies, even if this meant continuing the war for the time being.

The junior officers wanted to end the war at all costs, and knew only one way to do so--to hand over power to the real liberation movements, like the MPLA (People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola) in Angola and Frelimo in Mozambique.

The divisions were soon increased by something else. Portugal had undergone considerable industrialization in the last decade of fascism. It was because big business wanted to prevent action by workers that Spinola took the Communists, by far the largest underground party, into his government.

They told workers to trust Spinola, and the Communist minister of labor framed a new anti-strike law.

But the workers were not to be held back in this way.

“There Was A Growing Tendency For Rank-And-File Soldiers To Organize Politically For Themselves, Joining Left-Wing Demonstrations And Siding With Workers To Industrial Disputes”

THE GIANT Lisnave shipyard began a wage of strikes that swept the country in the early summer of 1974. These workers faced opposition from all the government parties. Yet the workers succeeded in forcing massive improvements in pay and conditions and a general "cleaning out" of reactionary managers in industry and the media.

All this was too much for Spinola, big business and the Portuguese right. He tried to stop the revolution in its tracks in September with a fascist-style rally. But a mass mobilization of workers stopped it from taking place, and he was forced to resign.

In March 1975, he tried again, this time with a military coup.

But workers argued with soldiers who had been sent to seize the approaches to Lisbon and persuaded them to turn against their reactionary officers.

Instead of stopping the revolution, the actions of the right spurred it forward.

The banking unions closed down the banks until the government agreed to nationalize them--and with them some 60 percent of Portuguese industry. Workers occupied more than 300 factories.

The old generals lost their control over the armed forces to the junior officers of the MFA.

And there was a growing tendency for rank-and-file soldiers to organize politically for themselves, joining left-wing demonstrations and siding with workers to industrial disputes.

Foreign socialists who visited Lisbon in the summer of 1975 underwent an experience that they would not forget. Here was a city where the majority of the working class wanted socialism and where the old obstacles, in terms of the police, the army and even a well-organized capitalist class, seemed in complete disarray.

Yet other obstacles, just as dangerous, continued to exist.

Within the working-class movement, the two main parties were the recently reformed Socialist Party of Mário Soares and the Communist Party.

“Within The Armed Forces, They Began To Plot With The Old Right-Wing General To Oust The Junior Officers Who Had Overthrown Fascism”

The Socialist Party had gone along with the first popular mobilizations against the right. But its leaders took fright at the further development of the revolution. They were soon trying to whip up a lynch-mob atmosphere against the left.

In northern Portugal, they encouraged right-wing rioters who burned down the offices of unions and left-wing parties.

Within the armed forces, they began to plot with the old right-wing general to oust the junior officers who had overthrown fascism.

But the Socialist Party alone could not have saved Portuguese capitalism. It only had support from a minority of workers in the key Lisbon industrial belt, and in the unions.

The majority party of the workers at the time of the overthrow of fascism was the Communist Party.

If it had fought for socialist revolution by leading the wave of strikes and occupations that began in the early summer of 1974, it would have been unstoppable.

But it followed a different tack.

It denounced the strike wave, while attempting to get control of the existing state by secret plots with opportunist politicians and army officers. Its leaders believed this would enable them to establish an Eastern European-type society.

The high point of their success was the summer of 1975, when an officer thought too sympathetic to the party, Vasco Goncalves, formed a government. But this soon proved

incapable of effectively ruling the country. It refused to unleash the revolutionary energy of the workers and it could not deal with a wave of sabotage and unrest in the rural areas of the north. Goncalves soon quietly abandoned power to those to the right of him.

A quite considerable minority of workers turned to genuinely revolutionary ideas. The small revolutionary parties mushroomed in size until they exercised considerable influence.

“The Army Officers Became More And More Impotent”

Yet the far left had a major fault.

Although they talked about the working class, they all acted as if some other social force could substitute itself for the class.

They devoted as much attention to courting left-wing army officers as to trying to win factory workers away from the Communist Party.

Time was running out for the left-wing officers.

They could dominate Portuguese politics while the old ruling class was demoralized and divided.

But once it began to get its act together--with a lot of help from Western governments and from the Socialist Party--the army officers became more and more impotent.

By November 1975, there were only two choices: either the working class took things into its own hands, or the old ruling class would stage a comeback.

The right struck on November 25.

The pretext was the occupation of TV stations by a group of left-wing soldiers.

Right-wing officers moved their troops quickly to disarm all the left-wing soldiers in the Lisbon area and to restore the power of the old generals.

They met very little resistance. It required only a couple thousand troops to disarm the much larger left-influenced forces in Lisbon.

The reason lay in the way the left had put its faith in maneuvering by army officers, rather than in mass workers' action.

The Communist Party, which only the day before had organized a successful two-hour general strike, refused to take action against the advance of the right. It seemed to think it would be able to plot its way to power regardless.

The left-wing officers were not ready to wage what might well be an armed confrontation against their fellow officers, and made no move.

The revolutionary left had neither the will nor the influence to move rank-and-file workers in the face of the Communist Party's opposition, or rank-and-file soldiers in the face of opposition from the left-wing officers.

The right wing was careful not to use its newfound control of the army and police to attack workers' conditions immediately. It knew that to do so might rekindle the fire of the revolution.

But the more the revolutionary years of 1974 and 1975 receded into the past, the more such gains were taken back by the employing classes. The fact that most of the time the Socialist Party was in the government did not make any difference,

A decade later, average wages were 10 percent lower than they were in 1973, the last year of fascism. Hundreds of thousands of workers have to wait six months or more for wages owing to them. Lisbon is once again a city noted for the large number of people begging in the streets.

Portugal showed the promise of a very different sort of future in 1974 and 1975. That did not materialize because there was not a powerful revolutionary socialist party to challenge the hold of the Communist and Socialist Parties.

This is a tragedy from which we must all learn.

MORE:

**Hidden History -- The Egyptian Revolution:
The First March On The First Day Began When A Working Class Neighborhood Decided To Begin The Fight For Liberation:
“These Demonstrators Weren't, As The Popular Narrative Has Held, Educated Youth Who Learned About Protests On The Internet”**

“They Were Instead Poor Residents Who Filled A Maze Of Muddy, Narrow Alleyways, Massed In Front Of A Neighborhood Candy Store”



2-1-11 THE PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER. UNIVERSAL UCLICE.

The plotters say they knew that the demonstrations’ success would depend on the participation of ordinary Egyptians in working-class districts like this one, where the Internet and Facebook aren’t as widely used.

They distributed fliers around the city in the days leading up to the demonstration, concentrating efforts on Bulaq al-Dakrouf.

FEBRUARY 11, 2011 By CHARLES LEVINSON And MARGARET COKER, Wall St. Journal [Excerpts]

CAIRO—The Egyptian opposition’s takeover of the area around the parliament this week began with a trick—the latest example of how, for more than two weeks, young activists have outwitted Egypt’s feared security forces to spur an uprising many here had long thought impossible.

On Tuesday, young opposition organizers called for a march on the state television building a few blocks north of their encampment in central Tahrir Square.

Then, while the army deployed to that sensitive communications hub, protesters expanded southward into the lightly defended area around Egypt’s parliament building.

The demonstrations that now bedevil Mr. Mubarak across Cairo and Egypt took seed in part thanks to one trick play, interviews with several protest planners show.

On Jan. 25, the first day of protests, the organizers from the youth wings of Egypt's opposition movements created what appeared to be a spontaneous massing of residents of the slum of Bulaq al-Dakrou, on Cairo's western edge.

These demonstrators weren't, as the popular narrative has held, educated youth who learned about protests on the Internet. They were instead poor residents who filled a maze of muddy, narrow alleyways, massed in front of a neighborhood candy store and caught security forces flatfooted.

That protest was anything but spontaneous. How the organizers pulled it off, when so many past efforts had failed, has had people scratching their heads since.

The plotters, who now form the leadership core of the Revolutionary Youth Movement, which has stepped to the fore as representatives of protesters in Tahrir Square, in interviews over recent days revealed how they did it.

"We had to find a way to prevent security from making their cordon and stopping us," said 41-year-old architect Basem Kamel, a member of Mohamed ElBaradei's youth wing and one of the dozen or so plotters.

They chose 20 protest sites, usually connected to mosques, in densely populated working-class neighborhoods around Cairo.

They hoped that such a large number of scattered rallies would strain security forces, draw larger numbers and increase the likelihood that some protesters would be able to break out and link up in Tahrir Square.

The group publicly called for protests at those sites for Jan. 25, a national holiday celebrating the country's widely reviled police force.

They announced the sites of the demonstrations on the Internet and called for protests to begin at each one after prayers at about 2 p.m.

But that wasn't all.

They sent small teams to do reconnaissance on the secret 21st site.

It was the Bulaq al-Dakrou neighborhood's Hayiss Sweet Shop, whose storefront and tiled sidewalk plaza—meant to accommodate outdoor tables in warmer months—would make an easy-to-find rallying point in an otherwise tangled neighborhood no different from countless others around the city.

The plotters say they knew that the demonstrations' success would depend on the participation of ordinary Egyptians in working-class districts like this one, where the Internet and Facebook aren't as widely used.

They distributed fliers around the city in the days leading up to the demonstration, concentrating efforts on Bulaq al-Dakrour.

“It gave people the idea that a revolution would start on Jan. 25,” Mr. Kamel said.

In the days leading up to the demonstration, organizers sent small teams of plotters to walk the protest routes at various speeds, to synchronize how separate protests would link up.

On Jan. 25, security forces predictably deployed by the thousands at each of the announced demonstration sites.

Meanwhile, four field commanders chosen from the organizers’ committee began dispatching activists in cells of 10.

To boost secrecy, only one person per cell knew their destination.

In these small groups, the protesters advanced toward the Hayiss Sweet Shop, massing into a crowd of 300 demonstrators free from police control.

The lack of security prompted neighborhood residents to stream by the hundreds out of the neighborhood’s cramped alleyways, swelling the crowd into the thousands, say sweet-shop employees who watched the scene unfold.

At 1:15 p.m., they began marching toward downtown Cairo. By the time police redeployed a small contingent to block their path, the protesters’ ranks had grown enough to easily overpower them.

The other marches organized at mosques around the city failed to reach Tahrir Square, their efforts foiled by riot-police cordons.

The Bulaq al-Dakrour marchers, the only group to reach their objective, occupied Tahrir Square for several hours until after midnight, when police attacked demonstrators with tear gas and rubber bullets.

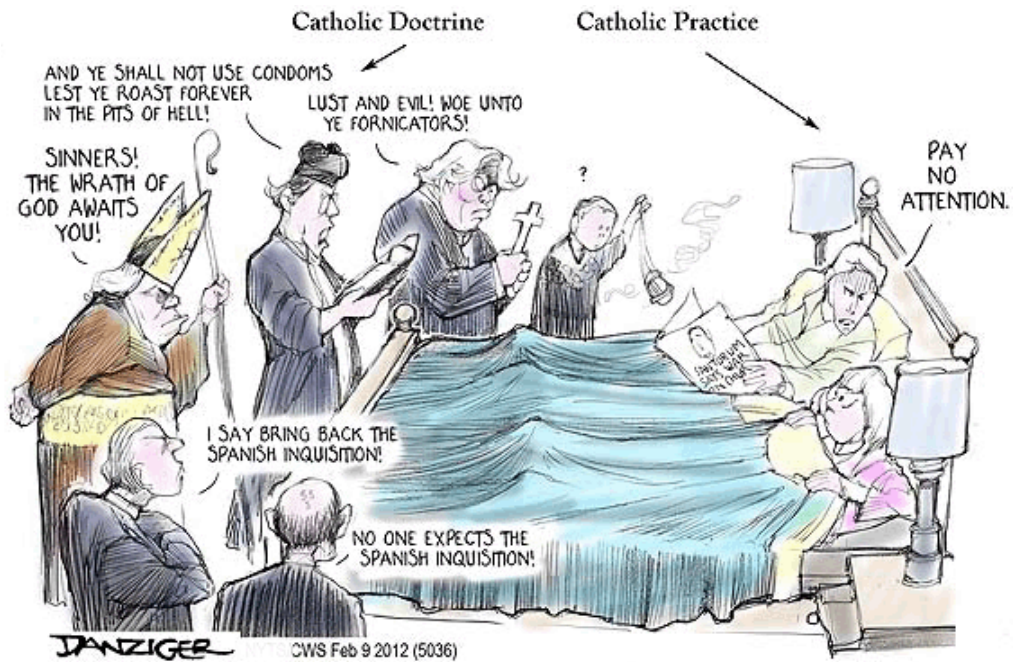
It was the first time Egyptians had seen such a demonstration in their streets, and it provided a spark credited with emboldening tens of thousands of people to come out to protest the following Friday.

On Jan. 28, they seized Tahrir Square again.

Copies Of Military Resistance Newsletter Free On Request

If you have some good use in mind for a package of Military Resistance & Traveling Soldier newsletters, email CONTACT@MILITARYPROJECT.ORG with a mailing address, an indication of how many you need, and how they will be used.

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



Vietnam GI: Reprints Available



Vietnam: They Stopped An Imperial War

Edited by Vietnam Veteran Jeff Sharlet from 1968 until his death, this newspaper rocked the world, attracting attention even from Time Magazine, and extremely hostile attention from the chain of command.

The pages and pages of letters in the paper from troops in Vietnam condemning the war are lost to history, but you can find them here.

Military Resistance has copied complete sets of Vietnam GI. The originals were a bit rough, but every page is there. Over 100 pages, full 11x17 size.

Free on request to active duty members of the armed forces.

Cost for others: \$15 if picked up in New York City. For mailing inside USA add \$5 for bubble bag and postage. For outside USA, include extra for mailing 2.5 pounds to wherever you are.

Checks, money orders payable to: The Military Project

Orders to:
Military Resistance
Box 126
2576 Broadway
New York, N.Y.
10025-5657

All proceeds are used for projects giving aid and comfort to members of the armed forces organizing to resist today's Imperial wars.



Military Resistance Available In PDF Format

If you prefer PDF to Word format, email: contact@militaryproject.org

Military Resistance Looks Even Better Printed Out

Military Resistance/GI Special are archived at website

<http://www.militaryproject.org> .

The following have chosen to post issues; there may be others:

<http://williambowles.info/military-resistance-archives/>; news@uruknet.info;

http://www.traprockpeace.org/gi_special/;

<http://www.albasrah.net/pages/mod.php?header=res1&mod=gis&rep=gis>

Military Resistance distributes and posts to our website copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available in an effort to advance understanding of the invasion and occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan. We believe this constitutes a "fair use" of any such copyrighted material as provided for in section 107 of the US Copyright Law since it is being distributed **without charge or profit** for educational purposes to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving the included information for educational purposes, in accordance with Title 17 U.S.C. Section 107. **Military Resistance has no affiliation whatsoever with the originator of these articles nor is Military Resistance endorsed or sponsored by the originators. This attributed work is provided a non-profit basis to facilitate understanding, research, education, and the advancement of human rights and social justice.** Go to: www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/17/107.shtml for more information. If you wish to use copyrighted material from this site for purposes of your own that go beyond 'fair use', you must obtain permission from the copyright owner.

If printed out, a copy of this newsletter is your personal property and cannot legally be confiscated from you. "Possession of unauthorized material may not be prohibited." DoD Directive 1325.6 Section 3.5.1.2.