

Military Resistance 9B8

No Regrets: T

Because of the press of keeping up with reporting on the mass movements from below catching fire in nation after nation, it's not been possible to respond to the hundreds of emails flooding in confirming that, suddenly, everything has changed.

There are 800+ messages backed up for attention, most of them with a common theme: people nobody ever heard of before are standing up and amazing the world. If you have sent one, thanks without regrets.

What a wonderful problem to have.

Spreading with unprecedented speed and intensity, making a mockery of national borders, this revolutionary earthquake is not yet finished shaking the wealthy and powerful, nor is it knowable yet how far it will be felt, or how powerful the shaking will be.

It is certain that eventually there will be a pause, and then more earthquakes to come soon, ever more powerful.

Humanity's tectonic plates have suddenly shifted, decisively, and the old order cannot be put back as it was before.

Chains break at their weakest links.

The chains under attack in Tunisia and Egypt are the same chains that bind us everywhere, and weakening them in Cairo, or Belgrade, or Baghdad, or anywhere, weakens the chains that bind us everywhere.

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

**“Atef Mohamed Habib Surmised
That The Army Was Making A
Show Of Trying To Suppress The
Demonstration To Appease The
Government”**

**“The Army Is Afraid Of The Regime,’
Said Magdy Gharib Mahmoud, 25”**

**“If The Regime Is Shaken Up A Little Bit,
Then The Army Will Be On Our Side. But
Right Now The Military Must Be Feeling
That The Regime Is Still Strong”**



Feb 6: Egyptian anti-government demonstrators gathered near soldiers at Tahrir Square in Cairo. (AFP/Khaled Desouki)

February 6, 2011 By Will Englund, Washington Post Foreign Service [Excerpts]

For a short time Sunday morning, soldiers prohibited anyone from bringing food into Tahrir Square, the scene of nearly two weeks of anti-government protests, though people were still allowed to pass the checkpoints.

A sit-down protest began on the street at the foot of the Qasr Al Nil bridge, which feeds traffic across the Nile and, on a normal day, into the square. Men who had brought supplies to be given out to the crowds in the square sat on the pavement, waving their plastic shopping bags in the air.

“Sit in, sit in, until they let the food in!” they chanted.

They called on everyone who was heading to the square to join them, outside the perimeter, in this new protest. The soldiers, most wearing riot helmets but with the visors up, were impassive.

“Why is the military preventing us from bringing food inside?” asked Hasan Afifi, who had arrived with a bag of sandwiches, fava beans and falafel. “Is the military fighting us? Do they want us to die of starvation? The role of the military is to protect us, not to kill us.”

The crowd at this secondary protest grew until it numbered several hundred angry, chanting people. Similar scenes were enacted at other entrances to the square, threatening to spread the unrest outward into the city. After an hour, with no explanation, the army relented, and food was again allowed in.

The mini-blockade was the latest in a series of maneuvers by the army. On Saturday, military tanks attempted to enter the square but were blocked by demonstrators.

Atef Mohamed Habib, who was carrying a large bundle of blankets on his head and was allowed to pass into the square unmolested Sunday, surmised that the army was making a show of trying to suppress the demonstration to appease the government.

“It’s to present an image,” he said.

The army’s increasingly visible presence has clearly made the area around the square much safer. The stone-throwing battles with protesters sympathetic to President Hosni Mubarak have stopped. Now, stones gathered as ammunition have been set out on the square to spell messages.

But the military escalation also is a sign that the army is much more in control. It has set up checkpoints at every entrance to the square - in addition to those run by the demonstrators themselves - and its tanks are mostly arranged with their barrels facing the protest. On the side streets leading to the square, some intersections have been blocked off with coils of barbed wire. Heavy traffic barriers are in place, as well as sand-bagged emplacements.

The demonstrators are aware that the army is the one institution in Egypt that commands universal respect and that could tip this struggle one way or the other. They are also aware that Mubarak, who continues to hang on, thereby continues to remain the commander-in-chief, and that an outright mutiny by the generals is unlikely.

“Only the steadfastness of the youth here, and also external pressure, has forced the military to be neutral,” said Mustafa, the teacher. “They may not be with us, but we definitely don’t want them against us.”

The protesters have decorated the military vehicles with graffiti: "God is Great." "The Egyptian revolution will not be thwarted."

"Down with Mubarak the butcher."

On an armored personnel carrier, a passerby had scrawled a line from a Tunisian poem: "If, someday, people want to live, destiny will have to give way."

The soldiers sit topside, forbidden to talk with the crowds around them. No one at Tahrir Square knows how much further the army might try to tighten control in the next few days.

"The army is afraid of the regime," said Magdy Gharib Mahmoud, 25. "If the regime is shaken up a little bit, then the army will be on our side. But right now the military must be feeling that the regime is still strong."

Demonstrators organized a human chain to blockade the Mugamma, a huge administrative services building that borders the square and is a hated symbol of Egypt's suffocating bureaucracy.

The crowd also fended off persistent but nonviolent attempts by the army to reclaim parts of the square, lying down in front of tanks to prevent them from closing in.

In Tahrir Square, many among the protesters said they had no choice but to hold firm.

If the demonstrations were to end prematurely, they said, Mubarak and Suleiman would renege on their promises and deploy the feared secret police to round up dissenters.

"All these attempts at putting people to sleep by responding to very marginal demands is just a tactic to gain time," said Hafez Moussa, 36, a Muslim cleric from Cairo's al-Azhar district.

"As soon as people leave the square, he will take his revenge on all of them."

MORE:

Egypt 2011:

"If the regime is shaken up a little bit, then the army will be on our side. But right now the military must be feeling that the regime is still strong."

Russia 1917:

"The more the soldiers in their mass are convinced that the rebels are really rebelling, that this is a struggle to

the death, that the people may win if they join them, the more they realize this, the more willing they are to turn aside their bayonets, or go over with them to the people”

“The revolutionaries can create a break in the soldiers’ mood only if they themselves are actually ready to seize the victory at any price whatever, even the price of blood. And the highest determination never can, or will, remain unarmed”

**[Excerpts from: The History of the Russian Revolution By Leon Trotsky
Volume One: The Overthrow of Tzarism: February 23-27, 1917]**

The army was still the army, it was bound with discipline, and the threads were in the hands of the monarchy.

The police are fierce, implacable, hated and hating foes. To win them over is out of the question. Beat them up and kill them.

It is different with the soldiers: the crowd makes every effort to avoid hostile encounters with them; on the contrary, seeks ways to dispose them in its favour, convince, attract, fraternize, merge them in itself.

In the last two days the troops had been drawn into the events – on the second day, cavalry, on the third, the infantry too.

They barred the way, pushed and crowded back the masses, sometimes connived with them, but almost never resorted to firearms.

Those in command were slow to change their plan, partly because they underestimated what was happening – the faulty vision of the reaction supplemented that of the leaders of the revolution – partly because they lacked confidence in the troops.

But out of this complicated web of material and psychic forces one conclusion emerges with irrefutable clarity: the more the soldiers in their mass are convinced that the rebels are really rebelling – that this is not a demonstration after which they will have to go back to the barracks and report, that this is a struggle to the death, that the people may win if they join them, and that this winning will not only guarantee impunity, but alleviate the lot of all – the more they realize this, the more willing they are to turn aside their bayonets, or go over with them to the people.

In other words, the revolutionaries can create a break in the soldiers’ mood only if they themselves are actually ready to seize the victory at any price whatever, even the price of blood.

And the highest determination never can, or will, remain unarmed.

**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

**“Mr. Mubarak, As Recently As
An Interview On Thursday,
Insisted Would Descend Into
Chaos Without Him”**

**“Throughout The Day, By Accident
Or Intention, Tens Of Thousands
Of People Seemed Determined To
Disprove Every Cliché That The
Elite Has Offered To Justify Its
Repression”**

**“Guards At The Barricades Wore
Helmets That Bore The Slogan “The
Government Of The Revolution”**

“In A Way, The Contest Has Begun To Pit Two Perceptions Of Power: Sanctioned Or Imposed”

[Thanks to Michael Letwin, New York City Labor Against The War & Military Resistance Organization, who sent this in.]

February 4, 2011 By ANTHONY SHADID, The New York Times [Excerpts]

CAIRO — It was proclaimed as “the Friday of departure,” but neither the demonstrators who proved their staying power as a force for change nor their nemesis, President Hosni Mubarak, left. Now a prolonged collision is shaping up between a staggering but entrenched old guard and an outpouring of Egypt’s discontented over how fast and how deep the changes will be.

In a contest of image, perception and power, the rebellion pits those disenfranchised by Mr. Mubarak’s government against a still formidable array built around the military and security apparatus and a fabulously wealthy clique enriched by connections with the governing party.

Even as it sheds some of its support, the government remains determined not to surrender what it deems its prestige.

Mr. Mubarak’s leadership is one symbol of that, but even if he leaves, the old guard may well dig in to obstruct open elections and true civilian rule. The government retains a monopoly on armed violence, the state’s arsenal in its hands.

But despite organizers’ own lurking fears, the uprising has proved its ability to turn out thousands into the streets, in a remarkable show of steadfastness that has left the government no option but to engage it.

“There are a lot of Fridays left,” said Tayssir Ibrahim, a protester in Tahrir Square here.

Since the revolt, the military has surged to the forefront, emerging as the pivotal player in politics it long sought to manage behind the scenes.

The beneficiary of nearly \$40 billion in American aid during Mr. Mubarak’s rule, its interests span the gamut of economic life — from the military industry to businesses like road and housing construction, consumer goods and resort management. Even leading opposition leaders, like Mohamed ElBaradei, have acknowledged that the military will have a key role in a transition.

What is so striking about Egypt’s tumult is the ardor that protesters have brought to an idea of community. In some ways, Egypt’s revolution has already happened.

In a country made miserable by the petty humiliations of authority, Egyptians were welcomed to the square with boisterous greetings. “Thank God for your safety,” men

organized as guards declared. “Welcome, heroes!” others cried. “Come on and join the square.”

Most poignantly, they simply chanted, “These are the Egyptian people.”

Throughout the day, by accident or intention, tens of thousands of people seemed determined to disprove every cliché that the elite has offered to justify its repression of a people that Mr. Mubarak, as recently as an interview on Thursday, insisted would descend into chaos without him.

No one pushed unduly as they waited to pass concertina wire strung by the military across the entrance.

They waited as men prayed, bowing their heads on Egyptian flags that served as prayer rugs.

The menacing harassment of women was nowhere to be seen.

Volunteers ferried in bread, cheese, honey, juice and milk, along with medicine, some of which was provided by a pharmacist who gave a 20 percent discount for the cause.

Guards at the barricades wore helmets — actually, kitchen bowls converted for a fight — that bore the slogan “The government of the revolution.”

“God is great,” people chanted, “and the revolution is growing.”

In a way, the contest has begun to pit two perceptions of power: sanctioned or imposed.

Protester after protester made the point that the government’s prestige was broken, most remarkably by the young men in Tahrir Square who for two days fought off government supporters once routinely deployed to intimidate voters in sham elections and small crowds of protesters. “Heroes,” they called the young men.

“The people are stubborn now,” said Nasser el-Sherif, a 24-year-old student, sitting near a grandmother, Um Ibrahim Abdel-Mohsin, who had ferried rocks to the barricades for two days. “You want to beat us up? We’ll kick you out, and it’s our right.”

“We’re not compromising our freedom anymore,” Mr. Sherif added.

Near him was scrawled graffiti. “Victory is with the patient,” it said.

MORE:

“We Are Witnessing The Tremendous Blossoming Of Human Self-Activity

That All Great Revolutions Bring Forth”

“One Crucial Test Facing The Revolution In The Coming Days Will Be Whether The Self-Organization That Is Blossoming On The Streets Can Make Its Way Into Egyptian Workplaces”

February 3, 2011 By Zach Zill, Readers' Comments, Socialist Worker [Excerpts]

THE EGYPTIAN revolution continues to confound and befuddle America's leading conservative halfwits. While the racist, Zionist idiot Richard Cohen bemoans the march of democracy in the Arab world and neo-con scumbag Elliott Abrams tries to paint George W. Bush as an Egyptian freedom fighter (both, incidentally, in the op-ed pages of the Washington Post), the Egyptian people themselves march defiantly forward.

But there's more: we also are witnessing the tremendous blossoming of human self-activity that all great revolutions bring forth.

As one Egyptian says in Judith Orr's brilliant reporting from Cairo, “Here are the people in all their inventiveness. It's magnificent.”

The socialist axiom that ordinary people can run society for themselves, without the profit motive or the incentive of money, is coming to life in Egypt before our very eyes.

While the old order convulses in its death throes, and as U.S. and Western imperialists frantically try to arrange a stage-managed transition to a harmless new regime, the Egyptian street is quietly and humbly giving birth to a flourishing of human creativity and intelligence, and a flowering of new forms of popular power.

“As revolt sweeps Egypt, so does volunteerism: a newfound pride in a country that protesters say, now belongs to them,” reports the news video above.

It depicts an amazing scene: Egyptian people filling the streets of Cairo, but not just to protest. No, these people are also cleaning up trash voluntarily. They are handing food out to people. They are setting up volunteer medical stations to treat patients. They are protecting museums and neighborhoods from looters, many of whom have been proven to be Egyptian police trying to discredit the protests.

In short, ordinary Egyptians are taking their very first steps in learning to run society for themselves, without their rulers or their bosses.

They are doing so at this moment mostly out of necessity--these are things that have to be done in order to keep the protest movement going, in order to force Mubarak from power. But it's easy to see how the revolutionary enthusiasm quickly raises people's horizons beyond the immediate question of Mubarak.

As one Egyptian interviewed says, "This has charged us with positivity. We can do more; we can help our country to be better."

THE NEW York Times describes the same phenomenon happening in Alexandria. There, new organizations calling themselves "Peoples Committees" have sprung up. In addition to the "Popular Committee for the Protection of Properties and Organization of Traffic," there are other branches organizing cleanup and emergency response.

The Mubarak regime surely is unaware of this, as its sole concern now must be self-preservation.

It's unlikely that the imperialists are paying much attention, either, as they preoccupy themselves with rearranging the chairs at the top and getting back to "stability" and business as usual.

They consult with the generals, they confer with the big businessmen, they seek advice from the Israeli government. Their worldview assigns almost no importance to the intelligence and initiative of the little people on the streets.

The Western media, too, have a hard time understanding what's happening, of conceiving this as anything other than "volunteerism."

But what this term does not quite convey is the way in which all this "volunteer" labor that's being done flows from the democratic initiative and self-organization of the people themselves--not at all directed from above.

This is not me going down to the soup kitchen, where a staffer tells me what to do. This is the people themselves deciding what needs to be done for the benefit of all, and then doing it.

This dynamic exerts itself so powerfully in revolutionary situations that it becomes apparent to any observer, even non-socialists.

Perhaps most striking was an Al Jazeera correspondent quoting Marx while describing the scene in Cairo: "The people are working together, 'from each according to their ability, to each according to their needs.'"

There is a telling exchange at the end of the above New York Times article.

It at once illustrates both how incomprehensible this whole situation is to those for whom politics necessitates leadership by rich elites; and how embryonic are the new forms of street organization, how newly politicized are those participating in them.

The reporter asks one of the “volunteers” if he will run for political office. The volunteer, puzzled, responds that no, he's just a “normal guy.” The reporter sees the People's Committees as inherently political organizations, and thus tries to conceptualize them in the only way Americans understand politics: electoralism.

Though right to see the “volunteer's” actions as political, he is quite wrong in assuming that the democratic politics of self-organization and self-activity are not valid political acts in their own right.

The Egyptian “volunteer,” on the other hand, still sees himself as just a “normal guy” doing what needs to be done for the movement; it's possible he does not yet even understand the vast political implications of the Popular Committees.

It is these ordinary Egyptians, many of whom are impoverished and illiterate, in whose hands the fate of the revolution lies.

Clearly, some of them are already aware of the lasting significance of their actions. Another Egyptian interviewed in the video says, “I'll tell you something, these six days will impact Egypt for the next 50 years.”

Referring to the strength and organization of the people in the streets, he says, “Any ruler will think a hundred times before making a decision, because he will always remember what happened on January 25, 2011.”

One crucial test facing the revolution in the coming days will be whether the self-organization that is blossoming on the streets can make its way into Egyptian workplaces.

Should that happen, especially if it happens in the mass textile factories of Mahalla, or in the steel mills, or in the ports of Alexandria and Suez, then the movement will become incomparably more powerful; its implications for the current social setup, all the more ominous.

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

Resistance Action

Feb 5 (Reuters) & February 07 By AFP

Two roadside bomb attacks on Monday in a town south of the Iraqi capital killed three soldiers, local police said. The three soldiers were killed by a bomb near their patrol in Iskandiriyah, 50 kilometres (30 miles) from Baghdad, a police officer in the Babil provincial capital of Hilla said. Among the dead was an army captain.

Iskandiriyah lies within a region known as the "Triangle of Death" because of the frequency of insurgent attacks during the worst of Iraq's insurgency after the 2003 US-led invasion.

ABU GHRAIB - Insurgents wounded four Iraqi soldiers when they opened fire at a security checkpoint in the district of Abu Ghraib in western Baghdad, police said.

TUZ KHURMATO - A roadside bomb targeting a provincial council member wounded two of his guards on Friday in Tuz Khurmato, 170 km (105 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

MOSUL - A roadside bomb wounded an Iraqi soldier on Friday when it went off near his patrol in eastern Mosul, 390 km (240 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.

BAGHDAD - A roadside bomb went off near an Iraqi army patrol, wounding two soldiers and two civilians, in Baghdad's northeastern Sadr City district, local police said.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

U.S. Soldier Reported Killed As Bomb Hits Foreign Troops Touring Afghan Customs Office In Kandahar

Feb. 7, 2011 (CBS/AP)

A bomb exploded in southern Afghanistan's largest city of Kandahar on Monday, killing at least one person and wounding two, Afghan officials said.

The Kandahar bomb went off at the city's customs house during a visit by foreign troops, police chief Khan Mohammad Mujahid said. He said an Afghan interpreter was killed, and at least two people were wounded in the attack.

Sources tell CBS News that initial reports suggest a U.S. service member may also have been killed, but that information could not be immediately returned.

The government building is used by residents to clear customs paperwork on imported items. Visitors typically must undergo pat-downs to enter, raising questions about security procedures at the facility.

Mujahid said the bomber was able to enter the building before detonating the bomb.

Zalmay Ayubi, the spokesman for the Kandahar provincial governor, said only that the explosion occurred near the building. Conflicting reports are common in the immediate aftermath of bombings.

The Taliban claimed responsibility for Monday's attack within minutes of the blast. Taliban spokesman Qari Yousef Ahmadi said a team of two attackers was involved.

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.

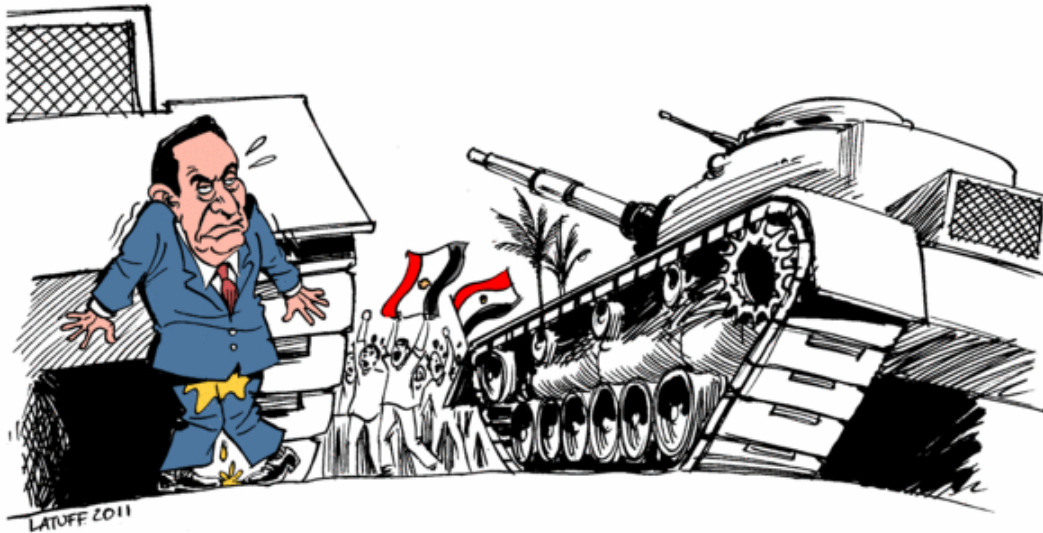
“We need the storm, the whirlwind, and the earthquake.”

Frederick Douglass, 1852

<p>Hope for change doesn't cut it when you're still losing buddies. -- J.D. Englehart, Iraq Veterans Against The War</p>

“A Lesson That All Great Social Movements Of The Past Have Learned: The Struggle For Freedom And Democracy Can't Be Left To Those At The Top”

“News Footage Of The Protests In Tunis And Elsewhere Showed A Scene Common To Every Revolution--Of Protesters Trying To Engage With Rank-And-File Soldiers And Convince Them Not To Fire On Them”



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

But no matter what follows, the scenes in Cairo and elsewhere at the end of January echo similar ones in Russia in 1917 and every other revolution--where the masses have confronted the rank and file of the army and convinced them to not turn their guns on the people.

February 1, 2011 Editorial, Socialist Worker [Excerpts]

MANY OF the great struggles of the past can be brought to mind by their year alone: 1917 and the Russian Revolution. 1968 and the French May. 1989 and the revolutions against Stalinism in Eastern Europe. 1979 and the fall of the Shah of Iran.

2011 is only a month old, but it already seems likely that it will be remembered as the year of the great revolt across the Arab world.

The images from the streets of Cairo, Tunis and elsewhere are electrifying--even the U.S. cable news networks, so used to peddling celebrity gossip and Washington's political trivia, seemed to grasp the importance of the struggle before their eyes.

The scenes bring to mind Leon Trotsky's famous words about the revolution he was a part of making in Russia:

“The most indubitable feature of a revolution is the direct interference of the masses in historic events. In ordinary times, the state--be it monarchical or democratic--elevates itself above the nation, and history is made by specialists in that line of business--kings, ministers, bureaucrats, parliamentarians, journalists. But at those crucial moments when the old order becomes no longer endurable to the masses, they break over the barriers excluding them from the political arena, sweep aside their traditional representatives, and create by their own interference the initial groundwork for a new regime.”

This dynamic illustrates a lesson that all great social movements of the past have learned: The struggle for freedom and democracy can't be left to those at the top.

Capitalism is supposed to promote democracy, according to its defenders, but the business and political elite of the U.S. and other nations are perfectly willing to tolerate dictatorship if their interests are best served that way.

Achieving genuine democracy--in Tunisia or Egypt or the U.S.--depends above all on the struggle from below.

AS IN every previous social upheaval that has shaken the old order, a critical question asserted itself in Tunisia and Egypt: How to overcome the armed force of the state that the rulers use to maintain their grip on power?

Ben Ali's regime depended on a huge security apparatus--some 150,000 police out of a population of 10.6 million--and the dictator ordered these forces to put down the first protests by whatever means. But rather than be intimidated, demonstrators only became more determined. They battled police and confronted the military when it was deployed.

News footage of the protests in Tunis and elsewhere showed a scene common to every revolution--of protesters trying to engage with rank-and-file soldiers and convince them not to fire on them.

When the revolt spread to Egypt, the same scenes were repeated.

Mubarak's police attacked demonstrators with their usual savagery, but they were pushed back--and eventually forced to retreat from the streets for days at a time.

Egypt's military has been armed to the teeth by the U.S., but here were the tanks manufactured in the U.S. and sent to Washington's most important Arab ally to bolster the imperialist order in the Middle East--now surrounded by a sea of protesters who reached out to poorly paid Egyptian soldiers to call on them to join the revolutionary movement.

The top brass of the Egyptian military recognized the threat. Their forces remained deployed through the last week of January, but seemingly with orders not to attack. Meanwhile, the top military officials were part of the scramble to find a façade for the “peaceful transition.”

Of course, the Egyptian military is no ally of the struggle for democracy, and its forces may still be called upon to crack down.

But no matter what follows, the scenes in Cairo and elsewhere at the end of January echo similar ones in Russia in 1917 and every other revolution--where the masses have confronted the rank and file of the army and convinced them to not turn their guns on the people.

The working people of Tunisia and Egypt have confronted hated dictators, but they have an even greater power to challenge the whole system of exploitation and oppression.

The demonstrations that rocked the tyrants can be the stepping-stones for the struggles of the future--the first taste of action that can give confidence that further change is possible.

The outcome of the struggles taking place now will determine the shape of the future Tunisia, the future Egypt and more besides.

It will be important for every fighter for social change, everywhere in the world, to engage in the discussions to come--with the goal of building a movement to transform a society that can't provide a decent living standard for workers, whether they live in Detroit or the Nile Delta.

One more lesson of past struggles flows from this--the importance for socialists to be organized to make our voices heard in the struggles to come.

The socialist vision of a new society based on workers' power--a world where inequality and injustice are ended forever--shows the alternative to the crisis-ridden capitalist system, and how that system can be transformed. But that alternative needs to be made part of all the struggles in society, whether in Tunisia or Egypt or the U.S., if it is to become a guide for the future.

That's why it's important for socialists everywhere to be organizing and building our numbers--as part of waging the struggles of today, as well as looking ahead to the fight for a new world.

2011 will certainly be remembered as the year of rebellion in the Arab world.

Right now, it's a year of possibilities that we can look forward to with a renewed sense of optimism, thanks to the struggles of the people of Tunisia and Egypt and across the Middle East.

MORE:

Outreach To The Troops 1907: “The Work Of The Socialist Youth Is Not In Vain”

**“During The Strikes At Dunkirchen,
Creusot, Loguivi, Monso-Le-Min The
Soldiers Ordered Against The
Strikers Declared Their Solidarity
With The Workers”**

**“The Young Socialist Workers Are
Working With All The Enthusiasm And
Energy Of The Young To Have The Army
Side With The People”**

Anti-militarist literature is delivered to soldiers in the barracks and handed out to them in the streets; soldiers find it in coffee-houses and pubs, and everywhere else they go.

October 8, 1907: Vperyod [Forward], Issue #16. By V.I. Ulyanov. [The writer used the pen name “Lenin” to keep the government from terrorizing his family.]

It will be recalled that the International Socialist Congress in Stuttgart discussed the question of militarism and in connection with it the question of anti-militarist propaganda. The resolution adopted on the point says, in part, that the Congress regards it as a duty of the working classes to “help to have working class youth brought up in a spirit of international brotherhood and socialism and imbued with class consciousness”.

The Congress regards this as an earnest of the army ceasing to be a blind instrument in the hands of the ruling classes, which they use as they see fit and which they can direct against the people at any time.

It is very hard, sometimes almost impossible, to conduct propaganda among soldiers on active service. Life in the barracks, strict supervision and rare leave make contact with the outer world extremely difficult; military discipline and the absurd spit and polish cow the soldier.

Army commanders do everything they can to knock the "nonsense" out of the "brutes", to purge them of every unconventional thought and every human emotion and to instill in them a sense of blind obedience and an unthinking wild hatred for "internal" and "external" enemies.... It is much harder to make an approach to the lone, ignorant and cowed soldier who is isolated from his fellow-men and whose head has been stuffed with the wildest views on every possible subject, than to draft-age young men living with their families and friends and closely bound up with them by common interest.

Everywhere anti-militarist propaganda among young workers has yielded excellent results. That is of tremendous importance. The worker who goes into the army a class-conscious Social-Democrat is a poor support for the powers that be.

There are young socialist workers' leagues in all European countries. In some, for instance, Belgium, Austria and Sweden, these leagues are large-scale organisations carrying on responsible party work. Of course, the main aim of the youth leagues is self-education and the working out of distinct and integrated socialist outlook. But the youth leagues also carry on practical work. They struggle for an improvement in the condition of apprentices and try to protect them from unlimited exploitation by their employers.

The young socialist workers' leagues devote even more time and attention to anti-militarist propaganda.

For that purpose, they try to establish close ties with young soldiers.

This is done in the following way. Before the young worker has joined the army, he is a member of a league and pays membership dues. When he becomes a soldier, the league continues to maintain constant contacts with him, regularly sending him small cash aids ("soldier's sous" as they call them in France), which, however small, are of substantial importance to the soldier.

For his part, he undertakes to provide the league with regular information about everything that goes on in his barracks and to write about his impressions. Thus, even after he joins the army, the soldier does not break off his ties with the organisation of which he was a member.

An effort is always made to drive the soldier as far away from home as possible for his service. This is done with the intention of preventing the soldier from being tied with the local population by any interest, and to make him feel alien to it.

It is then easier to make him carry out orders: to shoot at a crowd.

Young workers' leagues try to bridge this alienation between the soldier and the local population.

Youth leagues are connected with each other. When he arrives in a new town, the soldier, a former member of a youth league at home, - is met by the local league as a welcome visitor, and he is at once brought into the circle of local interests and helped in every possible way.

He ceases to be a newcomer and a stranger.

He is also aware that if any misfortune befalls him he will receive help and support.

This awareness adds to his courage, he gains assurance in his behaviour in the barracks, and is bolder in standing up for his rights and his human dignity.

Their close ties with young soldiers enable the youth leagues to carry on extensive anti-militarist propaganda among the soldiers.

This is done mainly with the aid of anti-militarist literature, which the youth leagues publish and circulate in great quantities, especially in France, Belgium and also in Switzerland, Sweden, etc.

This literature is highly diverse: postcards with anti-militarist pictures, anti-militarist army songs (many of these songs are very popular among the soldiers), "soldier's catechism" (in France it was circulated in more than 100,000 copies), all sorts of pamphlets, leaflets, appeals; weekly, fortnightly and monthly newspapers and magazines for soldiers, some of them illustrated.

Barracks, Recruit, Young Soldier, Pju pju (a pet name for the young recruit), and *Forward* are very widely circulated. For example, in Belgium the newspapers *Recruit* and *Barracks* have a printing of 60,000 copies each. Especially many magazines are published at the time of the draft.

Special issues of soldiers' newspapers are mailed to the homes of all recruits.

Anti-militarist literature is delivered to soldiers in the barracks and handed out to them in the streets; soldiers find it in coffee-houses and pubs, and everywhere else they go.

Recruits receive special attention. They are given a ceremonial send-off.

During the recruitment, processions are staged in the towns. In Austria, for instance, recruits walk through the town dressed in mourning and to the strains of funeral marches. In front of them rolls a decorated red carriage.

All the walls are plastered with red posters which say in large letters: "You will not shoot at the people!"

Evening parties with ardent anti-militarist speeches are held in honour of the recruits. In short, everything is done to awaken the recruit's consciousness, to ensure him against

the evil influence of the ideas and emotions which will be instilled into him in the barracks by fair means and foul.

The work of the socialist youth is not in vain.

In Belgium, there are almost 15 soldiers' unions in the army, which are mostly affiliated with the Social-Democratic Labour Party and are closely allied with each other. In some regiments, two-thirds of the soldiers are organised.

In France, the anti-militarist mood has become massive. During the strikes at Dunkirchen, Creusot, Loguivi, Monso-le-Min the soldiers ordered against the strikers declared their solidarity with the workers....

As time goes on, there are more and more Social-Democrats in the army and the troops become increasingly less reliable.

When the bourgeoisie has to confront the organised working class, whom will the army back?

The young socialist workers are working with all the enthusiasm and energy of the young to have the army side with the people.

“How Soldiers Rebelled Within The Ranks Of The U.S. Military In Reaction To The Insanity Of The Vietnam War”



Doug Hazen, alt.current-events [Excerpt]

One example of yanking '60s history out of the closet is the new film, "Sir! No Sir!," by David Zeiger.

This documentary, which opens April 7, tells the powerful story of how soldiers rebelled within the ranks of the U.S. military in reaction to the insanity of the Vietnam War.

It portrays the culture of the GI coffeehouses and the barnstorming actors and musicians led by Jane Fonda, who nurtured the resistance.

In the end, the film makes a convincing case that Nixon and Kissinger had no choice but to get the hell out of Vietnam. Toward the end of the war, thousands of GIs were refusing to do battle: some fragging officers who attempted to force them into hopeless and treacherous situations.

When I saw the film recently in Mill Valley, Calif., both Jane Fonda and Cindy Sheehan were present to honor many of the courageous vets who fought the war from the inside.

Fonda made one crucial point that night that stuck with me. She said that everyone associated with the successful soldier rebellion and the powerful themes of the '60s had to be demonized by the government and the media or else our military might would be called into question: the illusion of power we need to maintain empire.

The result is that soldiers who had the best of intentions and told the truth about what was really happening in Vietnam would be forever labeled as unpatriotic.

To find it: <http://www.sirnosir.com/>

**The Sir! No Sir! DVD is on sale now, exclusively at
www.sirnosir.com.**

Also available will be a Soundtrack CD (which includes the entire song from the FTA Show, "Soldier We Love You"), theatrical posters, tee shirts, and the DVD of "A Night of Ferocious Joy," a film about the first hip-hop antiwar concert against the "War on Terror."

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

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

February 8, 1968: KIA For Freedom The Orangeburg Massacre



Carl Bunin Peace History February 4-10

Three black students were killed and 50 wounded in a confrontation with highway patrolmen at a South Carolina State rally supporting arrested civil rights protesters.

The town's only bowling alley, the All Star, was still segregated years after the Civil Rights Act of 1964 outlawed discrimination based on race in such public accommodations.

On the previous two days, college students had entered the bowling alley, refusing to leave after they were not allowed to bowl. Fifteen of the second group were arrested.

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

**“The Greatest Danger To The
Egyptian Revolution And The
Prospects For A Free And
Independent Egypt Emanates
From Washington”**

**“If Egypt Goes Under, The United
States Fears That The Contagion
Would Spread As Arab Publics
Realize That The US-Backed**

Despots Who Rule Them Can Be Replaced”

“The Notion That Anyone, Let Alone US Officials, Could Believe That Suleiman Would Lead An ‘Orderly Transition’ To Democracy Would Be Laughable If It Were Not So Sinister”

“Under Any Suleiman ‘Transition’ Political Activists, Journalists And Anyone Suspected Of Being Part Of The Current Uprising Would Be In Grave Danger”

[Thanks to Michael Letwin, New York City Labor Against The War & Military Resistance Organization, who sent this in.]

6 February 2011 Ali Abunimah, The Electronic Intifada [Excerpts]

The greatest danger to the Egyptian revolution and the prospects for a free and independent Egypt emanates not from the “baltagiyya” -- the mercenaries and thugs the regime sent to beat, stone, stab, shoot and kill protestors in Cairo, Alexandria and other cities last week -- but from Washington.

Ever since the Egyptian uprising began on 25 January, the United States government and the Washington establishment that rationalizes its policies have been scared to death of “losing Egypt.” What they fear losing is a regime that has consistently ignored the rights and well-being of its people in order to plunder the country and enrich the few who control it, and that has done America's bidding, especially supporting Israel in its oppression and wars against the Palestinians and other Arabs.

US President Barack Obama and his national security establishment may be willing to give up Mubarak the person, but they are not willing to give up Mubarak's regime.

It is notable that the US has never supported the Egyptian protestors' demand that Mubarak must go now.

As The New York Times -- always a reliable barometer of official thinking -- reported, "The United States and leading European nations on Saturday threw their weight behind Egypt's vice president, Omar Suleiman, backing his attempt to defuse a popular uprising without immediately removing President Hosni Mubarak from power." Obama administration officials, the newspaper added, "said Mr. Suleiman had promised them an 'orderly transition' that would include constitutional reform and outreach to opposition groups" ("West Backs Gradual Egyptian Transition," 5 February 2011).

Moreover, the Times reported, the United States has already managed to persuade two of its major European clients -- the United Kingdom and Germany -- to back continuing the existing regime with only a change of figurehead.

Suleiman, long the powerful chief of Egypt's intelligence services, has served -- perhaps even more so than Mubarak -- as the guarantor of Egypt's regional role in maintaining the American- and Israeli-dominated order.

As author Jane Mayer has documented, Suleiman played a key role in the US "rendition" program, working closely with the CIA which kidnapped "terror suspects" from around the world and delivered them into Suleiman's hands for interrogation, and almost certainly torture ("Who is Omar Suleiman?," The New Yorker, 29 January 2011).

The notion that anyone, let alone US officials, could believe that Suleiman would lead an "orderly transition" to democracy would be laughable if it were not so sinister.

Much more likely, the strategy is to try to ride out the protests and wear out and split the opposition, consolidate the regime under Suleiman's ruthless grip with the backing of the Egyptian army, and then enact cosmetic "reforms" to keep the Egyptian people politically divided and busy while business carries on as usual.

Under any Suleiman "transition" political activists, journalists and anyone suspected of being part of the current uprising would be in grave danger.

If Egypt goes under, the United States fears that the contagion would spread as Arab publics realize that the US-backed despots who rule them can be replaced, and that the toppling of these regimes whose only promise to their people has been "security" is not the end of the world but the start of renewal.

By coming to the streets in their millions, by sacrificing the lives of some of their very finest, the Egyptian people have said that they and they alone want to decide their nation's future.

The confrontation is now between the Egyptian people's desire for democracy and self-determination on the one hand, and, on the other, US insistence (along with its clients in Egypt and the region) on continuing the old regime.

Let us offer whatever solidarity we can from wherever we are to help the Egyptian people to win.

**Ohio Mother Gets Felony
Convictions For Enrolling Her
Kids In A Good School:
The “Crime” Was “Sending Her
Children To The Copley Schools
By Using The Address Of Her
Father, A Resident Of Copley”
“Ohio Public Schools Were Allowed
To Operate Illegally For A Decade, In
Violation Of A State Supreme Court
Ruling”
“Yet No One Went To Jail For Forcing
Mostly African American Children To
Attend Underfunded Schools”**

February 2, 2011 By Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor, Socialist Worker

Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor is on the editorial board of the International Socialist Review. She is a frequent contributor on the subject of race and class and has written extensively on the struggle for housing justice. Her articles have also appeared on the Black Commentator, CounterPunch and Gaper’s Block Web sites.

AN AFRICAN American single mother of two from Akron, Ohio, was sentenced to two concurrent five-year prison sentences for a felony conviction of “falsifying documents” so that her two daughters could attend public school in the mostly white Copley Township outside Akron.

The five-year sentences were suspended, but Kelley Williams-Bolar was ordered to spend 10 days in prison and perform 80 hours of community service afterward for the “crime” of sending her children to the Copley schools by using the address of her father, a resident of Copley.

Williams-Bolar and her father Edward Williams were also charged with grand theft for “stealing” \$30,500, the cost of “out of district” tuition for the two children for two years.

The jury couldn't agree that the two engaged in theft, but they did convict Williams-Bolar on the fraud charge. Judge Patricia Cosgrove reduced the sentence, but insisted that Williams-Bolar serve some time so as not to “demean the seriousness” of the “crime.”

But what exactly is the crime?

Prosecutors claimed that the two children lived with their mother in federally subsidized housing in Akron, but Williams-Bolar maintained throughout that the family shared residency with her father. The three began splitting their time between the two homes, Williams-Bolar said, when their apartment was burglarized shortly after Christmas in 2006, and her father experienced a stroke.

What this case really highlights is the racist double standards applied to poor and working-class African Americans in this country.

“In The Williams-Bolar Case, The School District Paid An Off-Duty Akron Cop \$6,000 To Follow Her”

KELLEY WILLIAMS-BOLAR was sitting in jail serving her 10-day sentence when Barack Obama claimed in his State of the Union address to loud applause:

“(T)he question is whether all of us--as citizens, and as parents--are willing to do what's necessary to give every child a chance to succeed. That responsibility begins not in our classrooms, but in our homes and communities. It's family that first instills the love of learning in a child.”

Wasn't Williams-Bolar and her father attempting to give the two girls “every chance to succeed” by moving them to a school district that, by every measure, is superior to the schools they attended?

Williams-Bolar, who worked as a teacher's aide for kids in special education while also taking classes at the University of Akron to become certified as a teacher, lives in a city with some of the lowest-rated public schools in the state.

Akron is a typical poverty-stricken, de-industrialized, Midwestern city with high rates of poverty and unemployment. More than a quarter of the population lives below the official poverty line. African Americans are 31 percent of the population, but account for 40 percent of those under the poverty line.

Akron schools are underfunded and segregated.

Forty-eight percent of students are Black and 78 percent are categorized as “economically disadvantaged.”

According to one study ranking school districts in Ohio on a scale of 1 to 10, Akron got a “one” when compared to other school districts in the state and a “three” compared to national averages.

The Copley-Fairlawn School District lies only a few miles west of Williams-Bolar's home in Akron, but when comparing the schools, they might as well be a million miles away.

Copley is 86 percent white, with a Black population of less than 9 percent. Copley schools are ranked as some of the best in the state--they got a rating of “10” in the study. The Copley student body is 75 percent white, and only 11 percent of the student body is classified as economically disadvantaged.

The prosecution of Williams-Bolar revealed how Copley schools stay so lily-white despite being in such close proximity to Akron's large Black population.

School officials worried about students “illegally” attending their schools have offered \$100 rewards to anyone who turns those students in.

In the Williams-Bolar case, the school district paid an off-duty Akron cop \$6,000 to follow her.

One can assume that school officials became suspicious of the girls simply because they were Black children in a predominately white school district. It stands to reason that if Williams-Bolar were white, her daughters never would have been suspected, and she never would have been prosecuted.

The school district and county prosecutors were bound and determined to make this Black single mother an example to other families that might dare to try to get a good education for their kids.

Despite the fact that the girls were pulled out of the Copley-Fairlawn School District in 2009, the school district and the county refused to drop the case, or even negotiate lesser charges.

The judge, Patricia Cosgrove, while later trying to portray herself as sympathetic after receiving “hundreds” of angry phone calls, nevertheless insisted on making Williams-Bolar go to jail “so that others who think they might defraud the school system perhaps will think twice.”

For his part, Brian Poe, the Copley-Fairlawn school superintendent, left no doubt about the motivations of putting Williams-Bolar in jail when he told reporters: “We have, for the past three and a half years, gone after residency cases and had residency hearings...it's something that's important to us. We are not an open-enrollment district.”

“Williams-Bolar's Jailing Is Meant As An Example To Any Other Parent Desperate To See Their Child Get Equal Access To Education”

ON THREE separate occasions--1991, 2000 and 2002--the Ohio State Supreme Court ruled that the way public schools were funded in the state was unconstitutional.

The court ruling found an “over-reliance” on local property taxes, “forced borrowing” and insufficient state funding for school buildings. These rulings were consistent over a 10-year period--until a right-wing court was elected and declared that the state Supreme Court lacked jurisdiction on the question.

So Ohio public schools were allowed to operate illegally for a decade, in violation of a state Supreme Court ruling, and yet no one went to jail for forcing mostly African American children to attend underfunded schools.

It's hard to think of a clearer example of the hypocrisy of American law than this case of a single mother arrested, prosecuted and jailed for “falsifying” documents so her children could attend a decent school--while the perpetrators of real crimes in this society, like the Wall Street bankers who falsified and tampered with documents to grease the wheels of the foreclosure process, will never see in a single day in court or jail.

Williams-Bolar's jailing is meant as an example to any other parent desperate to see their child get equal access to education.

She is paying a steep price. Williams-Bolar is only 12 credits away from receiving her certification to become a public school teacher, but she'll no longer be able to become a teacher in Ohio because of the felony conviction now on her record.

It's also possible under laws created during the Clinton administration that because Williams-Bolar now has a felony conviction, she will lose her residency eligibility in Akron public housing.

Ohio is in the grips of a severe budget crisis, and a new right-wing governor, John Kasich, is threatening budget cuts across the board--including to education, which will cripple the Akron school district even more. Kasich, who installed an all-white cabinet for the first time since 1963, doesn't care about the education of poor, Black children.

The politicians and so-called education experts who support charter schools and other “reforms” claim that the problems in public education are “complicated.”

But this case shows the problems really aren't that complex at all. Tying funding of public schools to property taxes inevitably creates a two-tier education system--one for the rich and one for the poor.

When Black children are overrepresented in the ranks of poverty, it means they are condemned an unequal education.

Kelley Williams-Bolar took matters into her own hands and defiantly insists that is she had it to do over, even knowing the outcome, “I would do it again.”

Public education should indeed be for the public. Education should be a right for all, not just the rich and white.

What you can do:

Donations are being raised for Kelley Williams-Bolar. Send contributions to: National Action Network Akron Chapter, c/o Kelley Williams-Bolar, P.O. Box 4152, Akron, OH 44321. Make checks payable to Kelley Williams-Bolar.

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.

CLASS WAR REPORTS



**NEED SOME TRUTH?
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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/>

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