

## **LDMG UPDATE 24TH OCTOBER 2003**

### **THE FUTURE OF LDMG?**

The Legal Defence & Monitoring Group was reformed (on a one-off basis!) for J18 and has continued to provide Legal Observers, a newsletter, website, do workshops, support prisoners etc. since. We are now considering the future of LDMG. Do Legal Observers help or hinder direct action? Doesn't it lead to an unhealthy specialism? Shouldn't we all be legal observers on actions? We are holding a meeting at the Anarchist Bookfair on Saturday, 25th October, 2003 to discuss this. Please come and join the discussion. The meeting will be in room 2B at 1pm at ULU, Malet Street, London.

For more details see: <http://www.anarchistbookfair.org/>

### **WITNESSES URGENTLY NEEDED**

LDMG are urgently seeking witnesses to arrests at both Mayday in London and the Arms Fair in Docklands in September.

One woman keen to trace witnesses was with the Samba band in Pall Mall/Haymarket close to Trafalgar Square, when she was arrested at about 4.15pm on Mayday. Her trial takes place in November.

A legal observer from LDMG was arrested at DSEi whilst trying to witness an assault by the police. She has been charged with assaulting a police officer. She was arrested at the entrance to the passage way by Ivy Road and Butchers Road. We need to contact the man being assaulted.

If you can help with the above, or you witnessed any arrest or if you have video or photos, please email or write to us. Please include as much detail as possible. We will pass information on to solicitors. This information may prevent someone being sent to prison.

### **HOW MANY PEOPLE CONSTITUTE AN ASSEMBLY?**

According to the law, there must be 20 or more people for an assembly (Section 16 Public Order Act 1986). The so-called Anti-social Behaviour Bill currently going through Parliament will reduce this to 2. That's right, if there is more than one person present there will be an assembly! This would then give the police power to impose conditions.

The Bill will also remove the words 'open air' for the offence of aggravated trespass, so that you could be charged with this in the future for going into a building.

Elsewhere the Bill reduces the numbers required for a rave from 100 to a mere 20.

The Public Order Act 1986, first made it difficult for festivals and travellers to gather and placed severe limits on protests. Then the 1994 Criminal Justice and Public Order Act, tightened those laws, and lowered the threshold of numbers attending. The Anti-social Behaviour Bill contains further serious attacks on protest and parties.

### **SIMON CHAPMAN**

A medical team has been checking up on the hunger strikers, Suleiman "Castro" Dakduk, Carlos Martinez, Fernando Perez, Simon Chapman and Spiros Tsistas. As can be expected, most of them have lost around a stone and half each in weight but their spirits are high and we are in direct contact with Simon everyday. Castro is doing well though has suffered with headaches. He is now in his 31st day of hunger strike. Demonstrations have been organised around Greece as well as an art exhibition of Castro's work. A decision on the latest bail application is expected in a couple of weeks, but it does not seem hopeful. The UK media has finally taken an interest in Simon Chapman's plight - his story was carried on the local ITV news in London recently and an article appeared in The Guardian (23/10/03).

At this difficult time, Simon and the others need support more than ever. Please write letters of support to: Kratoumeno Simon Chapman, Dikastikes Flylakes Diavation, T.K. 540 12, Thessaloniki, GREECE (be sure to included a return address on the back of the envelope). The Thessaloniki Prisoner Support Campaign have produced 5,000 colour leaflets describing the background and events of the EU summit in Thessaloniki as well as detailing Simon Chapman's case. 5,000 postcard have also been produced, addressed to the ambassador of Greece. These will be available at the Thessaloniki Prisoner Support Stall at the Anarchist Bookfair in London. The Thessaloniki Prisoner Support Campaign meets every Wednesday at 7.30pm at the Autonomy Club, Upstairs at Freedom Bookshop, 84b Whitechapel High Street, London E1. They are also holding a meeting at the Anarchist Bookfair at 1pm in room 3B.

Two demonstrations at the Greek Embassy have called for Monday October 27th. The first will start at 12noon until 2pm and the second at 4pm until 7pm. This demonstration has been called by the Thessaloniki Prisoner Support Group and will coincide with Simon's, Carlo's and Fernando's start of the fourth week of their hunger strike. We ask all supporters to come down for at least one the two demonstrations. Embassy of Greece 1A Holland Park London, W11 3TP (Directions: Exit Holland Park Tube on the central line, cross the road, turn left then first right. Straight down the road until you see the Greek flag)

#### **OBSTRUCTION OF THE HIGHWAY**

Dozens of people were charged with Obstruction of the Highway at the arms fair protests and most have been denied Legal Aid, so are defending themselves. Recently LDMG held a small but successful workshop on this issue. The notes will shortly appear on our website for anyone who was unable to attend.

#### **LIBERTY JUDICIAL REVIEW**

The Judicial Review brought by Liberty against the Home Secretary and the Metropolitan Police over the use of anti-terrorist legislation against protesters picketing the arms fair in London's docklands was heard earlier this month. The judgment is expected by the end of October. There will be a protest at the High Court in London when judgment is given. For further information and the date when known see: <http://www.fairfordcoachaction.org.uk/44/>

#### **SUBSCRIBE**

To subscribe send a blank e-mail with SUBSCRIBE in the subject line to [ldmgmail@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:ldmgmail@yahoo.co.uk) (to unsubscribe send a blank e-mail with UNSUBSCRIBE in the subject line).

Please forward to anyone who may be interested.