

WAKE UP! WAKE UP! IT'S YER GETTING ON A BIT...

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REVOLTING? WHAT US?

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SKOOOL'S OUT FOR EVER

School is definitely out for the kids of Greece: pens, set squares and rough books have been exchanged for petrol bombs and face masks as a wave of pupils strikes and school occupations has rocked the country. Pupils and teachers have joined forces to oppose implementation of the 2525/97 Act - which seeks to link education directly to the needs and fluctuations of the economy - with a torrent of actions resulting in imprisonments and a hunger strike.

The offending Act, introduced nearly a year ago and billed as "a broad reform of the education system" means, in reality, intensification, rivalry and total loss of free time for pupils. First to react were teachers culminating in four days serious rioting in many Greek cities: anarchist activist Costas Mitropetros was among those nicked; he's been on remand since November.

Pupils then occupied over 1000 schools in December. The government hoped the kids would 'get it out of their systems' by the time of the Xmas holidays; come mid-January, however, 800 schools were still occupied. The government began prosecuting pupils and a wave of threats and terror began to spread.

Starting on January 15th, demonstrations swept almost every Greek city; in Athens, where 25,000 people protested, 14 arrests were made, with heavy charges centred on two people: Arban Belala, a 17-yr old Albanian and Vasilis Evangelidis, a 30-yr old anarchist and unemployed teacher.

They denied all charges and got put on remand for their troubles. On Jan 19th, as demos and riots continued to sweep the country, Vasilis announced that he had started a hunger strike, protesting at false charges, including arson and declaring solidarity with the pupils struggle: "What is most important today is the continuation of the struggle, the solidarity with the occupied schools, the coming together and the communication of all people in struggle."

And the struggle has continued; on the 21st Jan, over 40 activists were arrested, mostly in Athens and Patras, and bailed till February. The demos show no signs of abating. So take a leaf out of the Greek schoolbooks, kids: turn off your TV set and go do something less boring instead...

URGENT NEED FOR SOLIDARITY!

Greek activists are urging counterparts in other countries to organise solidarity demos etc. in front of their local Greek embassies: publicity is paramount. Solidarity e-mails/faxes and/or messages for prisoners are urgently requested; send to +(3031) 257364 or nautilus@otenet.gr and they be passed on. Continuously faxing the Ministry of Justice at +(301) 7796055 might upset those in high places. So don't do it.

THE CASE OF COSTAS MITROPETROS

The anarchist Kostas Mitropetros was arrested during the clashes of June 18th and had heavy charges laid against him, relating to an incident where a troop of neo-nazi "Chrisi Avgi (Golden Dawn)" members attacked 3 left wing students, causing severe injuries to all three of them. Retaliation was rather mild, for Greek activists, but a group of about 30 comrades attacked cops and cameramen with stones and molotovs. Kostas has had to pay the price as the only one arrested; cops see his main crime as anarchist beliefs and attitude, along with his solidarity to groups of immigrants, pupils, teachers and all resisters and desisters.

Patronising bastards of the week!

Goes to SchNEWS' favourite company Monsanto, who've just published a new booklet in India featuring "Mr Reality" - a clean-cut, friendly man who takes it upon himself to correct the silly fears of "Mr Myth" about genetic engineering. Poor, confused Mr. Myth finally sees the light; his fears are soothed and the two walk arm in arm towards a Brave New World of "Food, Health and Hope."

To get the low-down on Monsanto send £4 to The Ecologist, Unit 18, Chelsea Wharf, 15 Lots Rd., London, SW10 0QJ, or get Monsanto Monitor from A Seed Europe, P.O. Box 92066, 1090 AB Amsterdam, Holland (<http://www.antenna.nl/aseed>)

MEANWHILE, BACK IN ENGLAND...

"I think it's very reasonable. It's a fair market price"

Well rad LSE student, on tuition fees

It certainly ain't Greece. It's a far cry from Danny the Red and the Sorbonne occupations of Paris '68. Shit, it's not even Grange Hill. Yes, it's '90s Britain, and the only ones doing something are the students at Oxford Uni, including such 'avin' it 'ardcore frontliners as the ex head girl of Roedean - who've instigated what so far has been the only real resistance to the imposition of the governments' latest nail in the coffin of education for all: tuition fees (See SchNEWS 185 for full crack).

Last Friday, a national demo attracted a pitiful 1000 studes to Oxford to be bullied by SWP'ers and the university's own bowler-hatted soft cops, then Monday saw 140 students occupy the exam hall for 20 hours.

The demonstrations, supported by the Union and by Students Against Fees In Education (SAFE), were solidarity actions for five students who face suspension for refusing to pay the £1000 fees. Two others, who didn't want to risk being 'sent down' (kicked out), gave in and coughed up, feeling they'd publicised the cause as much as possible without harming their careers. The students claim that the government deliberately pushed through fee legislation during uni holidays to avoid confrontation; the introduction of fees has already led to an 11% decrease in university applications for 1998/9. The action has received solidarity from many quarters, including the Campaign For Free Education who stated:

"Students at Oxford university are showing the lead... building the sort of campaign that if replicated nationally could sling tuition fees into the history books"

Although as sexy as old womens' pants in comparison to the Greek actions, it is of course imperative that such campaigns are repeated- and built upon. A turnout of 1000 for a national student demo-when even the smallest uni's have 8-10000 students- is totally pitiful. Subtract the Socialist Wankers and there'd be even less. Learn from the Greeks and educate, agitate and organise!

Free Leonard Peltier
On 6th Feb, native American Leonard Peltier will have spent 23 years behind bars. To mark this occasion and pile on the pressure to get him released, the 6th is an international day of action. Leonard was found guilty of killing two FBI agents at the Pine Ridge Reservation in 1975. Despite the fact that the government says they do not know who is responsible for the deaths of the agents, Leonard remains in prison where he has endured an attempted assassination, harassment, and physical brutality.

Between 1973 and 1976 over sixty Native people were murdered on Pine Ridge. Overwhelmingly the victims were "Traditionals" and American Indian Movement supporters at odds with the FBI backed "Tribal Government" and the establishment interests that they represented. AIM was born in the ghettos of Minneapolis in the late 60s, as the most recent manifestation of the 500-year native resistance to European domination. In direct conflict with the FBI and the Tribal Government's death squad (known as the GOONs, an acronym for "Guardians of the Oglala Nation") they began organising on Pine Ridge in the early 70s. The reservation at the time was the site of a low intensity war on tribal traditionals, waged with the full force of state brutality. Leonard Peltier went there as a warrior to defend his people. Subsequently he was involved in an FBI-instigated firefight; in the exchange of fire the two FBI agents were killed. They set a trap for an group of AIM warriors and the traditional families upon whose land they were living. The two FBI agents were to set up an excuse to surround the AIM people and have them murdered. The FBI agents were shot dead before SWAT teams could get there, and AIM barely escaped. Leonard Peltier escaped to Canada with a price on his head. The American authorities needed to pin this on someone. Leonard Peltier - captured in Canada - was extradited after the FBI fabricated evidence. He was tried in the US, and convicted on the strength of the false evidence. He has been in prison for nearly a quarter of a century; everybody knows he's innocent, and the American authorities have admitted they don't know who shot the FBI agents. The only reason Leonard is being kept inside is that to let him out would be a tacit admission of the massive injustice done to him.

He is now in extremely poor health and can't chew his food because of problems with his jaw. He can only eat by forcing food through a gap in his front teeth and then mashing it against them with his tongue. The prison will not blend his food. He suffers from excruciating headaches and jaw pain. However, despite a specialist offering to carry out surgery on his jaw, the prison authorities refuse. Without this vital surgery being carried out, Leonard is at risk from death through blood poisoning.

International Diplomatic efforts are increasing the pressure on the United States to free Leonard Peltier. The European Parliament and the governments of Italy and Belgium have passed resolutions calling for clemency and for investigations into the illegal FBI activities against the people of Pine Ridge.

Wanna help? Target Bill Clinton on Sat Feb 6th. His administration has ignored letters and resolutions from foreign governments, many prestigious people, and millions of signatures and letters from the people of the U.S. There's a sample letter you can send on the SchNEWS website.

Contacts	
<i>Support group:</i>	<i>In prison:</i>
Leonard Peltier	Leonard Peltier
Defense Committee	#89637-132
PO box 583 Lawrence,	PO Box 1000
KS 66044	Leavenworth
(Tel 785-842-5774)	KS 66048

Recommended reading "In the Spirit of Crazy Horse" by Peter Mattheisom.

If you're in Brighton on the 6th you'll be able to e-mail letters of protest to Bill Clinton for free from the Peace & Environment Centre, Gardner Street. (North Laine.)

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SchNEWS in briefs

*** The Army are busy recurring youngsters using a new video game - **Wargasm!** *** **Thai Greens** protested in front of Leonardo DiCaprio's hotel bedroom - his new film *The Beach* is destroying Maya Bay, in a national park. The beach has been planted with 100 coconut trees, causing irreparable damage to the habitat. Environmentalists have now filed charges against film makers 20th Century Fox. *** **The Eden Project** is a plan for a giant tourist attraction in Cornwall. It threatens 80 acres of medieval field systems, hedgerows, mature oak and ash wood, and 2 conservation sites. Drilling and testing along the proposed 2-mile road has begun and direct action is likely. Contact 01726 843586. Feb 8th - demo against Eden, council offices, Restormel, St Austell, Cornwall. *** A new email list has been created to help network between autonomous groups who run **info shops/cafes/etc**, and inspire others to create their own autonomous spaces. More info can be found at www.worthing.eco-action.org/teapot *** A day-school, **Making the Belfast Agreement** work 30 years after the civil rights movement has been organised by Student Friends of Ireland on 6th Feb at Goldsmiths College SU, Dixon Road, London SE14 (New Cross BR). Details on 0181 692 1406. *** **Why do you read SchNEWS?** Chris Atton, media researcher, wants to know! To tell him, email c.atton@napier.ac.uk or write: c/o PMPC, Napier University, Edinburgh. *** Made any environmental or social justice films? Send them to the Wild Spaces **Film Festival** being held on in May around Australia. Deadline for entries is March 12th. Wild Spaces, PO Box 274, Blackheath, NSW, 2785, Australia. Tel 0011 61 (0)2 4787 5530 www.pnc.com.au/~wldspcs

Minor problem

Last Friday Romania came back from the brink of a state of emergency, after a deal was struck between striking mineworkers and the government. The deal means that each mining region controls their own finances and receives government subsidies which will gradually decrease each year, and eventually stop. By then the mines will undoubtedly be private companies

This isn't really such a good deal for the miners whose initial demands included the resignation of the government and the ending of all privatisations and pit closures. However miners leaders realised that the Romanian people wouldn't be too pleased with martial law being imposed, and trade unions are calling off the general strike. However the government has received quite a strong message from the miners not to fuck with them again! By the end of Friday the miners had taken 100 police hostages and 300 shields, helmets, batons, masks, 13 tear gas guns, 200 gas canisters, 4 police vehicles, radio communication equipment and flares!

Another black custody death

Last Sunday 500 people demonstrated outside Tottenham Police Station after the death of Roger Sylvester (30). Eight police went to Mr. Sylvester's house on the evening of Jan 11th after being told that a naked man was "acting very strangely and flinging himself on the floor." He was detained under the Mental Health Act and taken to the nearby St. Ann's hospital. At the hospital he was seen by a doctor who left the room. At some point during the doctor's absence "Mr.Sylvester went all limp and it was obvious that he had collapsed." He was then taken to Middlesex Hospital where he died 7 days later.

The Inquiry - conducted by an outside force - is expected to be a test of the Met's pledge that it has learned from previous deaths of black men in custody and the of the Stephen Lawrence case.

Mr. Sylvester became the 42nd black person to die at the hands of the cops over the past 10 years. 27 of those deaths came at the hands of the Metropolitan Police.

Contact: INQUEST, Ground Floor, Alexandra National House, 330 Seven Sisters Rd., London,N4 2PJ. Tel 0181 802 7430 Email inquest@compuserve.com

Anti-racists jailed

"I am 24 years of age - a Muslim, born and bred in Rawtenstall. In 1994 I was a victim of a brutal racist attack. The outcome of this was that I received 112 stitches inside my right shoulder and 24 staples to close the wound. My face, neck and lung were punctured and my face was severely disfigured. I was also kicked like an England penalty shoot-out. I was left to die but managed to get to safety. This incident happened in Preston. There were 6 white males - only 3 got charged. One received 12 months and the other received community service. They threw a machete at me. Was justice done? I could go on and tell you about the unprovoked attacks I've received. In this latest incident I was receiving racist comments from a white girl...soon after 2 white males approached me and said "We don't like what you said to that girl, you smelly black Bastard." They were both drunk and attacked me. Self-defence was the next option." - Taj Ahmed

Taj Ahmed and Roberto Brollini were recently given a 12 month sentence after being found guilty of "actual bodily harm" on 1997 BNP General Election candidate Andrew Weardenhave. During the trial the judge refused to listen to evidence about the fascist activities of the supposed "victims" but instead talked of the need to set an example. Incredibly, the Rossendale police involved in this case claimed that they never knew that Andrew Wearden had been the BNP candidate, despite the fact that his home was raided by cops some months before, after which no action was taken despite finding racist materials.

Which goes to show: the police haven't learned a thing, even from cases like Steven Lawrence's.

Write to Taj Ahmed BT9173 & Roberto Brollini CC5829, HMP Kirkham, Freckleton Rd, Kirkham, Preston, PR4 2RN or to "Justice for Taj & Roberto" c/o Councillor Jean Hayler, Rossendale Town Hall, Lord St, Rawtenstall, Lancashire, BB4 7LZ

National Civil Rights March - 12 Noon, 6th Feb. Assemble opp. Lambeth Town Hall, marching to New Scotland Yard. Tel 07957 696 636.

...and finally...

Three members of the Biotic Baking Brigade have been found guilty of battery and not guilty of assault on a public official after creaming San Francisco's Mayor with pie. The dessert tossing took place on Nov 7th when Mayor Brown was about to kick off a talk on the annual community street-cleanup.

The BBB agents said the pie attack was a legitimate, nonviolent political prank to ridicule Brown's policies on homelessness, including a plan to criminalise it by cracking down on habitual drunks. Brown said he'd been frightened by the first "object" that hit him, blurring his vision.

Jurors were shocked at how easy it is to convict on the battery charge - the law requires only the intent to touch another person in an unwanted way. "Agent Apple" of the BBB said, "We'll continue with our campaign of delicious resistance to corporate crime until they pry our pies from our dead, bloated fingers."

disclaimer

SchNEWS warns readers that a free education don't mean doin' lines late at nite and getting six of the best... Honest Sir!