

The Libyan revolution has started as the imperialist shoot-to-kill policy backfires;

Tunisian, Egyptian and Libyan fever is spreading to Morocco, Occupied Palestine, Algeria, Sudan, Djibouti, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Bahrain, the Emirates, Iraq, Iran, China, Bolivia and Wisconsin (USA), for now

Since February 11th when the revolutionary masses in Egypt forced imperialism to give up its puppet Mubarak, world imperialism embarked on a massive campaign to contain the fallout from this setback for it. The clear message that the world proletariat has sent to imperialism is that they are no longer prepared to tolerate repressive regimes that keep them in permanent hunger, unemployment, homelessness and starvation. In order to eat, have work, to have a home, the masses have to overthrow the capitalist dictatorships- this is the one message the world proletariat is drawing on an increasing scale. This is the message that world imperialism now combines to attempt to drown in blood.

Bitter rivals- French, UK, US, German, Japanese imperialism unite temporarily against the revolutionary masses. Even as they do so they stab each other in the back to extend their sphere of influence over the other as they vie to parasitically ride on the backs of the revolutionary masses to contain a Socialist revolution.

Thus since February 11th world imperialism has stepped up its campaign to contain the revolution with greater use of force, to drown it in blood if necessary as they are attempting to do in Libya for the past 5 days, with the use of live ammunition from machine guns, bombing from fighter planes and the use of mercenaries. There is a division of labour- the imperialists kill the masses where they have the greater influence: in Bahrain where the US 5th fleet is based, US imperialism issued orders for the protestors to be shot down with live ammunition; in Algeria 5000 protestors were surrounded by 35000 police, hounding and beating them up; in Libya, French and Italian mercenaries were used with Ghadaffi's troops to shoot down unarmed protestors with live ammunition, with machine guns, with the use of bombs from jet fighters.

But as in Tunisia and Egypt, when the imperialists sent in the army against the masses, the army split and the base (or a sizeable part of it) went over to the revolution. Two airforce colonels refused to carry out bombing of unarmed protestors; the police were smashed and some parts of the police joined the masses against some soldiers who were shooting at them. Whole divisions of the army has gone over to the masses. Benghazi, the second city of Libya where most of the oil reserves are, has been taken by the revolutionary masses. The battle for Tripoli has started and the masses are attempting to

march on Ghadaffi's main base. Already workers at one of the main oil refineries are on strike.

The immediate programme for the Libyan revolution

The first point has to be the arming of the masses, the setting up of workers committees and an armed workers militia to defend the masses against the murderous state and the onslaught of imperialism. It follows that the arming of the masses must be accompanied with the disarming of the police and the dissolution of the army. The rank and file soldiers should elect their own committees and send delegates to the workers committees.

The strike of the oil workers should be extended to a political general strike with a single aim: down the entire regime of the Ghadaffi- all power to the revolutionary masses based on councils of workers delegates, who are instantly recallable and where no delegate or leader gets more than the average wage of a skilled worker. The imperialist oil companies, banks and other capitalist companies are the centres from which the counter-revolution is organised to kill the masses. All imperialist assets must be expropriated (including all companies that have been privatized), without compensation to the capitalists, and placed under workers control; immediate nationalization of all the land; the expropriation of all capitalist agriculture, without compensation to the capitalist, placed under workers control.

Libya's 'African Socialism' is African capitalism and nothing in common with Socialism

When Gadaffi launched his coup in 1969 he only partly nationalised the oil industry; thus under the cover of 'Socialism', imperialism still controlled the oil fields. No unions are allowed nor are any strikes- really a capitalist paradise. Gadaffi's reward for opening up Libya to greater privatization since 2003 like many other capitalist countries- several of the oil fields are now 100% owned by imperialism, including Shell and Exxon Mobil, was to receive a 2 year position on the UN Security council (2008-9). Gadaffi was also chairperson of the African Union. Currently, this butcher, this lackey of imperialism, having shot down hundreds of unarmed protestors over the past 5 days, is still a serving member of the UN Human Rights Council. This shows 2 things: one, the UN is an organization of butchers and murderers and cannot be trusted with ensuring the rights of the masses; secondly the role of the UN is to ensure the complete control by imperialism over every centimetre of the earth and in an instrument of violence against the masses of the world. Libya plays a role of receiving slaves and is a centre of human trafficking for cheap labour and slaves from the rest of Africa and from Asia, for supply to Italy and other imperialist centres. The UN turned a blind eye to this and still regards Gadaffi and his unelected governing council as champions of 'human rights'.

What is needed is not the raising of the old Libyan flag as imperialism now opportunistically wants to do, but we call on the masses to raise the red flag- the flag of the international working class in our fight for Socialism. The time is long overdue to expropriate the expropriators.

Problems of the Egyptian and Tunisian revolutions

The problems with the Tunisian and Egyptian revolutions so far is that the smashing of the police, which also resulted in substantial loss of life by the revolution, was not accompanied by the mass arming of the masses; this allowed imperialism to manoeuvre to hijack the revolution (for the moment) and turn it into pacifist 'caravans of liberation' [Tunisia] and an open prison for the unarmed masses in Tahrir square [Egypt]. Imperialism and its capitalist media [including Al Jazeera] flattered the middle class youth and systematically built up the middle class leaders to form a bonapartist popular front with the trade unions and the old regime in Tunisia and a military dictatorship with a toothless cabinet of capitalist 'opposition' and the old regime in Egypt. In Egypt the military dictatorship is even more directly controlled by US imperialism than the farce in the time of Mubarak.

Secondly, none of the groups made any efforts to call for or set up committees of workers delegates or to organise a political general strike, namely to unify the strike movement on a political basis against the old regime- this would have immediately set up the basis of workers power. Thus unelected youth activists and capitalist 'opposition' figures could hijack (for now) the fight of the working class for them to be co-opted in the capitalist system- the price is the strangling of the revolution so that imperialism-capitalism continues to control the wealth.

Thirdly, the fights in Tunisia and Egypt were kept on the nationalist terrain and ignored the fundamental fact that imperialism is really in control and the puppet regimes were merely managers of the attacks of world imperialism against the local masses. Thus the revolution was steered into the direction of changing a dictatorial manager for a more 'democratic' manager of the same imperialism.

The Egyptian Socialists (part of the Internationalist Socialist Tendency) directed the struggle for economic gains at factory floor level, whereas the task was posed of a political general strike which would have set the basis for workers to take power. They applied the same policy as the KKE in Greece, and the NAP in France and other reformists put in order to prevent the working class from taking power.

The model of 'democracy', the USA, US imperialism is cutting their expenditure by \$1 trillion (\$1000 bn), much of it are cutbacks on expenses for the working class- thousands of teachers are being dismissed, 24 million cannot even get a permanent job; medical aid contributions are being almost doubled- meaning a wage cut of up to 20% for many; monitoring of companies- on pollution, on profiteering etc, is being drastically cut; heating allowances are cut- meaning more will die of cold this year than before. Etc etc. At the same time huge tax cuts for the large corporations continue. Obama is forcing the US working class to pay for the bailing out of the very US banks that control the world including a large part of the Tunisian and Egyptian economy.

The Obama Republicrat government pays the US monopolies to send outdated and old military equipment to Tunisia and Egypt. The Tunisian and

Egyptian governments have over the years handed over many billions of dollars of the wealth of the masses to these US monopolies. Military 'Aid' is a cover for the plunder of the masses by US imperialism. Most of this 'Aid' does not even leave the USA but there is a constant outflow of wealth from Tunisia and Egypt for the old military goods. The very US banks and companies are the ones who have been dismissing Egyptian and Tunisian workers, who keep low skilled work in the semi-colonies like Egypt and Tunisia and who enforce a dictatorship at factory level, often with no union being allowed or a puppet state union to 'represent' the workers.

Over the years, imperialism has, through the WTO, has collapsed local food production and created a dependency on food imports. 86% of all arable land in the world is controlled by the monopolies. This creates the basis for the imperialists to raise the food prices, even though the supply is plentiful. In 2008 when the imperialists artificially raised food prices to make more profits, there were record supplies of wheat and other food. The price of red wheat went from \$3 per bushel to \$25 in 2008 when there was a record crop. The reason for the increase was not a shortage but because 64% of the world supply was held in one way or another by the imperialist banks, who withheld the supplies from the market and created artificial shortages and could push prices up. This is the same process now when the banks sit on huge stocks of food, deliberately starving the masses of the world to boost their falling profits. The growth of the Indian and Chinese middle class is given as a reason for the increase in price of corn and other foodstuffs. But studies show that demand has fallen by 3% for such food over the past 2-3 years.

There is enough building materials for all the masses of the world to be housed adequately yet hundreds of millions live in squalor- the planet is a massive squatter camp. The monopoly on building materials and land by the giant banks, the imperialists is what artificially keeps the price of housing beyond most people. Housing units that should cost \$2000 are sold for \$80000. The masses are deliberately kept homeless so the imperialist banks can make money from housing.

The first steps of the Ben Ali regime (minus Ben Ali) and the Mubarak regime (minus Mubarak) was to maintain the decades long state of emergency; they still arrest and torture activists; they attempt to force workers back to work for the same imperialist companies that have brutalized the working class for several decades; they suppressed protest actions of the masses; the communist party –led unions are part of the government in Tunisia while the Muslim brotherhood and the April 6th movement lend legitimacy to the military dictatorship in Egypt. In other words the regimes have suppressed the very democratic demands that formed the basis of the revolutions. These regimes maintain the dictatorship of the imperialist companies that keep the world proletariat and impoverished masses in starvation, homeless and in permanent mass unemployment. These regimes allow the imperialist companies and banks to repatriate hundreds of billions of dollars while the masses are kept in poverty and dying of hunger. The military dictatorship makes noises of going after this or that official but refuses to lift a finger against the butcher Mubarak; Ben Ali was allowed to escape with 1500 tons of

gold. Imperialism is reluctant to prosecute their former henchmen as this would create huge insecurity in the ranks of all their current puppets. So imperialism helps the killers escape.

The international tasks of the unfolding revolutions for food, work and freedom

The first task is for the working class in Italy, local and immigrant to call an immediate political general strike- Out with Berlusconi and his regime for their supply of mercenaries and other support to the massacre of the revolutionary Libyan masses. Out Sarkozy and his regime for the supply of mercenaries and their support for the suppression of the Algerian and Libyan revolutions. Out with Obama and his regime for their shoot-to-kill policy in Bahrain against unarmed masses- it is a shoot-to-kill policy against the world masses - extend the strike in Wisconsin to a general political strike across the entire USA. The central axis of the political general strike is down with the regime, expropriate Wall Street , the London, Paris, Tokyo and Berlin banks, expropriate all imperialist assets without compensation to the capitalists, place these under workers control- forward to a workers government based on the self-organization of the working class.

The imperialists have launched an offensive to deliberately kill off millions of the world's masses through starvation through unemployment and artificially high prices. This is a world war against the masses. The revolutions in Tunisia, Egypt and now Libya show that in order to eat, the working class must overthrow the capitalist regime, and go further, and need to take power in their own hands. On Sunday 20th February there were the starts of mass protests in China- protests were held in 16 cities and are still spreading. This is not a North Africa or Middle East revolution only but the start of the world revolution. The position of dependence of the semi-colonies on the imperialist centres mean that for the working class to achieve Socialism, the working class has to take power in the semi-colonies and in several imperialist centres. The Libyan revolution must spread to Italy and Germany; the Algerian and Tunisian revolution must reach France; the Egyptian, Palestinian, Jordanian, Bahraini, Saudi , Iraqi, Iranian, Chinese, Zimbabwean, South African, Mexican revolutions must reach the USA, and so on.

The Bolivian uprising in December 2010, when the revolutionary masses reverses a 80% increase in petroleum price with dynamite sticks in hand, show that a central task of the revolution must be to expel from the workers' movement any collaborationist leader; ie any leader who collaborates with a capitalist regime or any capitalist. It is not sufficient to build independent workers organisms while the treacherous leaders still hold sway over a huge section of the masses.

It follows that an urgent conference is needed to unite the revolutionary worker organizations and internationalist Trotskyist organizations to form a new International, which for us means the refounding of the Fourth International.

We call for exposure of the role of imperialism in the massacres, through protests at US, Italy and French embassies; let us take the flame of revolution to confront the capitalist regimes everywhere.