



GSC UPDATE 21 (12 December 2013)



Chanting during a general strike in Greece last November.
Photograph: Menelaos Mich/Demotix/Corbis

Please put these dates in your diary for 2014:

GSC Organising Meetings will be held every 3rd Wednesday of the month 1830 – 2000 hours in Meeting Room 3, ground floor at UNITE HQ, 128 Theobalds Road, London WC1X 8TN (corner of Old Gloucester Street – nearest tube Holborn), viz: January 15; February 19; March 19; April 16; May 21; June 18; July 16; August 20; September 17; October 15; December 17 (possible alternative venue). The GSC Annual General Meeting Saturday 1 March 2014 1030-1430 hours will be held in the Diskus Room, basement, ground floor at UNITE HQ, 128 Theobalds Road, London WC1X 8TN (corner of Old Gloucester Street – nearest tube Holborn).

1. Alexis Tsipras, Syriza President, announces he will stand for presidency of the European commission in the Guardian (27 November 2013)
[Read the Guardian article here](#)
2. Eurozone finance ministers are calling for yet more cuts in Greece
[More details...](#)
3. A new book: **'Crucible of Resistance – Greece, the Eurozone & the World Economic Crisis'** (Pluto Press, £12) has been launched. It is by two leading Syriza figures – Christos Laskos and Euclid Tsakalotos MP.
Hilary Wainwright commented at the London book launch, *"The future of democracy in Greece is a matter for us all. Laskos and Tsakalotos take us behind the headlines and share both the challenges and the alternatives that Greeks are creating as they resist: from networks of solidarity to a new kind of political party."*
4. **New video: 'Ruins'** an important but harrowing documentary about the prosecution and exposure of a group of HIV positive women in Greece in 2012, was shown at Unite Offices and can now be seen here with English subtitles: [See it on YouTube](#)
5. **Dave Green, FBU national officer**, [reports on the austerity agenda facing Greek firefighters](#).

6. [Three million Greeks unable to afford health insurance](#) and [Greek doctors strike](#) as government makes massive cuts to 'tackle healthcare debt'
7. The murder of the Greek anti-fascist activist and hip-hop artist Pavlos Fyssas ("Killah P") by neo-Nazi 'Golden Dawn' thugs sent shock waves throughout Greece and the Globe. In September most of the leaders of Golden Dawn were arrested, though some were released after a summary court appearance. A take by a section of international capital on the current situation was provided by the Wall Street Journal '[Greece Struggles to Outlaw Its Golden Dawn Fascist Party - Government Mounts Risky Effort to Declare Group a Criminal Organization](#)' . [This video](#) shows neo-Nazi Golden Dawn at work - *Nazi salutes, anti-semitic slogans, Ku Klux Klan outfits and threats to hang politicians recorded*
8. **Attacks on Freedom of the Press:** There is a growing use of the law in Greece to close down freedom of expression. On 11 December there were pickets outside the Greek Embassy in London and in a number of European cities, in support of three journalists on Ergatikii Allilenghii (Workers Solidarity, sister paper to Socialist Worker in the UK) due to appear in court accused of defamation by a lawyer pay rolled by Golden Dawn because the paper exposed the neo-Nazi inspired campaign against the right of second generation immigrants to Greek citizenship. Katerina Thoidou, Tassos Anastasiades and Panos Garganas are accused under the infamous as the 'Free press killer' law. Penalties can be up to 30,000 euros per person which would close the paper. More at www.searchlightmagazine.com.



9. In this context please also [sign the petition](#) for Thassis Kourkoulos, of Expel Racism (Greece), to be acquitted. The appeal, signed by many trade union leaders and Greek MPs states: "On 16th December 2013, Thanasis Kourkoulas, member of "Expel Racism" movement is to be tried in the 4th Single Judge Misdemeanour Court of Athens, as a result of the provocative and slanderous lawsuit of an extreme rightist who accuses him of "giving orders to a group of men bearing bats", a group which he claims attacked him in 2009. This trial is a part of a whole scheme of prosecutions set up by the neonazis in the last few years, which aims at intimidating and targeting people and organizations who are giving a fight openly, collectively and in broad daylight in order to bring down the Golden Dawn gang as well as their collaborators in the state mechanisms." We condemn the unprecedented attempt to criminalize the antifascist action and we demand that Thanasis Kourkoulas be acquitted. ... Fascism never again.
10. [European Network of Anti-Fascist Parliamentarians has been launched](#) - "The European Network of Antifascist Parliamentarians we are launching today, offers a first concrete example of this kind of antifascist networking we are proposing to all European citizens who want to resist effectively the terrible far-right and neo-fascist threat. Our antifascist resistance has to be democratically conducted by the popular masses themselves. Dear friends and comrades, we have to admit that more difficult days are coming and that we are now engaged in a race against neo-fascism and racist barbarism. We have to organize and act now and not tomorrow, because tomorrow could be too late. However we are confident that what we are doing is the right thing. As said the German theologian and martyr of the anti-Nazi resistance Dietrich Bonhoeffer, "The only fight which is lost is that which we give up."
11. **N.B. coming soon:** A day of action against racism, not least of the Golden Dawn fascist variety, has been called for across Europe to coincide with the marking of UN Anti-Racism Day in 2014, with eyes on the European elections in May. [More details...](#)

In the UK there will be a [Stand up to racism and fascism demo on 22 March 2014 marking UN Anti-Racism Day](#)-

No to Islamophobia

Yes to diversity Rally and Demo marking UN Anti-Racism Day

11am, Saturday 22nd March 2014 Central London • Demonstration assembly point tbc. email name/position/organisation to info@uaf.org.uk to add your name to the list of supporters of the Stand up to racism and fascism statement www.uaf.org.uk • info@uaf.org.uk • 020 8971 7426

12. There was a packed house at Passing Clouds for a first UK screening of "Neo-Nazi's: The holocaust of memory" with a video link with film-maker Stelios Kouloglou who referred to the banned two part documentary, 'Greece, the Hidden War', which is concern Britain and America's shameful involvement in Greece during and after World War 2. Watch [Part 1](#): & [Part 2](#) The YouTube comment says: "This is a British political documentary produced in 1986 and shown for just one and only time in British television, thereby being BANNED, concerning the involvement of the British Government in Greece's political affairs during and after WW2, that is argued to have been the main catalyst in the breaking out of the Greek Civil War, followed by American involvement in the Civil War Battle (in line with the Truman Doctrine)." The documentaries consist mainly of interviews with Greek, British and American participants, soldiers, officials, politicians and ordinary people in Greece. The first, concerns the events in which the ELAS movement, the Greek resistance group (leftist orientated, yet made up of people of widely different political views, thus of wide social base), clashes with Churchill's plans for post-war Greece and with the Britain's internal allies;; the second concerns the American involvement and the events of the Greek civil war until its closure with the defeat of the Democratic Army in the mountains of Grammos and Vitsi.
13. SOS Halkidiki: People in Halkidiki, Greece, have been struggling for two decades against destructive mining, in order to protect the environment, health and traditional economic activities. This social struggle has been met with extreme police violence, state oppression and injustice. [Do sign the petition](#) and [Click to share this petition on Facebook](#).
14. A film on Eldorado Gold and Skouries is on the Film/video page of the new website http://greesesolidarity.org/?page_id=509
15. "[Vasanizomai](#)" -a film portraying the effect of the crisis on three young people in Athens .
16. [A New 'Myth' that Greeks Gave Themselves HIV For Welfare Money](#) is being promoted by Limbaugh, a conservative US [radio talk show host](#). "Rush is citing an erroneous report about HIV in Greece to falsely claim that half of all recent infections there were self-inflicted for the purpose of receiving government benefits. In fact, the original report on AIDS and HIV in Greece does not confirm a single instance of a person intentionally infecting himself with HIV. [Limbaugh is surely fascinated by this erroneous report because it fits into the false right-wing narrative that government programs that help the poor encourage laziness and dependency.](#)"
17. **Extract from Sonia Mitralia's article on 'Violence Against Women: a strategic weapon in the hands of the rulers in a time of class war in Greece** <http://socialistresistance.org/5710/greece-violence-against-women>: "The most recent case occurred at the beginning of November 2013 when special forces of the Greek police (MAT) wanted to prevent two Members of Parliament to enter the building of ERT, the public radio and television station, which had been occupied by the police. The opposition MPs Zoe Konstandopoulou of Syriza and Rachel Makris of the Independent Greeks party were pushed against the entrance gates and roughly handled by the police. Zoe Konstandopoulou, who nearly died from asphyxiation, is now taking legal action against her agressors for attempted murder! This aggression occurred because the two MPs just wanted to exercise their constitutional right to enter the ERT building to prevent the police destroying equipment to frame the workers who had been fighting for the station to remain in public hands. // What followed this incident is very revealing and confirms our assertion that violence against women is becoming a weapon in the hands of the ruling class. The morning following the incident at the ERT building, the pro-government daily newspaper TA-NEA,

launched an extremely sexist campaign against the two MPs, publishing a cartoon on its front page showing them a strippers pole-dancing in front of a male audience. The caption, a conversation of a male client in the audience, to the cartoon read “Rachel is on the right and Zoe on the left. Do they do anything else? I heard that they are taking legal action. But we should ask the waiter”.

18. **V N Gelis, a GSC member, writes ‘[An Eyewitness Report From A Dickensian Athens](http://www.theworker.org.uk/blog/?p=1209)’:** <http://www.theworker.org.uk/blog/?p=1209>: “A city centre which at night resembles parts of Detroit and daily life which resembles Victorian Britain with many beggars and a general feeling of a country in irreversible decline. Schoolchildren have been seen looking in dustbins for food and many people have died burning wood in makeshift stoves in apartments to keep warm. Despite all the official pronouncements that the Troika’s (EU-ECB-IMF) programme will herald growth, there has been a decline of an average 5% fall in GDP annually over the last four years – figures not seen since the 12% annual fall during the civil war of the 1940s. Unemployment has skyrocketed to at least 2.5m (official numbers 1.5m), roughly between 30-40% of the population.”

Many individuals in the UK, and unions with over 3 million members, are affiliated to the Greece Solidarity Campaign. We support all (non-fascist) parties and community campaigns opposing austerity in Greece.

Please encourage more to Join the Greece Solidarity Campaign
http://greesolidarity.org/?page_id=469