

## Military Resistance 9B3



**“Khalid Ibrahim Al-Laisi  
Has Been A Soldier In  
The Egyptian Army For  
20 Years”**

**“He Said, ‘If The  
Demonstrations Are Too  
Peaceful, Officials Do Not  
Understand The Urgency  
Among The People””**

**“Far From Shooting Protesters, He Says The Time Has Come ‘To Revolt Against Oppression’”**  
**“Who Are We Going To Shoot? Our Brothers And Sisters?”**  
**“The Officers Are Expressing The Sentiment Of The Soldiers, Says Al-Laisi”**



Credit: Mohammed Omer: Copyright IPS

[Thanks to Mohammed Omer and Mark Shapiro, Military Resistance Organization]

Feb 2, 2011 By Mohammed Omer, IPS

**Khalid Ibrahim Al-Laisi has been a soldier in the Egyptian army for 20 years. Today, far from shooting protesters, he says the time has come “to revolt against oppression.”**

And as protesters vow to continue to press for President Hosni Mubarak to leave now, rather than at election time later in the year as he offered to do Tuesday, Al-Laisi, 38, is the face of an army that is one with protesters, not against them.

Khalid tells IPS just why. "My monthly wage is 1,100 Egyptian pounds (188 dollars). It's not enough, and I have to do another job in the evenings." He and his wife struggle to bring up their three children, aged 13, nine and four in the Al-Zaytoun neighbourhood of Cairo.

"No one can afford to live on these wages," he says.

"There is no joy in life. You bring a child into this world to enjoy life, not to feel trapped. One kilo of meat costs 60 Egyptian pounds (EGP) in today's market. To eat meat once a week costs me 300 (Egyptian) pounds a month. That leaves no money to go out and do anything else."

Al-Laisi was promoted recently, and that added 100 EGP to his salary. That went partly to pay for extra tutoring for his son Mohammed. The tutoring costs 300 EGP a month.

The demonstrations have been effective, he says.

**"The bullet that does not hit, at least makes some noise," he says, repeating a popular saying in the army.**

**"Nothing comes overnight. But I am going to ask for my needs, because my life, like the life of so many others, has simply become intolerable."**

The army man's suffering is one with that of the people determined to continue the struggle to get Mubarak out. Mubarak's declaration that he would leave was a triumph for the demonstrators, but not what many seemed prepared to be satisfied with, although crowds seemed divided on this.

"We still insist he should leave now," political activist Buthaina Kamel said at Cairo's Al Tahrir square after Mubarak's television address Tuesday. Many demonstrators see their success as a revolution, and don't want to give up.

Mustapha Al-Iraqi, a young oil engineer said he will not leave the square, and expects more protestors through the week. "President Mubarak is fooling around with our demands," he said.

A high-ranking Egyptian official confirmed that the Egyptian Army will not shoot at protesting people.

The officers are expressing the sentiment of the soldiers, says Al-Laisi. "Who are we going to shoot? Our brothers and sisters?"

**Groups of demonstrators were planning meanwhile to take their protests closer to Mubarak's presidential palace.**

**Units of the Egyptian Army are surrounding the palace, which has been fortified with barbed wires and checkpoints.**

**It is still unclear how far the army will let protests go, and at what point at least some units of the army may step in against the demonstrations if the protesters go that far.**

Army units deployed so far have been popular among the people, and particularly the demonstrators. "The army and the people are one – hand in hand", a group chanted. There has been an outpouring of expressions of support for the army.

The regime clearly wants to defuse the situation for now.

Yasmine Al- Jayyoshi, among the organizers of the demonstration, said she feared the regime would punish demonstrators. That was only another reason to stay on and protest, she said.

Al-Laisi said the violence was regrettable, and "private and public properties must be protected."

But, he said, "if the demonstrations are too peaceful, officials do not understand the urgency among the people."

The protests are undoubtedly people driven, and not organized by parties. Muslim Brotherhood, the Islamic party whose members won a fifth of seats in the last parliament despite reports of widespread rigging by the ruling party, seems to hold little sway over the thrust of the demonstrations.

The protests seem driven by wages and prices, and less by politics and ideology.

**MORE:**

**“Mubarak Loyalists Rode Horses  
And Camels Into Tahrir Square,  
The Epicenter Of Anti-Government  
Protests Since Jan. 25, Swinging  
Whips And Clubs”**

**“Three People Were Killed And More  
Than 600 Injured”**

**[The Festival Of The Oppressed Closed  
Until Further Notice --**

## -- Civil War Begins]



[Hint: Try ball bearings or marbles under their feet: horses stop in fear and/or go down. Same for camels.]

Cairo: Feb. 2, 2011: Man takes down one of Mubarak's police beating the protesters.  
Getty Images

Feb 2, 2011 By Ahmed A. Namatalla, Alaa Shahine and Caroline Alexander, Bloomberg & CNN [Excerpts]

Supporters of Egypt's Hosni Mubarak clashed in central Cairo with demonstrators demanding an immediate end to the 30-year-reign of the president, who said yesterday he won't step down before elections due in September.

**Mubarak loyalists rode horses and camels into Tahrir Square, the epicenter of anti-government protests since Jan. 25, swinging whips and clubs.**

The two sides hurled rocks and Molotov cocktails were thrown.

Egyptian soldiers didn't intervene, and the U.S. publicly pressed Egyptian leaders to bring an end to the violence and speed the promised political transition.

**Health Minister Ahmed Farid said on state television that three people were killed and more than 600 injured. Mohammad Khaled, a doctor at the scene, told Al Arabiya television that he had seen several bodies.**

**State television blamed the Muslim Brotherhood, an allegation at odds with the sequence of events that began with organized crowds of men carrying pro-regime banners confronting anti-Mubarak demonstrators.**

Mohamed ElBaradei, an opposition leader and former United Nations diplomat, told the BBC the army should move in to end unrest incited by a “criminal regime” that “has to go immediately.”

Egypt credit-default swaps rose, reversing a decline, as the clashes intensified. Bonds dropped and global depository receipts of Orascom Telecom Holding SAE fell as the country’s bourse remained shut.

The cost of protecting Egyptian debt against default for five years with credit-default swaps widened 40 basis points, or 0.40 percentage points, to 382 today, according to prices from CMA, a data provider in London.

The yield on the North African nation’s 5.75 percent debt due in April 2020 increased 13 basis points to 6.63 percent at 4:06 p.m. in London, according to Bloomberg composite prices.

Persian Gulf shares rose on Mubarak’s announcement of a departure date and rising oil prices, sending Dubai’s benchmark index up the most in almost 10 months. The Bloomberg GCC 200 Index of Gulf shares climbed 1.8 percent, the most since May. Most Gulf trading closed before the new clashes in Cairo.

**Service providers including units of Vodafone Group Plc “returned to the Internet” at 11:29 a.m. in Cairo, Web security firm Renesys said today in a blog post.**

Communications had been cut off during the protests.

Some banks’ automated teller machines are working, and 24,000 government employees received their salaries, state television said.

All Egyptian ports are closed because of a lack of staff, though the Suez Canal is operating as normal, Inchcape Shipping Services reported today.

**MORE:**

**“To Have Their Say In The  
Debate They Slash Faces With  
Knives”**

**“Not 12 Hours After The  
President’s Emotional Appeal, The  
Regime Turned Loose Its Thugs  
On The Street”**

# **“Every Time One Of Them Is Captured His ID Says He’s A Member Of The Security Forces”**

## **“So, The Regime Once Again Displays Its Banality; Unable To Come Up With Any Move That Is Decent Or Innovative, It Resorts To Its Usual Mix Of Brutality And Lies”**

2 February 2011 By Ahdaf Soueif, Guardian UK [Excerpts]

I knew something was wrong when I woke up to the sound of car horns. It’s been so quiet and peaceful the last few days we’ve even started seeing the bats once again flitting in and out of the fruit trees at dusk.

This wasn’t the normal noise of Cairo traffic; this was aggressive, patterned and constant, like what you get after a football match only lots more so.

Out of my window I saw the crowd marching across 15 May flyover.

It’s odd: the pro-Mubarak lot are so much more regimented – and so much less civil: the noise pollution, the rude gestures at the street, the sticks, the attitude – and at the same time the perfectly scripted banners, the “stewards” marshalling and directing them.

By midday they had started to attack Tahrir Square; the attacks are continuing as I write now. I’m getting regular updates from the square from my son, nieces, sister and other friends in the thick of it. The people who on Tuesday night were listening to music and debating modes of government are now putting their bodies on the line.

So who are these people?

**In support of the president, they throw Molotov bottles and plant pots from the tops of buildings onto the heads of women and children.**

**To establish stability and order, they break heads with rocks and legs with bicycle chains.**

**To have their say in the debate they slash faces with knives.**

Who are they?

Well, every time one of them is captured his ID says he's a member of the security forces.

And his young captors simply hand him to the military who are standing by.

So, the regime once again displays its banality; unable to come up with any move that is decent or innovative, it resorts to its usual mix of brutality and lies.

**On Tuesday night President Mubarak came on TV and patronised the rest of the country by claiming that Egyptians were in the grip of fear, and pretended that his regime which has been de-developing the country and stealing the bread from people's mouths is now suddenly equipped to "respond to the demands of our young people".**

**And the next morning, not 12 hours after the president's emotional appeal, the regime turned loose its thugs on the street.**

**The same tactics that have been used against protesters over the last five years, the same tactics in force at the last elections to scare voters off the streets, appeared and with redoubled viciousness.**

**This is the regime that is going to listen to the people and use the coming months to put in reforms.**

**Sure.**

Their next trick will be to say that the young people in Tahrir are "foreign" elements, that they have connections to "terrorism", that they've visited Afghanistan, that they want to destabilise Egypt.

But by now the whole world knows that this regime lies as naturally as it breathes.

What was it one American literary diva said about another? "Everything she says is a lie including 'and' and 'the'?"

**The people here are so way ahead of their government.**

**If you could see the kids on the street telling you that the regime wants to pin the responsibility for this movement on the Islamists in order to scare the west – when actually it was started by 11 Facebook youth groups only one of which has any religious colouring, and very mild at that.**

**If you could see the small field hospital that's gone up with volunteer doctors – mostly young women – treating the people, and the medicines pouring in from well-wishers.**

**If you could see the young men with their dropped jeans and the tops of their boxers showing forming a human chain to protect what the people have gained over the last week in Tahrir Square.**



If you could see my nieces with their hair streaming like a triumphant banner tweeting for dear life in the midst of it all ... you would know beyond a shadow of a doubt: Egypt deserves its place in the sun – out of the shadow of this brutal regime.

MORE:

**“The Longer The Army Is In Contact With The Revolutionary Masses, The Greater Will Be The Effect And The More Difficult It Will Be To Use It To Crush The Revolution”**

**“The Army Has Stated That It Will Not Use Force To Suppress The Demonstrations. This Is The Kiss Of Death For Mubarak”**

**“Decisive Action Is Necessary If Order Is To Be Imposed By Force Of Arms. But Here There Is No Decisive Action, Only Hesitation, Prevarication And Indecision”**

**“Mubarak Is ‘Willing To Wound, And Yet Afraid To Strike’. This Is A Sure Recipe For Undermining Any Authority He May Still Have Had”**



Young girls are welcomed atop an armored vehicle by Egyptian soldiers during a mass demonstration against Mubarak at Tahrir or Liberation Square in Cairo, Egypt, Feb. 1, 2011. (AP Photo/Victoria Hazou)

01 February 2011 by Alan Woods, Marxist.com [Excerpts]

The Great Pyramid of Giza has lasted for 3,800 years.

Hosni Mubarak has lasted somewhat less, but he would like to survive for a little longer.

The difference between his regime and the Pyramid of Khufu is that it is an inverted pyramid.

All its strength is at the top, but there is only a tiny point at the bottom.

The laws of gravity and architecture tell us that such a structure is inherently unstable.

The slightest push can bring the whole structure crashing down.

The whole of Egypt is now in a precarious balance.

That same precariousness applies to the role of the armed forces, the sole remaining fulcrum of the regime. On paper it is a formidable force, as solid as the aforementioned pyramid.

But armies are composed of human beings, and are subject to the same pressures as any other social stratum or institution.

From one minute to the next the protesters awaited the order from the President for the army to disperse the crowds. “The soldiers are not out here for the people, they are out for the president,” said a middle-aged man.

The tanks that rolled into Tahrir Square were meant to intimidate. But they were immediately surrounded by a human mass that impeded their progress.

There have been shows of solidarity with protesters sharing their food with soldiers and in one case, carrying a young officer on their shoulders.

The longer the army is in contact with the revolutionary masses, the greater will be the effect and the more difficult it will be to use it to crush the revolution.

The display of military might was meant to have a psychological effect on the tens of thousands of protesters gathering in Tahrir Square. However, the tanks have failed to stop the protests.

Mubarak, a former air force officer, decided that fighter planes might get better results, since it is difficult to fraternize with a high-flying pilot.

Yesterday fighter jets flew low over the protesters in an attempt to cause panic. But just as they had quickly adjusted to the presence of tanks on the streets, demonstrators were undeterred.

Instead of fear, however, this intimidatory gesture caused anger. “Look! They are sending the air force against us. From this moment we have no President. We will get rid of Mubarak or we will die here.” That was the reaction of one protester.

“At first, I was frightened from the sound of the planes, but now it’s as if I’m listening to music,” commented a student who had come out to protest for the first time.



The tank says ‘The Will of The Egyptian People is above you Mubarak’. Photo: Zarabawy

In a revolution, as in a war, timing is of the essence.

The same is true of a counterrevolution.

Decisive action is necessary if order is to be imposed by force of arms.

But here there is no decisive action, only hesitation, prevarication and indecision.

Mubarak is “willing to wound, and yet afraid to strike”. This is a sure recipe for undermining any authority he may still have had.

Machiavelli said that it was better for a ruler to be feared than to be loved. Just one week ago Mubarak was not loved but he was feared. Now he is regarded with contempt.

He has lost the initiative and it will be impossible to regain it.

The momentum of the movement continues to grow as we write these lines. Thousands rallied over the weekend in Alexandria and there were also sizeable demonstrations in Mansoura, Damanhour and Suez.

A march billed as the “protest of the millions” is taking place today (Tuesday).

**More than a million people are out in Tahrir Square, 300,000 in Suez, 250,000 in Mahalla, 250,000 in Mansoura, and 500,000 in Alexandria. Protesters are out in every single city and town in Egypt, approximately four million all over Egypt. It is the moment of truth.**

**Even without a general strike normal economic life has already ground to a halt.**

The Japanese car maker Nissan has announced that it is halting production at its Egypt plant for a week, and it has urged non-Egyptian employees to leave the country.

Most shops and businesses in Cairo are closed. The middle classes are rushing to withdraw money from bank cash machines.

The few supermarkets that are open are stripped bare by shoppers, stocking up with food.

In the poor areas, the bakeries are running out of the small round loaves of bread that are a staple of the national diet. Streets are said to be piling up with rubbish as shops and hotels run out of basic supplies as infrastructure breaks down due to the unrest.

British foreign secretary William Hague told the BBC: “It’s to avert those risks and meet the legitimate grievances and aspirations of the Egyptian people that we are urging the Egyptian authorities... to create a more broadly-based government.”

He said reforms should be “real and visible” and elections “free and fair”.

**But there is one small problem with all this well-meaning advice. Mubarak seems determined not to run away as Ben Ali did.**

**And in fact the Americans don’t wish that either.**

They can see that the resulting power vacuum would be very dangerous for them.

The Americans have warned President Mubarak urgently that there must be no more killings. They know that one bloody clash would be sufficient to split the army in pieces. Then the floodgates would open.

**That is why the army has stated that it will not use force to suppress the demonstrations. This is the kiss of death for Mubarak.**

The masses want a complete transformation.

But Barack Obama wants only an “orderly transition”.

An orderly transition – to what? We do not know.

But we do know that Obama has called for Mr Mubarak to initiate it. That is to say, he is willing to give the old dictator a key role in making arrangements for the future of Egypt. We know also that Washington sees Egypt is a key “ally” in the Middle East. It has given it billions of dollars of aid, and it wants value for its money.

The White House says Mr Obama made a number of calls about the situation over the weekend to foreign leaders including Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan, King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia and British Prime Minister David Cameron. The protests in Egypt are top of the agenda of a meeting of European Union foreign ministers in Brussels on Monday.

All are terrified about the effect of “contagion” from Egypt.

**The BBC correspondent John Simpson says: “From the American point of view, the best thing that could happen would be a peaceful end to the protests, the retirement of Mr Mubarak and the continuation of some part (at least) of the system which he has created - shorn, hopefully, of its corruption.”**

**But he adds a warning: “It won’t be easy and it won’t appeal greatly to the demonstrators, who have condemned Mr Mubarak’s entire political structure and want to bring it down.”**

The strategists of Capital are relying on the fact that people will be tired, and that there will be a general desire to get back to ordinary life, and this will bring a gradual end to the protest.

Then the system if not the president himself might survive.

But everything depends on the demonstrators: if they hold out - an “orderly transition” will not be possible, and the movement could go far further than anybody suspects.

**Last night on (British) Channel Four News there was a debate between an American and a British “expert”. The American – a typically bone-headed right winger – was optimistic about a “managed transition to democracy”.**

**His British counterpart was not impressed. “This is a revolutionary situation,” he replied with icy sarcasm. “You cannot hope to manage a situation like that.” There can be no doubt that the latter evaluation is the correct one.**

In its search for an “orderly transition”, the western media is trying to build up the figure Mohamed ElBaradei.

**Although he played no role in organizing the protests, he is nevertheless presented as the leader of a mysterious “opposition coalition”, which apparently includes the Islamist Muslim Brotherhood, which also played no role in organizing the protests and at first did not even participate in them.**

This “coalition” is calling for a national unity government to be set up.

**Who will be in this government? Nobody knows. Who elected this “opposition coalition”? Nobody knows. Yet behind the backs of the masses, these gentlemen are already making plans to seize the reins of power.**

The leaders are jockeying for power. The opposition is unified in its hatred against Mubarak, yet divided on almost everything else.

Already there were signs of disunity within the “united” opposition. The Muslim Brotherhood is having second thoughts about its endorsement of leading figure Mohamed ElBaradei as a negotiator with Mr Mubarak.

**A spokesman for the Muslim Brotherhood, Mohamed Morsy, told the BBC:**

**“The people have not appointed Mohamed ElBaradei to become a spokesman of them.”**

**That is quite true.**

**The people have not appointed Mohamed ElBaradei, but neither have they appointed the Muslim Brotherhood.**

**They have not appointed anybody because they have not been consulted.**

**They are fighting and dying on the streets, and their objective is not to further the careers of opportunist politicians but to change their lives.**

The basic demands of the Egyptian demonstrators are for jobs, food and democratic rights. This is nothing to do with the Islamists and is a bridge to socialism, which has deep roots in the traditions of Egypt and other Arab countries.

The political structure of the state is crumbling, forcing the army to assume direct responsibility for the running of society.

**The military is supposed to be the guarantor of the state.**

**But the military is not a monolithic entity.**

The lower and middle ranks of the officer caste reflect the pressure of the masses.

The entire history of Egypt places the possibility of a colonel's coup on the agenda. The result could be a nationalist regime like that of Gamal Abdel Nasser, a colonel in the armed forces, who overthrew the British-backed monarchy in 1952.

In the present situation, it is possible that history will be repeated.

But whatever "transitional" government is formed will be under close scrutiny. It will feel the hot breath of the masses on its neck. The key to the whole situation is the mass movement.

All the contradictions are coming to a head. The coming hours will be decisive. The moment of truth has arrived.

**MORE:**

## **“Hospitals Confirmed That They Received Several Wounded Looters Shot By The Army Carrying Police Identification Cards”**

February 1, 2011 By Leila Fadel, Washington Post [Excerpts]

CAIRO - Human Rights Watch confirmed several cases of undercover police loyal to Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak's regime committing acts of violence and looting in an attempt to stoke fear of instability as demonstrations grew stronger Tuesday against the autocratic leader.

**Peter Bouckaert, the emergency director at Human Rights Watch, said hospitals confirmed that they received several wounded looters shot by the army carrying police identification cards.**

**They also found several cases of looters and vandals in Cairo and Alexandria with police identification cards.**

He added that it was "unexplainable" that thousands of prisoners escaped from prisons over the weekend.

**“Mubarak's mantra to his own people was that he was the guarantor of the nation's stability. It would make sense that he would want to send the message that without him, there is no safety,” Bouckaert said.**

Over the past three days, state television has been reporting alarmist news about violence and criminals among the demonstrations in an attempt to discredit the democratic movement.

## **DO YOU HAVE A FRIEND OR RELATIVE IN THE MILITARY?**

**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**

## **AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS**

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

February 2, 2010 Reuters

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

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### **Hundreds Gather To Honor Fallen Garden Grove Soldier**

Jan. 28, 2011 By DEEPA BHARATH, THE ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

Jennifer Sievers stood on the pavement wiping tears from under her sunglasses on a warm, sunny Tuesday morning.

The ceramics teacher was one face among those who lined nearly a half mile of Lampson Avenue outside Pacifica High School in Garden Grove with their hands over their hearts to welcome home a fallen soldier – Spc. Jose A Torre Jr.

Torre, 21, a Garden Grove resident and 2007 Pacifica graduate, died Jan. 15 from injuries after insurgents attacked his unit with a rocket-propelled grenade in Baghdad. Torre was assigned to the Special Troops Battalion, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, Fort Riley, Kansas.



At 10:35 a.m. Tuesday, an airplane brought a casket bearing Torre's body to the Joint Forces Training Base in Los Alamitos. His family members walked over to the flight line to a cart on which the casket was placed, draped with the Stars and Stripes.

Torre's family members stood around the casket while his grandfather became emotional, leaned over and rested his head on the casket for a minute.

A hearse then drove through Pacifica High School where all the students lined the street to pay their respects to the fallen hero, who was one of them not too long ago. The hearse stopped briefly outside the school while the band played the alma mater. Members of the varsity wrestling team, which Torre was a part of during his time in Pacifica, stood up front.

Sievers, who had Torre for a year in her ceramics class, said she was shocked when she heard the news.

"I'm his Facebook friend and talked to him just two weeks ago," she said. "I logged on to see if it was true – and it was."

She described Torre as talkative, friendly and outgoing.

"He was a loud presence in any room," she said, smiling through her tears.

Alicia Duncan, a Spanish teacher at Pacifica who taught Torre for three years, said he was one of those teens who turned his life around.

"He had his issues like most teens, but his junior and senior years, he really matured and became focused," she said. "He was a man at 15. Why does it always have to be the kid who is pulling his life back together?"

Torre wrote to her two days before he died saying that he was looking forward to coming back home. Duncan said Torre wrote he was leaving for home in a couple of days and she promised to send him a picture of the snow-capped mountains.

Torre's younger sister, Laura, also graduated from Pacifica. So he often came to visit, said Amy Bowman, his guidance counselor.

"He came in a couple of times in his fatigues," she said. "He was very proud of serving. He told me he was very happy doing what he was doing. I got the sense that he belonged and was part of something bigger."

Laura Herzog, spokeswoman for the Joint Forces Training Base, told students gathered around her that the Torre family is overwhelmed by the support they have received from the community and from Pacifica High School.

"(Torre's) mother told me that this wonderful community support has made it possible for them to deal with this tremendous loss," she said.

Family members did not comment.

Also present at the base was Marlon Chinchilla, brother of 22-year-old Yorba Linda native, Marine Cpl. Claudio Patino IV, who was killed in Afghanistan's Helmand Province June 22. Chinchilla said he came to show his family's support for the Torre family.

"My mother and I are here to show this family that they are not alone," he said, choking back tears.

Chinchilla said he had to deal with feelings of anger, disbelief and hopelessness that he would never see his brother ever again.

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## **UNREMITTING HELL ON EARTH; ALL HOME NOW**



A medic with the United States Army's Charlie Company 1-214 Aviation Regiment runs towards a Marine wounded by an improvised explosive device before moving him to a medevac helicopter in southern Helmand Province, Afghanistan, 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**

## MILITARY NEWS

### HOW MANY MORE FOR OBAMA'S WARS?



The remains of Army Spc. Sean R. Cutsforth of Radford, Va., at Dover Air Force Base, Del. on Dec. 18, 2010. Cutsforth, 22, of Radford, Va., died Dec. 15 at Ghazni Province, Afghanistan, of wounds suffered when insurgents attacked his unit using small arms fire. (AP Photo/Jose Luis Magana)

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## **Amnesty Offered To 50,000 Sri Lanka Army Deserters**

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

Feb 1, 2011 ColomboPage

Feb 01, Colombo: Sri Lanka Army has decided to offer a nine-day period for the Army deserters to surrender and de-list.

The grace period to surrender in search of de-listing without punishment will begin February 04, the National Independence Day and will end on February 12, Army announced.

The Army deserters are asked to report to their respective regimental headquarters and get the official clearance from the Army at special counters opened for this purpose during the specified period, said the Army spokesman Major General Ubhaya Medawala.

Official figures say that there are around 50,000 Army deserters. Some of them were proven to have linked to the spate of violence that prevailed in the island in the recent past.

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## **FORWARD OBSERVATIONS**



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

**“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.”**

**Frederick Douglass, 1852**

**Hope for change doesn’t cut it when you’re still losing buddies.  
-- J.D. Englehart, Iraq Veterans Against The War**

I say that when troops cannot be counted on to follow orders because they see the futility and immorality of them THAT is the real key to ending a war.  
-- Al Jaccoma, Veterans For Peace

“What country can preserve its liberties if its rulers are not warned from time to time that their people preserve the spirit of resistance? Let them take arms.”  
-- Thomas Jefferson to William Stephens Smith, 1787

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

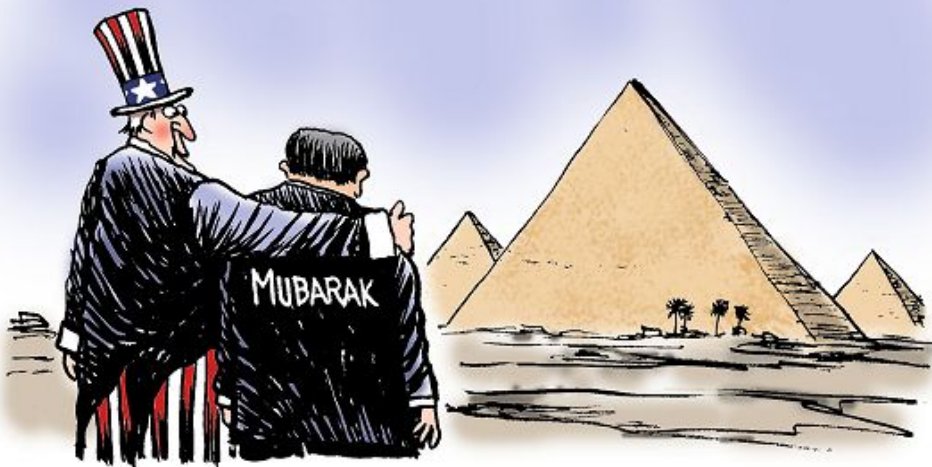
It is a two class world and the wrong class is running it.  
-- Larry Christensen, Soldiers Of Solidarity & United Auto Workers

Rise like Lions after slumber  
In unvanquishable number,  
Shake your chains to earth like dew  
Which in sleep had fallen on you-  
Ye are many — they are few  
-- Percy Bysshe Shelley, 1819, on the occasion of a mass murder of British workers by the Imperial government at Peterloo.

**“In The Aftermath Of The  
September 11, 2001 Terrorist  
Attacks, Americans Wondered  
Why Their Country Had Been  
Targeted”**

**“Democracy Is Great In Theory,  
But If It Will Cause Any Disruption  
To Business As Usual,  
Washington Prefers Dictatorship”  
“On This Question, There Is Less  
Than A Dime’s Worth Of Difference  
Between ‘Progressive’ Democrats  
And Republican Xenophobes”  
“There Is None”**

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**BEATTIE**



**“Thanks, Old Friend. When America tries to promote peace, democracy and human rights, it’s always nice to have a dictator you can rely on.”**

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

**The words of Obama and his chorus of apologists say it all: When it comes to the aspirations of ordinary Arabs for genuinely participatory politics and true self-determination, those vaunted American values are suspended.**

January 29, 2011 From the Editors, MIDDLE EAST REPORT [Excerpts]

Every US administration has its mouthpiece in Washington's think tank world, its courtier that will slavishly praise its every utterance.

For the blessedly bygone Bush administration, that echo chamber was the American Enterprise Institute and the neo-conservative broadsheets in its orbit.

For the Obama administration, it is the National Security Network, an operation founded in 2006 to bring "strategic focus to the progressive national security community."

With one US-backed Arab despot dislodged and dodging Interpol, and another facing an intifada of historic proportions, many eyes looked to Washington, hopeful that President Barack Obama might reprise his ballyhooed Cairo speech of June 2009, showing the restive Arab masses that he felt and, perhaps, really understood their pain.

**Instead, Arab populations have heard a variation on Washington's long-standing theme: "The Obama administration seeks to encourage political reforms without destabilizing the region."**

**That sentence, taken from the National Security Network's January 27 press release, says it all: Democracy is great in theory, but if it will cause any disruption to business as usual, Washington prefers dictatorship.**

And so it was no surprise, though a deep and indelible blot upon Obama and his "progressive" entourage, when the president took a White House lectern on the evening of January 28 -- Egypt's "Friday of Rage" -- and announced his continued backing for the indefensible regime of President Hosni Mubarak.

In so doing, he ensured that the Arab fury of the winter of 2011 would be directed increasingly toward the United States as well as its regional vassals.

Amidst the hand wringing in the mainstream media over Obama's "limited options" in Egypt, through whose Suez Canal cruise oil tankers and the warships of the US Fifth Fleet, the truth is that the entire debate over democracy promotion in the Arab world and greater Middle East has been one long, bitterly unfunny joke.

In the aftermath of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, Americans wondered why their country had been targeted.

Many, of course, settled upon the solipsistic, emotionally comforting explanation that "they hate us for our values" or resorted to conspiracy theory about Islam and world conquest.

Saner sorts looked to the US history of support for Israel in its colonization of Palestine or coziness with certain kingdoms sitting atop vast pools of petroleum.

But these factors have never been the whole answer.

All who continue to wonder about the rest should ponder this day, January 28, 2011.

The words of Obama and his chorus of apologists say it all: When it comes to the aspirations of ordinary Arabs for genuinely participatory politics and true self-

determination, those vaunted American values are suspended, even when “special relationships” and hydrocarbon riches are not directly at issue.

And the anti-democratic sentiment is bipartisan: On this question, there is less than a dime’s worth of difference between “progressive” Democrats and Republican xenophobes, between pinstriped State Department Arabists and flannel-clad Christian fundamentalists, between oil-first “realists” and Israel-first neo-conservatives.

There is none.

**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](mailto:contact@militaryproject.org): Name, I.D., withheld unless you request publication. Same address to unsubscribe.**

## **OCCUPATION PALESTINE**

# **Zionist State Terrorists Send Three Planeloads Of “Hazardous Equipment” To Mubarak: “Internationally Proscribed Gas To Disperse Unwanted Crowds”**

31 January 2011 Middle East Monitor

The International Network for Rights and Development has claimed that Israeli logistical support has been sent to Egypt’s President Hosni Mubarak to help his regime confront demonstrations demanding that he steps down as head of state.

According to reports by the non-governmental organisation, three Israeli planes landed at Cairo’s Mina International Airport on Saturday carrying hazardous equipment for use in dispersing and suppressing large crowds.

In the statement circulated by the International Network, it was disclosed that Egyptian security forces received the complete cargoes on three Israeli planes which were, it is claimed, carrying an abundant supply of internationally proscribed gas to disperse unwanted crowds.



If the reports are accurate, this suggests that the Egyptian regime is preparing for the worst in defence of its position, despite the country sinking into chaos.

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

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## **DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK**

**The German Government “Once Again Defied German Majority Opinion And Voted To Continue The Use Of Troops In That Troublesome War In Afghanistan”  
“Nearly Two Thirds Of The Population Opposed Sending Troops And Wanted Them Out”  
[They Have The Same Kind Of Political Dictatorship We Do Here In The USA]**

February 1, 2011 By Victor Grossman, Berlin Bulletin No. 18 [Excerpt]

On Friday, January 28th, the Bundestag once again defied German majority opinion and voted to continue the use of troops in that troublesome war in Afghanistan.

Although both political and military leaders admit that it is a hopeless mess and a NATO victory a very bloody illusion, and although even the former German president admitted that economic objectives were the main concern (a confession which cost him his job), the ruling coalition put one more annual extension to the vote, which meant about 5000 troops and four fighter planes killing more Afghans and occasionally getting killed themselves.

Since nearly two thirds of the population opposed sending troops and wanted them out, it was politically necessary to get the opposition parties on board if at all possible.

To tempt them, or give them an alibi, the government spokespeople proclaimed that they would start withdrawing troops by the end of 2011, though only if the situation warranted, it was hastily added, while a possible final deadline of 2014 was hazily hinted at.

Although this was basically a blank check, the Social Democratic Party, which had been involved in sending troops there in the first place, decided to support a government which it is now otherwise opposing vigorously, at least in words. 105 Social Democrats voted Ja, 8 courageous ones voted Nein, while 8 abstained.

The Greens are also an opposition party, at least officially. Their grass roots, once adamantly anti-war, have not been completely tamed and so, like last year, their deputies split; 9 were in favor, 22 opposed, while 34 took the wishy-washy path of abstention. There were a few brave No-votes from the Christian corner, 4 to be exact, while the 86 right-wing Free Democrats all voted to keep the troops on their risky positions along the Hindu Kusch mountains.

As always, it was the Left Party, all 70 of those present (6 were unable to attend), who unanimously demanded an end to German participation. Again they were attacked by all the others, including some Green leaders.

The final count was 419 for keeping the soldiers in the war, 116 opposed, 43 abstaining and 44 absent.

This was ten votes less for the war than in 2010 and five more No votes, no great change.

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

## **CLASS WAR REPORTS**

**Underneath The Egyptian Revolution  
-- The Politics Of Food:  
“The Inability Of The Egyptian Regime  
To Insure A Steady Flow Of Food Staples  
Should Be Viewed As A Critical Factor**

# Driving This Seemingly Spontaneous Movement For Freedom”

01 February, 2011 By Billy Wharton, Countercurrents.org [Excerpts]

Billy Wharton is a writer, activist and the editor of the Socialist WebZine. His articles have appeared in the Washington Post, the NYC Independent, SpectreZine and the Monthly Review Zine.

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*So long as you have food in your mouth, you have solved all questions for the time being. - Franz Kafka*

Hidden beneath the spectacular street battles that aim to force Egyptian dictator Hosni Mubarak out of office is a trigger that exists in dozens of countries throughout the world – food.

Or, more specifically, the lack of it.

While commentators focus on the corruption of the dictatorship, or the viral effects of the Tunisian moment or the something akin to an Arab political awakening, the inability of the Egyptian regime to insure a steady flow of food staples should be viewed as a critical factor driving this seemingly spontaneous movement for freedom.

Egypt is far from an isolated case when it comes to food shortages. Since 2008, rising food prices have resulted in 40 mass riots throughout the globe and the United Nations reports that 37 countries currently face a food crisis.

**What makes Egypt special in regards to food shortages is the triple convergence of ecological devastation-induced harvest reductions, government corruption and ineptitude, and a resulting reliance on a global food market that is being inflated by global environmental degradation and capitalist speculation.**

The Nile River, the great provider of civilization, sits at the core of the severe environmental decline in the region. An over reliance on its resources combined with long-term negative effects from damming projects have resulted in water scarcities and yield declines in arable land.

The resulting crisis has produced skyrocketing prices for potable water – soda is now cheaper than water in many parts of Egypt – and reductions in the planting of necessary crops. (BBC Worldwide Monitoring, May 30, 2010)

**In November 2010, just a few months before the revolt, the Mubarak government announced severe restrictions in the production of staple crops such as rice.**

**The reduced rice production had spiraling effects. Prices rose sharply, a key nutritional staple was removed from the poor and, because rice is also a key export crop, agricultural laborers were left jobless.**

**All this was done via the usual autocratic decree from Cairo. (The Citizen (Dar es Salaam) November 24, 2010)**

The Mubarak government has, for many years, chosen to manage the food crisis with an old combination succinctly summarized by turn of the 20th century Mexican Dictator Porfirio Diaz' slogan "pan o palo" (bread or the stick).

**Instead of allowing workers to bargain for wages that might meet the increased food costs, he repressed the labor movement through a reliance on a police apparatus that had swelled to an estimated one police operative for every 37 citizens.**

**This, while refusing for the last 26 years to raise the minimum wage. (AfricaNews, June 23, 2010)**

**Simultaneously, he attempted to create a state monopoly on the production and distribution of low cost bread.**

**When black market activity threatened this monopoly, he had the military take over the enterprise. (USA Today, April 30, 2008)**

All of this created a dual food dependency for the country.

Egypt remained a main recipient of US aid, about \$1.8 billion annually, and developed a dangerous linkage to global food markets. This link can be seen most clearly in the wheat market, where the Egyptian state was forced to make mass purchases of wheat in order to satisfy rising food demands and maintain social order.

Though it was a critical strategy to maintain political order, Egyptians do not live on wheat alone.

Soaring bread prices, lack of rice and water scarcity intersected with sharp increases in the costs of other basic foodstuffs. This year, vegetable prices soared 50% and meat and poultry increased by 28.6%. The tomato crop was particularly poor this season with harvests declining as much as 75% in some areas. (Reuters, October 19, 2010)

Consider then that the revolt in Egypt is more than just a movement for political freedom. It may be one of the first instances of a political movement that exposes the sharp limitations of current global system of food production.

**The lack of food was the trigger for this uprising, the severing of a final link with a deeply authoritarian regime operating within limits imposed by its own corruption and repression, the natural world and an exceedingly unnatural global market for food.**

One lesson that can be drawn from this moment is that it is vitally necessary to create another kind of global system for the production and distribution of food.

Capitalist values built into these markets ensure that they serve the profit interests of the big food conglomerates. Ecological damage pushes further reliance on these same markets.

A new system anchored around socialist notions of global equity and ecological sustainability would serve as a better companion to the demands for political freedom being presented in Egypt and held by people living in many other places in the world.

## **NEED SOME TRUTH? CHECK OUT TRAVELING SOLDIER**

**Traveling Soldier is the publication of the Military Resistance Organization.**

**Telling the truth - about the occupations or the criminals running the government in Washington - is the first reason for Traveling Soldier. But we want to do more than tell the truth; we want to report on the resistance to Imperial wars inside the armed forces.**

**Our goal is for Traveling Soldier to become the thread that ties working-class people inside the armed services together. We want this newsletter to be a weapon to help you organize resistance within the armed forces.**

**If you like what you've read, we hope that you'll join with us in building a network of active duty organizers. <http://www.traveling-soldier.org/>**

**And join with Iraq Veterans Against the War to end the occupations and bring all troops home now! ([www.ivaw.org/](http://www.ivaw.org/))**

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