

Military Resistance 9D3

Administration Promises No Boots on the Ground in Libya



**Kill Team Afghanistan:
“Twelve Soldiers From The ‘Kill
Team’ Platoon Were Charged In
Connection With The Murder Of
The Unarmed Civilians, And Five
Face Murder Charges”
“To Date, The Highest-Ranking
Soldier On Trial For Crimes
Committed Is A Staff Sergeant”**

“Those At The Top Should Be Held Responsible”

March 28, 2011 By Rory Fanning, Socialist Worker [Excerpts]

Photos of soldiers from the 5th Stryker Brigade, 2nd Army infantry division, posing with the dead and mutilated bodies of three Afghan civilians have shocked the world.

In the pictures, soldiers pose gleefully with dead Afghan civilians who have been stripped naked and bound by the wrists, and who display signs of torture.

But while the U.S. military is attempting to claim the atrocities were carried out by a few “bad apples,” the responsibility for these crimes rests not only with the soldiers themselves, but with the architects of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq--all the way up to the president.

Twelve soldiers from the “kill team” platoon were charged in connection with the murder of the unarmed civilians, and five face murder charges. All together, the soldiers were charged with 76 crimes.

There was nothing “insane” about the 12 soldiers from the Kill Brigade before they went to Afghanistan. Instead, it is the logic of the “war on terror” itself--a logic which drives soldiers to see any and all civilians as potential counter-insurgents and justifies occupations on a racist basis--that inevitably leads to such atrocities.

To date, the highest-ranking soldier on trial for crimes committed by the “Kill Brigade” is a staff sergeant.

The military and government officials will attempt to go to any lengths to hide the truth about the brutality of their wars.

Today, after 10 years of an aimless and unending U.S. military crusade against the people of the Middle East, timid “apologies” for such atrocities issued by the military and administration officials carry no weight.

Those at the top should be held responsible for these war crimes.

MORE:

**Kill Team Vietnam:
Charlie Company: My Lai:
Same Old Same Old:**

“The Wrong People Are On Trial For Atrocities”



[Vietnam GI, June 1970]

MY LAI
“C” Company the Goat ?

Vietnam GI

Because when you come right down to it, the wrong people are on trial for atrocities.

Nixon, Westmoreland, Abrams and Mendal Rivers, the very bullshitters who are most eager to see Charlie Co. brought to justice, are finally the men most responsible for My Lai. They were the ones telling us that Ky and Thieu's corrupt government is worth dying for. They are the ones who taught us to kill, who put us over here in this mind-fucking shit hole and told us to go to it. In short, they started the war and they know you never have a war without atrocities.

[Vietnam GI, June 1970]

Laughin', Cryin',
Livin', Dyin'
Hee Haw
Who's the jackass now?

Charlie Co. is the jackass. From Nixon and Abrams on down to all sorts of deluded fat ass lifers and selfrighteous civi-pigs there is a feeling that Charlie Co. really blew it. They didn't give candy bars to the kids of My Lai. They didn't pass out soap to the women. Instead they blew off the village.

So the men of Charlie Co. fucked up. They didn't act like your friendly neighborhood Peace Corpsman. They acted instead like the ordinary sons of ordinary people.

They acted like an outfit of short-timers and Purple Heart winners who'd been in the shit, who'd lived it and breathed it for a long time. They acted like men who were taught to believe in and respect officers like Lt. Calley, who awarded himself an extra 7 days leave while his platoon was being chopped to shit in a minefield. They acted like men who were given the bullshit line about getting their GED's and going to an Army school and then were dumped into the infantry.

The men of Charlie Co. conducted themselves like men whose personal knowledge of the Vietnamese people came from encounters with whores, pimps, begging kids, black market operators, thieves, and of course the VC. They acted like men, a tight group of men, who for two months had seen their brothers getting mangled in mine fields and ripped off by snipers and who'd rarely seen anybody to shoot back at.

Sound familiar so far?

Then pay attention.

Charlie Co. is ordered by Lt. Col. Barker to hit My Lai 4. He tells Medina there's a crack VC battalion in the village. They are supposed to destroy it, then burn out the village.

Next day they move in. No VC. But a few of the villagers panic and run. The men, fucked over, psyched up, looking for revenge, open fire.

A lot of people fall.

The rest of them are too scared to move.

Next we see Snot Calley ordering his men to herd the people into ditches and to start cutting them down. Some do and dig it. Some get pissed off and sickened by the whole thing.

Calley and Medina make a bullshit body count, find a few imaginary weapons, and pull out. A few days later Westmoreland commends Medina for doing a good job. The real story gets hushed up for the obvious reasons that nobody in the Army wanted the publicity

But after 20 months word does get out. And as the story gets pieced together by the CID, the press takes it up. The Establishment is surprised, shocked and outraged... both because there was a massacre ("How could our boys have done such a thing?"), and because the Army covered it up.

After showing that their hearts were in the right place, they gave up the stage to the Brass with parting remarks to the effect of "well, if you are just men, you will not sweep this under the rug... you will see to it that the guilty are punished."

Enter the Brass, anxious to prove that they are indeed, just men.

How do they do it? They tell the ex-GIs of Charlie Co. that they want them to come to Washington, all expenses paid, to tell their version of the massacre so they can get the goods on Calley.

Half of the company gets sucked in. Now that the Brass has the whole story of My Lai, what do they do?

The two-faced bastards turn around and announce their intention to prosecute the whole company. But you say most of the guys are civilians now, so they are out of the reach of military "justice"? Well, not exactly... the latest is that the JAG is trying to find a way to extradite them to SVN for trial.

The Brass is really pissed at Charlie Co. But it's not because they give a fuck about the killing of innocent people.

If that were true they'd be a little more careful where they ordered air and artillery strikes. They'd also find it a little harder to just shrug when they hit our own men and say, "Well, accidents happen you know."

What they are pissed about is that news of the massacre has made them and their war look worse than they ever have before. So they know what they have to do. Put the screws to Charlie Co., to make it look to people back home and around the world that they believe in-fighting a good clean war.

At the same time they are making the GI's of Charlie look like bloodthirsty freaks. While everyone is talking about what a terrible thing it is they completely forget who is really responsible.

Because when you come right down to it, the wrong people are on trial for atrocities.

Nixon, Westmoreland, Abrams and Mendal Rivers, the very bullshitters who are most eager to see Charlie Co. brought to justice, are finally the men most responsible for My Lai. They were the ones telling us that Ky and Thieu's corrupt government is worth dying for. They are the ones who taught us to kill, who put us over here in this mind-fucking shit hole and told us to go to it. In short, they started the war and they know you never have a war without atrocities.

If you put men in the shit long enough, you're going to have My Lai's.

It's as simple as that.

If they were really concerned about putting a stop to massacres like My Lai they'd stop the war.

But right now their concerns are very clear; easy promotions, soft civilian jobs for retired Brass, and money for the owners of the arms industry. If by making the men of Charlie Co. into the scapegoat they can keep the ball rolling a bit longer you can bet your ass they'll do it.

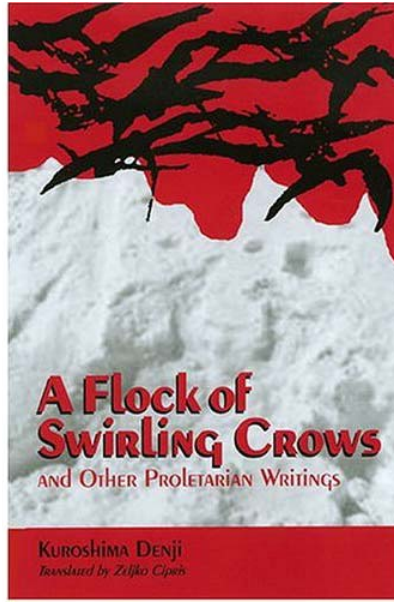
Comment: T

If you're looking for people to blame for the endless evil shit that happens in this dishonorable Imperial war on Afghanistan, blame the politicians that put the troops downrange, in an impossible situation.

Everything flows from the act of invasion and conquest ordered up by the greedy Imperial liars and traitors in Washington DC.

They are the enemy. Bring the war home now.

Ishikawa and Kuroshima would understand: insert troops into a hell on earth and there's no way to prevent atrocities. Yet the real fiends in their capital suites are never spattered with a single drop of blood. Solidarity, Z



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.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Fallen Bellflower Soldier Among Honored

03/21/2011 By Greg Mellen, Press Telegram

SACRAMENTO - Arturo Rodriguez, a 19-year-old private first class from Bellflower, was one of 11 fallen service members recognized by Gov. Jerry Brown and his wife, Anne Gust Brown, Monday.

The governor ordered flags flown at half-staff over the state Capitol and sent letters of condolence to the families.

Rodriguez died March 12. He was stationed in Paktika province, Afghanistan. He was reportedly on foot patrol when he came under small-arms fire with insurgents. Rodriguez died from his wounds and was the lone Army fatality.

Rodriguez was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 506th Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, out of Fort Campbell, Ken.

Rodriguez had joined the Army in February 2010 and was assigned to Fort Campbell in July.

His awards and decorations include: Bronze Star Medal; Purple Heart Medal; Army Achievement Medal; Army Good Conduct Medal; National Defense Service Medal; Afghanistan Campaign Medal; Global War on Terrorism Service Medal; Army Service Ribbon; Overseas Service Ribbon; North Atlantic Treaty Organization Medal; Parachutist Badge; and Combat Infantryman Badge.

Rodriguez is survived by his father, Arturo Rodriguez Segura, and mother, Rosa Jimenez Davila, both of Mexico. He is also survived by his aunt, Maria Lopez of Bellflower, according to the Fort Campbell Courier.

A memorial service was scheduled for Rodriguez in Afghanistan and Fort Campbell also holds monthly remembrances to honor fallen troops. That ceremony will be held April 6.

Rodriguez is one of 4,430 American service members the Department of Defense has identified who have died since the start of the Iraq war and 1,493 who have died as part of the Afghan war and related operations.

Others honored by the governor and first lady either from or stationed in California were Staff Sgt. Eric S. Trueblood, 27, of Alameda; Staff Sgt. Mark C. Wells, 31, of San Jose; Cpl. Jordan R. Stanton, 20, of Rancho Santa Margarita; Spc. Jason M. Weaver, 22, of Anaheim; Spc. Rudolph R. Hizon, 22, of Los Angeles; Sgt. Jason G. Amores, 29, of Lehigh Acres, Fla.; Petty Officer Dominique Cruz, 26, of Panama City, Fla; Spc. Martin J. Lamar, 43, of Sacramento; Spc. Jose A. Torre, Jr., 21, of Garden Grove; and Maj. Evan J. Mooldyk, 47, of Rancho Murietta.

Fallen Westminster Marine Remembered As Life Of The Household

March 22, 2011 By Raven L. Hill, The Baltimore Sun

In life, Staff Sgt. James M. Malachowski made his family proud by maintaining a sense of humility even while earning a distinguished record of service in the Marines. Now, in death, the fallen Marine has made his family even prouder.

“He said that if he ever went, he wanted to go out in combat,” said his mother, Alison, on Tuesday at the family home in Westminster. “And that’s how he went.”

Malachowski, 25, was killed in action Sunday in Afghanistan by a homemade bomb. It was his first tour of duty in Afghanistan. He had previously served three deployments in Iraq.

Born and raised in Hampstead, "Jimmy" was remembered Tuesday as the life of his family, whose death has left a hole in family members' lives. His interests included weightlifting, running, firearms and wood-working.

He particularly enjoyed bodybuilding, his mother said. "If it was heavy, Jimmy would lift it." She said she used to warn him that if he got any bigger, "he'd have to turn sideways to get through the door." He was running up to 10 miles a day by the time he left for Afghanistan.

Malachowski came from a military family; his mother is a retired Marine, and his sister is in the Army. He decided to join the Marines in his final year at North Carroll Senior High School, attracted to the challenge and sentimentality.

"It was the Marine Corps. It was the hardest thing to do and ... his mom was in it," said his father, James Sr. He left for boot camp the day after high school graduation in 2003. Added his mother, "He has challenged himself and the Marine Corps has challenged him over the last six years. He's done very, very, very, very well at it, too, I must say. We're really proud of our little boy."

He had been awarded two Navy and Marine Corps Achievement medals, two Marine Corps Good Conduct medals, a National Defense Service Medal, two Iraq Campaign medals, a Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal and Global War on Terrorism Service Medal. He was promoted to staff sergeant last April.

He earned a position on the Marine Corps Rifle Team and taught more than 50,000 recruits the fundamentals of marksmanship.

Family members said they only learned about some of his accomplishments since his death, which was just like him. Though he didn't like to brag, there was no doubting his courage, they said.

On his first tour in Iraq, his mother recalled asking him, "Just what do you all do over there?" His reply: "We do what everyone else can't or won't do. That's when they call us."

His older sister, Brandy Malachowski, 28, said she was thrilled to get her first salute as a commissioned officer from her brother. And his parents said they hope that others will remember his sacrifice. His father said, "We were proud of him on Saturday, and we're even prouder of him now."

"It was like a bright flame that burned very brightly, but very shortly," his mother said. "We really hope that everyone else in this country remembers this war. We still have these young men and women dying for this country."

Funeral arrangements are pending. His body is expected to arrive at Dover Air Force Base Wednesday morning, according to military officials.

Survivors include his parents and sister; his wife, Lindsay; and two sons, Vincent James and Evan Michael.

Three Foreign Soldiers Wounded At Camp Phoenix

April 3, 2011 Deb Riechmann, smh.com.au [Excerpts]

KABUL: Three insurgents have attacked a NATO base on the outskirts of Afghanistan's capital.

NATO said three of its soldiers were wounded in yesterday's attack against Camp Phoenix but their injuries were not serious.

Camp Phoenix is a base on the eastern edge of Kabul used mostly by American forces to help train the Afghan army and police.

MILITARY NEWS

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



The remains of Army Spc. Andrew C. Wilfahrt of Rosemount, Minn., upon arrival at Dover Air Force Base, Del. Feb. 28, 2011. Wilfahrt died of wounds suffered when insurgents attacked his unit. (AP Photo/Jose Luis Magana)

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

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

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS



“At a time like this, scorching irony, not convincing argument, is needed. Oh had I the ability, and could reach the nation’s ear, I would, pour out a fiery stream of biting ridicule, blasting reproach, withering sarcasm, and stern rebuke.

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

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

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

Frederick Douglass, 1852

Hope for change doesn't cut it when you're still losing buddies.

-- J.D. Englehart, Iraq Veterans Against The War

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
al government at Peterloo.

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

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

“The Nixon administration claimed and received great credit for withdrawing the Army from Vietnam, but it was the rebellion of low-ranking GIs that forced the government to abandon a hopeless suicidal policy”
-- David Cortright; Soldiers In Revolt

**“Emboldened Western Powers Make
Further Wars More Likely.
Supporting Their Military Actions
Contributes To That”**
**“The Same Obama Who Said That
Attacks On Hospitals Were A Casus Belli
Against Tripoli Is Standing By His Allies
In Riyadh And Manama, Who Spent Many
Days...Attacking Hospitals”**

March 28, 2011 By Kevin Ovenden, Socialist Unity [Excerpts]

The same President Obama who said that attacks on hospitals were a *casus belli* against Tripoli is standing by his allies in Riyadh and Manama, who spent many days...attacking hospitals under the noses of the U.S. Fifth Fleet.

The same Treasury revenue going up in smoke as missiles explode in Libya is subsidizing Israel's missiles blowing up people in Gaza--not two years ago, but today, now, with the threat of much more imminently.

Is the West's policy about oil? On one level, it is always about oil.

When Silvio Berlusconi and Sarkozy embraced Muammar el-Qaddafi, the unspoken interest was oil.

When they find themselves intervening to overthrow him, the underlying interest remains oil--just as it was when the West supported Saddam Hussein in his attack on revolutionary Iran and then, a decade later, drove him out of Kuwait, embargoed Iraq for 12 years, finally invading a second time and executing him.

The same imperial, capitalist objectives in the region can be served by different *politiques d'Etat*; to paraphrase Lord Palmerston, imperial chancelleries have no eternal friends and no eternal enemies, only eternal interests--as Hosni Mubarak discovered at the 11th hour.

So why the change in policy toward Qaddafi?

There are those who serially tell us that this time, it's different--this time, the Western governments are subordinating self-interest to humanitarianism.

Qaddafi managed neither to fall on his sword, like Mubarak, nor to crush the opposition, like the Al Khalifa kleptocrats in Bahrain, though only after the intervention of the U.S.'s oldest ally in the region, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

In those circumstances, he became a liability for the West.

On the eve of the bombing campaign, Obama said that the instability in Libya threatened "vital US allies in the region."

Qaddafi himself had already proven that he had no intention of posing such a threat.

Those who think that he is some kind of anti-imperialist now would do well to reflect that even as he denounced the Western bombardment as "crusader aggression," he was proclaiming himself as the only possible Libyan leader to maintain peace with Israel and to prevent African migrants from entering Europe.

The wrangling in Western capitals over how to respond and bring a return to stability more plausibly reflects the uncertainty that has beset their attempts to rally a riposte to the Arab revolution than it does some dawning recognition of a hitherto absent moral sensibility.

Unlike in Egypt, there was no army high command to switch allegiance to smoothly and safely.

The same hesitancy marked the Arab despots.

They want an end to the revolutionary wave, but they have no loyalty to, still less liking for, Qaddafi--or necessarily for each other; the Qataris long campaigned for the toppling of Mubarak. The West's actions are a single axe to fell a two-headed monster, they hope.

Now, only the self-appointed and deluded leaders of "global civil society" would claim that public opinion in Europe and North America is what drove the decision to go to war. Britain and the U.S. went to war on Iraq despite public opinion.

Emboldened Western powers make further wars more likely.

Supporting their military actions contributes to that.

The dead in Bahrain and Yemen deserve to be counted, too.

The first phase of the Arab rising of 2011 carried echoes of the European revolutions of 1848.

They made flesh the truly progressive modern force which Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels identified in the Communist Manifesto published that year as "the independent movement of the immense majority, in the interest of the immense majority."

Such independence in the matured global capitalist system of today depends upon many things.

Above all, it cannot happen without spurning the embrace of the biggest capitalist powers and consistently opposing their ideologies, their political machinations and their killing machines.



[Thanks to Phil G, who sent this in.]

**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

Eyewitness Report:

**“The Egyptian Ruling Class--
Which Is Wounded And Shaken
By The Revolutionary Upsurge--
Is Still Quite Powerful And Is
Fighting Back To Preserve Its
Rule And Privileges”**

**“It's Doing So With The Help Of
And Under The Leadership Of The
Supreme Council Of The Armed
Forces, Which Is A Sanitized Name
For Mubarak's Own Top Army
Generals”**

“A New Ally In Their Campaign For ‘Stability’ And ‘Law And Order’: The Muslim Brotherhood”

“During The Middle Of March, There Were A Number Of Positive Developments On The Side Of Those Who Support The Revolution”

March 30, 2011 By Mostafa Omar, Socialist Worker, based on a speech given at the Left Forum in New York City on March 20.

IT IS probably fair to say that the revolutionary uprising and process underway in Egypt is one of the greatest popular revolutions in modern history. The sheer numbers of those who participated in the uprising as well as their percentage compared to the total population is unprecedented and astonishing.

It is estimated that between January 25, when the demonstrations started, and February 11, when the dictator Hosni Mubarak was toppled, at least 15 million people out of a population of 80 million--that is more than 20 percent of the population--took part in the mass mobilizations.

A friend of mine in Cairo reminded me--and he was probably bragging a little bit--that 15 million protesters exceeds the total number of people who participated in all the protests that took place in all the countries of Eastern Europe at the time of the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989.

It is true that young people led the charge on January 25, and that most of the 400 martyrs who were killed during the uprising were under the age of 30. But young people were not alone in the streets.

From day one, the Egyptian uprising was a popular revolution. From day one, millions of workers, poor peasants, poor housewives and all sectors of society took part in the mobilizations across the country.

When you walked across Tahrir Square in Cairo, you saw group after group of poor workers, of struggling government clerks; you saw peasants; you saw poor housewives who fight every day in order to keep their children fed and alive; you saw thousands of disabled people on crutches and wheelchairs, ignored by the government for decades; you saw thousands of retirees who can't afford meat and even certain kinds of vegetables; you saw men and women, Muslim and Christian.

All of these groups came to participate--and when the regime cracked down, they came to protect the youth who were leading the occupation of Tahrir Square.

The masses of poor and working-class people who took part in the uprising--as everyone else who took part--wanted democratic reforms.

But workers and the poor also want social justice and the redistribution of the country's wealth after 30 years of privatization, impoverishment and neoliberal policies pushed by the Mubarak regime.

“Sir, It Is Over. The People Are In The Saddle”

IT WAS truly a national uprising--every city and province up and down the country took part.

Believe it or not, as militant and determined as the revolutionaries were in Cairo, which got most of the media coverage in the West, the revolutionaries in other cities such as Suez and Alexandria, the second largest city in the country, were even more militant and bolder.

For example, the protesters in Cairo concentrated on Tahrir Square and bravely held it for 18 days by fending off numerous bloody attacks by the police and Mubarak's thugs.

But in Alexandria, the protesters didn't adopt a Tahrir Square strategy.

They didn't wait for the police to attack.

The protesters came out every single day in the tens and hundreds of thousands from every neighborhood and street to confront the police--they fought back against police bullets and tear gas over and over again, until they defeated the police.

I listened online to an amazing tape of a radio communication between the police headquarters in Alexandria and commanders in the field, trying to deal with the flood of angry protesters.

In the tape, police officers are begging headquarters for reinforcements to deal with what they described as massive and dangerous crowds of 10,000, 20,000 and 30,000 people, closing in on them everywhere in the city.

But the headquarters was helpless because all of the officers in the field--literally all of them--were asking for reinforcements.

The headquarters advised officers and units to retreat to the precincts, and the officers responded: “Sir, protesters are burning the precincts.”

The tape ends dramatically with the commander at headquarters asking a subordinate for an explanation for the police defeats.

The officer simply told him: “Sir, it is over. The people are in the saddle.”

The Alexandria story was repeated in Suez and city after city.

Protesters marched on police precincts, on the headquarters of the Mubarak regime's ruling National Democratic Party (NDP), on municipal buildings, on governor's mansions, and on and on.

And just as the revolt was massive, the celebrations that took place when Mubarak fell were breathtaking in their size and joy.

On the night that Mubarak resigned, 5 million of us celebrated in Tahrir Square for 24 hours.

I thought it must have been the largest celebration in the country.

I was corrected by friends in Alexandria, who told me: You have a population of 20 million in Cairo and 5 million came out.

We have a population of 10 million in Alexandria and 7 million of us jammed the Mediterranean Boulevard, from one end of the city to the other.

I've read in books about great revolutions for social justice. I've read that millions who were involved in those revolutions not only change oppressive social institutions, but they also rediscover their humanity in the process.

I must say that I was lucky to have witnessed this process of social and human transformation firsthand in the few weeks of the uprising in Egypt.

I've seen and talked to so many people who tell you that they feel proud of what they did; they feel that they are no longer strangers in their own country; they feel human for the first time in their lives.

I have never seen so many millions in Egypt look more proud--so proud of what they and other revolutionaries accomplished, and so proud that they have done what they themselves never believed they could do.

People look more relaxed and at peace--you can see it on their faces. People in Egypt will tell you: Gone are the days when we felt helpless and little; gone are the days when the police could humiliate us and torture us; gone are the times when the rich and the businessmen think they could run the country as if it was their own private company.

Everywhere, people posted the January 25 revolution stickers--on their cars, in coffee shops, in their homes. Thousands of young people formed committees to clean up the streets in their neighborhoods. Thousands of others donated blood to those injured during the uprising. Young artists painted revolutionary graffiti, rejecting corruption and celebrating equality between Muslims and Christians.

In the days and weeks after February 11, one could sense the excitement and hope in the air.

Indeed, the revolutionary uprising has brought big and amazing changes.

The Supreme Council of the Armed Forces--which took over from Mubarak in an attempt to save the social system from collapsing entirely, and which rules the country for the

time being--made significant concessions to the revolution under intense popular pressure.

For example, the Council arrested some of Mubarak's corrupt political and business allies and froze their assets. It also froze Mubarak's own assets and promised to put him on trial.

On television in Egypt, you can see many hated figures from the business elite and from the regime, not smoking cigars in a fancy meeting, but wearing prison clothes and awaiting trial.

You can see the despised former minister of the interior who ordered the shooting of protesters--not walking like an arrogant despot and spitting in our faces while his subordinates brutalize opposition figures, but wearing prison clothes and awaiting trial.

The arrest and trial of some high-profile corrupt officials were and still are a great source of euphoria for millions.

But many ordinary people also realize that they made the revolution not just to punish a few figures in the old regime, but to change the whole regime.

Therefore, for many, Mubarak's ousting represents only the beginning of the revolution, not the end.

Their slogan quickly became: In every corner of Egypt, in every factory, school and company, there are 1,000 smaller corrupt and criminal Mubaraks that we have to fight against and get rid of.

On February 12, only hours after Mubarak resigned, workers, students and even the oppressed Coptic minority all began organizing to end decades of exploitation and oppression. Millions of poor and oppressed people have been engaging in amazing and inspiring actions for social justice and democratization of all aspects of society.

But, of course, the Egyptian ruling class--which is wounded and shaken by the revolutionary upsurge--is still quite powerful and is fighting back to preserve its rule and privileges.

It's doing so with the help of and under the leadership of the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces, which is a sanitized name for Mubarak's own top army generals.

In other words, immediately after Mubarak fell, an intense period of social and class struggle opened up in Egypt.

Millions of workers and students began to try to shape the outcome of the revolutionary uprising through a series of daring and brave new round of struggles.

**“Near My House In Central Cairo, I Witnessed One Of Those Militant Strikes
Firsthand”**

I WANT to give you a sense of some of these struggles, and I'll start with the unfolding workers' uprising.

There is no doubt that the strikes by industrial workers that took place starting on February 9 across Egypt were a key reason why Mubarak's generals decided that he had to go--before the revolutionary uprising could gain more depth and threaten the whole social system.

The council was definitely correct to be concerned.

Since February 12, from within hours after Mubarak quit, workers all over the country--in the public and the private sectors--have been striking, protesting or sitting in. Oil workers, teachers, nurses, bus drivers, janitors, journalists and pharmacists--all the way to clerks in posh country clubs--have been organizing and protesting.

Workers' demands vary from one sector to another, but they revolve four main issues:

Workers everywhere want to raise wages and benefits; they want permanent status for the millions who have been working as temporary workers, sometimes on contracts as short as three months; they want an end to the neoliberal policies of privatization of companies, and many in the public sector are calling for the renationalization of companies that were privatized and sold to investors at below market values; and they want the ouster of all the corrupt CEOs appointed by Mubarak.

This last issue goes to the heart of the struggle for economic democracy.

In the crucial industrial city of Mahalla, for example, 24,000 textile workers struck last month, drove out the corrupt CEO, and forced the army to accept their own nominee as the replacement.

It is the same story in other factories and companies across the country: workers' expectations are very high, and their militance and confidence is phenomenal.

Two weeks ago, near my house in central Cairo, I witnessed one of those militant strikes firsthand.

Some 1,200 government print workers who produce school curriculum books went on strike to protest low salaries--an average of \$100 a month--an outrageous CEO salary of \$60,000 a month, disrespectful treatment at work, temp contracts, terrible health care provisions and on and on.

Three hundred workers attempted to rush the building to get to the CEOs office, but an army unit stopped them. So the strikers laid siege to the company building and locked their corrupt CEO in his office on the fifth floor for 36 hours.

The army officer in charge, along with a union representative, negotiated over the workers' demands with the CEO for 24 hours. The army officer forced the CEO to concede 90 percent of workers' demands so he could disperse them. The CEO caved in, and the army officer and the union rep came down and announced the settlement. The strikers were ecstatic and almost dispersed.

But some angry young workers whose temp contracts had been recently terminated were infuriated and attempted to storm the building again.

Meanwhile, an older, militant woman pleaded with the rest of the workers not to abandon the youth. Most of the crowd decided to stay. They sent the union rep and the army officer back upstairs to tell the CEO to reinstate all temp workers, and offer them permanent contracts immediately.

And they instructed the union rep not to come down again without a “yes” on all their demands.

This is an example of the kind of militant strikes, sit-ins and hunger strikes that are taking place all over the country every day in Egypt. Workers are also breaking with the government-run union federation and forming independent unions. A section of militant workers are in the process of forming a new political party: The Workers’ Democratic Party.

“The Student Initiatives And Struggles”

I also want to briefly describe some of the student initiatives and struggles.

When the army finally opened schools and universities again after Mubarak’s downfall, millions of students, teachers and professors--many of whom were part of the January 25 uprising--opened a new front of struggle.

In one university after another, mass student and faculty rallies are taking place to elect college presidents and deans in order to get rid of those appointed by Mubarak. In some universities, students are camping out--following the model of Tahrir Square--to win their demands. And in all of the colleges, the students forced the government to finally implement a year-old court order to remove secret police from all campuses.

High school and middle school students also formulated their demands and grievances. They rallied to demand an end to corporal punishment and removal of all sections in the curriculum that refer to Mubarak’s so-called accomplishments. The ministry of education has complied.

But this is only one part of a wave of struggles for democratization that is sweeping every corner and sector of society.

Journalists are ousting pro-Mubarak editors. Cinema actors and workers rebelled against the autocratic union president. Fans are boycotting many of their once beloved famous actors and singers who supported Mubarak.

Soccer referees are threatening to strike over pay. Non-soccer athletes are demanding that sports clubs stop spending all their money on soccer players.

The Boy Scouts of Egypt are demanding elections--and on and on.

Soccer fans go to soccer games in Egypt, but very few fans actually bother to watch and cheer for their team. Organized fan groups that took part in the revolution and lost martyrs are angry that their idols, the big time famous players, didn't show up in Tahrir, and that some of them openly supported Mubarak.

The fans taunt those players at games with angry chants and with huge banners. One of these banners at a recent game read: "We supported you every second and everywhere, but where were you when we needed you?"

When the uprising in Libya began, fans went to a game with a big banner in the colors of the Libyan, Tunisian and Egyptian flags--it read: The Free Republic of North Africa.

At every game, you find hundreds of people still chanting against Mubarak and the former interior minister, or calling for the removal of governors and so on.

The Supreme Council Of The Armed Forces "Daily Denounces Striking Workers And Calls On Them To Return To Work. In Some Cases, It Has Tried To Arrest Strikers"

OF COURSE, the emergence of these revolutionary forces across society has been met from day one with vicious opposition from the ruling class.

The Egyptian capitalist class is stronger and more established than the elite around Ben Ali in Tunisia or the Libyan regime of Muammar el-Qaddafi.

Now, this ruling class is using all its ideological and sometimes repressive powers in an attempt to end--or at least slow down--the flood of struggle among workers and the poor.

Since February 12, the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces has followed a policy of rejecting--or stalling on--every popular demand of the January 25 revolution in order to demoralize people.

For example, the Council initially rejected the popular demand to dismiss the last cabinet appointed by Mubarak.

It also rejected the demand to dismantle the entire secret police apparatus and vowed only that it would be reformed.

The Council daily denounces striking workers and calls on them to return to work. In some cases, it has tried to arrest strikers.

As well, remnants of the NDP and secret police burned a Coptic church in Helwan, south of Cairo--in order to whip up a civil war atmosphere between Muslims and Christians, with the hopes of splitting the revolutionary camp.

Then, while the army stood watching, thugs organized by the NDP attacked Christians who were protesting the church burning in one poor Cairo neighborhood--they killed nine and injured dozens.

More recently, the army refused to draft a new constitutional declaration and insisted on forcing people to vote on nine amendments to the 1971 constitution written under the Mubarak dictatorship. Moreover, soldiers brutalized protesters at Tahrir Square on March 9, using electric batons and torturing those it arrested for hours in its field headquarters in the Egyptian Museum.

I have to be honest that for a few days toward the end of February and the first days of March, there was a widespread feeling of anxiety among millions of people who support the revolution that all was not going well--that the revolution was under siege at best, and counter revolutionary forces were actually winning at worst.

Fortunately, though, the deep reservoir of revolutionary aspirations and readiness to struggle to win our demands turned the situation.

First, mass demonstrations and an unrelenting popular opposition finally forced the Council to dismiss the Mubarak cabinet on March 3.

Then, on March 4, while millions were celebrating this victory, revolutionaries laid siege to the headquarters of the secret police in Alexandria and shut it down. The next day, protesters marched on secret police headquarters in city after city. In some places, protesters occupied these buildings, freed political prisoners in torture chambers and walked out with tons of secret documents, detailing repression and torture.

This courageous move by thousands of protesters forced the army to occupy and shut down the secret police headquarters in numerous places. A week later, as millions were still reading through the documents that were taken away from these buildings, the army finally dismantled that heinous institution and arrested dozens of its officers, charging them with corruption and torture.

The dismissal of the Mubarak-appointed cabinet and the defeat of the secret police gave a tremendous boost to everyone who supports the revolution.

That same week, mass mobilizations by Christians to protest the burning of the church in Helwan produced another important victory for the revolution.

Tens of thousands of Christians, along with large numbers of Muslim supporters, occupied the north side of Tahrir Square, laying siege to the TV building for eight days to demand that the army rebuild the burned church and provide protection to Christians. After the eight days, the army caved in and rebuilt the Church.

This was not only a great victory for Christians, who have been systematically discriminated against for decades, but widespread solidarity from Muslims for the protesters at the TV building and elsewhere in the country reignited a sense of common destiny--defeating for now the counter-revolutionaries' divide-and-conquer schemes.

“During The Middle Of March, There Were A Number Of Positive Developments On The Side Of Those Who Support The Revolution”

THE NEXT few days and weeks in Egypt are certain to lead to a continuation of the social and class polarization that erupted after February 11.

On the one hand, the Supreme Council and the new Cabinet have escalated their anti-revolutionary rhetoric and measures. They are supported by large sections of the frightened middle classes and, of course, the wealthy.

For example, the Cabinet recently announced a draconian law that would criminalize certain protests and strikes in periods of emergency in the future.

The army also attempted to use force to break up a 10-day sit-in by students in the school of mass communications at Cairo University to demand the dismissal of a corrupt dean.

Both the army and the cabinet can now rely on a new ally in their campaign for “stability” and “law and order”: The Muslim Brotherhood and the Islamic Fundamentalist Group.

The Muslim Brotherhood and the more reactionary fundamentalists campaigned in favor of passing the cosmetic constitutional changes proposed by the Supreme Council. These groups turned the referendum into a vote on the “Islamic” identity of the country. They told people that it was their religious duty to vote yes in order to prevent the establishment of a secular state with equal rights for the minority Christians.

Incredibly, in this effort, the Muslim Brotherhood formed a de facto bloc with their former jailors, Mubarak’s NDP.

The NDP is discredited, but has yet to be dismantled--and it was the only other political group in the country to support the army’s proposals.

So the fundamentalists are attempting to polarize the country along religious line and weaken the unity between Muslims and Christians forged since January 25--something that can only benefit the old regime.

Meanwhile, remnants of the old secret police are attempting to wreak havoc in the country through an arson campaign directed at Interior Ministry buildings--in order to cover their past crimes--and through threats to assassinate public figures who support the revolution, such as Mohamed ElBaradei and Kefaya leader George Ishaq.

Nevertheless, during the middle of March, there were a number of positive developments on the side of those who support the revolution.

First, a growing minority of people who initially supported the Supreme Council and believed the lie that it aims to defend the revolution is rethinking its position.

Sections of activists that were quiet before are now publicly criticizing the timidity of the Council in meeting the revolution’s demands for democracy and social justice--something you could not do in the first few weeks after February 11. Some are drawing the conclusion that the army is complicit in counter-revolutionary actions.

Second, workers’ strikes continue to spread and become more militant.

For example, as of this meeting on March 19, thousands of television workers were carrying out a sit-in inside and outside the government-owned TV and radio building near Tahrir Square. They are demanding democratization of the institution, higher wages and the removal of all managers who supported Mubarak. They are threatening to take television off the air if their demands were not met.

Railway workers shut down all train movement in the south of the country, thus cutting off all entries and exits to the tourist cities of Luxor and Aswan, in an effort to push their demands for fair wages.

Meanwhile, workers continue to build new independent unions. On March 25, thousands of mass transit workers--whose strike during the uprising was instrumental in paralyzing Cairo and bringing down Mubarak--announced the formation of an independent union after a four-year struggle against the government-run federation.

The same day, hundreds of nurses, workers and doctors at Manshiat al-Bakri Hospital in Cairo announced the creation of a single united independent union after two months of feverish protests and organizing. Mahalla textile workers and many others have also formed new unions.

All these groups are joining the newly formed Egyptian Federation of Independent Trade Unions--and in mid-March, the pressure of strikes and protests forced the new cabinet to change the old labor laws and recognize all independent unions.

As the Muslim Brotherhood, Islamists and liberals all scramble form new political parties ahead of elections that will take place later this year, workers and the left are also initiating their own organizations and parties to fight for workers' demands and a radical democracy.

For example, hundreds of militant trade unionists have come together to initiate the Workers Democratic Party. Also, hundreds of socialists, progressives and unionists are forming a broad left party called the Popular Coalition.

In universities, large groups of professors and teaching staff have been supporting and joining in on all kinds of student mobilizations to democratize the campuses.

On a neighborhood level, popular committees to defend the revolution, initiated by socialists and other activists in Tahrir, have spread to more than 11 governorates--the Egyptian equivalent of states.

These committees of organized thousands for mobilizations around social justice issues and in favor of purging all remnants of the Mubarak regime.

In contrast to the Supreme Council and the cabinet, which ignored women in all their appointments to ministries and constitutional committees, women play a much bigger role in the new unions, left parties and the popular committees to defend the revolution.

MOST OF what the Egyptian revolution achieved in democratic changes after February 11 can only be attributed to massive popular pressure and courageous mobilizations of thousands of revolutionaries, such as the marches on the secret police headquarters.

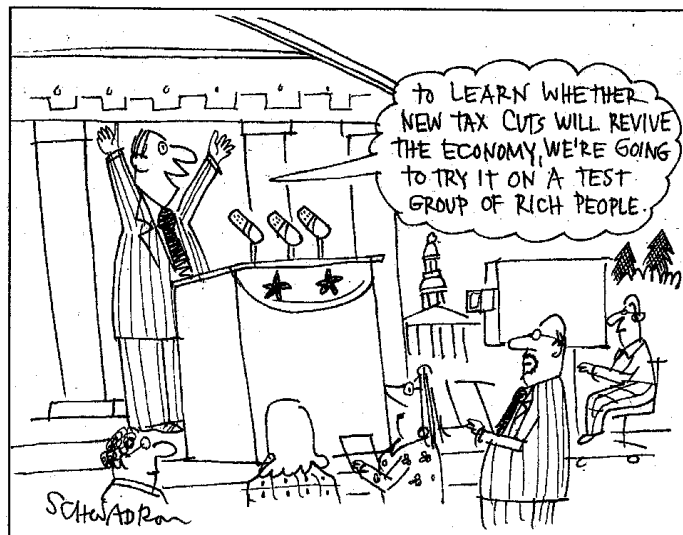
Consciousness about the new situation is still developing. Millions of people who support the revolution have not yet joined in these activities. They are still waiting for the Supreme Council and the new cabinet to fulfill its promises of raising wages and eliminating all vestiges of corruption by the business elite.

However, the Council and its cabinet daily show their contempt for the masses of poor people--to the point where the new prime minister compared strikers to street thugs.

As time passes and the promises by those defending the old system are broken, the revolutionaries could win over millions of new recruits to their efforts. And as millions join the revolutionary wave across the Arab world, the balance of forces can continue to tip against the old order.

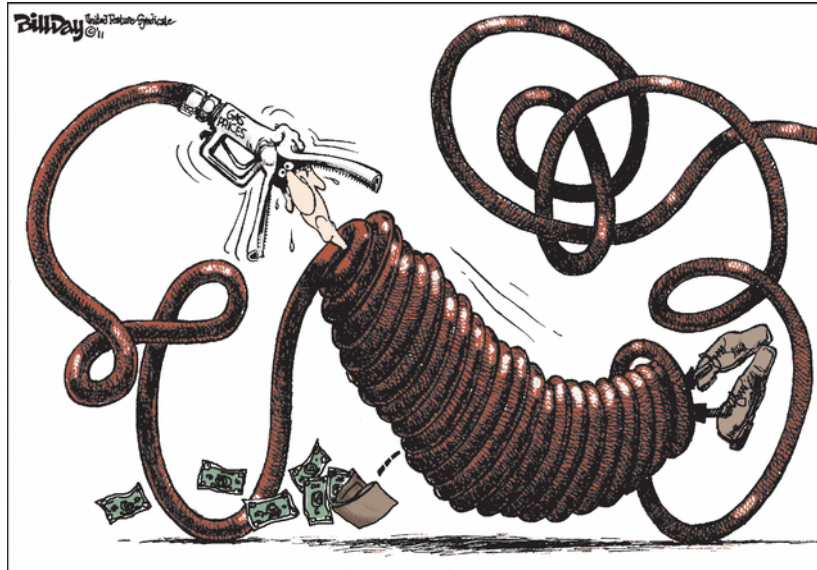
The current organizing efforts by workers, students and political activists are laying the basis both for much bigger rounds of struggle and for an alternative to the reactionary projects of the old ruling class and the fundamentalists. As one revolutionary likes to put it: "The spring of the Egyptian Revolution has just started."

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



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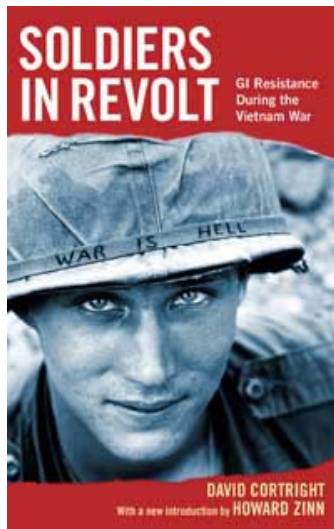
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