

EGYPT 2011: MILLIONS HAVE HEROICALLY STOOD UP...

THE FUTURE REMAINS TO BE WRITTEN

A Statement By Bob Avakian, Chairman of the Revolutionary Communist Party, USA

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Millions of Egyptian people from all walks of life, drawing inspiration from the people of Tunisia, have heroically risen up, defied the hated regime of Hosni Mubarak and forced Mubarak to resign. This has shattered the notion that “things can never change.” It is a powerful demonstration that **there is no permanent necessity to the existing conditions under which the great majority of humanity suffer so terribly.** Oppressed people and people who hunger for an end to oppression, in every country all over the world, have deeply shared in the joy and hope of these massive uprisings. And the stirrings of revolt continue to spread.

At the same time, while Mubarak has stepped down, the same basic forces that have so cruelly ruled over and exploited the Egyptian people remain in power. And, despite their honeyed words of praise for the masses of youth and others who have risen up, despite their promises of “freedom” and “democracy,” in reality they are determined to bring about a “transition” that will ensure that there is no fundamental change—that whatever new arrangements are engineered in the political process will still keep the masses of people in Egypt, in Palestine, and other countries of strategic importance for U.S. imperialism, in unbearable conditions. After all, the armed forces in Egypt—which are now supposed to carry out this “transition”—are the same armed forces which for decades faithfully and brutally enforced the rule of the Mubarak regime, while the heads of this military enriched themselves through becoming major exploiters of the Egyptian people; and the imperialists of the U.S.—who fully backed Mubarak and his cronies and kept them in power for 30 years, without any regard for the suffering of the people—are the very same imperialists who are now seeking yet again to call the shots and give the ultimate orders in terms of what the “transition” in Egypt will be.

The plans and designs of these oppressors and

exploiters are NOT what the masses of people desperately want and need. Theirs is the cry of “freedom,” and the struggle must be carried forward until real freedom is achieved—freedom from the rule of the imperialists and their local henchmen and junior partners, freedom from all forms of oppression and exploitation. Freedom from both the outmoded forces which would enslave women, and the people as a whole, in medieval darkness and oppression—and from the outmoded forces who would enslave people in the name of “democracy”...“freedom”...and capitalist-imperialist exploitation marketed as “progress.”

It has frequently happened in history, as has been the case in Egypt (as well as Tunisia), that the domination of imperialism and the rule of local exploiters has taken a concentrated form in the regime of a “strong man” butcher. This was the case, for example, in Iran, with the torture-chamber rule of the Shah, in the Philippines with the tyranny of Marcos, and in Indonesia with the long monstrous reign of Suharto—all brutal dictatorships put in power and long kept in power by U.S. imperialism. In Iran in the late 1970s, in the Philippines in the 1980s, in Indonesia more recently, massive uprisings of the people forced the U.S. imperialists to throw aside these hated tyrants and to allow some changes. But in every case, the ultimate result was not one which led to real “freedom” for the people—instead they have continued to be subjected to cruel oppression at the hands of those who replaced the old, hated rulers, while these countries have remained within the overall framework of global imperialist domination and exploitation. But historical experience has also shown that the continuation of oppressive rule, in one form or another, is NOT the only possible outcome.

In Russia, in February 1917, another brutal despot, the Czar (absolute monarch), was overthrown by the uprising of the people. Here again, the U.S., British, and other imperialists, and the Russian capitalists, tried to continue the oppression of the Russian people in a new form, using
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the mechanisms of “democratic rule” and elections which, while allowing for some broader participation of different parties, would still be totally controlled by the exploiters of the people and would ensure their continuing rule, and the continued suffering of the masses of people. In this case, however, the masses of people were enabled to see through these maneuvers and manipulations, to carry forward their revolutionary rising, through many different twists and turns and, in October 1917, to sweep aside and dismantle the institutions and mechanisms of bourgeois dictatorship and to establish a new political and economic system, socialism, which for several decades continued to advance in the direction of abolishing relations of exploitation and oppression, as part of the struggle throughout the world toward the final goal of communism. **The crucial difference was that, in the uprisings in Russia, there was a core of leadership, communist leadership, that had a clear, scientifically grounded, understanding of the nature of not just this or that ruthless despot but of the whole oppressive system—and of the need to continue the revolutionary struggle not just to force a particular ruler from office but to abolish that whole system and replace it with one that would really embody and give life to the freedom and the most fundamental interests of the people, in striving to abolish all oppression and exploitation.**

Even though the revolution in Russia was ultimately reversed, with capitalism restored there in the 1950s, and today Russia no longer seeks to disguise the fact that it is a capitalist-imperialist power, the lessons of the Russian Revolution of 1917 hold valuable, indeed decisive lessons for today. And the most decisive lesson is this: When people in their masses, in their millions, finally break free of the constraints that have kept them from rising up against their oppressors and tormentors, then whether or not their heroic struggle and sacrifice will really lead to a fundamental change, moving toward the abolition of all exploitation and oppression, **depends on whether or not there is a leadership, communist leadership**, that has the necessary scientific understanding and method, and on that basis can develop the necessary strategic approach and the influence and organized ties among growing numbers of the people, in order to lead the uprising of the people, through all the twists and turns, to the goal of a real, revolutionary transformation of society, in accordance with the fundamental interests of the people. And, in turn, when people massively break with the “normal routine”

and the tightly woven chains of oppressive relations in which they are usually entrapped and by which they are heavily weighed down—when they break through and rise up in their millions—that is a crucial time for communist organization to further develop its ties with those masses, strengthening its ranks and its ability to lead. Or, if such communist organization does not yet exist, or exists only in isolated fragments, this is a crucial time for communist organization to be forged and developed, to take up the challenge of studying and applying communist theory, in a living way, in the midst of this tumultuous situation, and to strive to continually develop ties with, to influence and to ultimately lead growing numbers of the masses in the direction of the revolution that represents their fundamental and highest interests, the communist revolution.

In my writings and talks, in *Communism: The Beginning of a New Stage, a Manifesto from the Revolutionary Communist Party, USA*, and in other major documents of our Party, we have striven to draw as deeply and fully as possible the critical lessons from the historical experience of the communist revolution and the socialist societies it has brought into being—the very real and great achievements, and the serious errors and setbacks—and to learn from the broader experience of human society and its historical development, in order to contribute all we can to the advance of the revolutionary struggle and the emancipation of oppressed people throughout the world. As the Constitution of our Party states:

“The Revolutionary Communist Party, USA has taken the responsibility to lead revolution in the U.S., the belly of the imperialist beast, as its principal share of the world revolution and the ultimate aim of communism....

“The emancipation of all humanity: this, and nothing less than this, is our goal. There is no greater cause, no greater purpose to which to dedicate our lives.”

It is in this spirit, and with this orientation and goal in mind, that I extend heartfelt support and encouragement to the millions who have risen up. To all who truly want to see the heroic struggle of the oppressed masses develop, with the necessary leadership, in the direction of real revolutionary transformation of society and genuine liberation: engage with and take up the emancipating viewpoint and goals of communism, and the challenge of giving this organized expression and a growing influence and presence among the struggling masses.