

The UN 'no-fly zone' is a cover for the imperialist invasion to crush the Libyan masses

The kicking out of US puppet dictators in Tunisia and Egypt has opened the door for the masses around the world to start the counter-offensive against the brutal attacks by imperialism. It takes forward the fight in Kyrgyzstan where the masses kicked out the regime of US puppet Bakiev, burning the parliament building to the ground when the regime massively increased the price of food. It takes forward the fight of the Bolivian masses in December 2010, when, dynamite in hand, they threatened to kick out all the treacherous union leaders who refused to call a general strike when the regime increased the price of petrol by 83%. The fights in Tunisia and Egypt begin to give an answer to the Greek masses who have launched more than 8 general strikes last year against the imperialist cutbacks. The kicking out of the imperialist puppet dictators raises the question for the world working class as to how to fight high prices and unemployment and loss of benefits- namely by overthrowing their capitalist regimes. All over the world, every capitalist regime is under threat from the masses.

Up to now, the most advanced process of rebellion against the capitalist regime has gone the furthest in Libya. Not only have the police been smashed and defeated in the streets but the masses took over the army bases and the rank and file soldiers joined the masses. Such was the sweep of the revolution that within days huge sections of the army went over to the masses. It was only a matter of days before the entire Gaddafi regime would have been smashed.

Imperialism was worried- if they allowed the Gaddafi regime to be smashed by an armed revolution of the working class, every capitalist regime would have been immediately under threat of being overthrown in a similar way. This was why the first step was to send mercenaries from Chad and Niger – both regimes that are completely under the control of French imperialism. While the French imperialists supported Gaddafi in the West to prevent him from being overthrown by the masses, in the East, US imperialism used its influence, through the ex-Justice Minister of Gaddafi, Mahmoud AbdelJibril, and other US-trained agents that had long been prepared for their counter-revolutionary role, to delay the masses from advancing from the Benghazi region on to Tripoli- the excuse was that they were busy building up a trained army. But the masses when they overthrew the state structures in Benghazi, did not need to such training so this excuse was merely a delaying tactic to prevent arms reaching the masses in Tripoli. This gave several crucial days for Gaddafi and his mercenaries to smash the revolutionary forces in Tripoli and several other areas. Once the objective of weakening the revolutionary forces in Libya was achieved, with smashing of the resistance in the West and the centralizing of arms under the new bourgeois regime in the East, under the 'Interim Transitional National Council, ITNC, which in effect has placed the weapons of the masses who are still fighting the Gaddafi regime, under the

indirect control of US imperialism, world imperialism, through the UN, launched the 'no-fly zone'.

This allowed imperialism to pose as 'saviours' of the unarmed 'civilians' while launching an invasion whose primary objective is to stop the world process of their puppet regimes being expelled by the armed masses. Thus the objective of imperialism is to crush the Libyan revolution and to disarm the masses. To achieve this objective, imperialism works from within for their middle class lackeys to capture the leadership of the masses and from without through the massacres by Gaddafi and the imperialist invasion.

The imperialist invasion marks a new phase in the attacks by imperialism on the masses in revolt. Thus, as part of the same strategy to crush the revolts with an iron fist, are the widespread use of live ammunition and snipers to continuously shoot down the unarmed masses in Bahrain and Yemen by puppet regimes of US imperialism. The invasion by the Saudi army of Bahrain is part of the strategy of US imperialism to attempt to definitively end the mass revolt against their puppet regime. The occupation of hospitals and the shooting of patients by the Saudi army shows the desperation of imperialism to crush the masses. The placing of the reformist Gwisai and 5 others on trial for treason shows the nervousness of US imperialism for the slightest challenge to their puppet, the dictator Mugabe. The attempts by the Egyptian military to ban all strikes and protests, threatening 10 year prison sentences and massive fines for transgressions, are also part of the same desperate measures by imperialism to regain absolute control and to smash the world revolt of the working class.

These acts of desperation by imperialism and their lackeys show that the fire of revolution has not been put out; on the contrary, the fires are spreading.

The UN resolution 1973 (2011) creates the conditions for the imperialist invasion against the Libyan masses

While claiming to 'exclude a foreign occupation force', the resolution allows the invading imperialist forces to use 'all necessary measures' which means that they can send in troops to support the crushing of the masses. Further, the so-called Panel of experts which are to oversee the process of 'democratization' has a mandate for at least one year. Thus the drafters of the resolution knew that the invasion was not going to be for a few days or a week or two but allows troops to be put in the region and on the ground for at least one year. Further, while the resolution refers the Libyan regime to the International Criminal Court, the invading forces are indemnified through a no claim clause (no 27) where no person who suffers any losses will be allowed to claim in any court against the invaders- thus US and other imperialism has a blanket amnesty under which they can commit genocide and kill at will - in short the imperialist occupation of Libya with the aim of smashing the masses is a central aim of the UN resolution.

The whole resolution was designed to create a pretext to invade. Suddenly imperialism claimed to be worried about foreign nationals. Most of these

'foreign nationals' are immigrant workers who have long been underpaid, suppressed and exploited while working for the imperialist companies operating in Libya. Rather ironically they want to compel Gaddafi to 'protect civilians and meet their basic needs' when imperialism capitalism nowhere on the planet has met the needs of the working class. Suddenly concern is raised for human rights and refugee law, when since 1948 the UN has sat idly by while Israel has refused to allow millions of Palestinian refugees to return.

The resolution was drafted in such a way that the Gaddafi regime could not meet the terms and thus the invasion could take place.

At the same time a special UN envoy is being sent to Libya to facilitate 'dialogue' with the Gaddafi regime. This is a preparation for fragments of the Gaddafi regime, possibly including his family members or even Gaddafi himself in the new regime. Imperialism has realized that Gaddafi himself is too discredited to play the role of controlling the masses on their behalf in future so they are also preparing for his departure and the installation of a 'new' Gaddafi regime. The preparation of a capitalist regime which consists of part of the old regime is also reflected by the 'freeze' of capital assets of Libya in other countries- what is frozen can be unfrozen to a 'new' lackey regime.

The resolution talks of 'concern for safety of foreign nationals and their rights' which hints at the task of invading to defend to property rights of imperialist assets in Libya. In other words the invading force has the mandate to defend the imperialist assets from being taken over by the Libyan masses.

An arms embargo is placed on Libya and while mercenaries are condemned, no steps are outlined against them. This means that the further arming of the Libyan masses is restricted while the forces who are armed are the mercenary forces of Gaddafi and the imperialist forces. The arms that the masses have, is day by day being further centralized under their control of the pro-imperialist ITNC. The resolution thus makes it very difficult for the masses in Egypt and Tunisia who have arms, to send them to arm the Libyan masses.

In the first days of the bombing campaign by imperialism they destroyed not only the military infrastructure in Tripoli but also in Benghazi. This is in itself a preparation for a full scale imperialist invasion and shows that imperialism is not in full control of the armed masses in Benghazi who may at some stage see through the ITNC and launch an offensive against the invading imperialist forces. If US imperialism does send arms to the ITNC these will be used to crush any internal resistance and for strengthening their grab of the oil resources away from the control of other contending imperialist forces.

The so-called Panel of experts can at any stage 'strengthen' the terms of the invasion- a blank cheque handed to imperialism to commit the worst atrocities in defence of their 'right' to exploit the masses of the world.

The treacherous role of the middle class and the reformist leaders

In the UN Security Council it was the Lebanese government, and thus Hezbollah, that proposed this resolution, which shows that in times of deep

crisis of imperialism, when the masses are threatening with revolution, the forces of Hariri and Hezbollah stand shoulder to shoulder, against masses.

If the Africa regimes (SA, Nigeria, Gabon) represented on the UN Security Council had abstained they would not have had the legitimacy to pass the resolution. As it is, the ANC-SACP government, the governments of Nigeria and Gabon all voted in favour of the invasion, thus providing a cover for the crushing of the Libyan masses. This shows that the regimes from the semi-colonies who are represented on the UN Security Council have no independence from their imperialist masters. All talk of democratization of the UN is just to give an extra lease of life of the brutal, violent imperialist world domination that it represents.

The leading role of the Egyptian military dictatorship in proposing the 'no fly zone' in the Arab League, shows that the Arab League and the Egyptian military are nothing but puppets of imperialism. Further, the role of much of the 'left', the April 6 movement, the Muslim Brotherhood and other middle class and bourgeois forces in promoting pacifism in Egypt that has allowed the Egyptian military dictatorship to take the place vacated by Mubarak, is exposed as being fundamentally pro-imperialist.

The ISO (International Socialist Organization), in the form of the Egyptian Socialists played a role in diverting the mass struggle into economic demands when the question of the working class taking power was on the cards. It was only when workers began a general strike from the 12th February, with the masses starting to break from pacifist methods by going to surround the parliament buildings and the presidential palace, that imperialism realized that the masses were breaking from the reformist leadership- imperialism gave the instruction for Mubarak to go and thus handed back the initiative to the middle class forces to maintain their control. If Mubarak had stayed longer the base of the army would have joined the masses, splitting from the officer caste which was still openly siding with Mubarak. It was under these conditions that the supporters of the Egyptian Socialists were saying that the military should take over and that the fight should now go to demands at factory level (ie not an immediate fight for the working class to take power using its own methods). The Egyptian Socialists thus helped turn the strike movement into a pressure tool against the Mubarak regime, raising no independent working class programme for the working class to take power; there was no call to turn the general strike into a revolutionary general strike in order to overthrow the Mubarak regime. Throughout the process the trade union leaders made no call for a general strike to bring down the regime- in fact they tried their best to keep the working class off the street, playing a key role in maintaining capitalist economic relations, ie keeping workers enslaved to the imperialists; at the same time the union leaders were curbing the offensive of the masses especially in times of revolution. For a workers revolution to succeed, the working class has to break with the treacherous trade union leaders.

The concentration of the Egyptian Socialists on economic demands of the workers, instead of a struggle for the workers to take political power in their own hands, helped to create illusions that fundamental change would come

from above. The support by the April 6 movement and others from the middle class of the capitalist 'referendum' and even accepting its outcome, when the masses rejected it, shows the treacherous role of the middle class. In the referendum on proposed changes to the constitution, even with the minimal changes to the constitution of the dictatorship, even though the April 6 movement called for a no-vote, only 41% of the electorate took part. Of this, 77% voted yes, thus only 31% of the total electorate supported the 'changes'. This shows that the masses have largely broken from illusions in the capitalist parliament but that the critical role in tying the masses to the military dictatorship is being played by the middle class organizations such as the April 6 movement and the bourgeois Muslim Brotherhood. The referendum results show that the Egyptian masses are breaking from their treacherous leaders and the path to revolution is still open. This is why US imperialism is trying to use this period where there has been a temporary downturn of the revolutionary momentum of the masses, to begin to crack down on the masses through the banning orders from the Egyptian military, which is essentially the Mubarak regime minus Mubarak.

Imperialism has the resources to prepare the groundwork over years for a reserve reactionary layer from the middle class, posing as oppositional forces, to rescue it at times of crisis- thus they fund NGO's to gather intelligence and to corrupt the emerging layers among the vanguard fighters, they organise student exchanges for the cream of the youth to be taken to their universities to be brainwashed with capitalist ideology. The commander of the ITNC armed forces in Libya, one Hafter, was once part of the US-backed Libyan National Salvation Front, who was saved from military defeat years ago, taken to the USA and now returns as the point man for US imperialism to control the forces that are opposed to Gaddafi. The 'new' Finance Minister of the ITNC was trained for years in the universities in the USA. A section of the tribal leaders, for years part of the Gaddafi regime, play an important role in the ITNC in tying the masses to imperialism. Out with the ITNC and any representative from the Gaddafi regime! For internationalist brigades to go to Libya to combat imperialism and their lackeys, be they from the Gaddafi regime or the ITNC.

The Way Forward

The leadership of the struggle against capitalist regimes, be they of the form of open dictatorship or supposed parliamentary democracy, cannot be left in the hands of the middle class. In the semi-colonies all the capitalist regimes have no independent existence from imperialism. It is important to fight for independence of the working class organizations. For the working class demands to be met requires a complete dismantling of the repressive organs of the state, disbanding and disarming the police and the army, integrating the rank and file soldiers into armed workers militia, the setting up of soviets (or councils of workers delegates with delegates from rank and file soldiers) that sets itself the task of taking power into its own hands, expropriating all imperialist assets without compensation, placing them under workers control.

Thus we call on the working class in Egypt and Tunisia to organise to expropriate imperialism, without compensation to the capitalists, placing these

assets under workers control. It is out of this struggle against their own capitalist regimes that armed workers be sent to fight against the imperialist invasion of Libya and to defeat the murderous regime of imperialist puppet Gaddafi. Indeed the call must be raised in all corners of Libya to expropriate imperialism (without compensation) and to place these assets under workers control. This call for expropriation of imperialism in the entire region is the way to unify the working class, irrespective of nationality, against the common enemy, the very force that has kept the billions in starvation and hunger and forced slavery, namely capitalism-imperialism. Even further, the call must be raised to extend such expropriation of imperialist assets, and principally the banks in the imperialist centres, in the USA, Spain, Greece, France, UK, Germany, Japan, Italy so that the fight for food bread work freedom is taken from the semi-colonies into the imperialist heartlands. It is only a workers government based on workers councils and factory committees, supported by the poorest sectors of the peasantry (in such specific cases) which can carry out the expropriation of imperialism, without compensation to the capitalists, and placing all these assets under workers control.

Every worker in the US, UK, France etc should ask why trillions of dollars and euros are used on wars in Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan, Libya, while workers have education cut, health care cut, jobs cut, forced to work longer, to die at the lathe. It is time to take forward the struggle for power, starting preparations for general strikes to bring down the imperialist regimes. Cancel the bailouts of the imperialist banks- let them go down. Let us paralyze the imperialist war machinery. For general strike committees of the rank and file workers and unemployed.

The fascist state of Israel was set up a means of dividing and terrorizing the working class in the region so that imperialism could sustain its dominance and exploitation of the masses. The time has come to tear down the Rafah border and all walls and checkpoints that keep Palestinians in concentration camps and that prevent the 6 million refugees from returning home. For a free Palestine. For a federation of Socialist workers states of North Africa and the Middle East! For a Federation of Socialist workers states of Europe! For a Soviet Africa! For a Soviet USA!

The conditions are ripe for the urban and rural working class to take over the leadership of the struggle for bread, work and freedom.

For the masses to eat and work the working class needs to take power in the semi-colonies and in the imperialist centres.

We call for the setting up of a preparatory committee to set up a revolutionary International, based on the above programme, which we say is the basis for the refounding of the Fourth International. As part of this process is the setting up of revolutionary working class parties as sections of this International.

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