

Military Resistance 10C5

New York Police Department Intelligence Unit Ranges Far and Wide



**“An Afghan Air Force Colonel
Gunned Down Eight U.S. Air
Force Officers At Kabul Airport”
“The Shooter, Col. Ahmed Gul,
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**“Officials In The Afghan Air Force,
Which Was Established Largely With
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Nefarious And Profitable Activities With
The Billions Of Dollars Worth Of Aircraft
We're Buying Them”**

March 7, 2012 By MARIA ABI-HABIB, Wall Street Journal [Excerpts]

KABUL—The U.S. is investigating allegations that some officials in the Afghan Air Force, which was established largely with American funds, have been using aircraft to ferry narcotics and illegal weapons around the country, American officials told The Wall Street Journal.

Two probes of the Afghan Air Force, or AAF, are under way—one led by the U.S. military coalition and another by the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration, officials said.

“The nature of the allegations is fairly dramatic and indicated that (AAF officials) were transporting drugs on aircraft and transported weapons not owned by the government of Afghanistan for the use of private groups,” said U.S. Army Lt. Gen. Daniel Bolger, commander of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization Training Mission-Afghanistan, the command that is establishing and financing Afghan security forces, including the AAF.

As part of the inquiry, the military also is looking into whether the transporting of illegal drugs and weapons was linked to an April incident in which an AAF colonel gunned down eight U.S. Air Force officers at Kabul Airport.

In a 436-page report released by the U.S. Air Force in January about the killings, several American officials are quoted as mentioning that the shooter, Col. Ahmed Gul, was likely involved in the transportation of illicit cargo and wanted to shut down a probe into it.

The April shooting, for which the Taliban claimed responsibility, was the deadliest attack by Afghan troops on coalition personnel in the 10 years of war.

The majority of the victims were involved in an early inquiry into the misuse of AAF aircraft.

Col. Gul, the Afghan officer who killed them, coordinated AAF's cargo movement.

Western officials say preliminary findings of the investigation suggest certain senior officials in the AAF and other parts of the Afghan government may have been involved in the alleged drugs and weapons transporting, or have turned a blind eye to the activity.

The NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan has provided roughly \$20 billion, almost all of it from the U.S., this year and last to build up Afghan forces, with \$1.9 billion going to the AAF. Future funding for the Afghan security forces is slated to be discussed at a NATO summit in Chicago in May.

Afghanistan accounts for some 90% of the world's illicit opium production, according to the United Nations.

Before the 2001 U.S. invasion of Afghanistan, opium revenue enabled commanders of the Northern Alliance — the anti-Taliban fighters who would later aid the U.S. in toppling the regime — to finance their war effort.

Many of these commanders now occupy senior positions in the Afghan security forces or government.

American investigators say they believe some of these former commanders are now selling drugs again to buy weapons.

The U.S.-led coalition is looking at specific senior Afghan officials in its current investigation into the misuse of the air force.

U.S. Air Force Lt. Col. Frank Bryant, a coalition adviser at AAF, spearheaded an initial, informal, investigation after months of watching Afghan “helicopters just disappearing without flight plans,” said an American military officer who worked closely with him.

Early last year, Col. Bryant decided to impose U.S. control over the scheduling of Afghan military flights and suggested cutting off fuel to the AAF until it improved transparency about flight destinations and cargo, according to interviews with officials and the U.S. Air Force report on the shooting in April at Kabul International Airport.

Of particular concern was cargo ramp No. 5 at the airport, where unscheduled aircraft were landing late at night and cargo was being unloaded in a hurry, several Western officials with knowledge of Col. Bryant's probe said.

The airport is a joint civilian-military facility.

Unlike in most of the airport, the U.S.-led coalition has no oversight role at ramp No. 5. A Western official called that cargo-loading area the “Grand Central station of illicit activities” in Afghanistan.

That initial probe was cut short on April 27, when Col. Gul burst into a meeting room at the military side of Kabul airport and shot Col. Bryant, seven other U.S. service members and a U.S. contractor. Col. Gul killed himself later that day.

A U.S. Air Force investigation into the shooting, released in January, didn't establish a conclusive motive for the attack, but said Col. Gul, had "self-radicalized," possibly during a stay in Pakistan.

Now, senior American military officers in Kabul are pushing for that probe into the April killings to be reopened, saying Col. Gul may have been trying to derail the inquiry into a high-powered network of organized crime.

"These guys didn't die because of some nut job that radicalized overnight. They died because they took a stand to not let a criminality expand," one of the officials said.

"It's not just Afghans profiting from Afghans but includes international mafias. In a landlocked country, moving goods by air is everything."

The U.S. Air Force investigation report quotes Col. Gul's friends and family as denying he had become religious, and as saying he had financial problems and a dispute with the U.S. mentors.

A U.S. sergeant major quoted in the report wrote that imposing U.S. control over scheduling flights, something Col. Bryant wanted, "could impact (Col. Gul's) income if he took payments for arranging flight and cargo movements."

Col. Gul likely paid for his colonel's position, and needed the illicit traffic to pay off his superiors, two Western officials told the Journal.

Another witness, a U.S. lieutenant colonel, was cited in the report as saying some senior Afghan officials see the AAF aircraft as a source of income.

They "want to continue these nefarious and profitable activities with the billions of dollars worth of aircraft we're buying them and the hundreds of millions we spend every year on maintenance and fuel," he told investigators.

In April, a coalition spokesman couldn't give a conclusive answer about why Col. Gul opened fire, but suggested it was because of a disagreement with coalition forces.

The current probe into alleged drugs and weapons transport continues to look into ramp No. 5. Investigators are also looking into movements at other military airfields used by the AAF, especially those close to northern border areas.

Northern Afghanistan is a major route for the transport of opium and heroin to consumers in Russia and Western Europe. Opium is mostly grown in southern Afghanistan, and is smuggled to the north to be moved on to the rest of the world, Western officials say.

The AAF has 86 aircraft, including 16 C-27 cargo planes, 41 Russian-made Mi-17 transport helicopters and 11 Russian-made Mi-35 helicopter gunships.

Suspensions that some of these aircraft have been used to ferry money, weapons and drugs throughout the country first surfaced in late 2010, Western officials say.

Deliveries by the U.S. and others are expected to bring the fleet to 145 aircraft by 2016.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Six British Soldiers Believed Killed In Helmand

7 Mar 12 Ministry of Defence

It is with great sadness that the Ministry of Defence must announce that six soldiers are missing, believed killed, after their armoured vehicle was caught in an explosion in southern Afghanistan yesterday, Tuesday 6 March 2012.

Six soldiers, five from 3rd Battalion The Yorkshire Regiment and one from 1st Battalion The Duke of Lancaster's Regiment, were on a mounted patrol when their Warrior armoured fighting vehicle was caught in an explosion.

Lieutenant Colonel Gordon Mackenzie, spokesman for Task Force Helmand, said:

"I have the tragic duty to report that six soldiers are missing, believed killed, during a security patrol. The six soldiers, five from 3rd Battalion The Yorkshire Regiment and one from 1st Battalion The Duke of Lancaster's Regiment, were on patrol in a Warrior armoured fighting vehicle when it was caught in an explosion in the Task Force Helmand Area of Operations."

Family Says Noble Soldier Died From Gunfire

Feb 23, 2012 By Jennifer Pierce, News 9

NOBLE, Oklahoma - Sergeant Allen McKenna of Noble always knew he wanted to be in the military.

"He liked that discipline, to walk with shoulders proud and head high," said his mother Connie Sams-Mitchell.

The 28-year-old soldier was killed on Tuesday in Afghanistan. His mother was told he was shot.

"I can now tell you personally, you really cannot put into words the pain and the things you feel when you find these out," said Sams-Mitchell.

Her thoughts turn to the family her son leaves behind. Sergeant McKenna was happily married with three young boys ages eight, five and 2-months. McKenna was able to come home in December for the birth of his youngest son.

"His children meant everything to him," said his mother. "Everything he did was based around his family."

McKenna is the second of four boys and the only one to join the military. His mother said she tried to talk him out of joining but there was no stopping his love for the Army and serving his country.

Sergeant McKenna's wife took their three boys to Dover Air Force Base for the soldier's first dignified transfer. Services are pending.

A memorial fund has been set up to benefit Sgt. McKenna's three children. Donations can be made to the Sgt. McKenna Memorial Fund at First State Bank in Noble.

**POLITICIANS CAN'T BE COUNTED
ON TO HALT THE BLOODSHED
THE TROOPS HAVE THE POWER TO
STOP THE WAR**

Troops Invited:

Comments, arguments, articles, and letters from service men and women, and veterans, are especially welcome. Write to Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657 or email contact@militaryproject.org: Name, I.D., withheld unless you request publication. Same address to unsubscribe.

**THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO COMPREHENSIBLE
REASON TO BE IN THIS EXTREMELY HIGH RISK
LOCATION AT THIS TIME, EXCEPT THAT THE
PACK OF TRAITORS THAT RUN THE
GOVERNMENT IN D.C. WANT YOU THERE COVER
THEIR ASS:**

That is not a good enough reason.



U.S. soldiers from Task Force Bronco leave Forward Operating base Lone Star for a patrol in Pachir wa Agam district in Nangarhar province, eastern Afghanistan March 5, 2012. REUTERS/Erik De Castro

SOMALIA WAR REPORTS

Insurgents Give Press Conference In Mogadishu

6 March 2012 Shabelle Media Network

Mogadishu — The militants of Al-shabab on Tuesday said it is still operating and carrying attacks and car bombs against TFG [government] and AMISOM [foreign occupation troops] in the capital, Mogadishu, a governor says.

Sheik Mohamed Abu A/rahman, the representative of Banadir region for Al-shabab fighters told reporters in Mogadishu that the group is it active in the capital and will

launch further attacks against the Transitional Federal Government TFG and its allied AU forces.

Abu A/rahman says that the Al-shabaab group is committed keeping fighting against what they called the apostate government and Africa Invaders as he put it.

He denied a claim of TFG and AMISOM troops about the capture of Mogadishu and more grounds beyond the capital in the latest attacks against Al-shabab military bases in northern Mogadishu.

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS



“At a time like this, scorching irony, not convincing argument, is needed. Oh had I the ability, and could reach the nation’s ear, I would, pour out a fiery stream of biting ridicule, blasting reproach, withering sarcasm, and stern rebuke.

“For it is not light that is needed, but fire; it is not the gentle shower, but thunder.

“We need the storm, the whirlwind, and the earthquake.”

“The limits of tyrants are prescribed by the endurance of those whom they oppose.”

Frederick Douglass, 1852

I say that when troops cannot be counted on to follow orders because they see the futility and immorality of them THAT is the real key to ending a war.
-- Al Jaccoma, Veterans For Peace

**“I Think That Something We
Would Have Said In Theory A
Few Weeks Ago Is Already
Being Seen In Practice”**

**“There Have Been Demonstrations
In Every European Capital And
Other Countries Beyond, Including
The U.S., Declaring Solidarity With
The Struggles Of Greek Workers’**

**“Recently, Portugal Witnessed Its
Biggest Labor Marches Since The
1974-75 Revolution That Overthrew
The Fascist Dictatorship”**

**“Local Popular Assemblies Are
Functioning In Many Places”**

February 28, 2012 Panos Petrou Interview, Socialist Worker [Excerpts]

Panos Petrou, a member of the socialist group Internationalist Workers Left (DEA), answers SocialistWorker.org's questions about the latest explosive protests--and where the struggle in Greece will go next.

What was the level of struggle in the recent round of demonstrations compared to earlier waves of strikes and protests?

I'm guessing the international media focused on the discussion of the mainstream parties inside the parliament and on the buildings that were burned by some activists of the Black Bloc. At least that was the case with the Greek mass media.

The important news is different: There were three consecutive days of action against the latest package of measures demanded by the troika--known as "Memorandum 2" to distinguish this round of blackmail from the troika's previous "Memorandum" in 2010.

A 48-hour general strike on February 10-11 paved the way for a massive demonstration on Sunday, February 12, the day that parliament voted.

Despite the closure of most subway stations around Athens' Syntagma Square, the presence of police throughout downtown Athens, and the media's hysteria that the only alternative to "Memorandum 2" was financial and social chaos, hundreds of thousands of people flooded not only the square itself, but all major streets that lead to it. Most people never made it to Syntagma itself because of the size of the crowd.

Riot police went on a rampage from early in the day, with volleys of stun grenades and tear gas fired in every direction.

But the masses of people remained on the street.

They retreated only for a short while, and then headed to Syntagma again.

For a period of five or six hours in every street in downtown Athens, there were battles with the riot police as demonstrators tried to stop them and claim their right to protest.

There were some demonstrations in the days after that were smaller, but kept the spirit of resistance alive.

The three days of action on February 10-12 were the latest peak of the movement, like the 48-hour general strikes on June 2011 and October 2011.

There have been ebbs between them, but each new peak carries with it the experiences of the previous one, both in political terms and in terms of the social struggle.

The peaks also bring together a variety of local struggles waged in between the high points. In the space between last October and February, private-sector workers provided some of the most militant examples: A steelworkers strike that has lasted more than 100 days; an occupation of a TV station by its workers who have gone unpaid for 10 months; and the publishing of a newspaper by employees when the owner decided to shut it down.

Similar struggles erupted in a number of factories, and this culminated in an Athens-wide general strike on January 17 that put pressure on the central labor confederations to call for the general strike in February.

Moreover, every round of confrontation leaves behind a new layer of activists.

This critical mass of radicalized people keeps growing--it's a process of constant radicalization that started in May 2010 (when the first Memorandum was signed) and keeps evolving.

To these experiences of the class struggle, we should add two important factors that are shifting consciousness to the left.

One is the fact that the austerity measures keep coming, and yet the economy spirals downward. The propaganda about "painful, but necessary" policies is exposed by that reality.

Second is the existence of the national unity government.

The wide spectrum of forces that take part exposes many illusions simultaneously--about PASOK; about the populist rhetoric of New Democracy leader Antonin Samaras; about the supposedly oppositional politics of the far-right LAOS party; about the "technocrat" Lucas Papademos, who was supposed to be better than the "corrupt politicians."

The latest austerity measures passed by a wide margin, but there were also resignations among deputies in PASOK and even New Democracy. Does this indicate that there is a split in the Greek ruling class over what to do next?

The memorandum and all the policies that it dictates remains the central and undisputed choice of the Greek ruling class. The creation of the "national unity" government underlines the devotion to this direction--PASOK and New Democracy, the historic "rivals" in the Greek two-party system, were forced to both join.

In that context, the rebellion of the parliamentary deputies in both big parties was mostly a result of the pressure of the mass movement on the streets and the mass anger of their traditional electoral base of support. As the mainstream parties face a dramatic decline in support, some people are choosing to abandon the sinking ship.

But at the same time, the ruling class, while insisting on the austerity program embodied in the Memorandum, knows that this leads to a dead end. Default is on the way, sooner or later, so the ruling class needs to prepare for this scenario.

The political crisis reflects both the effects of the popular resistance and the inability to confront the financial crisis.

Greece's rulers need to maintain their rule in the turbulence that a bankruptcy will cause. So we will probably witness a restructuring of some political forces on an "anti-Memorandum" basis.

The populist elements of New Democracy may organize a patriotic anti-Memorandum pole. The far-right LAOS, which has seen its support in polls fall dramatically since it joined the government, could withdraw its support from Papademos and return to the usual nationalistic demagoguery against "Germans."

Forces inside PASOK will probably attempt to reorganize on a more traditional social-democratic basis. Even Papandreou is posing now as a sworn enemy of the markets. There is also a formation called the Democratic Left--a right-wing split from the left-reformist Synaspismos--which is being promoted by the media as a socially sensitive, yet moderate and responsible political force that the country needs.

Such forces will try to serve as a back-up plan for the ruling class.

Georgios Karatzaferis, the leader of LAOS, warned the European Commission some time ago that the savagery of the austerity measures would bring the left to power, and that hunger in Greece would start a revolution that will spread to Europe.

That was dismissed as far-right hysteria, but it reflects the deepest fears of the ruling class.

With the traditional "safety valve" of the system, PASOK, unable to do its job, these splits may be the beginning of a restructuring of the political system.

The troika's latest demands continue to escalate, even after the latest parliamentary vote. It seems as if they're daring Greece to leave the euro--but the price to stay in will be abject surrender. Is this the case?

The Greek government is in agreement with the policies dictated by the troika. But it's easier for its leaders to return from Brussels and say, "We tried our best to protect salaries, pensions, etc., but we need the money, and this is what the troika asks in exchange." This has been the mantra of the mass media and the mainstream parties for months now.

The blackmail isn't being directed at Greek capitalism, but at Greek workers. After all, many of the measures that the Greek government is supposedly being forced by its creditors to implement are longstanding demands of the Greek industrialists and bankers, dating back from the 1990s.

You don't have to be an economist to understand that the reduction of private-sector wages and attacks on the right to collective bargaining have nothing to do with the state's finances. Papademos was honest during the recent summit of European financial ministers. He claimed, "The new program has characteristics which will contribute to improving competitiveness." What he means by that, of course, is improving the profitability of Greek capitalists.

In short, both international and Greek capital have no way to overcome the crisis, so they are doing what they know best--put the squeeze on workers and extract more and more surplus value from their labor.

This model is being exported to all European countries and will soon be institutionalized with a new draconian, anti-democratic European accord that makes extreme austerity policies an obligation for all member-states, with an expulsion penalty for those that don't comply.

How have the unions responded to the latest wave of struggle?

After the 48-hour general strike last October, the trade union leaderships sabotaged the struggle. They didn't declare a single strike while they were negotiating with the employers and the government. When the "Memorandum 2" was announced, they were forced to act again with the 48-hour general strike and the demonstration on February 12.

We should not underestimate the historical ties between the unions and the social democratic PASOK. But this is the biggest crisis this alliance has ever faced. PASOK is in the midst of a violent transformation. It voted and implemented policies that even an extreme neoliberal government of the right would have hesitated to put forward.

As a result, some unions have broken their ties with the party, like the union for municipal workers, which led an inspiring strike last fall. Similar conflicts are developing in other unions that are distancing themselves from PASOK. Even unionists who remain in the party say they have nothing to do with the current leadership and its policies. Whether they will choose to remain in the party and try to re-orient it--a lost cause in my opinion--or they will abandon PASOK remains to be seen.

The situation at the rank-and-file level is far more explosive. Local branches of PASOK are shutting down, one after another, all around Greece. In opinion polls, PASOK has its lowest level of support in working-class districts of Athens--the ones that used to be its traditional bastions. Wherever there have been elections in the unions, there is a clear shift toward the forces of the left.

This tendency will intensify. We can't predict the final outcome or guess the behavior of trade union leaders, but it is certain that the function of PASOK as the representative of workers is fatally wounded. The extreme neoliberals in the party actually support this transformation, declaring in a joint statement the need to break with the past "tolerance" toward trade unionists.

All this is creating a political vacuum, which represents a historic opportunity for the left.

How has the far left responded to the latest struggle?

On a political level, the forces of the left raise a series of demands: the overthrow of the Papademos government; cancellation of the Memorandum, the loan deals and all the austerity measures that went along with them; resistance to the decisions imposed on Greece by European authorities; and an end to debt repayments and a struggle to cancel the debt.

These demands are an attempt to give a political direction to the popular anger.

On the level of social resistance, the various forces of the left are the people who try to organize the struggle.

Since the movement of the squares, left-wing activists have played a leading role in spreading that movement to neighborhoods.

Some months later, local popular assemblies are functioning in many places.

In workplaces, left activists organize to try to overcome the passivity of the union leaders.

Like the neighborhood popular assemblies, committees of struggle have been set up to try to bring together the most militant workers in a workplace, so they can organize collectively, push leaders for strike actions, and build already declared strikes in a militant way, with picket lines and occupations.

This is how actions called by union leaders can be turned from ceremonial events into real battles that engage the rank and file.

The major problem for the working-class movement is the lack of coordination that can contend with the central union leaderships. The efforts of the left are also directed toward overcoming this problem.

There are significant challenges for the left, of course. The Communist Party leadership, for example, chooses to keep its organization isolated from any initiatives for joint action and from the rest of the working-class movement. Other issues, like sectarianism from some parts of the far left or the tendency of the reformist left to prioritize electoral politics, have put obstacles in the way of the effort to offer a serious, massive, radical alternative.

For DEA, the important task of the period has been to build a united front of the left in both the political and social field. A common pro-working-class program, including canceling the debt, nationalizing the banking sector under social and workers' control, heavy taxation of the capitalists and reversing the austerity measures, could build a challenge to the eurozone blackmail.

We believe a common pro-working-class program can bring together the Communist Party; the Coalition of the Radical Left, called SYRIZA, which brings together the left-reformist Synaspismos with various revolutionary left organizations, DEA among them; and the Front of the Greek Anti-Capitalist Left, known as ANTARSYA, a smaller front of organizations of the revolutionary left. These forces could organize together in factories, universities, schools and neighborhoods, providing a critical mass of committed activists that can bring wider layers of workers and students to the struggle.

Such a united front could provide a political alternative to the mass of workers struggling against the Papademos government, and it could open up the discussion about the only real answer to the crisis of the system: socialism.

What is the likely outcome of the elections coming up in April? Will the far right and the left grow at the expense of mainstream parties?

It's always hard to predict, and it's even harder now, in such turbulent times. But all the polls agree on one thing: the left is on the rise.

The total vote for forces to the left of PASOK reaches as high as 40 percent. If you take away parties like the Democratic Left or the Greens, which are to the left of PASOK, but still promote a center-left project, the combined support for the radical left is estimated at around 20-25 percent.

PASOK, the party that dominated Greek politics for decades, is reaching all-time lows in its poll standing. Its estimated share of the vote right now runs as low as 8 percent, and it comes in third and even fourth or fifth place.

The center-right New Democracy is leading the polls, mostly because of its previous anti-Memorandum position. But since it joined the “national unity” government, its share of the vote has also fallen. In fact, even the combined vote of the two major parties, PASOK and New Democracy, may not be enough to create a governing majority in parliament, let alone a stable government with wide social approval.

This makes the elections a dangerous adventure for the ruling class. Many high-profile members of PASOK and sections of the mainstream media are already asking for the national unity government--initially formed as an “emergency” caretaker regime--to remain in office until the mandate that PASOK won on 2009 expires.

Of course, this is also dangerous for them. If they decide to postpone the elections and keep Papademos in office, the class anger against austerity will meet a wider anger against the imposition of an unelected government.

The good news is that the polarization has mostly been in a left-wing direction. This is because of the mass struggles, strikes and protests--but also because the far-right LAOS party joined the government, and now it is paying the price for supporting austerity.

But this general direction toward the left is not something that can be taken for granted. Nationalistic sentiment against the “Germans” and “foreign capital” has an influence in Greece--and it is unfortunately supported by sections of the left with a tradition of looking to the Stalinist “popular front.”

The fear is that a part of disaffected LAOS voters could turn in an even more extreme direction. Thus, Golden Dawn, an openly fascist paramilitary organization, marginalized until now, could for the first time in history to win enough votes--3 percent is the required level--to win seats in parliament.

The forces of the radical Left are far greater, and there is a large antifascist majority in Greek society. But this is a warning that antiracist and antifascist action must continue. As the slogan goes, “Cut them off before they take root.”

What are the implications of the Greek struggle for Europe and beyond?

I think that something we would have said in theory a few weeks ago is already being seen in practice.

There have been demonstrations in every European capital and other countries beyond, including the U.S., declaring solidarity with the struggles of Greek workers, under the banner “We are all Greeks.”

We welcome this slogan, not as a matter of national pride, but, on the contrary, as a display of old-fashioned working-class internationalism.

To say “We are all Greeks” means that people recognize they are or will soon be facing the same attacks that their brothers and sisters in Greece are facing. In Portugal, Spain and Italy, workers are already facing the same problems and questions.

In France, polls show that 50 percent of the population believes their turn is coming soon.

“We are all Greeks” means something else that's even more important. It means that we will fight back like Greek workers did.

The recent wave of solidarity was inspired by the intensity of the class struggle here, like the international solidarity with the Greek youth revolt back in 2008. Back then, support for the Greek upheaval led to a wave of struggle by French youth.

I remember back in 2006, when French workers and students defeated a labor law that would have made it easier to fire young workers from their first job, we raised the slogan “France will happen here!”

A few weeks later, the Greek student movement exploded. You can find more examples of this today. We live in an era when each international struggle fuels others: From Cairo, to Wisconsin, to Madrid, to Athens, to New York, back to Athens, and on and on.

Recently, Portugal witnessed its biggest labor marches since the 1974-75 revolution that overthrew the fascist dictatorship.

There have also been big mobilizations in Spain, with plans for a general strike there and in Italy. So March could become a month of mobilizations by workers of the European “South”--and we hope the European “North” will join us soon.

Activists in Greece are happy to have the honor to be in the frontlines of the class struggle right now. But we will be even happier when the working classes of Italy, France, Portugal, Spain and beyond join the fight. The collective assault we are facing requires a collective fightback.

The same point is true on a global scale. When the movement here was in a temporary lull, our brothers and sisters in Egypt, in Wisconsin and, later, in the Occupy movement around the U.S. gave a massive boost to the will to fight back in Greece.

We hope our struggle will do the same for your struggles.

To all the comrades and activists in the U.S. fighting against the 1 percent in “the belly of the beast,” you have our solidarity. The best support we anticipate from you is to escalate your own struggle.

ANNIVERSARIES

March 7, 1932; Five Ford Workers Killed And Nineteen Wounded By Police And Company “Security” Armed With Pistols, Rifles And A Machine Gun



Carl Bunin Peace History March 3-9

The Ford Hunger March began on Detroit’s East Side and proceeded 10 miles seeking relief during the Great Depression.

Facing hunger and evictions, workers had formed neighborhood Unemployed Councils. Along the route, the marchers were given good wishes from Detroit Mayor Frank Murphy as well as two motorcycle escorts, and thousands joined the marchers along the route.

At the Detroit city limit, the marchers were met by Dearborn police and doused by fire hoses.

Despite the cold weather, they continued to the Employment Office of the Ford River Rouge plant, from which there had been massive layoffs.

Five workers were killed and nineteen wounded by police and company “security” armed with pistols, rifles and a machine gun.

According to Dave Moore, one of the marchers, “That blood was black blood and white blood.

One of the photos that was published in the Detroit Times, but never seen since, shows a black woman, Mattie Woodson, wiping the blood off the head of Joe DiBlasio, a white man who lay there dying . . . It’s been 75 years, but when you drive down Miller Road today, your car tires will be moistened with the blood that those five shed.”

Grave markers with the words “His Life for the Union” pay tribute to them in Woodmere Cemetery on Detroit’s West Side.

March 7, 1965: Noble Anniversary: The First March From Selma: A Day That That Shook The World



Alabama police attack Selma-to-Montgomery marchers

Carl Bunin Peace History; Americaslibrary.gov [Excerpts]

March 7, 1965

When 525 people started a planned march from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama, on Sunday March 7, 1965, it was called a demonstration. When state troopers met the demonstrators at the edge of the city by the Edmund Pettus Bridge, that day became known as “Bloody Sunday.”

In Selma, African Americans made up almost half the population, but only two percent were registered voters. Discrimination and intimidation tactics aimed at blacks kept them from registering and voting. The demonstrators marched to demand fairness in voter registration.

The sheriff warned the people that they had two minutes to break up the march, but the deputies attacked sooner. The demonstrators were tear-gassed, clubbed, spat on, whipped, trampled by horses, and jeered by others for demanding the right to register to vote.

Television and newspapers carried pictures of the event that became known as “Bloody Sunday.”

The images sickened, outraged, and electrified people throughout the country.

Within 48 hours, demonstrations in support of the marchers were held in 80 cities. Many of the nation's religious and lay leaders, including Martin Luther King, flew to Selma. After one more failed attempt, King led a peaceful march from Selma to Montgomery. Congress responded to these events by enacting the Voting Rights Act of 1965.



March 8, 1965; Unhappy Murderous Imperial Stupidity Anniversary



Carl Bunin Peace History

About 3,500 U. S. Marines became the first American combat troops in Vietnam, landing near the coastal city of Da Nang. The USS Henrico, Union, and Vancouver, carrying the 9th Marine Expeditionary Brigade under Brig. Gen. Frederick J. Karch, took up stations 4,000 yards off Red Beach Two, north of Da Nang.

Two Magnificent Anniversaries In The Fight For Human Liberation:

#1:

March 8, 1908:

**New York City Women Strike For
Higher Wages, A Shorter Workday
And An End To Child Labor**



Carl Bunin Peace History; un.org [Excerpts

March 8, 1908

Thousands of workers in the New York needle trades (primarily women) demonstrated and began a strike for higher wages, a shorter workday and an end to child labor.

This event became the basis for International Women's Day celebrated all over the world since March 8, 1945.

#2:

March 8, 1917

With 2 Million Russian Soldiers Dead In The War, Women Ignore The “Political Leaders” And Lead A Revolution To Overthrow The Imperial Tyrant Czar Of Russia



*Two old women lament
Old days of sorrow,
When prayers went unheard
And the grave was relief.*

*But no more does the stick
Fall upon women's shoulders.
Free and equal they march,
Comrades of men!*

March 8, 1917

With 2 million Russian soldiers dead in the war, Russian women again chose the last Sunday in February to strike for “bread and peace”.

Political leaders opposed the timing of the strike, but the women went on anyway.

The rest is history:

Four days later the Czar was forced to abdicate and the provisional Government granted women the right to vote.

That historic Sunday fell on 23 February on the Julian calendar then in use in Russia, but on 8 March on the Gregorian calendar in use elsewhere.

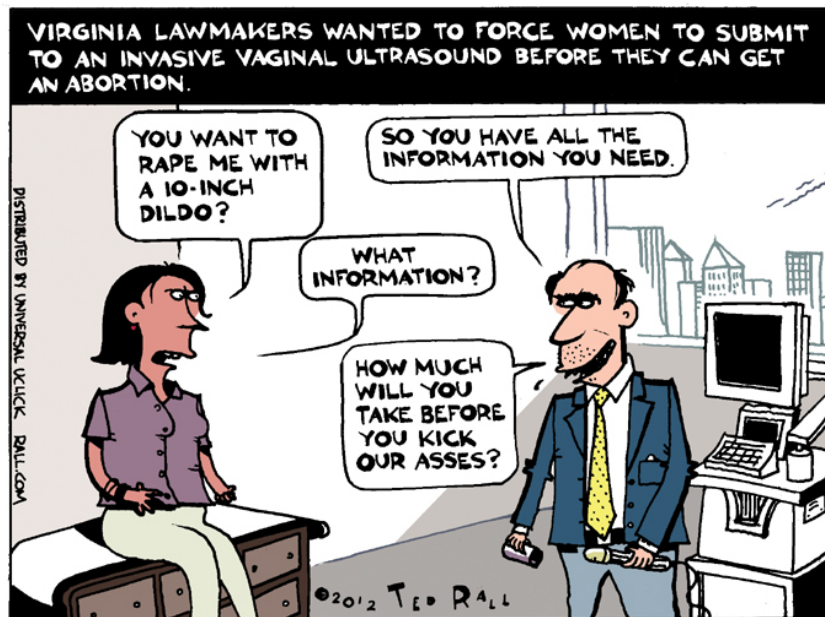
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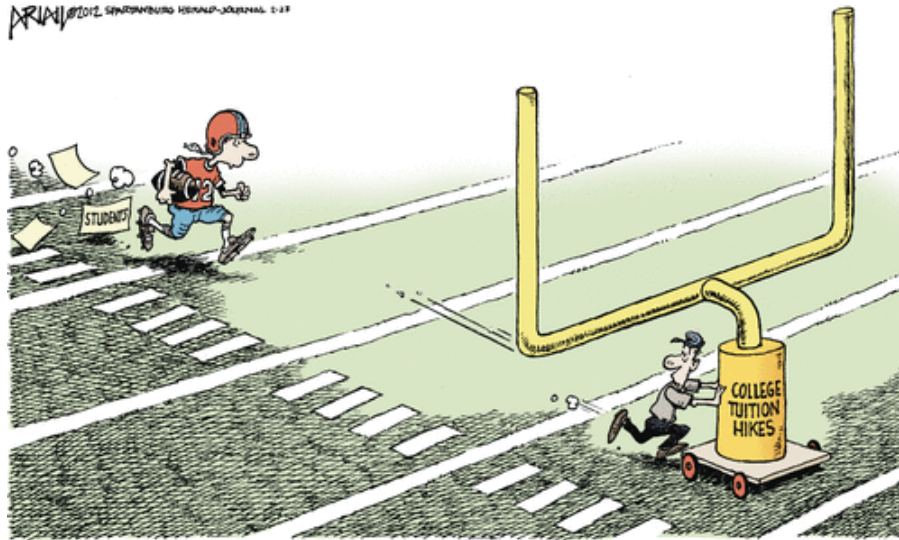
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CLASS WAR REPORTS



A High School Rebellion In Maryland:

**“Students Prepared To Stage A
Walkout To Protest Overcrowded
Classrooms, Unsanitary
Conditions And The Exploitation
Of Teachers”**

**“Northwestern's Administration
Threatened To Punish Anyone Taking
Part”**

**“Canine Units Were In The Parking Lot,
The Administration Was Illegally Filming**

Students, And Cops Were Intimidating The Students To Class”

“They said we were out to create anarchy and riots, that they couldn't trust us.”

“The way they said it was going to turn into a riot was pretty racist, like they assumed that since the students are nearly all minority, that's what we'd do. But we have morals and codes.”

March 5, 2012 By Scott McLemee, Socialist Worker [Excerpts]

An atmosphere of intimidation hangs over Northwestern High School in Hyattsville, Md.

Last week, students prepared to stage a walkout to protest overcrowded classrooms, unsanitary conditions and the exploitation of teachers.

Four students were suspended for five days each for organizing the event, which was intended to coincide with the March 1 Day of Action to defend education against budget cuts.

Northwestern's administration threatened to punish anyone taking part.

Even that was not enough. The only reason the walkout failed, as one participant explained on Facebook later in the day, was because “the doors were locked, canine units were in the parking lot, the administration was illegally filming students, and cops were intimidating the students to class. They marched around chanting in the halls instead. Hundreds of students participated.”

Other sources indicate that the doors were not actually locked (a fire-code violation), but that police and teachers blocked all exits.

Located in Prince George's County, just outside Washington, D.C., the school has a largely Black and Latino student body, from working-class families.

The demand for better conditions and a decent education--as opposed to “teaching to the test”--won strong support as young activists prepared for the event over the past two months.

The administration was caught almost completely off-guard.

Students now believe that the school police officer had been monitoring discussions among students on Twitter. But only the morning of the protest did he figure out what “Xbox” really meant. (The code name for the March 1 action was a shrewd choice: Any adult hearing it mentioned would assume the kids were just really excited about some video-gaming event.)

Word of the clampdown at Northwestern High is spreading. Labor activists and members of Occupy D.C. have offered legal aid and other kinds of support, and anyone

who wants to help defend the students can put pressure on the officials named in a posting to the Occupy Education blog.

“The Students Are Angry!”

Inspiration for Thursday's protest came from El Cambio, a discussion group on social and political issues that formed at Northwestern High during the fall semester. As its name may suggest, El Cambio (“Change”) was inspired in part by the wave of struggles that spread throughout the world in 2011.

It also has a special resonance during this election year.

Some of the students were in elementary school when Barak Obama promised change during his 2008 campaign. But the only thing that's improved over the past four years is the corporations' bottom line, thanks to massive layoffs and constant attacks on workers' benefits.

In their own time at Northwestern High School, students have seen Filipino educators brought in to fill teaching positions in Prince George's County--only to be discarded by the school system and left to face possible deportation.

But rather than become cynical about change, they've opted to fight for it.

To build support for the March 1 action, members of El Cambio circulated a fact sheet listing their grounds for protesting.

It is both impressive and appalling, and deserves to be quoted in full:

The Students Are Angry!

-- Students at Northwestern have found feces on the bathroom floors, puke in the water fountains, broken sinks, missing stall doors, and rooms lacking ceiling throughout our campus. The food we are typically served is not nutritious or sanitary; one student found a tooth in their hamburger!

-- Class sizes are enormous in our schools. It is too common to attend classes with over 40 students in it! This is intolerable. How are teachers supposed to enrich our minds with so many students to deal with at once?

-- For three years, our teachers have been denied obligated pay raises, and now the government is talking about not paying teachers for earning national certification and masters degrees!

-- Prince George's County promised our school's band funding to go to nationals. The County broke their promise and denied them funding.

-- The County has cut funding for our ESOL programs, threatening our Latino brothers' and sisters' opportunity for a better life and their right to an education.

-- Filipino teachers in Prince George's County, and throughout the nation, have been exploited and deported.

-- Students have pretty much no say in educational policies. The politicians advocating more "standards" and the steel fist of dictatorship over our educational environments are unjust and misguided. Students, teachers, and parents should have control over our education, not politicians!

WE DEMAND CHANGE!

Nobody should expect bureaucrats to be delighted when their routines are disrupted. But any educational institution with the least respect for its students would consider this document a credit to everyone involved. It is well-considered and socially minded.

The concerns it expresses sound valid. And there's not the slightest hint of adolescent prankishness.

The students operated, in short, like serious political people.

That makes the response by Northwestern High's administration quite revealing.

"I was called into the principal's office at about 10:50 that morning," says Carlos, one of the El Cambio members put on suspension. (To protect activists from further harassment, SW will not use their real names.) When he reached the waiting room, Carlos says he saw "another kid there who hadn't had anything to do with the walkout. He was facing expulsion because he wrote something on Twitter about it."

So began several hours of threats and harangues by administrators. According to Carlos:

They told us if anyone walked out, that person would be expelled, and we'd be held accountable for everything.

A friend of mine came to the office to try to defend me, and they wouldn't let him go--they charged him with the same thing.

They said we were out to create anarchy and riots, that they couldn't trust us.

When students tried to walk out at 2:40 that afternoon, suspension papers were drawn up for Carlos and three other alleged ringleaders.

"They took away our civil rights of assembly and free speech," he says.

"The way they said it was going to turn into a riot was pretty racist, like they assumed that since the students are nearly all minority, that's what we'd do. But we have morals and codes."

Not to mention every reason in the world to protest.

“The Only Aggression In The Halls Of Northwestern Was Committed By The Administration And Police, Who Were Pushing And Grabbing People”

Thirty people who had heard about the walkout showed up to express solidarity--only to be greeted by at least six police cars, forcing them to rally on a street corner nearby.

They held signs reading “Moms support students rights,” “Stand against anti-immigrant racism” and “Books not bombs,” and drivers honked in support.

When school let out, a number of students joined the rally, and discussion began about how to rescind the expulsions.

In an essay written the following day, one of the suspended students quoted a Northwestern administrator who said that the police were prepared to bash some skulls in.

But in fact, the student wrote, “the event was almost entirely peaceful. There were no incidents of fighting, intentional destruction of property, or attacks on staff.

“In fact, the only aggression in the halls of Northwestern was committed by the administration and police, who were pushing and grabbing people.”

The idea was to teach students a lesson--and a teacher who heard about the events at Northwestern High spelled it out very clearly in a message to colleagues:

“Some have theorized that there are really three public educational systems in this country. Schools for the ruling class teach children to think independently. Schools for the children of managers and professionals have to teach how to think critically. And schools for the working class have to teach how to follow directions and obey.

“And that was really the lesson from yesterday. People like you are not supposed to think for themselves. Democracy is not for people like you. Your job is simply to obey.

“Thankfully, I think the kids have learned a different lesson: that if they are going to fight for their rights, institutions like even their own school will not be on their side.”

But that's not the only lesson.

Two or three years ago, college students began feeling anxious--trapped by an economy that was shaky on the best of days.

Now, high schoolers are starting to figure out a few things.

Hardly anyone believes that steady work and a living wage are just a recovery away.

Poor and working-class kids get underfunded, crumbling and often prison-like schools for an obvious reason:

But it doesn't have to be that way.

The millionaires and billionaires have two political parties, the Republicans and the Democrats, to look out for their interests.

It's time for a new student movement that doesn't fall for either of them. Forget about Obama and listen to Frederick Douglass instead:

Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it never will. Find out just what any people will quietly submit to and you have found out the exact measure of injustice and wrong which will be imposed upon them, and these will continue till they are resisted with either words or blows, or with both.

Students at Northwestern High have learned that lesson.

Imagine if thousands more did, all around the country--refusing to accept the future of low wages, or no wages, which is all that Wall Street and Wal-Mart have to offer.

(You're never too young to find out that the capitalist system does not have your interests at heart.)

A movement like that would give the 1 percent nightmares--and the rest of us, hope.

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

Contact school officials at Northwestern High School and demand that the suspensions against students be revoked and removed from their permanent record:

- Principal Edgar Batenga at 301-985-1820 and Edgar.Batenga@pgcps.org
- Superintendent William R. Hite, Jr. at 301-952-6008 and william.hite@pgcps.org
- Amber Waller, board of education member for District 3, at 301-952-6115 and amber.waller@pgcps.org
- Jane Spence, instructional director of high school performance, at 240-264-1720

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