

Military Resistance 9B24

I Understood You... I Understood You...

حتر علي شعر فهمتكم .. فهمتكم

Feb 26, 2011
via Adibsk,
American Conscience

By: Ali Hattar

Translated by: Adib S. Kawar

**One by one we understood you...
At last we understood you...
The mean Zein Al-Abdin shouted
on behalf of all presidents
on behalf of Sharm Al-Sheikh and Doha
on behalf of allegeders
of all the miserable
After how many years our misery you understood?
suddenly important we become
in pillage and plundering account
At your end... suddenly you charlatans??...
suddenly in the name of justice... and reform we are ordered...**

**Immediately?? where were you??...
when we for help we called...
a bitter call after another... we shouted...
A homeland!!!**

**Just with a touch on the switch...
conditions turned upside down!!!
Are you mad... Are you nuts...
Damn you... with the same wanton
this homeland is ruled?!
Is such a homeland for fools it belongs?
Stupid we are not.**

**After how many decades of injustice...
you understood?
That people we are who deserve to exist?
that more than numbers we are...
that weight we have**

when pretenders on the scale are weighed??

**After how many decades of injustice...
you need to understand?
that captives, bondmaids...
and puppies we are not...**

**In your women's brothels...
for your women's paramours...
Bribes we are not...
at random and generously given
to your women and sons' wives servants...
No, we are not a bunch of porters...
servants and harlotry witnesses
After how many decades of injustice...
do you require to understand?!
Slaves we are not in palaces you built
of the remnants of others you demolished
with disdain... contempt and scorn**

**After how many decades of hunger you need to be alarmed?
and us abandoned over the sidewalk finishing?
After how many years of cold you shall be aware...
We, from the flayed skin of our backs became naked
to make leather and cloth to manufacture
your women's handbags and shoes...
for boasting at your harlot's races?
with everything you do... you come...
you come so that wretched we be
with your instructions hungry we be
thirsty we are, and poor we shall remain
our children the night they spent
in the open under the sky
they slept**

**Nonsense is all what you say
Poppycock is simply what you tell us
On us you imposed all sorts of extinction
in your name all sorts of debauch we get
and lowliness, stealth and the noble's repression
for it was always
your silence was the giving**

**You all hungered us
No food no water
You all said... and one day...
our villages you'll demolish...
you'll rubble our villages
over the heads of the weak
At night you all weapons buy...**

that internationally you prohibited...
fissionable... why...?
for the miserable's chests

All of you foreign mercenaries you hire
to stifle us when the confronting intensifies
All of you definitely beasts you become
and with Phantoms and Mirages on us you dive
when to bend we refuse
but we...
the wake of Iben Al-Bou Azizi
taught us...
we came... but not to ignite fire in us
but ignite fire in your desires...
We dashed... No retreat...
No kneeling... No bowing...

You are all the maladies... You are the disease
You are the stain in our history...
You are the foreigner's choice
You are whatever you say
You are not at all innocent
You are never innocent
in the codes of continuity.



Gaddafi "losing grip" over Libya

Meanwhile, Back In The USA:

Tahrir Square, Madison, Wisconsin, Sees “The Largest Gathering To Date For Protests Inside And Outside Capitol Building”



Tens of thousands of opponents of Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker's attack on worker's rights gather for protests at the Wisconsin State Capitol in Madison, Wisconsin February 26, 2011 at the largest gathering to date for protests inside and outside the Capitol building. (AP Photo/Wisconsin State Journal, John Hart)



Nurse Angela Aldous rallies protesters during demonstrations outside of the state Capitol in Madison, Wis., Feb. 26, 2011. Union supporters are on the 12th day of protests. (AP Photo/Andy Manis)

Washington State



Firefighters Brian Ritter and Joseph Hoffman of Ocean Shores, Wash., cheer during a pro-union rally on the Capitol campus in Olympia, Wash., Feb. 26, 2011. More than 2,000 demonstrators rallied in support of Wisconsin workers near the Washington State Capitol. (AP Photo/Manuel Valdes)

California #1



Workers rally in solidarity with Wisconsin workers outside Los Angeles City Hall in Los Angeles, Feb. 26, 2011. (AP Photo/Jason Redmond)

California #2



Avril Adams of Los Angeles, center, joins workers as they rally in solidarity with Wisconsin workers outside Los Angeles City Hall in Los Angeles, Feb. 26, 2011. (AP Photo/Jason Redmond)

Illinois



Demonstrators rally in support of Wisconsin workers at the Illinois State Capitol in Springfield, Ill., Feb. 26, 2011 (AP Photo/Seth Perlman)

Connecticut



Supporters of workers' rights rally at the State Capitol, in Hartford, Conn. in solidarity with Wisconsin workers Feb. 26, 2011. (AP Photo/Journal Inquirer, LesLloyd F. Alleyne)

Michigan



Supporters of workers' rights hold signs outside the state Capitol in Lansing, Mich., at a protest in opposition to Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker's attack on unions. (AP Photo/AI Goldis)

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Resistance Action: Attack Shuts Down Iraq's Largest Oil Refinery



Damage at the production unit after a bomb attack in Baiji oil refinery, 180 km (112 miles) north of Baghdad February 26, 2011. Militants attacked Iraq's largest oil refinery on Saturday, killing four workers and detonating bombs that touched off a raging fire and shut down the plant in northern Iraq, officials said. The militants planted explosives at a kerosene and benzene production unit at the northern refinery. REUTERS/Stringer

Feb 25 (Reuters) & Feb 26 (KUNA)

Militants attacked Saturday an oil refinery north of Baghdad and set it afire. They exploded several operating units there.

TUZ KHURMATO - A roadside bomb targeting a police patrol wounded two policemen in Tuz Khurmato, 170 km (105 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

HILLA – Guerrillas opened fire at a security checkpoint manned by a government-backed militia, killing two militia members and wounding another in northern Hilla, 100 km (62 miles) south of Baghdad, police said.

KIRKUK - Three policemen were wounded when a mortar round landed near police station in central Kirkuk, 250 km (155 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Westside Jacksonville Marine Seriously Injured In Afghanistan: Loses Both Legs After Stepping On IED On Patrol



A 21-year old Westside Marine lost both of his legs in an IED explosion in Afghanistan. The family of Cpl. Marcus Dandrea said he survived the explosion, but had to have his legs amputated at the knee. Courtesy of First Coast News

February 26, 2011 By Dan Scanlan, Jacksonville.com

A 21-year old Westside Jacksonville Marine corporal was severely injured in an explosion in Afghanistan.

Cpl. Marcus Dandrea had both of his legs amputated at the knee three days ago, after he stepped on an improvised explosive device while on patrol, according to his family.

Mark Dandrea said he learned the extent of his son's injuries in a predawn telephone call from him Friday, according to an interview with Times-Union news partner First Coast News.

"The first thing I thought when my son was wounded was when he was a little boy and he'd have a boo-boo, and we'd kiss it for him," Mark Dandrea told the TV station as he waited by the telephone for updates from his son.

Marcus Dandrea shipped out for duty in Afghanistan on Aug. 14, according to his Twitter account, which shows him lined up with fellow soldiers in a rainy parking lot wearing desert camouflage.

His father told First Coast News his son also suffered a concussion in the blast, but is recovering after surgery. He will get further treatment at an American base in Germany, then move to recovery in a military hospital in Bethesda, Md.,

His father said he hopes his son can eventually return home to Jacksonville to recover fully, and be with his wife and child.

“He’s going to live to see his daughter, Naomi, my granddaughter, grow up,” said Dandrea. “And he’s thankful for his life.”

**THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO COMPREHENSIBLE REASON TO BE IN THIS EXTREMELY HIGH RISK LOCATION AT THIS TIME, EXCEPT THAT THE PACK OF TRAITORS THAT RUN THE GOVERNMENT IN D.C. WANT YOU THERE TO DEFEND THEIR IMPERIAL DREAMS:
That is not a good enough reason.**



U.S. Marines from the First Battalion Eighth Marines Alpha Company patrol near the town of Kunjak in southern Afghanistan's Helmand province February 23, 2011.
REUTERS/Finbarr O'Reilly

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

MILITARY NEWS

**NOT ANOTHER DAY
NOT ANOTHER DOLLAR
NOT ANOTHER LIFE**



A medic with the United States Army's 1-214 Aviation Regiment leads Marines as they carry a Marine wounded by an IED to a medevac helicopter in southern Helmand Province, Afghanistan, Wednesday, Jan. 26, 2011. (AP Photo/Kevin Frayer)

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

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

OCCUPATION PALESTINE

**Not Content With Merely Killing
Palestinians, The Zionist Regime
Torments Their Dead Bodies:
“The Israeli Police Forced A Set Of
Rules Upon The Rwidy Family, Which
Needed To Be Agreed Upon Before
His Body Was Released”
“But At 1pm On Sunday, The Police
Called Me And Said That Everything Is
Cancelled,’ Rwidy Said”**



Hussain Rwidy speaking at a demonstration in Sheikh Jarrah two weeks after the murder of his son, Hussam. (Jillian Kestler-D'Amours)

25 February 2011 Jillian Kestler-D'Amours, The Electronic Intifada [Excerpts]

All Hussain Hassan Rwidy wanted was to bury his son.

“They took me to see the investigator who worked on the case. He called me inside (his office), alone, and asked me, 'Are you strong?'“ I said to him, 'I want my son,“ Rwidy told The Electronic Intifada.

“He said directly to me, 'Your son died ...’” Rwidy paused, then continued. “Your son died, and there are two people arrested.”

Twenty-four-year-old Hussam Rwidy was killed in the early morning hours of Friday, 11 February, on Hillel Street in West Jerusalem as he and a friend, Murad Khader Joulani, were walking to their car to drive home from work.

According to the Rwidy family, who live in the East Jerusalem neighborhood of Kufr Akab, everything began when a group of extremist Israeli Jews heard Hussam and Murad speaking Arabic to each other, and shouted “Death to the Arabs.”

“My son started to walk,” said Hussam's father, from a mourning tent set up to remember Hussam in the occupied East Jerusalem neighborhood of Silwan, where the family is originally from, last Saturday.

“They came from behind with a knife and jumped on him. After they cut his throat, four more people came and started to beat them with punches and kicks,” he explained.

While Hussam died of his injuries when he reached the hospital, Joulani survived the attack with a deep knife wound visible on the back of his neck.

According to an account Joulani gave to the Wadi Hilweh Information Center, a resident-run information and media center in Silwan, Joulani managed to pull Rwidy to a nearby restaurant where he called for help.

“None of the Israeli customers assisted the two men, except for one who handed Joulani a paper napkin to remove the blood from Rwidy's face.

Joulani was then himself able to call the police, who then commenced investigation into the incident,” the Wadi Hilweh Information Center article states (“The final moments of the martyred Husam Rwidy,” 20 February 2011).

The Israeli police originally arrested two suspects for the crime, but placed a gag order on the details of the criminal case.

The Israeli media, however, quickly presented the attack as a drunken brawl between the two groups, an account the Rwidy family vehemently denies.

“If the government or police lie and say that (Hussam) started this, I will never believe that. He was handsome, a gentleman,” Hussam's uncle, Bassam Maswadi, told The Electronic Intifada.

The gag order on Rwidy's case was lifted earlier this week, and the Israeli media reported that four Israeli teenagers -- two from Jerusalem and two from illegal Israeli settlements in the occupied West Bank -- were arrested for his murder.

Israeli daily newspaper Haaretz reported that “police suspect that the stabbing had nationalistic motives and the prosecution decided to put them on trial for manslaughter” (“Four teens suspected of stabbing Arab youth to death in Jerusalem,” 23 February 2011).

“After praying in the mosque on Friday (11 February), I was on the bus and my wife called me to tell me (what happened). I was shocked,” Maswadi said. “I started crying, like he was my son.”

The Rwidy family's turmoil didn't end with Hussam's death, however, as they were forced to wait five days before the Israeli authorities would release Hussam's body for burial.

The family wanted to hold his funeral in a graveyard adjacent to the Haram al-Sharif, or Noble Sanctuary, which is known to Jews as the Temple Mount and is the third holiest site in Islam.

“They said to me that Sunday at 11am, everything is okay and (I) can come and take son. When I went on Sunday, they said to me the security situation didn't allow that,” Hussain Rwidy said.

The Israeli authorities argued that they had secret evidence proving that if Hussam's funeral was to be held in the vicinity of the Temple Mount, a riot would break out, similar to what happened when an Israeli settler security guard shot and killed Silwan resident Samer Sarhan in September 2010.

Therefore, the Israeli police forced a set of rules upon the Rwidy family, which needed to be agreed upon before his body was released. Israel said only forty persons could be present at the burial, that it could only take place after 8pm and that the family couldn't hold the ceremony near the al-Aqsa mosque.

“But at 1pm on Sunday, the police called me and said that everything is cancelled,” Rwidy said.

He explained that the Israeli authorities told the family that they would only be allowed to pick up Hussam's body at the Qalandiya checkpoint -- which separates East Jerusalem from the rest of the West Bank -- and that he could only be buried in the West Bank, not Jerusalem.

This outrageous condition, Rwidy explained, forced the family to submit a petition to the Israeli high court to get Hussam's body back. They finally reached an agreement, and at 12:30am on Wednesday, 16 February, were able to prepare Hussam for burial.

That night, Hussam's body was taken to a mosque in Ras al-Amud, a neighborhood of East Jerusalem near Silwan, and was buried in a cemetery there.

Only twenty men and fifteen women were allowed to be present while the body was being prepared for burial, and no more than fifty men could be at the funeral ceremony itself.

The family was not allowed to visit al-Aqsa, either, which is a customary practice for Jerusalem-area Muslim families.

More than a hundred persons gathered in Silwan last Saturday to mourn the loss of Hussam Rwidy and condemn the vicious attack that ended his life.

“People need to open their eyes and see what's going on. All of us are human beings. We can live together. We need to respect each other,” said Bassam Maswadi, Hussam's uncle.

Maswadi explained that Hussam worked two jobs -- as a Coca-Cola salesman during the day, and making deliveries from the Mahane Yehuda market in West Jerusalem at night -- in an effort to save money and start a family. The eldest of three children, Hussam planned on getting engaged next summer.

“Anyone who needed help, he would help. Lots of people respected him. He was just great. He was like one of my sons,” Maswadi added.

According to Hani Baidoun, a Silwan resident and friend of the Rwidy family, the Israeli government and police and security forces play a large role in perpetrating the violence toward Palestinians in Jerusalem.

“Previously we used to hear them saying that a good Arab is a dead one. Today, neither a live or dead Arab is good for Israel.

Gaza: Mubarak Name Easier To Erase Than His Legacy

From: Mohammed Omer

To: Military Resistance

Subject: MIDEAST-- Mubarak Name Easier to Erase Than his Legacy

Date: Feb 22, 2011 1:06 AM

Feb 21, 2011 By Mohammed Omer, (IPS)

Rafah, Palestine

It was easy enough to rename Mubarak Children's Hospital the Al Tahrir Hospital in Gaza.

Not so easy is the task of managing patients who need to cross over to the Egyptian side for treatment, or come back in.

Crossing the border, even for medical treatment, has always been an arduous task. Through the period of unrest it has been virtually impossible, although the new government in Egypt shows signs of relenting.

There has been some easing of restrictions on movement, and some indications that the border will be opened Tuesday to allow 300 people through. Priority will be given to urgent medical cases, Gaza security officials told IPS.

On Friday, the Egyptian Army reopened its Rafah crossing one way to allow some Palestinians to enter Gaza Strip.

The change of name for the hospital in Khan Younis in the Gaza Strip is symbolic, but shows new hope that the Hamas government in Gaza nurtures of better relations with the new Egypt. Many in Gaza believe that under former president Hosni Mubarak, Egypt has long supported the Israeli blockade of Gaza.

The regime change in Egypt could spell hope for hundreds of patients in Gaza who need to travel out of the Strip for treatment.

The renaming of the hospital is “in honour of Al Tahrir Square in Cairo and the Egyptian revolution that took place recently there,” says Dr Yousef Al Mudallal, chief of staff at the Gaza Ministry of Health.

Former Palestinian president Yasser Arafat had given Mubarak hospital its name when it was set up in 1999.

This is the first time a government institution has been renamed in Gaza.

Next to this hospital is Nasser hospital, named after former president Jamal Abdelnasser. Al Tahrir hospital is now considered a part of Nasser hospital, which specializes in paediatric, neo-natal, and maternity care as well as physiotherapy.

Most Gazans have celebrated the removal of Mubarak. But the complete sealing of the border has been disastrous for patients at these and other hospitals.

Among those affected badly is Mona Yassin, 43, diagnosed with breast cancer. She went to a hospital in Cairo just before the revolution started. “I have spent the 8,000 Egyptian pounds (1,260 dollars) I saved for my medical treatment,” she says. She has run out of money to return, or to stay. She and some family members had rented an apartment in Cairo.

“Now, I can neither go back home, nor continue the treatment,” she told IPS. Her husband has meanwhile received notice that if he cannot get back through Rafah, he will lose his job that supports his family, including seven children.

Hamed Afana, 42, died in Egypt while awaiting medical treatment. Afana’s body was brought in through the tunnels underneath the Egypt-Gaza borderline to be buried in Gaza.

When IPS called to check the status of this case, a border official said his records show that the now buried Afana is still abroad.

Since the Mavi Marmara Flotilla attack on May 31 last year, the Rafah crossing between Gaza and Egypt has been only partially open for six categories, including those with medical needs, registered students abroad and the few with visas to travel abroad.

During the closure of the crossing, the Hamas de facto government controlled the border tightly. "We are controlling the border and will not allow anybody to get in without permission," said Ayyoub Abu Shaar.

Abu Shaar said an easing of restrictions is necessary for "the humanitarian cases in Gaza...as there are very urgent cases waiting for medical treatment abroad."

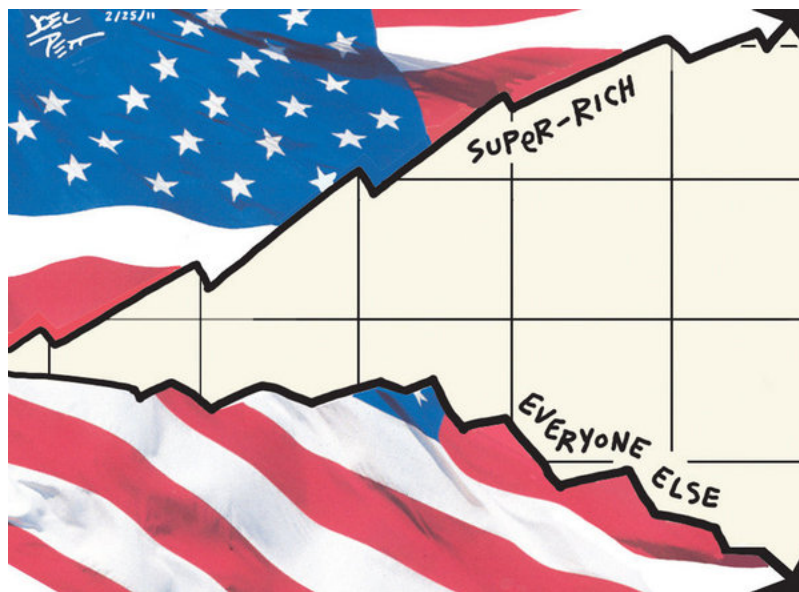
On a regular day, 300-500 Palestinians cross the border, mainly people in need of medical treatment, and students going abroad.

Palestinian official Dr. Ghazi Hamad says negotiations are in progress to keep Rafah open permanently.

Many Gazans see that Egypt is Gaza's gateway to the world, and expectation is high that the new government will help to end the siege of Gaza by being more lenient on the Rafah Border Crossing.

[To check out what life is like under a murderous military occupation commanded by foreign terrorists, go to: www.rafahtoday.org The occupied nation is Palestine. The foreign terrorists call themselves "Israeli."]

CLASS WAR REPORTS



[Thanks to Mark Shapiro, Military Resistance Organization, who sent this in.]

Strikes Break Out In Saudi Arabia:

“The Police Force Couldn’t Control The Workers”

“It Was The First Time In My Life I Saw A Police Car Smashed In Saudi Arabia”



Saudi Arabian Strikers

[Thanks to Cheryl Sanchez, who sent this in.]

24 Feb 2011 Socialist Worker [UK]

Saudi Arabia is now being rocked by strikes as the mood of resistance spreads across the region.

A socialist in Saudi Arabia reports on how struggles in the Middle East are even spreading to the most vicious dictatorship, which is sponsored by the US

‘I went to my workplace on Thursday of last week, and I found out that there were over 3,000 workers demanding their rights before they called a general strike in the construction site in Saudi Binladin Group.

“The workers were very angry. Their workplace is one of the largest construction projects in the country, which is worth SR.100 billion.

However, they live in a terrible conditions. One of the workers told me, “I live in a room four metres by three metres with eight people, and for every ten people there is only one toilet.” Another Egyptian worker told me about the working conditions and the restriction of religious freedom: “They are Zionists, they don’t even allow me to pray on time!”

And another worker was speaking about the water at the site, which is infected and full of filth and insects: “The managers wouldn’t even wash their hands with it, but for us we have to drink it because it is the only drinking water at the site.”

The others talked about the delayed salaries and the unpaid overtime: “Can you believe that some of the workers here are paid only 700 riyals a month, and I am paid 1,000 riyal. How would we survive?”

They couldn’t continue in the old way. They organised themselves and decided to do a demonstration at the site, to demand their rights immediately. It was the most interesting scene that I have witnessed in my life.

When a group of coordinators and security guards tried to persuade them to go back to work the workers replied by smacking their hats on the walls and they shouted we demand “food, money, accommodation – we need to be respected”. All the managers, for the first time since the start of the project four years ago, took the workers seriously.

The police force couldn’t control the workers.

When a police officer told the workers that they need to return to their accommodation and their issue will be solved later, the worker replied by throwing stones at him, and they managed to frighten all the police officers around him. The stones missed the police officer, but unfortunately it did not miss his car! It was the first time in my life I saw a police car smashed in Saudi Arabia.

When several coordinators, sent by the managers, tried to promise the workers change, I and several other socialists pushed for the occupation of the construction site, though that did not work.

However, when one of coordinators said, “We will give you a new accommodation with a football pitch,” one of the workers replied, “How would we play football after 13 hours of work with an unpaid overtime?”

Then the coordinators promised that every worker will be paid after five days.

Someone replied, “What would we do with today’s bread after five days, we need it now, we are sick of excuses, a billionaire cannot pay his workers today?”

In the end, the owner promised the workers that they will pay them on Saturday. The workers went back, and on Saturday they received an extra SR, 500 on top of their salary and the owners promised them that they will improve their accommodation and they will pay them 100 hours for their overtime each month.

The workers started to organised with a sister company, which belong to the same owners to start a new wave of strikes in different parts of the construction site.

Through this week, there were several strike actions in King Fahad Library and in a construction sites in King Saud University.’

“Just Over A Week Into The Revolution That Few, Even Here, Thought Possible When It Started, The Eradication Of A Despot Is Well On The Way To Completion”

“As Far West As Ras Lanuf The Oilfields Are Now Under Our Control”

“We Will Not Let A Drop Flow Until He Is Gone”

“We Are The Future Now. We Must Take The Capital”



The wreckage of a plane sent by the regime to bomb Bregga. Photograph: Sean Smith

Libya's east declares itself free



[Thanks to Mark Shapiro, Military Resistance Organization, and Joan M, who sent this in.]

26 February 2011 By Martin Chulov in central Libya, Guardian News and Media Limited [Excerpts]

On the road west from Benghazi to Tripoli, Colonel Gaddafi's Libya is being rapidly cleansed of his remnants.

Just over a week into the revolution that few, even here, thought possible when it started, the eradication of a despot is well on the way to completion.

The town of Ajdabiya, 160km south of Benghazi, the regional capital, has long been one of the east of the country's most forsaken enclaves, a place where people were thought to have been tamed and cowed during Gaddafi's 42-year rule.

Now, the spoils of a remarkable victory are everywhere, along with the scars of an ignominious defeat. Every official building in town has been torched and ransacked, just like the state institutions to the east. Every image of the loathed leader has been torn down and defaced. The tired facades, the grim streets and hard-bitten locals are the only signs that a dictator once ruled here.

We stopped first at a town square where an effigy hung from a wire alongside the Libyan independence flag, last flown under the monarch Gaddafi ousted in 1969, King Idris.

A small group of youths milled around an empty fountain, with a brand new feature – the wing of a fighter jet that plummeted to earth on Wednesday.

Its pilot had been sent to bomb three oil fields to the south, all of which had fallen into the hands of the opposition, who had promptly turned off the taps to further strangle the regime.

“The pilot is in hospital in Benghazi and the man who sat behind him with a gun is in prison,” said Ali Ramadan Mohammed, a civil servant from the oil town of Bregga that was one of the intended targets.

“He didn't carry out this evil mission and he is now a hero of the country's liberation.”

Back up the highway in Ajdabiya, men with Kalashnikovs who now keep order about town wanted to show us the spoils. At a former headquarters for Gaddafi's praetorian guard, a fleet of 4x4s had been torched and overturned. “Four men died here,” said one of the town's new custodians, pointing at a spot on the road. “They were killed by Gaddafi's men and his mercenaries.”

Next stop was the Qatibat Amin military base on the outskirts of town, a desert fortress with dank and dire looking buildings.

We were shown into the armoury, an unassuming building set behind barbed wire and land mines.

Hundreds of boxes of heavy ammunition had been emptied and those that hadn't been carried away were scattered across the floor. Two anti-aircraft guns sat on in the corner looking like museum pieces.

There was nothing derelict, however, about the dozens of artillery shells lying next to grenades and the odd claymore land mine. Every rifle had been taken, along with most uniforms and Kalashnikov rounds.

“We have enough already to go to Tripoli, should we need to,” said Ghaith Issa, leaning against a rocket launcher inside the armoury.

Another man, Faraj Ali, 44, joined us. “Everywhere is the same between here and Sirte and between Sirte and Tripoli. He is finished. He can never come back.”

All along the red desert highway, the Observer encountered further evidence to support Faraj Ali's claims.

We stopped next at al-Bregga, an oil enclave at Libya's southernmost coastal point. Gaddafi kept a house here and a row of guest homes either side. They have all been pillaged. The dictator's bedroom received the most attention. “We threw in an extra bomb for him,” said Khaled Yousef, a local who now proudly walked through the scorched remains of the loathed leader, carrying a Russian machine gun that he looted from the army.

“He was a criminal and a terrorist and he had one of these homes every 100km,” he added. That may account for the modest furnishings – those that could still be made out amid the ashes.

By all accounts it wasn't one of his favourites.

Nearby, the police station and governorate still smouldered.

But up the road, the Sirte Oil Company was still safe and secure. The attackers clearly saw this as an overthrow of a regime, not a sacking of a country.

In the east of the country the presence of so much black gold under the soil has long been more resented than appreciated.

“We never see any of the profits from it,” said Mohammed. “Gaddafi has all these compounds and offshore money and there are no jobs, not much health service and no way of improving ourselves. Now the people will decide how the money is spent, not him.”

Abdul Salam Nagem, a petroleum engineer from Bregga, said that opposition groups – many using former military weapons – were now firmly in control of the levers at the refineries and oilfields and would not be letting them go until Gaddafi was finally ousted.

“The people are very safe there,” he said. “The foreign workers, including the Britons, are under our full protection. As far west as Ras Lanuf (a further 150km west), the oilfields are now under our control.”

One oil engineer, Moustafa Raba'a, 44, said that around 120, 000 barrels of oil per day are now not making it to market, denying the Gaddafi regime millions of dollars in revenues from Europe.

“We all have solidarity with the opposition on this,” he said. We will not let a drop flow until he is gone.”

No one is working in the oil towns. There is next to nobody on the streets, or even in mosques, or markets. “We are all just waiting, said Nagem, as he drew me a map earlier last week of the road to Tripoli. Only Sirte is standing in the way of the push.

Sirte, a coastal city halfway to the capital, remains defiantly on the side of Gaddafi. His loyalist forces man checkpoints in and out of the town and there were confirmed widespread clashes there as late as Friday night.

It is the one place where opposition groups know they will face a fight if they decide to move on Tripoli.

So staunch is the pro-government presence there that some organisers in Benghazi believe it might fall after the capital itself. On Friday, a convoy of Egyptian doctors set off for Tripoli and reportedly encountered trouble on the outskirts of Sirte. There are conflicting accounts of their fate, with several local media outlets reporting that they came under attack.

On the red desert highway leading to Sirte, there is now no such risk.

As we left Bregga for Benghazi, we turned left off the highway to a site in the desert, which will surely come to be seen as a landmark in this revolution.

Along a soft sand track, past patches of coarse-grass, tumbleweeds and flocks of well-fed sheep and goats, we arrived first at a hamlet of timber huts. Children scampered

about in vivid clothes in the distance. It looked very much like a long-abandoned gypsy town.

“See, this is what oil money gets you in Libya,” said Mohammed. “No water, no electricity, no future and no dignity. Haram (against God's will). Does Gaddafi live like this?”

Another mile or so along the track we stopped at a moonscape of wind-blown sand and reeds.

Wreckage was everywhere; small bits of shattered metal, a larger piece that looked like a tail fin, and then the two main impact sites. One was a giant crater, the other was part of a fuselage and a large bomb that had not detonated.

“The pilot and the other man landed nearby,” a local shouted. “An old lady found this place yesterday.”

Gaddafi now has next to no control over the arm of his military that he has long trusted most. The defection of the air force pilot on such a sensitive mission has lionised the opposition further.

There are continuing reports of mass defections of senior officers at most towns and cities between here and the Tunisian border.

“I could take you to colonels and generals who are now with us,” said Issa at the military base.

The state built over 42 years through iron-fisted rule is clearly now almost impotent. Gaddafi's hopes of hanging on to the Libya he once knew are finished. His only hope appears to be a partitioning of the land, with the east ruled by the opposition and him staying in power in the west.

But that notion is universally scorned on the road to the capital.

“He has had his turn and it's been a long turn,” said Khaled Issa in the Ajdabiya town square. “We are the future now. We must take the capital.”

MORE:

**“We Have Won The Big Battle,
But That Does Not Mean The
War Is Won Just Yet”**

“All Day Defecting Troops And Officers Were Lugging In Thousands Of Pounds Of Ammunition”

“By The Day's End An Arsenal That Could Easily Supply An Army Brigade Was Piled Up”

“Gaddafi's Reported Use Of Mercenaries Appears To Have Tipped The Hand Of Many Protesters And Armed Forces”



A caricature of Gaddafi reading, 'The Monkey of Monkeys of Africa', a reference to his self-declared title 'The King of Kings of Africa'. Photograph: Alaguri/AP

23 February 2011 Martin Chulov in Benghazi, Guardian News and Media [Excerpts]

At the heart of the city where he launched his rise to power, Muammar Gaddafi's indignity is now complete.

In little more than three days of rampage, the rebels in Libya's second city have done their best to wind the clock back 42 years – to life before the dictator they loathe.

Benghazi has fallen and Gaddafi's bid to cling on to power, whatever the cost, has crumbled with it. There is barely a trace of him now, except for obscene graffiti that mocks him on the dust-strewn walls where his portraits used to hang.

Residents who would not have dared to approach the town's main military base without an invitation were doing victory laps around it in their cars. Every barrack block inside had been torched and looted.

The stage where Gaddafi would address the masses on the rare occasions that he came here had collapsed. His house across the road had been ransacked and there wasn't a loyalist soldier inside.

"He is gone. A dragon has been slain," cried Ahmed Al-Fatuuir outside the secret police headquarters. "Now he has to explain where all the bodies are."

At the city's hospitals, administrators are still tallying the toll from the most savage fighting seen here in decades. At the al-Jala hospital, at least 65 deaths have been recorded since 17 February, along with dozens of injuries, many of them horrific. And they are still coming in.

A Libyan soldier, who along with many of his colleagues had joined the anti-government insurgency, was pronounced dead as the Guardian arrived inside the overworked intensive care unit.

A small bullet wound near his right kidney had caused irreversible chaos inside his body.

"They are still out there," said the doctor who pronounced him dead. "These mercenaries who are hired by Gaddafi are lurking in the shadows."

All day defecting troops and officers were lugging in thousands of pounds of ammunition to a courtyard inside the secret police headquarters on Bengazi's waterfront.

By the day's end an arsenal that could easily supply an army brigade was piled up.

There were plastic explosives, rockets, machine guns and even the anti-aircraft weapon that was used to mow down demonstrators as they assaulted the military base on Sunday.

Evidence of the carnage it caused was clear on the walls of nearby buildings and in the mortuaries. Doctors had used their mobile phones to capture the carnage that was caused by military weapons on human flesh. And they coolly displayed the aftermath of the battle, denouncing Gaddafi as a criminal as they did so.

Nearby Filipino orderlies were putting the finishing touches to the short life of a dead soldier, washing his body with a clinical calm and slowly readying a green body bag. It was a process they were clearly familiar with. "Too many times, too many times," said one orderly as he rested on a trolley. "It has been terrible in here."

At least 232 demonstrators in Benghazi are believed to have been killed since the uprising began and up to 1,000 injured. There are no reliable figures on the number of

soldiers or mercenaries killed during the assault of the barracks, or in the hours of chaos that followed.

One thing that is clear is that this was not a peaceful stroll through the streets of Bahrain, as has largely been the case on the other side of the Arabian peninsular.

This was a savage rampage on both sides, a blood and guts revolution, fuelled by decades of repression, neglect and rage. There has been nothing peaceful about it.



The view from a state security building taken over by revolutionaries in Benghazi, Libya.
Photograph: Asmaa Waguih/Reuters

Testimony to the protesters' vehemence is dotted all around the base, in the form of bulldozers stolen from nearby worksites that were used to breach the walls. At least six of them stand burned and mangled near where their work had been successfully done – gaping holes in whitewashed walls that allowed protesters to storm through.

“That is where the anti-aircraft gun was and that is where all the African mercenaries were found dead,” said Mohamed Fatah, who was part of the throng that attacked the base.

“The people were leading a funeral march past the big roundabout and people from inside the base opened fire,” he said. “They went home, gathered themselves and came back. This is what happened.”

Gaddafi's reported use of mercenaries appears to have tipped the hand of many protesters and armed forces.

“That is why we turned against the government,” said air force major Rajib Feytouni. “That and the fact that there was an order to use planes to attack the people.”

The reports could not be independently verified. However, Feytouni confirmed that an air force base to the east had been hit on Sunday by two bombs dropped from a jet.

“They were trying to make sure that the weapons did not end up in the hands of the opposition,” he said.

He added that he had personally witnessed 4,000-5,000 mercenaries flown into his air force base on Libyan military transport planes, beginning on about 14 February – several days before the uprising started.

“They (the planes) had 300 men at a time, all of them coming out with weapons,” he said. “They were all from Africa: Ghanaians, Kenyans.”

Several of the alleged soldiers of fortune are being held in a jail at the top of the ransacked courthouse on Benghazi's corniche. One was briefly brought to meet the Guardian. He was quickly ushered away by lawyers who said he was not allowed to speak until the case against him was finished.

But the court of public opinion on the heaving street below had already convicted the unnamed African, along with anyone else linked to what they believe are the dying days of 42 years of sadistic oppression. There was no sign of any pro-regime figures.

And even those who have recently defected, such as the country's justice minister, are not prepared to show their faces publicly, fearing the reactions from a combustible street.

The mood of people fluctuated easily between nervousness and violence; warmth and zeal.

At some points during the morning and at the hospital, it was difficult to move without people eagerly thrusting in our faces more macabre images of dead people or missing relatives.

“His time will come,” said one man brandishing a simple sign that said in English: “Freedom for Libya”. He added: “You are welcome here. The world needs to see what is happening.”

Along the long and winding way from the Salum crossing from Egypt, there was not an official to be seen.

Neighbourhood Watch-like groups, all armed with AK-47s, manned checkpoints in and out of all the towns.

But every military and police post for 360 miles had been abandoned.

The scattering of the police was leading to claims of victory and the feeling of triumphalism among many of the city's young people.

The deathly emptiness of a rainy morning in a city under siege had by dusk given way to teeming streets and jubilant cheers. Celebratory burst from AK-47s cracked into the air throughout the afternoon – always a disconcerting sound in a war zone.

The jubilation did little to hide Benghazi's wounds, though.

Here, more than in the capital, Tripoli, or Gaddafi's other strongholds, mainly in the west, society remains brutalised and stagnant, a drab decaying old-order feel, much like Iraq in 2004.

“Here hospitals are nothing like in Tripoli,” said an intensive care nurse who identified herself as Fatima. “It is first world there, but we have to make do.”

It's the same with government buildings – what remains of them. There is barely a typewriter left, let alone a computer or the basic tools of administration.

Neglect had been a clear strategy for Gaddafi for a city that had in 1969 deeply resented the coup he launched against the monarch, King Idris, and has not forgiven him since. The independent flag last flown 42 years ago has become a prominent symbol of this revolution. It flies above key government buildings and even hospitals and it is worn as a badge by most organisers.

Benghazi feels Libya's time has come.

Residents are adamant that the leader who forgot them has days, or perhaps weeks, left as president. “He can't survive and he won't survive,” one man shouted outside the courthouse. “He is deluded and he is cruel. He will attack us again even though everyone knows he is finished.”

But there remains a gnawing fear that the worst may be yet to come.

“Of course it is true,” Saad Achmed, a 24-year-old student, said. “If he feels he is cornered he will come for us. Those roads you came in on may be clear, but you did not see who is hiding over the hills? We have won the big battle, but that does not mean the war is won just yet.”



Libyans stand on an army tank at Benghazi state security camp. Photograph: Alaguri/AP

MORE:

Revolutionaries Build Barricades In Tripoli



Palm trees used as barricades by residents in the Tajoura district of eastern Tripoli, Libya, Feb. 26, 2011. Residents have blocked many streets with roadblocks after protesters demanding Gadhafi's ouster came under a hail of bullets Friday when pro-regime militiamen opened fire to stop the first significant anti-government marches in days in the Libyan capital. REUTERS/Ahmed Jadallah

Revolutionaries Build Barricades In Tunis



Anti-government demonstrators take to the streets in Tunis, Feb. 26, 2011. Tunisian authorities killed four people in the capital protesting against the dictatorship. (AP Photo/Hassene Dridi)

Thousands Protest In Manama, Bahrain To Demand The Royal Dictatorship Get Out



Anti-dictatorship activists gather at Pearl Square in Manama February 25, 2011.
REUTERS/Caren Firouz



Effigies mocking the Bahraini royal family, King Hamad bin Issa al-Khalifa (C), his son Crown Prince Sheikh Salman (L) and Prime Minister Khalifa bin Salman al-Khalifa (R), at Pearl Square in Manama. Thousands of people protested in Manama to demand the royal rulers get out. (AFP/Joseph Eid)

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Forward Military Resistance along, or send us the address if you wish and we'll send it regularly. Whether in Afghanistan, Iraq or stuck on 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, 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 send email to contact@militaryproject.org: Name, I.D., withheld unless you request publication. Same address to unsubscribe.

RECEIVED:

Why Indeed?

From: Felicity Arbuthnot
To: Military Resistance
Subject: From Benghazi to Bagram, Baghdad ...
Date: Feb 24, 2011 6:53 AM

Re the excellent Military Resistance 9B21:

'General Soliman Mahmoud al-Obeidy said the Libyan leader was no longer "trustworthy," adding he decided to switch allegiances after hearing the authorities had given orders to fire on civilians in the eastern city of Benghazi.

"He bombs with airplanes and uses excessive force against unarmed people," he told Reuters ...'

Why does this sound eerily familiar?

Warmest,
felicity a.

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