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Blaumachen and friends

PART II : Summary of the events of the Greek riots in Thessaloniki from 6 Dec

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From 6 December - 31 December 2008.

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An updated short presentation of the recent riots in Athens and Thessaloniki through the eyes of some proletarian participants

We present below a rough chronology of events that took place in Greece's second largest city from Saturday 6th of December up until Wednesday 31st of December. During the first five days, when thousands of enraged proletarians got to the streets and set these cities of commodity on fire, we lived the peak of the recent upheaval, at least in Thessaloniki and other provincial cities and towns. During those days, we came across school kids, students, young (mainly, but not only) workers, unemployed, immigrant youngsters. Violent behaviors at streets and clashes were much lesser after December 11. An important thing about the up-heaval in Thessaloniki, in contrast to Athens, is that although almost every university de-partment was occupied by students, very few high schools were occupied, especially after the first week. For the most part, much lesser school kids participated in demonstrations and actions after the first five days of the upheaval. Immigrant youngsters only participated in the massive clashes, attacks and looting that had taken place from Sunday 7th until Tuesday 10th of December.

This short presentation cannot satisfy the need for an in-depth account of the recent unrest in Greece. It's just a first attempt to inform comrades and proletarians abroad about the on-going events from the perspective of people participating in them.

Saturday, 6th of December

Immediately after 15-year-old Alexis-Andreas Gregoropoulos was shot dead by police special guard in Athens, 300 people, mainly anarchist and leftist militants, gathered in Polytechnics School of Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (AUTH), which is located near the commercial and historical city centre. A spontaneous demonstration headed towards the police station at Aristotelous sq (the most touristic square of the city), where fights with cops took place. At the same time, there were people fighting riot police with stones and Molotov cocktails around Syntrivani sq, near AUTH. Clashes with cops continued throughout the night.

Sunday, 7th of December

A demonstration commenced from Kamara sq (located in the students' quarter near AUTH) at 12 pm. 1500-2000 people (mainly high school kids and university students, young work-ers, antiauthoritarian and leftist militants) marched along the commercial streets of the city centre (Egnatia, Agias Sofias, Tsimiski), smashing bank and shop windows, heading to the police station at Aristotelous sq. There, many protesters attacked police with stones and some firebombs. A cop was set on fire. Police responded with tear gas. The demo continued along Ermou and Venizelou streets to the Ministry of Macedonia and Thrace. Many stores and the city hall were smashed at Venizelou st. After reaching the Ministry, the demonstra-tion headed along Agiou Dimitriou st to the police station of Ano Poli, where riot policemen were attacked again. While returning to Kamara sq, a supermarket was looted by youngsters. As the demo was ending, high school kids attempted to loot a bookstore and new clashes with riot police started.

Later in the evening, the Higher School of Drama and the offices of Thessaloniki's Bar Asso-ciation were occupied, the first by Drama students and anarchists and the second mainly by leftist students. Both these spots, located in the

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city centre, were going to be used as meeting points for people participating in the protests.

During the night, clashes with cops took place outside AUTH. A rioter was injured by a police rubber bullet. During the same night, the police station in the eastern district of Toumpa, the town hall of Agios Pavlos district and the party offices of Nea Demokratia (this is the gov-ernment party in Greece) in 40 Ekklisies district were attacked.

Monday, 8th of December

At 10am, 400 high school kids demonstrated in Toumpa district and attacked the police sta-tion once again. Road blockades took place in other districts of the city as well. Meanwhile, 1500 high school kids erected barricades and clashed with riot police at Svolou and Ethnikis Amyntis streets and Navarinou sq, in the students' quarter of the city centre. Stores at Tsimi-ski and Venizelou streets were attacked, too. Nine university faculties were occupied by stu-dents. During the same morning the police station in the western district of Sykies was at-tacked, too.

A demonstration was called at 6.30 pm at Kamara sq. 6000 people marched in the city cen-tre. There were high school and university students, some immigrant youngsters, hooligans, young workers, antiauthoritarian and leftist militants. A great number of banks and shops (mobile phone, electronics, clothing and fast food companies and jewelries) were destroyed, mainly at Tsimiski st, the city's most commercial road, and Venizelou st. Some of the shops were looted too. Clashes with cops took place in front of the Ministry of Macedonia and Thrace. Cops used a great amount of tear gases. Fights with cops continued around AUTH during the night.

Tuesday, 9th of December

This was the day when the funeral of Alexis took place in Palaio Faliro, Athens. Fresh general assemblies of students took place voting for the occupation of many university departments. Teachers of primary and secondary schools were on strike and there was a work stoppage after 12 pm for all public sector workers. A demonstration was called at 12 pm at Kamara Sq. 4000 people participated and headed towards the Ministry of Macedonia and Thrace, where limited clashes with police took place. During Tuesday, prisoners all over Greece abstained from food, protesting against the murder of Alexis by cops and in solidarity to the ongoing revolt.

During the night there were some fights between youngsters and riot police in the university area. We have to mention that during these days many university departments were looted by school kids and immigrant youngsters coming from various suburbs. During the same night, fascists appeared near the university. The same happened in many cities all over Greece, especially in Patras, something that indicates that this was an organised govern-ment's plan. In some cases, like in Larisa, fascists attacked rioters together with undercover cops and "angry shop owners".

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