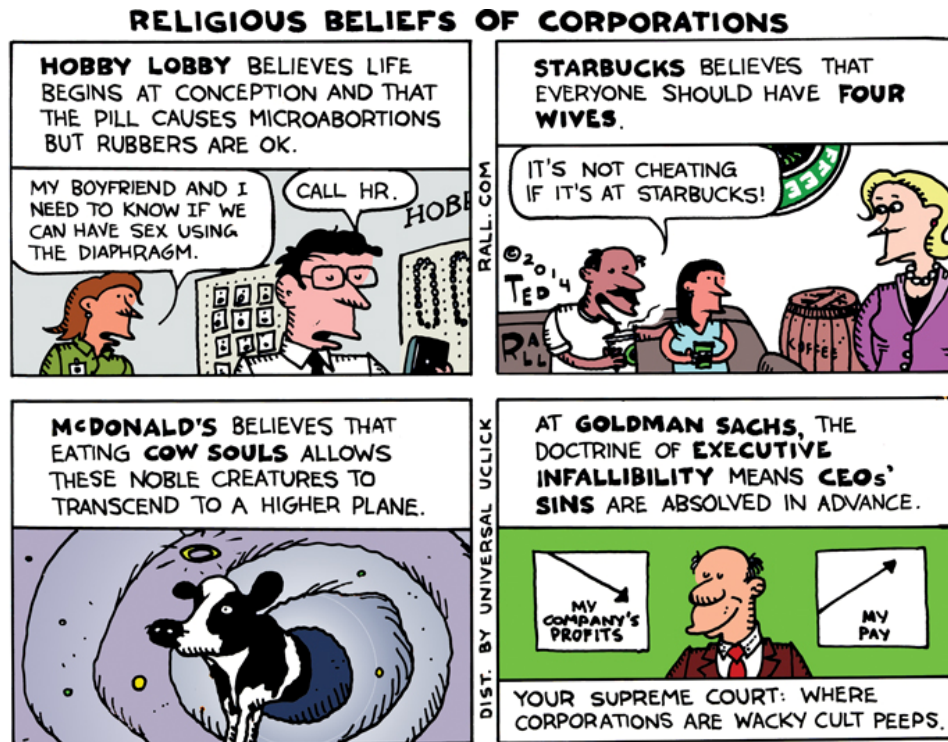


## Military Resistance 12C25



**“I Am Embarrassed To Be Part Of The Army Because Of This”**  
**“Makes Me Want To Never Admit To Being A Paratrooper For The Rest Of My Life When Compared To How The Army Treats Every Other Soldier. I Want To Vomit”**  
**“Not Like A General Is Going To Jail. Jail Is Only For NCOs And Joes”**

# **“He Just Thought He Was Above It All. Turns Out He Was Right. He Was Above It All”**

## **[“News Of Brig. Gen. Jeffrey Sinclair’s Sentence Prompted Howls From Soldiers”]**

Mar 20, 2014 The Associated Press

**The Army general at the center of a sexual misconduct case that put the military justice system itself on trial was spared prison on March 20 and sentenced to a reprimand and a \$20,000 fine —a punishment legal experts, a women’s group and members of Congress condemned as shockingly light.**

Brig. Gen. Jeffrey A. Sinclair, 51, immediately announced his retire-ment, capping a humiliating fall for the battle-tested commander once regarded as a rising star in the Army. A disciplinary board could still bust him in rank and severely reduce his pension.

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March 31, 2014 Army Times [Excerpts]

***News of Brig. Gen. Jeffrey Sinclair’s sentence prompted howls from soldiers and others commenting on Army Times’ Facebook page.***

***Here is a small sample:***

What pisses me off is that if an enlisted soldier in the rank of E-7 through E-9 had done this, they would’ve been court-martialed, they would’ve lost all pension and benefits, and they would’ve gone to jail. But because it’s a general, you just get a slap on the wrist.  
— Troy Decker

If he was enlisted, the trial wouldn’t have lasted as long as it did, he would lose almost everything, and he’ll be on his way to Leavenworth.  
— Reginald Pippin

What a farce. We wonder why SHARP is seen as a joke around the Army. The one chance to make an example of someone and you blow it.  
— Joe Cush

Not like a general is going to jail. Jail is only for NCOs and Joes.  
— Brian Saintsing

The more rank you have, the worse the punishment should be. You are a leader. You are expected to show the way. To live the Army values. To teach those below you. He failed and he should be ... booted.

He failed for three years. He knew damn well what the punishment was for this. He just thought he was above it all. Turns out he was right. He was above it all. He got away with this and it makes me sick.

I am embarrassed to be part of the Army because of this.  
— Rob Corcoran

“In closing arguments, prosecutors argued Sinclair should be thrown out of the Army and lose his military benefits, while the defense said that would harm his innocent wife and children the most.”

Little if any concern, however, would have been given to the innocent wife and children of the adulterous E-7 who pleads guilty to having inappropriate sexual relationships with three female soldiers in his platoon. Double standards lead the way.  
— Jose Galindo

How many people are surprised with this outcome? Look at all the deployments..failed marriages and divorces. What a great example for any soldier, let alone for the Airborne! If the Army was trying to change its image, this did not help. When will we hear about their consequences?

If they were enlisted, we would. But don't wait for that. Where are the outstanding leaders who lead from the front? Why aren't they crying foul?  
— Amanda L. Burrow

Makes me want to never admit to being a paratrooper for the rest of my life when compared to how the Army treats every other soldier. I want to vomit.  
— Kevin Pemberton

Wow. Hey General O, this is under your watch, at a time when sexual assault and sexual harassment has come front and center! What a message we are sending throughout the ranks.  
— Chuck Luther

**More:**

## **Brig. Gen. Sinclair To Take Command Of French Foreign Legion**

March 27, 2014 By drew, Duffel Blog [Excerpts]

FAYETTEVILLE — Brig. Gen. Jeffrey Sinclair is reportedly in talks with the French government to become the commanding officer of the French Foreign Legion, Duffel Blog has learned.

“General Sinclair is leaving the U.S. Army in disgrace,” Military analyst Reggie Hardy told reporters, noting his recent conviction in a sexual harassment case that resulted in a \$20,000 fine and discharge. “He is verbally abusive, has a history of sexual harassment, and doesn’t speak a word of French, so he would be a perfect fit.”

Brig. Gen. Sinclair, who has already changed his first name to “Apollinaire-Luc,” is excited for his future in France.

“I am honored to be considered for this position,” he said. “The Legion has a proud history of being full of scumbags, being sent to fight pointless wars in Africa so French citizens won’t have to, and rebelling against their own government. They also have their own vineyards — I can’t wait.”

“They’re still allowed to hit their subordinates,” Apollinaire-Luc Sinclair said, “So that’s a plus. The only thing I don’t like is that the Legion is an all-male force. I’m going to open up the ranks to females so I can be surrounded by women I can harass and threaten to kill.”

Brig. Gen. Apollinaire-Luc Sinclair is growing a beard and carrying an axe at all times, but “wearing aprons is for women-folk,” he said.

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## **AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS**

### **Taliban Attack Closes Afghanistan’s Main Airport**

3.29.14 AP

KABUL, Afghanistan — The director of the Kabul airport says the runway has been closed because of possible dangers to planes posed by a Taliban attack on the Afghan election commission’s headquarters.

Attackers are firing rocket-propelled grenades and heavy machine guns at the Independent Election Commission’s main compound, which is on the southern edge of the airport. No casualties have been reported.

Yaqoub Rassouli says authorities tried to reopen the runway after two hours Saturday but decided the risk was too high and closed it again. He says flights on Emirates Airline and Air India have been diverted.

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# Militants Attack Election Commission Headquarters In Kabul

3..29.14 By AMIR SHAH and RAHIM FAIEZ, AP

KABUL, Afghanistan — An Afghan interior ministry official says five militants who attacked the election commission headquarters in Kabul with rocket propelled grenades and machine guns have been killed, ending a four-hour standoff.

Deputy Interior Minister Mohammed Ayub Salangi says two policemen were injured in the attack Saturday. There were no casualties among the dozens of Independent Election Commission staff and other people on the heavily fortified compound.

Salangi said the five insurgents wore the all-encompassing burqua to sneak unnoticed into a building that looked onto the heavily fortified Independent Election Commission headquarters.

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## 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**

<p><b>A revolution is always distinguished by impoliteness, probably because the ruling classes did not take the trouble in good season to teach the people fine manners. -- Leon Trotsky, History Of The Russian Revolution</b></p>
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## **The Springtime Of The Peoples Arrives In Europe:**

**“This New Springtime Of The  
Contemporary Peoples Has Swept  
Away Another Régime, Through  
Long Struggle And Heavy  
Sacrifices”**

**“For The First Time, It Has Done So  
In Europe. It Is A Major Event”**

**“The Recent Mass Uprising In Ukraine Is  
A Democratic Movement In Its Very  
Essence, Against A Regime  
Representing The Interests Of The  
Powerful Oligarchy”**

**The Arab Spring arrived in winter 2010, close to Europe: in the countries located on the other side of the Mediterranean.**

**Four years later, we see that the springtime of the peoples is not solely an Arab phenomenon. It has also erupted in Europe, although for now in the external periphery of the European Union.**

26 March 2014 by Zbigniew Marcin Kowalewski, International Viewpoint [Excerpts]

Zbigniew Kowalewski was in 1980-81 a member of the regional leadership of Solidarność in Lodz. As a delegate to the First Congress of Soldarność, he took part in the elaboration of the programme that was adopted.

He was in Paris at the invitation of French trade unionists when the state of siege was declared in December 1981. He helped to edit Polish-language Inprekor, a journal of the Fourth International circulated clandestinely in Poland from 1981 to 1990, and published "Rendez-nous nos usines!" ("Give us Back our Factories!") (La Brèche, Paris 1985).

He is author of several studies on the Ukrainian national question, published, among others, by the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine. He is at present editor of the Polish edition of Le Monde Diplomatique

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**The Arab Spring arrived in winter 2010, close to Europe: in the countries located on the other side of the Mediterranean.**

**Four years later, we see that the springtime of the peoples is not solely an Arab phenomenon. It has also erupted in Europe, although for now in the external periphery of the European Union.**

We probably did not recognise to what point the process of capitalist integration in Europe contributed to the explosive accumulation of tensions in its near but extra-European periphery. This is still truer now in its nearer European periphery, as in Ukraine.

The link this time was direct, clearly visible: initially, the conflict broke out around the question of adhesion to the EU. This was the first slogan which began to gather the crowds, which gave birth to a mass social movement and which led to huge upheavals including the threat of war.

Not a civil war as in Libya or Syria – although that was expected and incited in Russia and in all the propaganda networks linked to it around the world – but an international war.

**“A Springtime Of The Peoples Is Always Surprising. It Sometimes Happens In A Country In A Totally Unexpected Manner, Like A Clap Of Thunder In A Serene Sky”**

**A springtime of the peoples is always surprising. It sometimes happens in a country in a totally unexpected manner, like a clap of thunder in a serene sky.**

However, after the event it proves that there is nothing surprising about why it has happened there and not elsewhere.

The same is true now.

On the world political map, Ukraine is a gigantic historic anomaly, a deviation in relation to a certain very significant “typical value”, at least at the world scale. The biggest country in Europe in terms of area, after Russia, and one of the biggest in terms of population, has been an independent state for barely 23 years. This on a continent where for a long time the “typical value” corresponds to national states for all the big nations, even those much smaller than the Ukrainian nation.

The historic anomalies have generated the most diverse contradictions, which are transformed into powder kegs much more easily than elsewhere.

Ukraine bears an extraordinary burden of several centuries of national oppression, mainly Polish and Russian.

In Soviet Ukraine, after several years of intense positive discrimination known as Ukrainisation, a return to the policy of Russification came with the advent of the Stalinist regime, behind which Russian imperialism was hidden.

The intelligentsia was massacred and several million peasants, that is to say the basis of national identity, were exterminated by famine. After the Second World War, Russification affected all the Ukrainian lands, now reunited; although in western Ukraine, previously under the Polish colonial yoke, a vigorous anti-Soviet resistance was maintained until the mid 1950s.

Outside the period of the government of Petro Shestchenko (1963-1972), Russification was pursued virtually until the fall of the USSR.

On the eve of the proclamation of independence by Ukraine, I wrote in the review “Nouvelle Europe”, edited by the European Parliament: “what makes the Ukrainian process vulnerable is the fact that as a nation without a state, subject to a long term oppression, it has not yet completed its national formation” [1]. And this is still the case.

Hence the great disparities in the uprising of the masses – the second now, after the “Orange revolution” – according to the different regions of the country. Directed against a regime whose main rearguard is in the east of the country, it has spread in the regions of the west and centre, the cradle of the pro-independence movements after the First World War.

**Hence also a paradoxical contradiction between this national movement, very delayed historically, but aspiring to consolidate an independent state, and its desire to join the EU, which – being the instrument of capitalist globalisation – weakens national states and restrains their sovereignty.**



Noting this contradiction does not at all indicate agreement with those who enjoy the privileges linked to membership of this prosperous and select fortress Europe advising Ukraine to stay out of it.

It is a mark of chauvinism of the privileged.

Access to the EU labour market has saved millions of Poles from poverty and hunger, and many Ukrainians know this well.

In the countries of the EU, the left has the duty of solidarity with the excluded peoples of the East and South. The argument that socially catastrophic neoliberal reforms await them in the EU is totally false. Not only will they not avoid them by remaining outside, but they will be hit still harder by not being able to enjoy the benefits linked to belonging to an integrated Europe.

On the contrary, inside the EU, they will have the possibility of resisting the neoliberal capitalist transformations together with other peoples. This is not to ignore the concerns of all those, of whom there are many also in Ukraine who rightly fear that membership of a free trade zone with the EU will have dramatic consequences for their jobs and standard of living.

However the right of nations to self-determination also means defending the democratic right of Ukraine to join the EU.

**The Recent Mass Uprising In Ukraine “Is A Democratic Movement In Its Very Essence, Against A Regime Representing The Interests Of The Powerful Oligarchy”**

A mass democratic movement

**No less paradoxical is another contradiction of the recent mass uprising in Ukraine. It is a democratic movement in its very essence, against a regime representing the interests of the powerful oligarchy of eastern Ukraine, known for its electoral frauds; an authoritarian regime, characterised by corruption and the pillage of the national wealth.**

**This movement found its second breath and showed great élan and extraordinary determination in struggle when, on January 16, the docile parliament voted for radical restrictions on democratic liberties.**

**Throughout the uprising it has maintained a very marked independence in relation to the main opposition parties, which it considered discredited.**

The masses gathered in Kiev’s Maïdan never recognised the memorable trio of braggarts as their leadership.

It is the latter who have erected themselves as leaders, and it is in this capacity that they were vigorously hailed by the political élites of the EU and the international media.

They led the movement nowhere; they would have led it only to defeat.

They promised vague “measures which will be definitely effective this time”, like for example a parliamentary vote limiting presidential power. All this to maintain the movement in a state of inertia, or at least to muzzle it, so that Yanukovych stayed in power. Without success.

**The masses at the Maïdan would not follow them, and they were several times ridiculed and heckled. What dominated on the Maïdan was self-organisation and an irreducible will to fight until victory and the overthrow of the regime.**

In the not so distant past, the nightmare of the global justice movement and numerous mass protests in Europe was combat groups which acted without their agreement, outside of any democratic control but on behalf of these movements. Whatever the banner under which they act, they unconsciously reproduced in their practices far right ideologies which promote violence.

Not surprising that they were very open to provocations leading to police repression against mass movements or provided the state with precious pretexts to repress them.

Faced with extremely brutal police aggression, the Maïdan had desperate need of self defence forces. It was however too weakly structured and consolidated to impose on any combat organisation subordination to its sovereign social power, avoiding thus the appearance of uncontrolled militias. The result of this weakness was the appearance around the strategic barricade of Hrouchevsky street, near Maïdan of an armed force dominated by a coalition of far right commandos, the Right Sector.

A number of strange affairs surround this coalition, whose permeability led to provocations. For example the completely stupefying fact that on Thursday February 20, as blood flowed in Maïdan, Dmytro Iaroch, commander in chief of the Right Sector, met secretly with Yanukovych, something discovered by journalists after the fall of the latter. What did they talk about? Iaroch said: “It concerned the agreement, like that signed later. I refused to sign. I told him we were not marionettes. And Viktor Fedorovych, withdraw the army, or there will be a guerrilla war throughout Ukraine. It was about saying that we would not give in, we would not lay down our arms, we would hold out until the end...” [2].

The very important role played by this ultra-nationalist formation in the combats with the police threw a brown shadow over Maïdan.

Just like the presence among the three braggarts mentioned above of the leader of the radical right national party, Svoboda. Russian propaganda tried to use this shadow to discredit Maïdan as a fascist or neo-Nazi movement [3].

To the extent that 40 Ukrainian and foreign historians specialising in Ukrainian nationalism deemed it necessary to react.

Maïdan, they said “is a liberationist and not extremist mass action of civic disobedience” Conscious of the risks that far right participation entails for the Mайдan, they called on the world’s media not to suggest that the latter “is being infiltrated, driven or taken over by radically ethnocentrist groups of the lunatic fringe” asking them to take account of the fact that such suggestions are grist to the mill of Russian imperialism, which “is a far

more serious threat to social justice, minority rights and political equality than all Ukrainian ethnocentrists taken together” [4]

**It is a fact that the Maidan was the theatre of an astonishing alliance of the mass democratic movement with the far right militias. That is its second big contradiction.**

**For this movement, it is a mortal danger.**

**But big mass movements are never inoculated by History against dangers of this kind.**

**Even movements already configured from the class viewpoint, let alone those which haven't been, like that in Ukraine, essentially learn from their own painstakingly accumulated experiences.**

**“This New Springtime Of The Contemporary Peoples Has Swept Away Another Régime, Through Long Struggle And Heavy Sacrifices. For The First Time, It Has Done So In Europe. It Is A Major Event.”**

**Inside a people which – exposed to imperialist oppression, pressure or aggression – can still not resolve its own national question, such paradoxical combinations, like the above mentioned alliance, are basically inevitable.**

The reasons for this were explained by Mykola Khvylovy – Communist, writer and director of the Free Academy of Proletarian Literature – who killed himself in 1933 to protest against the massacre of his people perpetrated by Stalin; as, virtually the same time, did the historic leader of the Ukrainian Communists, Mykola Skrypnyk.

Some years previously, Khvylovy wrote these significant words: “When a people (as has already been written several times) shows for centuries its will to constitute its organism as a state entity, then all attempts to stop in one way or another this natural process hold back the formation of class forces and on the other hand introduces an element of chaos in the world historic process. To deny the aspiration to independence with the aid of a sterile pseudo-Marxism means not understanding that Ukraine will be a field of action of the counter-revolution as long as it does not pass through this natural stage which western Europe underwent at the time when national states were formed” [5].

It is very difficult to pass through this stage when the neighbouring great power does not wish to loosen its grip on its former possession, threatening it with war and annexations; and when the new government of neoliberals and radical right nationalists, no less anti-popular than what preceded it, is creating for itself a new oligarchic base and is ready to subject the country to a rapacious capitalist globalisation.

**One thing is sure.**

**This new springtime of the contemporary peoples has swept away another régime, through long struggle and heavy sacrifices.**

**For the first time, it has done so in Europe.**

**It is a major event.**

## **Footnotes**

[1] Z.M. Kowalewski, "L'Ukraine entre la Russie soviétique et l'Europe orientale", "Nouvelle Europe", number 3, 1990, p. 5

[2] [R. Malko, "Dmytro Iaroch: Moïa zoustritch iz lanoukovytchem spravdi boula", "Oukraïïns'kyi Tyzhden", number 9 (329), 2014, p. 12

[3] [Anton Shekhovtsov's blog is essential for understanding ultra-nationalism in Ukraine. See also A. Umland (ed.), "Post-Soviet Ukrainian Right-Wing Extremism", "Russian Politics and Law", vol. 51, number 5, 2013

[4] A. Umland et al., "Kyiv's Euromaidan is a Liberationist and not Extremist Mass Action of Civic Disobedience", <http://krytyka.com/ua/articles/kyi...>

[5] M. Khvylovy, "The Cultural Renaissance in Ukraine: Polemical Pamphlets, 1925-1926", Edmonton, Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, 1986, p. 227

**MORE:**

# **A Wonderful Sight To See: "They Felt Like They Were Running For Their Lives -- A Pack Of Representatives Being Hunted By The People They Represented"**

February 25, 2014 By Christian Neef in Kiev, DER SPIEGEL [Excerpt]

Nobody told Ukrainian parliamentarian Yuri Blagodir that you had to be physically fit to be a representative. But last Thursday, the ability to run fast suddenly became a key skill. Just before 10 a.m., the parliament in Kiev was finally assembling in an effort to find a way out of the spiraling chaos that had gripped the country.

Then came the order to clear the building.

Gunfire rang out, explosions shook the government quarter and special police and secret service units rushed to the scene. The opposition, it was said, intended to storm the parliament and the seat of government.

Blagodir, 40, ran up the street along with the other parliamentarians, away from the city center and away from the parliament building.

They felt like they were running for their lives -- a pack of representatives being hunted by the people they represented.

It was afternoon before they returned to their workplace and the greatly anticipated special session only began at 5 p.m. For Yuri Blagodir, the session was of particular importance. Just a day earlier, he had still been a member of the Party of Regions, the governing party led by President Viktor Yanukovich.

Thursday was to be the first day of his new political life. A day prior, he had posted the following on his website: "The events of the last three months have shown that the official response to the crisis can only lead to civil war and the disintegration of the state." He joined three other Party of Regions members in renouncing their membership. A day later, 10 more representatives turned their backs on Yanukovich and huge numbers of functionaries across the country did the same.

It marked the beginning of the rapid end of Yanukovich's grip on power. It was his worst-case scenario: By the end of the day on Thursday, a third of his parliamentarians had abandoned him.

**MORE:**

**“In The U.S., The Emphasis Of Our  
Argument Is Naturally On  
Opposing U.S. Intervention In  
Ukraine”**

**“That Should Not Blind Us To  
Ukraine’s Historic Oppression By  
Russia And Its Right To Self-  
Determination”**

**“It Is Not The Job Of Revolutionaries To  
Choose Sides In An Inter-Imperialist  
Rivalry”**

March 25, 2014 by Paul D’Amato, Socialist Worker [Excerpts]

It is clear that nationalism--in the form of the oppression of weaker states by more powerful ones, of national rivalries and chauvinism, and of national movements--is still very much with us.

One need only think of the status of nations and national groups on the borders of the Russian empire since the collapse of the USSR, of Tibet and the Uighurs in China, of the national rivalries in the Balkans since the collapse of ex-Yugoslavia, of the inter-ethnic violence in Africa, or of the U.S. occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan--not to mention U.S. support for coups, both successful and not, in Haiti, Honduras and Venezuela, as well as its support for Israel.

And, of course, with the conflict over Ukraine, one can also see how the national question is complicated by the intervention of rival imperialist powers--the U.S. versus Russia.

In the U.S., the emphasis of our argument is naturally on opposing U.S. intervention in Ukraine.

But that should not blind us to Ukraine's historic oppression by Russia and its right to self-determination.

**There are some on the left who argue that support for Ukraine's self-determination must be cast aside because there are fascists in its government.**

**But making Ukraine's right to independence conditional on the composition of the government is similar to those in the U.S. who failed to defend Iraq's right to self-determination against invasion by the U.S. because of the brutal character of Saddam Hussein's regime.**

The position one takes on Ukraine does depend on where one lives. Socialists in Ukraine must oppose reactionary nationalism in their own country--including a government that is pushing through restrictions on language, threatening the rights of non-Ukraine minorities, cooperating with openly fascist forces and making deals with Western imperialism.

Socialists in Russia, on the other hand, are duty-bound to emphasize Ukraine's right to be independent from Russian interference, including military intervention, manipulation of elections and so on.

Without this, they can never hope to build relations of mutual trust and solidarities with workers in Ukraine, nor effectively challenge the far right in their own country or anywhere else.

It is not the job of revolutionaries to choose sides in an inter-imperialist rivalry.

**Though the main emphasis for any revolutionary living within a great power--especially the "greatest" power of all, the U.S.--should be to oppose the nationalism and chauvinistic patriotism in one's "own" country, that doesn't require throwing one's support behind another "great" power, with whom it is in competition and conflict.**

The greater imperialist reach of the U.S. and the necessity of opposing it with all our might does not require us to sow illusions in the equally reactionary and oppressive aims of the Russian empire of Vladimir Putin--including its attempts to weaken the sovereignty of Ukraine for reasons that have nothing to do with resisting "fascism" or fulfilling the will of the people of Crimea.

Putin's claims about Ukraine are no more legitimate and genuine than Washington's insistence that the U.S. invasion of Iraq was about combating a "new Hitler" or that its invasion of Afghanistan was about freeing women from oppression.

## **DO YOU HAVE A FRIEND OR RELATIVE IN THE MILITARY?**



U.S. soldier in Bejjia village Iraq, Feb. 4, 2008. (AP Photo/Maya Alleruzzo)

**Forward Military Resistance along, or send us the email address if you wish and we'll send it regularly with your best wishes. Whether in Afghanistan or at a base in the USA, this is extra important for your service friend, too often cut off from access to encouraging news of growing resistance to injustices, inside the armed services and at home. Send email requests to address up top or write to: Military Resistance, Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657.**

## **CLASS WAR REPORTS**

# **UPS:**

## **“A 90-Minute Walkout Of Over 250 Drivers In Response To The Unjust Firing Of Jairo Reyes, A Driver Of 23 Years”**

### **“Action Not Often Seen In The U.S. Labor Movement These Days”**



Members and supporters of Teamsters Local 804 rally in defense of 250 fired workers

March 27, 2014 by Danny Katch, Socialist Worker [Excerpts]

"UPS WORKERS around the country are fed up...What happened here on February 26 was a culmination. You can't put a tea kettle on, turn on the flame, and expect it not to boil over!"

Those were the words of Tim Sylvester, president of Teamsters Local 804, at a rally outside the gates of a UPS facility in Maspeth, Queens, on the morning of March 21.

What had "boiled over" on February 26 was the type of action not often seen in the U.S. labor movement these days, a 90-minute walkout of over 250 drivers in response to the unjust firing of Jairo Reyes, a driver of 23 years.

"They were so fed up, not even for me but in their personal experience, the pressure they're getting from the company," says Reyes, adding:

Put yourself in that situation, (management is) telling you're fired and you walk about anyways...Here's a decent paying job in America working for a very competitive



company. To feel inside you that, my choice is either stay here and continue putting up with the garbage or just walk out and giving myself a sense of dignity--it hits home. There is a lot of unfairness and a lot of inequality.

**UPS responded to the walkout in the only way that anyone who has ever worked for "Big Brown" (including this author) would expect: by raising the stakes. The company put hundreds of drivers who participated in the action on notice of termination.**

**But if UPS was hoping to intimidate its workers, it miscalculated.**

**Local 804 put out a call for support and has received an overwhelming response, getting over 100,000 signatures in just two weeks on petitions sent out by the union and the Working Families Party.**

An incident that started with one driver in one building has snowballed into a fight involving thousands of workers with grievances of their own in one of the country's largest unionized companies.

### **“UPS Has Long Been A Pioneer In Using Science And Technology To Squeeze The Most Work Possible Out Of The Bodies Of Its Workers”**

UPS drivers are widely considered to have one of the few remaining decent working-class jobs. With good pay and benefits, union protections and friendly customer interactions, it's no wonder that drivers are frequently asked by customers if the company is hiring.

**But UPS has long been a pioneer in using science and technology to squeeze the most work possible out of the bodies of its workers, which can create a pressure cooker atmosphere.**

**"(Management is) scrutinizing everything you do with all the technology they have," according to Reyes. "They know if you left the truck idle and if you turned at a certain speed.**

**“They live on the computer and then they try to catch you. And they ask you how many stops done and how many stops left. And god forbid--if you answer in the wrong way, they bring you into the office.”**

Reyes told me that when he returned to work after missing a lot of time due to an accident, he made the mistake of coming back like "a normal relaxed person--like you're not working in a hostile environment."

In Maspeth, that hostility has lately been focused on the issue of forced overtime.

Like many corporations, UPS divides its workforce between underemployed part-timers and overworked full timers, a system that is horrible for its employees but great for its profits. Maspeth drivers routinely work 12-hour days, staying on their routes past 9 p.m..

Because of the lack of affordable housing in New York City, many of them have long commutes to outer suburbs, which means they only get to see their loved ones on weekends.

**According to Local 804's contract with UPS, workers have the right to limit their amount of mandatory overtime, a right that the company has flagrantly ignored.**

"There's been a culture here of breaking the contract and not honoring what they agreed to," says Liam Russertt, Local 804's business agent assigned to the Maspeth hub.

"When it comes to work rules they're very big sticklers. If you don't hold your handrail getting in and out of the truck and have your keys on your pinky they'll write you up for discipline. But when it comes to guys wanting to come in early and it's in the contract, they violate it and say 'grieve it.' When you request your day off they violate it and say 'grieve it.'"

This was something many workers at the rally talked about: every time they try to stand up for their contractual rights around mandatory overtime or seniority, they are told by supervisors to file a grievance later and keep working. In other words, management has flipped the power dynamic of the union's grievance procedure. Something that was supposed to be a tool for workers to hold the company accountable to the contract is now being used by the company to do the opposite: to keep violating the contract and then letting the union staff have to deal with the enormous pile of grievances. "Grieve it" has become another word for "get back to work."

The anger that's been boiling up in the Maspeth UPS hub is the anger of workers who know their rights and yet are treated as if they don't have any. Every worker I spoke with at the rally used the word disrespect.

"Anyone in the country if they have an agreement or contract with any type of company and they violate it, you get angry," says Russertt. "If they violate it twice you never use them again. These guys are violating it every day to the extreme. And the workers just feel like...they love their customers, they love their jobs, but the way management treats them like they're property, and a commodity, and they just treat them until they're broken down."

**A month earlier, Jairo Reyes had requested an earlier regular start time so he could get off the road a little earlier each night. Management initially agreed, but when Reyes, a longtime union activist, signed his name to a mass grievance against the company's violations of seniority rules with start times, it decided to retaliate.**

**On the morning of February 26, Reyes was told that his new start time had never been approved and that he had therefore been "stealing" time for the past month by reporting to work too early.**

**For this supposed crime, Reyes was immediately fired; his ID was taken from him and he was escorted out of the building.**

To understand why Reyes's termination had such an explosive impact in the building, you need one more piece of information.

Local 804 has long had an "innocent until proven guilty" clause which allowed terminated workers to stay on the job through the process of their being defended by their union representatives. Local 804 members are protective of this provision because while the concept of "innocent until proven guilty" is supposed to be a universal right in this country, it rarely exists at the place we spend most of our time--at work.

The only exceptions to "innocent until proven guilty" in the Local 804 contract are cases that involve "dishonesty," which is supposed to refer mainly to package theft.

Not surprisingly, management is always looking for ways to stretch the meaning of "dishonesty" to cover all sorts of disciplinary issues.

But even by UPS standards, applying dishonesty to a worker who had changed his start time with management's approval is a ridiculous stretch.

"It was just the last straw," says Russertt. "Even when we were out here for a little bit, people didn't want to go back in until he went back in. We thought we were going to send a message and we ended up sending a message for 90 minutes or better."

To get a feel for the walkout, check out this video of Reyes addressing the workers <https://docs.google.com/file/d/0B73Wohp9bb6lZXBZmZaRkc4VVE/preview?pli=1> and this one of Russertt <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qQcii2r30Zw>.

### **“The Company May Not Have Counted On The Outpouring Of Solidarity That Reyes And His Co-Workers Would Received”**

After the walkout, UPS hit back hard with its mass termination notices, but the company may not have counted on the outpouring of solidarity that Reyes and his co-workers would received.

Cell phone videos like those above were posted on social media networks of UPS workers across the country. When Local 804 started a petition in defense of the terminated workers, networks of Teamster activists sprang up across the country to get signatures.

"I was never a Facebook person," says Russertt, "but I'm getting all these messages looking at the petition...To get 100,000 signatures in two weeks, we've definitely gotten a feeling of solidarity. It almost reminded me of 1934 Minnesota (Teamster general strike)."

The campaign was joined by the Working Families Party, a union-backed coalition often affiliated with the Democratic Party, which publicized an online petition and helped get statements of support from elected officials. Most notable was Letitia James, the city's new public advocate, who pledged at the rally that if UPS didn't rescind its terminations that she would have the city look into its contracts with UPS.

UPS has used its hardball style of management to wrest enormous profits out of its impoverished part-time, and stressed-out and exhausted full-time workforce. But in this case, it may have gone too far and provoked a response that could awaken a sleeping

giant. The walkout in Maspeth is inspiring a UPS workforce around the country that has already demonstrated its growing frustrations by voting down a series of local supplements to the Teamsters' national contract.

**Walking Jairo Reyes off the job wasn't just a cruel and illegal act; it was a slap in the face to every driver in the building.**

**And it led to what UPS and every company in the world fears the most: workers taking direct action and shutting down production.**

Companies like UPS don't like union grievances, but they have figured out how to live with them and not let them affect their relentless squeeze on their workforce.

Now, the Local 804 walkout has reminded UPS workers in New York and across the country about the type of actions it took to build the union in the first place, starting with that general strike in Minneapolis in 1934. At a time when a number of locals still haven't approved their local contract, this is a potentially explosive situation.

Local 804 has an important historic place in Teamsters and the entire labor movement. This is the home of Ron Carey, the Teamster president who led the 1997 UPS strike, the most successful national strike in the past 30 years. That strike sought to address the gap between the company's part-time and full-time workers, and galvanized public support with the slogan "Part-time America won't work."

UPS got its revenge after the strike when Republican lawmakers and Carey's rival Jimmy Hoffa Jr. united to get Carey removed from office based on corruption charges that were never proven in court. Carey's handpicked successors in Local 804 saw which way the wind was blowing, allied with Hoffa Jr., and let the local stagnate into passivity until they were unseated in 2009 by Sylvester's team of reformers, who campaigned on a pledge to restore Carey's tradition of member education and standing up to management.

Now Local 804 once again has a chance to lead the way.

For the rest of us, Jairo Reyes and the rest of the Maspeth UPS drivers need our support. Sign the petition, [http://petitions.moveon.org/workingfamilies/sign/ups-drivers-fired-for?source=c.em.cp&r\\_by=10171476](http://petitions.moveon.org/workingfamilies/sign/ups-drivers-fired-for?source=c.em.cp&r_by=10171476) pass it around to coworkers, and take the opportunity to talk about why workers walked off the job that morning in Maspeth--and how we can build a stronger labor movement so that more of us can rediscover the power to shut down production to stand up for our rights.

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## DANGER: CAPITALISTS AT WORK



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## OCCUPATION PALESTINE

**Zionists Demolish Palestinian Building In Occupied Jerusalem, As Usual:**

**“The Building Included A Clinic, A Mosque And Two Residential Apartments”**



March 26, 2014 International Middle East Media Center Editorial Group

**Israeli bulldozers demolished a Palestinian residential building in Tur village of occupied Jerusalem, on Wednesday, under the pretext that it was built without a construction permit.**

Local sources in Jerusalem told a PNN reporter that the 300-square-meter building belongs to two brothers named Ghadeer and Mussa Abu Ghaliya.

The building included a clinic, a mosque and two residential apartments.

Israeli forces closed off the area to residential access and the municipality staff dismantled gas, water, and power lines, and evacuated the inhabitants before demolishing the building.

In its statement, the Islamic-Christian Commission in Support of Jerusalem and Holy Sites considered such measures by the Israeli government a flagrant violation of humanitarian law, international conventions and other agreements which call for the safety and inviolability of the Holy Places.

The commission called on the international community to exert pressure on Israel to refrain from committing these violations and assaults in the occupied Palestinian territories, and on Muslim and Christian holy sites.

**In related news, the municipality of Jerusalem has ordered the demolition of another Palestinian building in East Jerusalem, after claiming that the owner should have obtained a construction permit.**

The owner, Muatasim Adila, a lecturer at al-Quds University, told Ma'an Wednesday that the demolition order for his home in Abu Dis was surprising because his building is in the West Bank and he "possesses all documents to prove that."

**Adila pointed out that a two-story building was built in 1959, and in 2012 he added a third story after he obtained the needed license from the Palestinian Authority, as the area is under Palestinian control.**

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# Zionist Mob Cuts Down Olive Trees On Palestinian Land, As Usual

29/03/2014 Ma'an

NABLUS -- Israeli settlers cut down more than 50 olive trees in Huwwara village south of Nablus in the northern West Bank on Thursday, a Palestinian official said.

Ghassan Daghlas, a Palestinian Authority official who monitors settlement-related activities in the northern West Bank, told Ma'an that "a number of settlers from Yitzhar settlement chopped down more than 50 olive trees in al-Naqara area north of the village."

Daghlas pointed out that the trees belong to Ahmad Odeh and Ghazi Al-Mukhtar.

**He added that more than 5,700 trees have been cut down by settlers in the West Bank since the beginning of this year.**

The villages south of Nablus are a frequent site of settler violence and Palestinian clashes with Israeli forces as they are located beside the notoriously violent Israeli settlement of Yitzhar.

**Settlers frequently attack locals and prevent farmers from reaching their lands, in addition to attacks on olive trees themselves.**

Settler violence against Palestinians and their property in the occupied West Bank is systematic and ignored by Israeli authorities, who rarely intervene in the violent attacks or prosecute the perpetrators.

**In 2013, there were 399 incidents of settler violence against Palestinians in the West Bank, according to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.**

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## **Regime Forces Break Up Palestinian Conference In Occupied Jerusalem: Palestinian Human Rights Organizations Forbidden To Hold**



# Conference “In Opposition To Arab Enlistment In The Israeli Military” The Dictatorship’s Special Forces And Police Storm The Headquarters Of The Yabous Cultural Center



“Do You Really Want To Be The New Gestapo?” [See poem next below.]

28/03/2014 Ma'an

JERUSALEM -- Israeli forces on Wednesday prevented Palestinian human rights organizations in Jerusalem from holding a conference in opposition to Arab enlistment in the Israeli military, organizers said.

Israeli special forces and police reportedly stormed the headquarters of the Yabous Cultural Center immediately prior to the beginning of the conference and shut down the building until the evening.

**Organizers said that the police hung a notice signed by the chief of police banning the proceedings from moving forward because the conference was organized by activists associated with the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, which Israeli authorities consider a terrorist organization.**

**Jerusalem Legal Aid and Human Rights Center director Rami Saleh denied the allegations, noting that the conference was organized by JLAC, St. Yves, Kanaan Project, and in cooperation with the Baladna organization’s Haifa branch.**



Saleh said the conference aims to raise awareness in the Arab community of Jerusalem about "civil service," a form of service in the Israeli army that the Israeli state has increasingly enjoined Arab youth to enlist in.

The conference was intended to encourage opposition to "civil service" and all kinds of military service in the Israeli army, which is not mandatory for Muslim and Christian Palestinians in Israel, unlike for Druze and Jewish Israelis.

Dozens of Jerusalem youths aged 18-21 had joined the program, Saleh said.

Yabous institute director Rania Elias condemned the closure of the institute from 2-8 p.m, adding that the institute will continue to provide service and organize events for Palestinian organizations.

**MORE:**

**“A Jew to Zionist Fighters, 1988”  
Do You Really Want To Be The New  
Gestapo?  
The New Wehrmacht?  
The New SA And SS?**



**By Erich Fried**

**Fried was born in Vienna in 1921 and escaped to England, with his mother, after his father was tortured to death by the Gestapo, in 1938.**

**Because of his experiences with racism and Fascism he became involved in the Palestinian cause.**

He was a leader in the fight against both Fascism and Zionism.

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## **“A Jew to Zionist Fighters, 1988”**

A Jew to Zionist Fighters, 1988

By Erich Fried

What do you actually want?  
Do you really want to outdo  
those who trod you down  
a generation ago  
into your own blood  
and into your own excrement  
Do you want to pass on the old torture  
to others now  
in all its bloody and dirty detail  
with all the brutal delight of torturers  
as suffered by your fathers?  
Do you really want to be the new Gestapo  
the new Wehrmacht  
the new SA and SS  
and turn the Palestinians  
into the new Jews?  
Well then I too want,  
having fifty years ago  
myself been tormented for being a Jewboy  
by your tormentors,  
to be a new Jew with these new Jews  
you are making of the Palestinians  
And I want to help lead them as a free people  
into their own land of Palestine  
from whence you have driven them or in which you plague them  
you apprentices of the Swastika  
you fools and changelings of history  
whose Star of David on your flags  
turns ever quicker  
into that damned symbol with its four feet  
that you just do not want to see  
but whose path you are following today

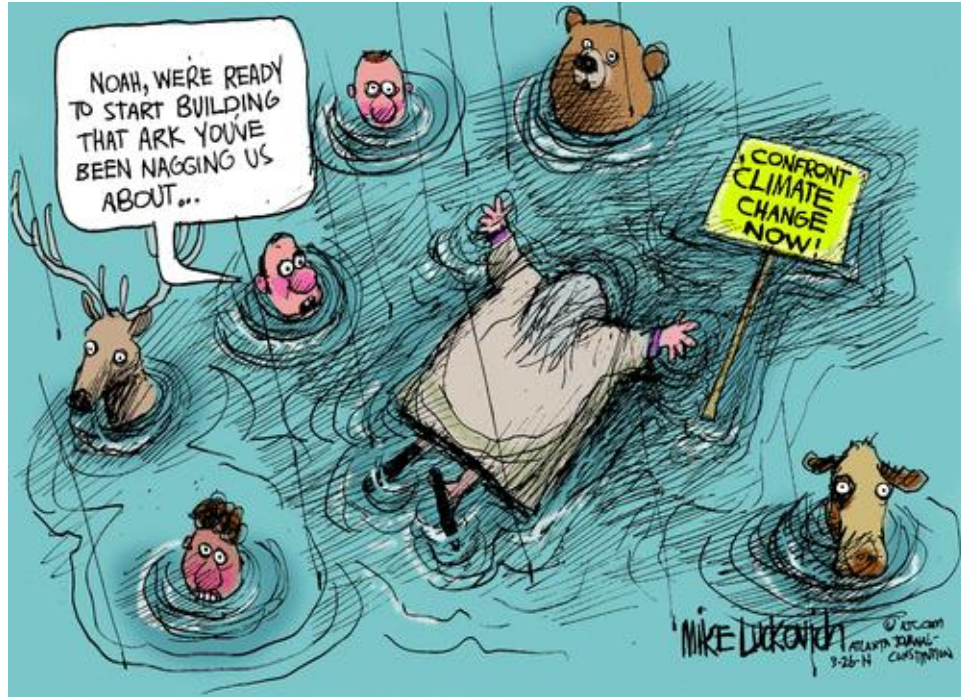
To check out what life is like under a murderous military occupation commanded  
by foreign terrorists, go to:

<http://www.maannnews.net/eng/Default.aspx> and

<http://www.palestinemonitor.org/list.php?id=ej898ra7yff0ukmf16>

The occupied nation is Palestine. The foreign terrorists call themselves “Israeli.”

## DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



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