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Libya

A retreat from previous positions?

- Debate - Problems of the Arab and Middle East regions -

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I was taken aback by the September 2nd SA statement on Libya, [Imperialist victory is no gain for Libyan revolt](#). Previous coverage on Libya had made clear SA's sympathy for the revolt and had sought to propose a course of action for the struggle. This latest statement is a retreat from that.

“Unfortunately, the mass and independent character of the anti-Gadhafi mobilizations proved to be ephemeral.”

“Whatever self-organization was evidenced in the earliest days of the mass protest was essentially spontaneous and created to organize the distribution of food and the coordination of vital services as Gadhafi’s forces bombarded Benghazi. We have yet to see any indication that these organizational forms gave rise to or were based on independent political forces aiming at developing a program to advance the interests of the masses.”

If indeed, “... .Libya’s short-lived February 2011 ‘Arab Spring’ was rapidly transformed into a six-month imperialist-led onslaught...,” doesn't this show that the leadership of rival political groups, such as the Workers World Party, was more far-sighted than the leadership of SA? Further, since the only force that could oppose the imperialist intervention was the Libyan army, shouldn't we have been supporting the army and its leadership?

If indeed, “... .Libya’s short-lived February 2011 ‘Arab Spring’ was rapidly transformed into a six-month imperialist-led onslaught...,” why was SA still calling for Victory to the Uprising! as late as April 28, 2011. Why is it that only in the September issue of their paper does SA revise its view?

As of [April 28](#) SA was still proposing a course of actions for the insurgent Libyans.

“Instead, the workers and peasants of Libya need to begin organizing now—starting with neighborhood, workplace, and militia gatherings—for a nationwide revolutionary constituent assembly of the sort called for by the left in both Egypt and Tunisia to enable the masses to vote democratically on what kind of government they want.

“Such an assembly could seek to organize its own armed forces to battle both Gadhafi and the imperialists. And it could put forward a revolutionary economic and social program to meet the masses’ needs, starting with the kind of political liberties that an imperialist-dominated TNC would never grant, and including such measures as putting Libya’s oil for the very first time under the control of its workers so that its revenues go for the working masses’ benefit.

“A revitalized grassroots militia and a constituent assembly promoting a revolutionary program could win the confidence of Libyans who have been misled into fighting on the side of Gadhafi, as well as the masses of Tripoli, whose uprising is in the final instance key to ridding the country both of Gadhafi and of imperialism.”

The statement of September 2nd has only one course of action to propose. “The liberation struggle in these countries also rests in the development of mass revolutionary socialist parties there...”

This advice is not very timely. Supporters of Socialist Action know through their own experience that it takes years, even decades, to build a revolutionary party. In any case, this will not be done separate and apart from participation in the struggles of today. If there are people in Libya who wish to follow the advice of SA, how should they be relating to the struggle today? Should they be putting forward a course of action for Libyan working people? What

should that be?