

FREE

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mary



queen mary's free, independent news sheet for all students and staff

NUS PRESIDENT IN RANT AGAINST LECTURERS



Wes "Mickey Mouse" Streeting wants YOU to have a crap education!

On Thursday 23rd April, *The Guardian* wrote an article outlining Wes Streeting's opposition to potential lecturers' strikes later this summer. In it, he claims to represent all students in UK Higher Education, and espousing exactly what we expect from a dodgy greasy-pole-climbing careerist like himself.

Well here he is again, laying into a group of people fighting for what they're worth. Uni workers, facing compulsory redundancies in their thousands and a 2p per hour pay rise have had the audacity to refuse to take it lying down. Of course, in Streeting's Gaga Land,

fighting against cuts is simply unacceptable. Never mind that the quality of our education will suffer massively if cuts go ahead.

These are the same workers who unconditionally supported student struggles against top-up fees and who work tirelessly to scrape the best out of our laughably mismanaged education system. We owe them more respect.

Of course, Streeting is part of a new breed of NUS 'representatives' who have been fighting to sabotage the last remnants of decency and political awareness in the NUS over the last few years. In his eyes, and the eyes of the cadre he has surrounded himself with, the NUS should be a purchasing consortium to offer students (or "consumers") cheap beer and shitty *School Disco* nights. These aren't bad in themselves (in fact, cheap beer is one of the few things the NUS have got right!), but it shouldn't be the main focus of a union that claims to represent the interests of all students in Higher Education.

The quality of our education as students, and the quality of our working lives as staff hangs in the balance. Employers are making cuts left, right and centre under the false pretence that because there's a recession, we're the ones that have to pay for it. Wes Streeting has shown his cards—he is 100% on the side of university management. What's more, he is risking the education of those who he claims to represent so he can cosy up to bigwigs to secure his future job in the Labour Party head office.

If it does come to a strike, and the University and College Employers' Association continues to be selfish and refuse offers for negotiation with trade unions, students must ensure that the likes of Wes Streeting don't get the way of supporting a decent education and decent jobs.

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COPPERS ON HOLIDAY—SUN, SAND AND RIOTS



Greek cops: not effective enough, apparently...

Officers from London's Metropolitan police force have been sent to Greece to advise the government on its current policing strategy. A delegation from Scotland Yard will assist the Greek authorities with 'domestic terrorism' after a spate of symbolic bomb attacks in Athens on banks and businesses following popular unrest in recent months.

BRITISH POLICE TO ADVISE GREEKS ON 'ANTI-TERROR' TACTICS

After the sustained outbreak of social unrest late last year caused by the murder of 15 year-old Alexandros Grigoriopoulos by Greek police, the authorities fear they cannot contain the rise in militant groups, especially during this current economic crisis.

Although the Metropolitan Police are notorious for their dodgy public order tactics it's understood that it is Scotland Yard's counter-terrorism unit who have been sent, including the former commissioner Ian Blair. The likelihood of UK police offering advice on riot control and public order is high though, leading to fears of repression

of Greek anarchists and other political activists. "Police are reorganising their response to deal with the new circumstances that exist," a government spokesman said. The plan is to adopt the British model of policing with the creation of the equivalent to our much-'loved' Territorial Support Group (TSG, AKA the Riot Squad).

The relationship between British and Greek authorities has historically been a close one, dating back to the Greek civil war, when British support aided Greece's far-right soon-to-be dictatorship to suppress its left-wing opponents.

PROBLEMS AT WORK? SHIFTY LANDLORD? STUDENT LOAN ISSUES? ASK AUNTY AUTONOMY...



Want to ask Aunty Autonomy a question about your rights? Just email it to QMLibSoc@gmail.com

Dear Aunty Autonomy,

I've been working at a shop for just over a year and my boss has sacked me for "not looking smiley enough"—is this legal?

Thanks, Tony

Hi there Tony, great name by the way...

Firstly, your boss is obviously a total moron. You're better off without him, sweetie. Secondly, no it's not legal at all. The law clearly states that if you've been working somewhere for more than a year then you can claim for what the legal eagles call 'unfair dismissal'. You see, sugar pie, you can't be sacked unless you've done something wrong according to your job description, and even then, it has to be something really bad (what they call 'gross misconduct').

What you need to do is join up to a trade union and get them to help you appeal your sacking. If that doesn't work, then you can go to an Employment Tribunal and you might even get some compensation. There's a good chance that others have been treated like you, too. So you should tell your co-workers to get together and stay strong together, preferably in a trade union. That way, they can look after each other and not get shat on by your boss like you did. Where I come from, that's called *solidarity*... Love and kisses, AA

ANALYSIS: CRISIS IN SRI LANKA

The Tamil protests have been some of the most impressive ever seen in London, with one march of over 200,000 people (approximately 2/3 of the UK Tamil population), several 'indefinite' hunger strikers, a couple of protesters jumping into the Thames, others closing down streets and Westminster bridge, and an ongoing 24/7 occupation of Parliament Square (under an act that has been illegal since 2005) that has lasted well over a month. In this article, I hope to give an outline of the crisis.

Until 1948 Sri Lanka was the British colony of Ceylon. It consists of several ethnic groups though the major conflict has occurred between the Buddhist Sinhalese (73.8%) and predominantly Hindu Tamils. Underlying conflict between nationalities had existed for some time, with the 19th century Buddhist revivalist movement, and these were exacerbated following 1948 as it morphed into Sinhalese Buddhist nationalism.

The Tamils have been systematically disempowered, disenfranchised, and eliminated since 1948. 1 million Tamils had their citizenship revoked in 1948. This reduced Tamil representation in Parliament from 33% to 20%, making it impossible for them to oppose Sinhalese policy.

Policies of discrimination continued, with a 1956 Act making Sinhala the sole official language of the island, State-sponsored anti-Tamil riots, a 1971 'standardization' scheme designed to restrict Tamil access

to university, and a 1972 law making Buddhism the state religion. Even the name of the country was changed: from 'Ceylon' to the Sinhalese name 'Sri Lanka.'

In 1976, the TULF (Tamil United Liberation Front) drafted the *Vaddukoddai Resolution*, which resolved to: "restore and reconstitute the free, sovereign, secular socialist state of Tamil Eelam based on the right of self determination inherent to every nation in order to safeguard the very existence of the Tamil nation in this country." The TULF called for a referendum on

"With the Tamil Tigers gone, what will this mean?... civil war seems over, but discrimination is set to continue for some time"

the resolution, which the government refused. They then asked the Tamil electorate to consider a vote for the TULF in the upcoming elections to be equivalent to a vote in favour of the resolution. The TULF won 18 of the 23 districts which they contested.

This prompted anti-Tamil riots in 1977, the burning of the Jaffna Library (which contained over 90,000 ancient manuscripts) and more anti-Tamil riots in 1983. Thousands of Tamils were killed and over 100,000 were displaced. The entire Tamil commercial base was destroyed. Tamils fled the country in their tens of thousands. The Sri Lankan president remarked: "Really if I starve the Tamils out, the Sinhala people will be happy."

Since the 1983 riots, Tamils turned to the Tamil Tigers, and there has been a violent civil war in which many Sinhalese and Tamils have been killed. Over 1 million Tamils have fled the country and another million remain internally displaced.

The latest crisis in Sri Lanka concerns the last 3 km strip of land that the Tigers possessed. A humanitarian disaster developed out of this, with around 150,000 people trapped there. However the Tigers have now been defeated, with more Tamils having been killed in Sri Lanka in the last 4 months than in the 1995 Srebrenica massacre, for which Serbian officials were charged with war crimes.

With the Tamil Tigers gone what will this mean? Will there be an end to discrimination? Will there be an end to fighting?

There is little hope that it will mark the end to discrimination against the Tamil population. Those who escaped the war zone are being held by what Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch are calling "concentration camps". Sources also claim that the Sri Lankan government has arrested all doctors in the so-called Safety Zone.

A resurgence of the Tigers certainly isn't improbable, though their declaration of a ceasefire will make it harder for the Sri Lankan government to justify the shelling of civilians. Open Civil War, for the short term, seems over, but discrimination is set to continue for some time.

“ANT’S RANTS”: THE CURIOUS CASE OF THE POLICE MEDIC - HE’LL BEAT YOU TO HEALTH WITH HIS MAGIC WELLNESS STICK!



If we’ve learned anything during the course of the G20 protests last month, we’ve learned never to trust a copper. The police lied to us about who killed Ian Tomlinson (“oh, we tried to help, but evil anarchist yoofs attacked us, guv!”), but they also exposed themselves for what most of them really are: a bunch of armed thugs.

The best example is the hilariously entitled “Police Medic”. How about that for a contradiction in terms! You tool up a bunch of knuckle-draggers to

the teeth with batons, mace, cuffs, dogs and horses, and give a couple of them a five quid first aid kit from Boots. Then you find an appropriate bunch of people standing up for themselves and give them a good going over, before patching them back up and playing the nice guy. Simple!

What’s more, the Met Police were actually surprised when people stopped believing their propaganda—talk about ‘police intelligence’! Funny old world. Meanwhile, have a butcher’s at againstpoliceviolence.org.uk

Introducing...

Housmans Bookshop

Housmans bookshop is London’s premier radical book shop, selling books, pamphlets, magazines, stationery and DVDs and more. It also hosts events every Wednesday and Saturday by activists, authors, and artists. Past events include film screenings, talks, book signings, and musical performances.

Also stocking mainstream books, Housmans specialises in radical literature, covering topics such as anti-militarism, environmentalism, human rights, civil liberties, gender and sexuality, anarchism, socialism, and conflict spots (e.g. the Middle East). The range of radical periodicals offer an opinion and quality of reporting absent from the mainstream corporate media.

Students get 10% off EVERYTHING! Volunteers are also welcome.

Housmans encourages the dissemination of progressive and alternative ideas to oppose injustice and oppression, in the hope of achieving a more peaceful society. Next time you want to buy a book, don’t go to a big corporate chain or website, go to Housmans instead! www.housmans.com

Queen Mary Autonomous Group: who are we?

QMAG is a group of students and staff at Queen Mary. We are a non-hierarchical campaigning group that acts on and off campus on a range of issues concerning social, economic and environmental justice. We hold a range of views but our principles focus largely on the negative effects that capital and authority have on our lives as students, workers and individuals. Our view of a future world is based on principles of community, equality, mutual aid and solidarity, rather than competition, consumption and alienation. We organise at uni, at work and in our community to get a little closer to that world for everyone.

Interested in getting involved? email us at QMAutonomous@gmail.com and visit our blog at qmautonomy.wordpress.com

Upcoming events

29 May 6pm London Critical Mass: monthly mass bike ride around London—against car culture and for sustainable transport. Meet at Festival Pier.

3 June 7pm “Meltdown: the age of greed”: Talk and book signing by Paul Mason at Housmans Bookshop on the subject of financial crisis. Free entry.

4 June 8 til late “Out of Step”: Benefit night for Rape Crisis, charity supporting rape victims. Folk, punk and poetry. @ Pangea Project, Stoke Newington N16 6XS. £3 entry.

5 June 6.30 “The Holy Jester”: Free showing of the leftist Dario Fo’s classic play. Arts Lecture Theatre, QM Arts Building.

6-7 June UK Anarchist Conference: Hosted at QMUL, anarchists and groups from around the UK will meet to discuss, organise and plan how to build a healthy and powerful movement. Visit www.conference09.org.uk for more info.