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Struggle or starve

Birkenhead riots 1932
pages 6&7



British economy

Facing a big freeze
page 9



Justice for Unison four

Witch hunt ruled illegal
page 4



EGYPT IN REVOLT

Mass action of workers and youth against dictatorship

Workers and young people in Britain and across the world are watching events in Egypt closely. The revolt against mass unemployment, grinding poverty and corrupt dictatorship, which started last month in Tunisia, has now gripped Egypt – threatening the 30-year old repressive regime of president Hosni Mubarak. Big protests have also taken place in Jordan and Yemen and could spread across much of the Middle East. Western governments try to distance themselves, seeing friendly regimes teetering on the brink - having propped up these rotten dictatorships and armed them to the teeth.

What hypocrisy to hear people like the US secretary of state Hillary Clinton calling on Mubarak to 'embrace democratic reforms' when the US, along with the rest of Western imperialism, has for decades turned a blind eye to fraudulent elections and the torture of political opponents in Egypt, Tunisia, Jordan and elsewhere. In contrast, socialists stand in solidarity with the courageous struggles of the workers and poor people throughout North Africa and urge them to overthrow, not only the dictators, but the system of capitalism which has exploited and oppressed them.

ENORMOUS DEMONSTRATIONS have taken place this week in Cairo, Alexandria and other Egyptian cities, as protesters moved to finally force President Hosni Mubarak and his rotten regime from power.

The week-long continuous mass revolt has shut banks and businesses. Much of the economy has come to a halt.

At the time of writing there are reports of over one million assembling in Cairo in a show of strength against the regime. The protesters were bolstered by the statement by Egypt's powerful army - the tenth largest in the world - saying that it will not use force against the protesters and that it regards their demands as "legitimate". The statement was a huge blow for Mubarak, who relies heavily on the army.

The US distanced itself from its long-standing ally, calling for an "orderly transition" and "free and

fair elections".

A retired US ambassador to Egypt was quickly dispatched to Cairo by Washington to urge Mubarak's regime to "embrace broad economic and political change". He may well have privately 'advised' Mubarak to leave office and allow a new, military backed government to take over.

Mubarak desperately reshuffled his cabinet again on Monday 31 January to try to head off the protests. His new vice president Omar Suleiman said he will hold cross-party talks on "constitutional reform". But for the masses, this was too little and too late.

As a young protester demanded: "We want Mubarak and his men to get out. Anything other than that is just not enough" (Guardian 01/02/11).

Continued on page 2
See socialistworld.net for updates.



Protesters are demanding that Mubarak step down.

We call for:

- Mass workers' action, including a general strike, to overthrow Mubarak and the whole rotten, brutal regime
- Full democratic rights immediately, including the right to assemble, to strike and to organise democratic independent trade unions
- The creation of democratically elected committees of mass struggle and defence against state repression
- No trust in any new 'national unity' regime based on the interests of the ruling class and imperialism
- Immediate and free elections to a revolutionary democratic constituent assembly. For a majority workers' and rural workers' government
- A living minimum wage, guaranteed jobs, a massive programme of house building, education and health
- End the Egyptian blockade of Gaza. For self-determination for Palestine and for workers' unity and mass action to overthrow dictators across the region
- Nationalisation of Egypt's big corporations, the banks and large estates and their democratic planning to meet the needs of the masses not an elite
- A socialist Egypt and a socialist confederation of the region, on an equal and voluntary basis