

For a revolutionary General strike in Egypt

Prepare the way for a revolutionary provisional government

Since Friday 28th January 2011 there has already been a general strike underway in Egypt. The working class is leading the Egyptian revolution which is greatly supported by the unemployed, the poor peasants (fellayin), the oppressed nomadic masses and the mass of the ruined sections of the middle class. All of imperialism is closing ranks behind US imperialism to gain control over the revolution in order to crush it from within, while at the same time preparing, at the first opportunity to once again use brute force to attempt to weaken and crush the revolutionary masses.

A dual power already exists

Over Friday and Saturday the 28th and 29th the masses have defeated the police in the streets. Immediately the masses set up their own self-defence committees against the armed thugs sent by the state and imperialism to attack some homes of the middle class, as they had done in Tunisia, to justify the continued use of the police. Revolutionary action committees, which the masses call 'Popular committees' led the destroying of the police stations, centres of torture supported by US imperialism, and disarmed the police. Sections of the army joined the masses to defeat the police. The army had been sent into the streets to intimidate and support the putting down of the masses but, without exception, the rank and file soldiers refused to shoot. In other words, the rank and file soldiers broke from the control of their commanding officers. US imperialism is desperately trying to regain control of the army using their most trusted sections of the elite Presidential guard to protect the main television station, and strategic areas like the gas and refinery installations from direct takeover by the masses.

The problem is that, for the moment, the heroic actions of the masses are not being co-ordinated. It is this vacuum that imperialism is trying to fill in order to strangle the revolution from within.

The call of the April 6 movement for a general strike for 1 Feb 2011 is an attempt by imperialism to gain control over the revolution

There is already a general strike, so why is the April 6 movement calling for one? Why is it that suddenly Egypt TV is starting to broadcast protests in Tahrir Square? The April 6 movement calls for a 'peaceful' transition to 'democracy', in other words, exactly the same call as imperialism puts out from the US, Britain and the EU. Imperialism has a problem in that the 'leaders' they are putting forward to strangle the revolution from within, played no role in the revolution from the beginning. El Baradei is the figure being built up by imperialism every day from all different angles. The Muslim Brotherhood leaders have now completely sold out to US imperialism by putting El Baradei as the 'leader' of the opposition and thus boosting his standing for becoming possibly the 'new' President of Egypt, a new manager for imperialism. The

April 6 movement is trying to hijack the revolutionary anger of the masses, calling for a 'million people' march on Tuesday 1st February 2011. They want to create a platform where El Baradei poses as the 'leader' of the masses, making a few radical sounding statements to boost his credibility. They want to boost the so-called committees of ten, for them to get a 'mandate' to negotiate, which means they want to open the way for selling out the masses. Of course, Egypt TV will broadcast this message, hoping that all the fighting masses in Egypt start to put their faith in El Baradei. We need only remember that after the groundwork done by El Baradei in creating suspicion that Saddam had chemical weapons (even if he did not go to the end and showed some public disagreement), imperialism invaded and slaughtered many hundreds of thousands of Iraqis, a slaughter that continues until today. The Iraqi regime is still a puppet of US imperialism. This is the heritage of El Baradei- no wonder imperialism gave him a Nobel prize.

Turn the general strike into a revolutionary general strike- prepare the way for a provisional revolutionary workers government based on the grassroots committees of action, the 'popular committees'

What the masses have conquered in the streets must not be conceded, not even one inch. This means that once again the masses must prevent the re-appearance of the police, they should be disarmed and dispersed. It is this hated police that has brutally killed over 150 unarmed protestors in 2 days- they cannot be allowed to return.

In opposition to the committee of ten of El Baradei, we call for the setting up of a provisional revolutionary workers government based on a national council of delegates from workers and soldiers who are part of the popular committees from all parts of the country. The rank and file soldiers should immediately form committees and send delegates to be part of the grassroots 'popular committees'. This national council of delegates from the 'popular committees' in struggle, should unite delegates of workers, rank and file soldiers, the unemployed, the poorest sections of the fellayin (peasants), delegates from the oppressed nomads, delegates from all sectors in struggle who have joined with the popular committees. It is this national council that sets up the provisional revolutionary government. It is only this council of delegates, who must be instantly recallable, earning the wage of not more than an average skilled worker and bound by a mandate not to have any secret talks, that can really represent the masses in struggle and take forward the current general strike up to the end. It is this provisional revolutionary government that can lead the masses to root out the Mubarak regime, from top to bottom, rooting out the entire bureaucracy. No-one that has served in the Egyptian parliament or its cabinet can be allowed to represent the masses in struggle; no-one who has been part of open and secret talks with Clinton, Obama or any agency of imperialism can be allowed to represent the masses. No-one who has been part of government talks with the Israelis and US imperialism over the Palestinian struggle, can be part of any revolutionary government. [This is important in the light of the revelation that all the Arab league leaders knew and approved of the sellout by the PLO leaders on the right of return and other questions]. No-one who supports the blockade on Gaza in any form can be part of the revolutionary government. No-one who supports the maintaining

of the murderous police can be part of the revolutionary government. No-one who supports the maintaining of any part of the Mubarak regime and bureaucracy, can be part of the revolutionary government.

The tasks of the provisional revolutionary government

The central task of the provisional revolutionary government is to co-ordinate the preparation for the revolutionary dispersing of the entire regime of Mubarak, from top to bottom, and for all power to pass definitively into the hands of the grassroots 'popular committees'.

A call must be made for all rank and file soldiers who have not yet joined the revolution, to do so, forming soldier committees and sending delegates to the 'popular committees'. The soldiers must break with the officer caste who gave the orders to shoot on the masses. These officers are the direct agents of US imperialism, the very group of capitalists who are keeping the Egyptian and world working class in starvation through high prices and unemployment, who daily dismiss immigrant workers in the imperialist centres and send them home to die of hunger. Once the support has been gained from the rank and file soldiers in sufficient numbers, the Mubarak regime should be dispersed without delay, even if provisional revolutionary government is still being formed.

At the same time, factory committees, which comprise delegates representing all workers must be set up at every workplace to prepare for workers control. This would place the armaments factories, the transport, the oil companies, the television and other media, the stocks of food, clothing, meeting venues, large accommodation etc, all at the disposal of the revolution. These factory committees should ensure they send delegates to the 'popular committees'.

Neither Mubarak nor any of his regime, nor El Baradei nor the Muslim Brotherhood can solve the problem of hunger and unemployment of the masses.

What should the programme be of the provisional revolutionary government of the 'popular revolutionary committees' be fighting for?

1. The first is to call for the overthrow of the entire Mubarak regime, with the officer caste and the entire bureaucracy who kept up the brutal attacks against the masses on behalf of imperialism for all these years. It is important to go beyond just 'down with Mubarak'. Down with any interim government of El Baradei, the Muslim Brotherhood and fragments of the Mubarak regime. This 'interim government' is just another face for the continued rule of US imperialism.
2. We need to raise the slogans of Tunisia (and really the world working class) for bread and work. This means that the land as a whole should be nationalised and workers should seize all the capitalist farms, place them under agricultural workers control, seize the entire capitalist food production and distribution, placing these too under workers control. No compensation to the capitalists. This is the way to feed the masses immediately. Model worker collective farms should be set up; cheap credit and every assistance for farming equipment should be given to

the poorest peasants. The re-allocation of the land should be jointly determined by committees of agricultural workers and committees representing the poorest peasants. The capitalist class have all become fat over the bones of the masses, all of them closely linked to the Mubarak dictatorship. The imperialist companies and banks operating in Egypt have long propped up the Mubarak dictatorship. They have kept the masses in unemployment and starvation in the land of plenty. It follows that to conquer work all capitalists and imperialist assets, including the banks must be expropriated without compensation to the capitalists, and placed under workers control. There should be no private ownership of the means of production, ie the large farms, large textile companies, the arms manufacturing companies, the banks, the hydroelectricity, the gas and oil companies, the large food distributors, all the large companies should be under workers control. In other words, all the commanding heights, the means of production should be occupied and taken over by the workers, opening the doors to all the unemployed. This would lay the basis for immediate reduction of the working day, sharing the work among all who can work, without loss of pay. It is only a revolutionary government based on the 'popular committees' that are centred on workers', the unemployed, the poorest fellayin, the oppressed nomads and rank and file soldiers delegates that can implement the masses aspirations for bread and work.

3. There should be delegates from the popular committees that investigate all the high prices and expose how imperialism and the local capitalists are benefiting.
4. expel all US military bases in Egypt; the revolutionary popular committees should take them over
5. Tear down the Rafah border- the ending of the blockade on Gaza is an immediate democratic task. In 2008-9 the masses from Egypt helped to tear down the Rafah border; now the Palestinian masses can join hands with their Egyptian class brothers and sisters to get rid of the entire Mubarak regime.
6. The nomadic poor should have their demands addressed for work and land and services.
7. for the scrapping of the debts of the masses with the capitalist banks
8. The immediate return of all the treasures of the country that were stolen and that are today in the collections of Buckingham palace, in the USA, in France and elsewhere.
9. The summoning of workers brigades from around the globe to support the Egyptian revolution.
10. for the immediate right of return of all Palestinians and for all the walls and checkpoints that keep the Palestinian masses in concentration camps to be torn down.
11. for the immediate overthrow of all the repressive regimes in the region
12. appeal to the workers of the world to take up the fight against world imperialism-capitalism, to import the Egyptian and Tunisian revolution to their home soil, ie for the revolutionary struggle for the working class to take power on a world scale

13. for an immediate conference of all workers revolutionary organizations and internationalist Trotskyists in Egypt to set up a revolutionary International, which for us means the refounding of the Fourth International.