

REVOLT IN SOLIDARITY WITH PEOPLE IN REVOLT

Policemen and soldiers all over our streets, more and more people end up on police files and there is institutionalised denunciation, orders and fines of all kinds... Every day police pressure weighs more on the population. Everybody is subject to searches, surveillance and restrictions, particularly the badly off. The discourse of social control is deafening and includes calls for legalised murder. It's no use to say "I've done nothing wrong, I've got nothing to hide and I've nothing to be afraid of..."

Laws protect everybody, "the guilty" and "the innocent" alike; even people who never asked for it. They constantly sift out the law breakers from the good citizens, and these criminals have not necessarily chosen to break the law but find themselves caught in legal proceedings with the because of economic problems or other personal circumstances. Paradoxically our society is based on the long term pillage of the workforce and the wealth they create while stigmatising part of the population as delinquents. It shows them up and spits them out. It punishes petty crime and absolves economic crime by people who are well placed to help themselves...

Locking people up is the torture reserved for the disobedient and the unlucky. It's also a growth industry. Every day it's worse. Millions of people are living on borrowed time, as potential raw material for the prison machine and potential victims of the system. Millions of court cases touch millions of people with varying degrees of violence. Millions of lives are passed in various penal institutions and under judicial controls such as electronic tagging... There are also millions of people who have never been found guilty, such as the families and friends of prisoners who also stand and wait before oppressive prison regulations and institutional harassment and humiliation.

More offenses are being created and new punishments are being invented and made infinitely longer and lonelier: the state and its profiteers, civil servants or share-holders of the private companies which increasingly run the prisons, dole out suffering with all the humanity worthy of the Republic, democracy, prison regulations, Human Rights and the market. These are the people, and people like them, who spread poverty and fear all over the world through a war economy and real wars.

We want a classless society with no dominant power, and let's say it again, and to put an end to profit, money and imprisonment...

The more some people submit or adhere to the system, the more others want change it. Resistance survives in society and in prisons; constantly reinventing itself ever since the tradition of inflicting suffering as punishment began. Struggles against oppression take different forms but are sustained by a common aim; the destruction of inequalities and the prisons which defend them. At least the message is clear. It has been disseminated for decades by everybody who has not simply given up. It means social revolution and emancipation. The violence clash between the interests of different social classes is as strident as ever. The state locks people up for ever longer periods and is faster to seize

people who struggle against the law of the jungle. The age of criminal responsibility is currently 13 and is likely to be lowered to 12 (for the moment minors under the age of 13 are subject to measure of “protection, assistance, surveillance and education”). The best years of their lives are spent in prison, recently within closed institutions (special centres, closed centres...), in children’s and young people’s prisons and the notorious EPM for minors as venerable centres of prison education. Prisons where young people suffer, commit suicide and sometimes revolt, such as at Lavaur last spring when the authorities sent armed riot police to control the young prisoners. The legal protection service for young people, the PJJ, collaborates with the prison administration in the shameful work of keeping young convicts down. On 5th July 2011, the Toulouse (Labège) was hit by militant solidarity when its prison methods were denounced and its premises bore the mark of collective resistance. This might seem quite pathetic but is really of great symbolic importance just when the Minister of Justice announced a series of measures further reinforcing the repression of minors. The new loi Mercier instituted instant trial from the age of 13, a special data base for child delinquents (personality, environment...) which allows the prosecutor to send a young person straight to trial in the children’s court, thereby abolishing the powers of the special judge for children. It set up a criminal court for minors from the age of 16, with non-specialist judges, which effectively reduces the age for custodial prison sentences from 18 to 16...

On 15th November 2011, after a four months inquiry when people were searched and remanded in police custody, five people were charged with acting against the PJJ. They were accused of “participating in a group which planned violence against individuals or the destruction or damage to property; violence at meetings; damage or destruction of other people’s property during meetings”. Minor acts of solidarity have led to very serious charges which may have very serious consequences. Four people are held at the Seysses remand centre, one person is on bail and another is being held as a witness. And the inquiry has not finished yet.

Whether or not these people are implicated in this action is of little importance; expressing solidarity with those who suffer brutal repression, in this case the young prisoners at Lavaur, is obviously justified. When the state locks somebody up for painting graffiti, it shows its real face to its opponents and anyone else who dares direct political or economic action when hit by economic disaster.

The struggle against a society which creates poverty and locks people up has its pitfalls, its pleasures and its pains, from which we can rise again even stronger and more determined. It is now vital to express our support in every way we can for these new victims of a legal system which attacks any form of solidarity.

Lift the charges! Freedom for all!

Send your messages of support to nonalepm@riseup.net

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 17th
DEMONSTRATION
JEAN JAURES, 14 H (TOULOUSE)