

REVOLUTION

¡Revolución! - قروثلا

Revolution is the creation of new living institutions, new groupings, new social relationships; it is the destruction of privileges and monopolies; it is the new spirit of justice, humanity, of freedom which must renew the whole of social life, raise the moral level and the material conditions of the masses by calling on them to provide, through their direct and conscientious action, for their own futures... Revolution is the destruction of all coercive ties; it is the autonomy of groups, of communes, of regions... Revolution is freedom...
-Errico Malatesta, 1924

February Issue – FREE or FOR DONATION

Egypt: Seize the Moment, Keep Up the Struggle

by Ron Tabor Feb 15, 2011

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<http://www.utopianmag.com>



Above photo of Egyptian Federation of Independent Trade Unions with banner calling for peoples revolution and a general strike.

With Mubarak gone, the top brass has suspended the constitution, dissolved the parliament elected by the last (and phony) elections, and promised to hold new elections in six months. They have also declared that they will lift the emergency decree at some indefinite point in the future and select a commission to amend the constitution. With these acts, *the military has put the country under martial law*, under which it can, if it wishes and feels able to do so, arrest (and torture) anyone they want, break up opposition meetings, and smash opposition demonstrations (although I expect it will not resort to these heavy-handed measures right away). The military announced that current Prime Minister Ahmed Shafiq will stay in office, while he has indicated he will reshuffle his cabinet and perhaps offer some positions to members of the opposition. In short, aside from the departure of Mubarak and possibly a few crumbs in the way of posts in a powerless cabinet, the only thing the protesters have won are promises.

The military played its hand brilliantly. Ordering the troops not to fire on the people, the generals managed to station their forces so that they controlled access to Tahrir Square and much of the rest of Cairo. *They (the Military) turned what had begun as a militant struggle, including storming police stations, seizing control of neighborhood streets, and an attempt to break into the Ministry of the Interior, into a peaceful protest bottled up in a confined space, all the while continuing to enjoy the confidence of the people.*

When the huge crowd did march out of the square, the army remained firmly in control, and when it became clear that there was no way to save Mubarak, they nudged him out. The military leadership apparently decided that this was the best option, rather than risk a bloodbath that would have set the entire country, and

perhaps the entire region, ablaze. Meanwhile, although some of the protesters have vowed to stay in the square and there has been some talk of holding another demonstration in a week, most of the demonstrators have headed home, under the watchful eyes of the soldiers.

Fortunately the brass have not yet succeeded in putting the genie back into the lamp; workers throughout Egypt have erupted in a wave of strikes and demonstrations to address their long-standing grievances, particularly low wages and shabby working conditions. The militant actions involve not only workers at private enterprises but also those at state-owned businesses. These have included ambulance drivers, journalists, workers at banks and insurance companies, and transport workers. Hopefully, the nation-wide strike wave will signal the beginning of a new stage of the Egyptian Revolution rather than its death throes.



The opposition is starting to differentiate itself along political and class lines. Young (and middle class) organizers of the protest, including Google executive, Wael Ghonim, and Amr Salama, met privately with representatives of the ruling junta, Major Generals Mahmoud Hijazi and Abdel Fattah, coming away supposedly impressed with the generals' sincerity. Ghonim has been urging them (workers) to call off their strikes and start working for the "new Egypt". Many of these individuals are prepared to sell out the needs of the workers, the unemployed, and the rural poor in return for a US-style bourgeois democracy in which they can expect to play leading roles.

Seize the Moment, Keep Up the Struggle. Now is not the time to give up the struggle. Ghonim's advice should be ignored. Now, more than ever, the workers, the unemployed, the rural poor, and all those oppressed by Egypt's rotten social structure need to step up the struggle. In addition to striking and demonstrating for their immediate needs, they need to organize for another mass demonstration the demands of this demonstration should include (*continued on reverse side*):

(Continued from other side)

- Lift the state of emergency and release all political prisoners immediately!
- For full rights to speak, assemble, and organize without the threat of arrest now!
- No to the military's maneuver to monopolize the process of amending of the constitution! The opposition should assert its right to rewrite the constitution. For a nation-wide Constituent Assembly elected by all the people in open and fair elections!
- Former president Hosni Mubarak must be arrested! He, former Vice President Omar Suleiman, and all those (including members of the current ruling junta) implicated in the torture and killing of Egyptians must be put on trial for their crimes!
- Seize the financial assets of the entire Mubarak family! For a full and open financial investigation of the means by which the Mubaraks and all the members of the Egyptian ruling class have enriched themselves at the people's expense!
- As they organize for another mass mobilization, the opposition should begin to organize for a nation-wide Peoples Congress to meet in Cairo. The aims of this congress should be two: one, to draw up a further list of demands and proposals to reorganize Egyptian society that address the needs of all the oppressed people of Egypt; the other, to organize for a nation-wide general strike.
- Meanwhile, anarchists and libertarian socialists should seize the political space that has been created, however temporary it might be, to form their own groups and establish working relations among them, with the idea of eventually federating on the national level.

The struggle is not over! Victory has not been won! The only way the people can win their demands is by struggle, by stepping up the pressure, not by returning to their homes! The only guarantee against continued military rule is mass mobilization! Don't leave your fate in the hands of the generals!



Egyptian Graffiti: "Revolution, People, Revolution"

Thank you Tunisia, Thank you Egypt

by KDog Jan. 28, 2011

U.S. media/politics/culture does its best to portray Arab people as gloomy, authoritarian, repressed/repressive, fundamentalist, etc. This racist brainwashing has its effects even on good people.

So leave it to my favorite species, humanity, to decide to undermine all that. Last week the people of Tunisia erupted in revolt against poverty and dictatorship chasing the pro-US President from the country. This week the tidal wave swept to Egypt, a country about 8x the size of Tunisia, and the most populous country in the Arab world.

Egypt is the major Arab ally in Mideast receiving billions of dollars in "aide" to prop up the repressive Egyptian state. Egypt recognizes Israel and criminally participates in the blockade of Gaza.

Demonstrations all over Egypt have paralyzed the country and the cabal of gangsters that run the world are shitting their pants:

BBC: "German Defence Minister Karl-Theodor zu Guttenberg expresses concern about the risk of "infectious momentum" of unrest in the Middle East, during a meeting at the World Economic Forum."

Like in Tunisia, the Islamicists have been completely by-passed by largely secular youth and their facebook accounts.

Libcom and Angry Arab are two good sites to follow developments. The BBC and Al-Jazeera for mainstream accounts.

Because of the spontaneous nature of this "contagious" revolt, there are not strong revolutionary organizations that could act to replace old order with an egalitarian democracy from below. It is therefore likely that the rulers (with new faces) will regain control.

But nothing will be the same. The youth of Tunisia now have the experience of ousting a dictator. The people of Egypt are feeling their power. The movement is gaining an insurrectionary quality - all bets are off. Who is next? Algeria? The Palestinian territories? France?

Thank you kids, workers, women (those who choose to wear scarves, those that dont) in the streets of Tunisia and Egypt! Spring is coming.

-KDog is a union member holding dual membership in the Communication Workers of America and the Industrial Workers of the World.

A major priority in the United States and West is to combat the racist, anti-Arab, and anti-Muslim attitudes that are so prevalent. The conservative media are attempting to distort the uprisings by accusing the protesters of being agents of "Fundamentalists". There is constant talk of on one hand, the outpouring of "popular" and "democratic" desires, but in the next breath condemnation of the forces in motion for being at odds with US foreign policy interests. Constant references to the Muslim Brotherhood, al-Qa'ida, Iran, and Hezbollah are made to further confuse people's analysis of the actual groups and situation. Meanwhile the liberal media are focusing in on and strengthening the personalities of would-be-leaders from the middle classes and bourgeois business sectors. This tactic is to de-emphasize the mass and anti-authoritarian character of the revolts.

It is clear that there are many ideological and political trends involved in these struggles. The revolts have broken open an oppressive society that has criminalized free thought and action amongst the people. We realize there is a contest of ideas. While the revolts have created many new collaborative "common fronts", there are many different visions concerning societal (re)organization. The differences will become more acute as the struggles deepen. It is our responsibility to 1) actively confront racist ideas 2) connect with and demonstrate solidarity with radical organizers in the North African and Arab diasporas 3) popularize the international revolutionary actions and organize radical oppositional and libertatory movements here in the United States and the West.

REVOLUTION is published by the First of May Anarchist Alliance (M1). Members of M1 are also active in the organizations, Industrial Workers of the World and Solidarity & Defense.

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