



February 2009

For Mutual Aid
& Solidarity

DARK NIGHTS

About Prison Struggle in Belgium

This text was written on the occasion of the process concerning the detention circumstances of Farid Bamouhammad.

Farid was transferred to the isolation section of Bruges last summer, this in clear line with the entire strategy of the Belgian state, which has built the isolation section especially for prisoners with "strongly expanded misbehaviour". What the spectacle calls misbehaviour, is in reality an ongoing conflict with the prison; a conflict that expresses itself against its guards and its infrastructure.

Farid has now spent 25 years in different Belgian prisons, a great part of which he was in isolation. Recently a book of his writing appeared, in which he denounces the detention circumstances in various prisons. In the spring of 2008 the torture and isolation he suffered in the prison of Lantin reached its peak. In June the state had to correct itself while a judge decided that the torture of Lantin had to come to an end, and that Farid had to be transferred to an average size prison. After a short stay in the prison of Leuven to lower the tempers, he was anyway transferred to the dungeons of Bruges. The appeal against that decision was last Monday February 6th in Liege.

The verdict is expected to be at March 10th. Farid was presented to the judge accompanied by some masked and heavily armed cops of the anti-riot unit COBRA, and he spoke. He spoke about the madness of the detention circumstances in the isolation section, and finished with "This cannot be about improvement any more; this has just got to stop".

"A BALL BOUNCES BACK WITH FULL FORCE..."

"In the mid evil centuries they threw people like me in the forgetting well.

Nowadays the same happens, only you won't die of starvation. I feel like a laboratory where people like to test how far they can go."

Ashraf Sekkaki, from the isolation section of Bruges, November 2008

"All this, as well as this place that freezes you, that exhausts you and destroys you, made me expel myself with grievance, full of discontent. This place that looks like a concentration camp, a correction facility institute or a laboratory where I serve as a test rabbit. But I got out of it, and remain as good and as bad as I can stoical, imperturbable against this cutting, oppressive and lawless system. I remain and I am like a straw that bends sometimes out of despair, but straightens itself quickly."

Farid Bamouhammad from isolation section of Bruges, January 2008

The prison is nothing more than a reflection of the society in which we live. A society that resembles a great prison in which the majority of the population are locked up because of the necessity to find money, because of the lack of perspective in life, because of roles such as "housewife" that were imposed by the ruling values. Just like in the street there are people in the prisons, psychiatric institutions, detention centres who do not come to peace with this, that do not bury a certain taste for freedom, for a better life, because the judge imposes that.

People that refuse the humiliation every day to obey the guards and chiefs.

For whom the walls and the barbed wire of the prisons are not yet marked in their brains, and rather observe them as obstacles that have to be overcome. Because the punishment society gave them, through its judges, only is a reflection of a world that is based on the power of money and obey.

Since three years a small storm of revolt blows through the tens of Belgian prisons and detention centres. By rising up, by burning the prison infrastructures, by attacking guards, by escaping, some prisoners found again what the system tried to take from them : courage, a desire for freedom, a rebellion that dreams of finishing with at least a part of the mess this society brings.

The state will build seven new prisons to temper also this rage and to lock up more people that, with the ever sharpening exploitation possibilities, would no longer accept the laws of the powerful and the rich. And for the fighting prisoners the state recently opened two isolation sections in the prisons of Bruges and Lantin, real prisons within the prisons, cages of white torture, to finish with those whose hearts bring them rather to revolt than to peace?

These sections are compiled of ten cells, which look like freezers, in which the prisoners are locked up for 23 to 24 hours per day. In a cage of a few square metres, they are "walked". Inside the cells hardly any materials are allowed. A special and temporary approval is required for using for instance a ballpoint. At night the lights are turned on frequently. The cells itself are sound isolated. These places look like moratoria, in which the state wants to finish with those that want to disturb the well oiled detention machine where people are being broken.

In the last months the prisoners who are currently locked in these cages revolted

several times by destroying the very little that is there (the lights for instance) inside the cells. Every time, the guards called for the anti-riot unit of the federal police, which are permanently located near the prison. They come with sticks, shields, pepper spray and dogs to control the rebellious spirits. These acts of revolt show that even in the most repressive situation there are people who refuse to adjust, to disavow themselves, to shape after the despicable authority.

With building these cells, the state attempts to sweep away every critique in word and act by the use of white torture and tries to break every individual that chooses the path of holding their head up high, rather than hide behind the masses, thinking to so restrict the whiplashes of repression and oppression. To obstruct those

deadly plans we have to emphasize the critique on the prison and the world that needs it. The critique of the prison becomes real, when it becomes capable of clarifying of how it exists and who helps run it. In that sense we will not forget that Hans Meurisse, general director of the prison facilities in Belgium, decides who is put in these isolation sections. We will not forget that the prison directors Jurgen van Poecke, Sybille Haesebrouck and Ronny Vandecandelaere control the prison and maximum security unit of Bruges. We will not forget the guards who do the dirty job to make this hell machine work and who are proud of their uniforms. We will not forget the judges and the entire magistrate that impose the imprisonment of thousands.

We will not forget who make a fat profit by cooperating with the construction and maintaining of the prisons. Because forgetting is the waiting room for submission.

Some lovers of freedom

"They forget that the endurance of people is not endless. They could end up in a painful situation. A ball that you try to keep under water comes back above with full power."

Ashraf Sekkaki, November 2008

Police foil bomb attack at Citibank in Athens

ATHENS, Greece (AP) — Greek police on Wednesday destroyed a powerful car bomb left outside the offices of Citibank in a northern Athens suburb.

A guard at the offices called police after seeing the car being abandoned, and the bomb squad destroyed the device shortly before 7 a.m. (0500GMT), police spokesman Panagiotis Stathis said. A police statement later said at least three people were seen leaving the car with their faces covered.

The time bomb consisted of five 10-12-liter propane gas canisters that had been emptied and then filled with an ammonium nitrate fuel oil explosive mixture, police said. It was attached to two mechanical clocks, batteries and detonators.

Hours earlier, gunmen opened fire and threw a suspected bomb in the parking lot of the private Alter television station.

The bomb failed to explode and nobody was injured in the shooting, but the attack shows Greek militant groups are expanding their targets.

Ballistics tests on the bullet casings showed the weapons used were the same as those used in a similar attack against an Athens police station two weeks ago, police announced Wednesday.

That attack, which also caused no injuries, was claimed by a previously unknown group calling itself Sect of Revolutionaries. The gunmen had used a submachine gun and a 9 mm pistol to spray the precinct with bullets. In their statement claiming responsibility, they had vowed to expand their targets to include journalists and politicians, among others.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility for either the shooting or for Wednesday's attempted bombing.

Athens has seen a spate of attacks by domestic far-left extremists in the past two months. The majority have been aimed at police. The groups have issued claims of responsibility stating the attacks were to avenge the death of a 15-year-old boy shot

dead by a policeman in December. The boy's killing sparked the country's worst riots in decades.

The statement by Sect of Revolutionaries was left on the teenager's grave.

Greece has faced targeted attacks by domestic terrorist groups for decades. But authorities had indicated they believed the problem had diminished after the arrest of several members of the country's deadliest group, November 17, following a botched bombing in 2002. That group killed 23 people in nearly three decades of targeted bombings and shootings.

A different group claimed responsibility for 17 firebombings last week against the offices or homes of people including a top anti-terrorism prosecutor, a prominent politician and a judge. There were no injuries, but the daytime attacks were a departure from the usual practice of anarchist groups carrying out firebombings late at night to minimize the chance of casualties.

Last month, a far-left group called Revolutionary Struggle claimed responsibility for a Jan. 5 shooting that seriously wounded a 21-year-old riot policeman in central Athens, as well as for an earlier gun attack against a riot police bus that caused no injuries. The group is best known for firing a rocket-propelled grenade into the U.S. Embassy in Athens in 2007.

Arson attack against cars of Deutsche Bahn, Berlin

On 22 January 2009, a group of unknown people torched 5 cars of the Deutsche Bahn (German rail), in an action against the transport of nuclear materials. In the communique, they mention as an instigating factor, the case of the alleged members of Militant Group, accused of burning military vehicles in Germany, and also the situation regarding the imprisonment of 9 comrades from Tarnac, France, who have been arrested, accused of membership within a terrorist organization and of being responsible of railway sabotages in November 2008.

"... As long as the Deutsche Bahn will keep on offering its railways for the nuclear transport, they will remain always a target of our protest. Solidarity means attack." - a few ultra-leftists-anarcho-autonome.

Repression update from the Greek Uprising

More than 270 people have been arrested in connection to actions, since the beginning of the insurrection, on December 6th, in 5 cities. 67 of them have been detained, while 50 immigrants that were arrested the first 3 days, were rapidly condemned to 18 months of imprisonment and are being deported. 19 arrestees in Larissa face charges under the anti-terrorist law. Countless people were brought to the police departments but were released with no charges. On 17/01 there was a nationwide demonstration in Larissa, in solidarity to the arrestees. One person (Ilias Nikolau) has been arrested and detained in Thessaloniki. He is being accused for explosion (felony) and for organising a gang (minor offence, not connected with the anti-terrorist law), related to the effort for an arson/gas-canister bomb against a police department. There was a solidarity demonstration, for him outside the Police Headquarters, where he is kept. Konstantina Kouneva, a woman, immigrant and unionist, who was violently attacked and forced to drink acid, due to her political action against the employers, will remain on a life support machine for the rest of her days and nights. Give not one moment of peace to the class enemy - never forget this.

*Letter from
Greek anarchist
Ilias Nikolau,
from Amfissa
prison...*

In the night of January 13th 2009, an incendiary device, composed of gas canisters and gasoline, exploded in the entrance of the (police) commissariat of Evomos (region of Thessalonica), and damaged the windows in the facade and the ventilation system. Shortly after, the police arrested the 26 year old anarchist Ilias Nikolau, who does not live far from there. Ilias was, together with Dimitra Sirianou and Kostakis Halazas, subject of an arrest warrant for over a year, concerning the same case as Vaggelis Botzatzis (on the accusation of several arsons). Vaggelis was released on conditions on October 13th 2008. On November 14th, during the agitations with the hunger strike in Greek prisons,

the 3 others went to the commissariat of Thessalonica, accompanied by some hundred comrades. The day after, the judge decided to let them await their trial in freedom. Currently Ilias is accused for "explosion" (felony), "production" and "accomplishment" (misdemeanours). Ilias does not acknowledge the accusations, nor admits "having been caught red handed". The police raided his parent's house, the place where he works, and stormed the house of his grandmother out of the city. Ilias was brought to the prison of Amfissa, this is a letter he wrote:

In the morning of January 13th I was arrested in the west of Thessalonica, on the accusation of an explosion that took place at the commissariat of the municipal police. This happened a year after, an incredible accusation was created against me and three of my comrades in November 2007. That accusation put one of us in prison, and made three others escape. The witch hunt has started. We have lived through a considerably warm December and a situation that shows the lack of

social peace clearly. Social peace only lives in the imagination of those that cannot understand that reality is characterized by a permanent civil war. With a revolutionary side that rebels against this democratic monstrosity. Rage replaced fear and instead of approval, negation appeared. The month of December, as a sign for times to come, made a very clear division between those that feed the Power, maintain and defend it, and those that fight it. Now is not the time to look back in nostalgia to the ashes that the insurrection left on its path. We have to understand and express the signs of the present and the future. The signs that already exist, and those to come. The signs of a relentless social war. If we want that moments of negation, revolt and dignity are lived, we have to arm our hands and our desires, determined and organized. I resist against those who think that manifestations and pacifist protest will make a difference, because they're already dead. They drag their corpses along the streets, in the unions and in the luxurious offices of their bosses. I take place on the side of those who are led by dignity and I join with those who feel the unchangeable will to disrupt and to destroy this enormous cemetery. The prison is an added step to a rebel. A step towards imprisonment.

To all those who think that they have overcome me, that they have overcome us...

For me and my comrades it works just the other way around! Because as long as there are prisoners of war, we will continue to struggle.

I send warm and rebellious greetings to my comrades and to revolutionaries everywhere.

Freedom for all prisoners of the revolt. Freedom for Yiannis Dimitrakis, Polis Georgiadis and Yiorgous Voutsis-Vogiatzis and all the hostages of democracy.

Ilias Nikolau,
Amfissa prison,
19th January 2009



Letter from Marcelo & Freddy, political prisoners in Argentina...

Marcelo Villaroel and Freddy Fuentesvilla are prisoners in Argentina and awaiting trial in Chile for resistance actions. They have just ended their hungerstrike after 46 days.

To the Argentinian, Chilean, Mapuche peoples and their organisations. To the networks of support, families, companeros, nucleus and brotherly organisations spread throughout the world. We communicate:

From 10pm today, Friday, the 2nd of January, we have decided to end the mobilisation characterised by a Hunger and Liquids Strike which we started on Monday 17th of last year. We began the hunger strike for the following reasons:

- 1- LIBERATION OF ALL COMBATANT PRISONERS FROM THE POPULAR STRUGGLE
- 2- POLITICAL REFUGE IN ARGENTINA
- 3- DIGNIFIED TREATMENT IN PRISON

Assuming the vital importance contained in the first two points, our concentration was focussed primarily on changing the shit conditions that we have lived in for the past 6 and half months, without any legal justification save for reasons of security based on intelligence information of no legal value that came from the Interior Ministry in Chile. We have decided to conclude our mobilisation after:

Being transferred from punishment and isolation Wing 6 to penal population Wing 2, with increased normalcy of regime that contains the same work and rights as the rest of the people detained in the unit. And to give account of the specifics of this new regime, we have demanded a meeting with those responsible for the detention units of the province. Said meeting will take place today, Friday the 2nd of January 2009 between 7.50pm and 9.50pm. Present will be: Rolando Vergara, Director of the Detention Units for the province of Newken, Gabriel Álvarez, acting chief of Unit N°11, Maria Elena, militant companera from the Asociación Zainuco (espacio de DD.HH.) as a guarantor and ourselves.

In it we will establish a 45 day normalisation period for the wing we find ourselves in now, dignified treatment, distance and respect shown towards our visitors, the lifting of restrictions on receiving texts and media, timely medical treatment, 2 days of 5 hour normal visits a week, that have started to happen since last week.

We started this strike incarcerated 20 hours a day, isolated for security reasons. During the strike each of us lost 13 kilos in weight.

Today we have 60% of the normality afforded other wings. Moreover the advances we have achieved with our mobilisation will be shared with all the detained people on our wing. This path towards advances has been collective and tireless. It has been constructed day to day with the complicity and fraternity of many spread throughout the world...

In it we gave our all and with the tiny taste of victory we can say that we have made small concrete steps towards the betterment of our conditions of detention.

Our thoughts are with all those companeros incarcerated today that fight for a better life... with Matias Katrileo, a Mapuche warrior murdered 1 year ago by the police. Our heart is with our fallen. We are building from anti-capitalism, from continued survival and so we advance with our hearts and our reason...

We greet all those that are present with revolutionary-libertarian affection!!

Here, companeros, this struggle has not finished, and what we must define in the immediate, every morning is titanic but not impossible, we need to double our efforts. We have confirmed that solidarity, without borders or flags is an effective weapon, made up of coordinated, well directed action and clear objectives.

We now enter a period of recuperation. This is not to say that we would lower our fists, more that we would continue agitating and acting, denouncing and fighting, from all trenches. Every gesture big or small is a contribution and gives us meaning so that we don't lose value or confidence and so we don't perish at the hands of misery.

**Prisoners in struggle: To the street, alive and free!!
Political Asylum in Argentina: No to the Expulsion!!
Only the Struggle sets us free!!!**

Marcelo Villaroel Sepúlveda
Freddy Fuentesvilla Saa

Neuken, Argentina,

2rd January 2009

