

# For a Workers' Revolution in Egypt and Throughout North Africa!

The recent mass popular upheavals in Tunisia and Egypt have mesmerized the attention of people all over the globe, and given hope to the exploited and oppressed throughout North Africa and worldwide. The Liaison Committee composed of Humanist Workers for Revolutionary Socialism (HWRS) and the Communist Workers Group of New Zealand (CWG-NZ) join the courageous workers, students, and oppressed people of Tunisia, Egypt, Yemen, and Jordan in standing up to their imperialist-backed dictators and demanding an end to tyranny. We join in the widespread condemnation of the brutal Mubarak regime for organizing, arming, and paying undercover security forces and street thugs to attack both the demonstrators in Tahrir Square in Cairo and the international news media and human rights workers. We recognize the formation of self-organized committees of workers and their allies, to protect and defend the neighborhoods and protests, as incipient organs of dual power.

All of the courage and determination shown by the people of Tunisia and Egypt will come to nothing, however, if the Egyptian revolution is crushed (or stalled in its tracks, as it appears has occurred in Tunisia), or the upshot is simply the replacement of one oppressive regime with another that is equally willing to carry out the dictates of Western imperialism and global capitalism, even if it operates in a somewhat more "democratic" manner. In this flyer, we present edited versions of two separate public statements released earlier on the Internet by HWRS and the CWG-NZ regarding the issues raised by the upheaval in North Africa. We encourage the interested reader to visit the Discussions section of HWRS's Facebook page, and the CWG-NZ's Redrave blog (see URLs below), to read the full original text of these statements. They will also be posted on HWRS's website in the near future.

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## TO ARMS! TO ARMS! THE REVOLUTION IS UNDER ATTACK!

(Originally published February 2, 2011)

The Mubarak regime is collapsing! The counter-revolutionary thugs, the remnants of the regime, the NPD stalwarts, and out of uniform state security have attacked the people as a last ditch attempt to crush the revolution. The Army has as yet refused to defend the people. The working class must take leadership and form up workers' militias to defend the revolution. The masses are under bloody attack!

Mubarak has shown he will ask the troops to fire on the people! We must win the conscript base of the army to the revolution now! The Generals have shown they will not defend the masses from the thugs; it is time for them to go!

It is time now for the masses call upon troops to convene rank-and-file soldiers' committees to elect their own officers who will give orders to defend the masses and defend the revolution. These committees must link to the neighborhood committees, to arm the people and set up new organizations of popular democracy.

- **Arming of the workers and the creation of joint committees with soldiers to smash the counterrevolution is the only way for the revolution to go forward!**
- **Soldiers give weapons to the masses!**
- **Workers to the barricades! Carry out a general strike to defend and advance the revolution! Arrest the counter-revolution!**
- **Joint coordination between the neighborhood committees and the soldiers is needed to constitute an incipient dual power and create a workers'-farmers'-soldiers' government.**

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## Liaison Committee Statement on Tunisia (Originally published January 30, 2011)

### REVOLUTIONS IN NORTH AFRICA AND THE MIDDLE EAST: THE PERMANENT REVOLUTION UNFOLDS!

[*Note: What follows is a greatly condensed and slightly revised version of a statement that was originally written during the early days of the Tunisian revolt, and published on January 30, 2011. It does not attempt to deal in detail with the quick moving escalation of revolutionary uprisings in Egypt and elsewhere in the Middle East occurring today. For the full original version, please see HWRS's Facebook page or the CWG-NZ's Redrave blog (URLs below).*]

#### The National Revolution revives

Two and a half years since the onset of the world imperialist crisis, we are seeing a revolutionary development in the Arab world that resembles the generalized revolutionary upsurge that accompanied and followed the final days of WWI. In Egypt we see the toilers climb on the tanks, hug the soldiers, carry them on their shoulders and ask them for their participation in the revolution. We saw similar fraternization in Tunisia.

We are not surprised that revolutionary uprisings in which the workers and the impoverished toilers throw themselves bravely against the batons, shields and armored vehicles of the police, are not happening in Europe but rather in North Africa where American and European imperialism has for decades crushed the inspiration to fight imperialism and the Zionists via the brutal services of the most vicious puppet dictators. Now the masses flow by the tens of thousands into the streets fighting to overthrow the dictatorships installed, armed and defended by imperialism.

The goal of overthrowing these dictators and the class of comprador capitalists with them, expresses the democratic nature of this re-opening of the national democratic revolution. The masses of North Africa and the Middle East have never gone through the experience of bourgeois democracy and its associated illusions. Naturally many of the people in the streets believe that by overthrowing the dictatorships and creating a democracy, under the control of the masses, or with the support of the army, their basic needs will be met. Yet, this "democratic" re-opening of the national revolution will be crushed if it aims only at the creation of a parliamentary democracy and does not develop over into a workers' revolution spreading across the Arab world and ultimately Europe. The national question in the Arab world cannot be fully answered unless the revolution becomes international and creates one Arab nation. In order to succeed, the revolution must be unified across borders and this can be done only if the masses struggle to complete the democratic tasks of the national revolution carries over to the socialist revolution; to defeat the imperialists and to overthrow their agents, not only the dictatorships but the national bourgeoisies, creating a federated socialist Republic of North Africa and the Middle East.

Imperialism will seek to resolve this crisis by imposing a democratic façade, or left Bonapartist officers coups may arise to manage the transition to 'democracy'. But ultimately these cannot meet the masses' needs, and if they are not sufficient to contain the masses, then imperialism will not hesitate to send NATO or Zionist dogs to crush the revolutions. That is why it is critical for the Palestinians, Syrians, Jordanians, Yemenis, Iraqis etc to join the North African uprisings and unite with the masses to drive imperialism and Zionism out of the Middle East.

### HUMANIST WORKERS FOR REVOLUTIONARY SOCIALISM

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Redrave (CWG-NZ blog): <http://redrave.blogspot.com/>

## **The Tunisian Revolution**

It's clear that the Tunisian uprising has sparked off a re-opening of the Arab national democratic revolution. The massive revolutions erupting throughout the Arab world express the fundamental character and contradictions of the struggle for national independence, agricultural reform, control of foreign trade and national resources, expansion of workers and lower-peasants wages and rights. These are all goals which can be achieved only by the leadership of the working class pushing the struggle on to the formation of a workers' state.

These lessons from which the theory of permanent revolution was derived have been played out over and over again in countries across the colonial world where the working class has been prevented from taking power into their own hands. Without the rapid emergence of a revolutionary workers' party capable of leading the masses to create democratic organs of worker's power, the consolidation of power in the hands of a counter-revolutionary comprador bourgeoisie will strangle the revolution. Today the North African working class is faced with the necessity of accomplishing the national and democratic tasks of the bourgeois revolution, which can only be done through the formation a workers' and farmers' state. The inability of the local capitalists to liberate the nation from the fetters of imperialism places those tasks squarely in the hands of the proletariat.

The driving force in the revolution so far has been the working class, the youth and the unemployed. Any governmental solution short of a workers' state will perpetuate the economic crisis because the bourgeoisie has no choice but to maintain subservience to imperialism. The class character of the uprising and revolutionary process is therefore proletarian. However, for lack of a revolutionary leadership, mass organizations of workers, unemployed councils, and neighborhood committees have, to the extent they have begun forming, not become true organs of workers power or generalized as of yet. Therefore, true dual power, which is a necessary stage to complete the proletarian revolution, has not yet developed. In this vacuum the grave danger is that the formation of a popular front, coalition bourgeois government, or left Bonapartist 'officers' coup', would be a setback for the revolutionary process.

### **Only the working class can lead**

The revolution requires the end of all restrictions on assembly and the freedom of all political and economic prisoners. The violence of the counter-revolution has been met with by the formation of neighborhood committees and to a large extent has been rooted out (for now). The neighborhood defense committees are not controlled by any left or other organizations. They are truly spontaneous, controlled by the workers in their areas. Vanguard workers need to counter-pose the power of the spontaneous organizations of workers, unemployed youth, and students who organized the revolutionary uprising, and these organizations need to link with the street defense committees to form incipient workers' councils.

These forces should be linked to newly formed rank-and-file action committees within the unions, the factories and the army. Thus such workers councils will rise as a challenge to the capitalist regime in a dual power situation.

We have already seen the soldiers (who are mostly short term conscripts with close ties to the working class) hesitate in suppressing the masses. The Madagascar experience from 2009, of soldiers arming the workers must be popularized in the workers discussions in the coming weeks. Workers' militias are needed to defend the revolutionary process and to unite the workers with the neighborhood committees and the soldiers who break rank and come over to the revolution. Soldiers must be pressed to open the armories to the workers to defend the revolution through the formation of a popular worker's militia.

Defense of the revolution by necessity is a confrontation with imperialist forces and that confrontation has begun. Imperialism will first try to undermine the revolution from within. If their coalition governments and popular fronts, or military putsches, are not successful we can expect to see US, French, Zionist, NATO or UN imperialist troops arrive to 'restore order'. Internationalist workers and anti-imperialist fighters must take action to demand:

***No to Imperialist or Zionist intervention! Prepare to stop shipments of troops and supplies! Internationalist dock workers prepare to tie up the docks! French and US workers: build general strikes to stop imperialist intervention!***

### **To defeat imperialism this revolution must spread**

The situation requires an internationalist perspective in order to advance the revolution and drive out imperialism. Today we see Egypt in flames, the masses are taking to the streets in all the major cities. Jordan, Yemen, Lebanon, Syria and even Albania are all feeling the ripple effect. The occupied masses of Palestine and Iraq are lifting their eyes in hope towards these events. A wave of revolutionary fervor is awakening the oppressed masses. For the Tunisian revolution to be successful it must spread and break out of its national and regional isolation.

We have seen the terrible consequences of the isolation of the revolutionary process to one country. First, with the USSR which through isolation had its revolution overturned by the Stalinists who made their peace with imperialism. Now in Cuba the PCC rapidly restores capitalism as socialism on one island could not survive without the advance of socialism in the Americas. Tunisia's revolution will either be corrupted and reintegrated into imperialism's structures or will be the spark that ignites revolutions that initiate and sustain the world revolution.

### **In the next days and weeks we say**

- Generalize the neighborhood committees; unite with workers committees in the factories and form workers assemblies where the demands of the revolution can be debated and voted on. Rise up worker's councils, soldier's councils, student and unemployed councils. These are the embryonic organs of dual power and the workers state.
- Demand the immediate sacking of the officer corps and the disbanding of the army into a popular soldiers and workers' militia with elected officers.
- Demand the immediate expropriation of the property of the imperialists, and of the Tunisian and Egyptian ruling classes that serve imperialism
- Repudiate the foreign debt! Immediate suspension of debt payments to the IMF!
- Nationalize the land and distribute it to the peasants. Nationalize major industry without compensation. Take the planning and direction of these industries under democratic workers control!
- Expropriation of the banks and formation of one state bank controlled by the workers representatives.
- For the formation of workers food and transport commissions to administer just distribution.
- No to coalition governments of the bourgeoisie! No to popular fronts between capitalist parties, liberals, and bureaucratic trade union leaders! For an independent workers government!
- Bread for all, jobs for the unemployed and land for the poor farmer.
- Stop all capital flight demand return of all stolen wealth to the people!
- For full employment! To provide a job for every unemployed youth and worker we fight for thirty hours work for forty hours pay at full union scale. For an immediate implementation of sliding scale of wages and prices.
- Solidarity with the workers of Algeria, Morocco Libya, Egypt, Jordan, Palestine. Only together can we defeat imperialism.
- Stand down any attempt to crush our revolution; the best way to support the revolutionary process is to defeat your own ruling class.
- Unite to form a World Revolutionary Party that draws on the tradition of struggle of the previous communist internationals, based on the Trotskyist program of 1938, to coordinate and lead the international revolution to a victorious socialist revolution!

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