

O.L.M.E

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To: - the Education International
- the ETUCE and affiliates

Dear colleagues,

The very beginning of the present school - year found the teachers Secondary Education of Greece, on strike mobilizations, according to OLME decisions, claiming solutions to the acute problems of both the teachers and the Secondary Education in all.

The text that follows is a summary of the decision of the General Assembly of the Chairmen of Regional Trade-union Organisations of Teachers (ELME), which took place on the 26/9/2003 and followed the corresponding general assemblies of the local unions, in which the proposal of the Executive Board of OLME was discussed.

DECISION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE CHAIRMEN OF ELME

Summary

The Present Situation of the Greek Secondary Education

Unfortunately, Public Education in Greece today has nothing to do with what the educational movement and the Greek society have fought for over the past decades. The acute problems remain unsolved under the shadow of the governmental policy.

It's low budget of education is continued (3,5% of GNP) remains the lowest among the E.U. countries (average educational budget 5%). The educational system staggers between its exam – centred structure, inherited by the recent "reform" of 1996 and the paten - work amendments of the present Minister of Education.

We do not accept an education imprisoned in a policy which gives priority to the needs and the pursuits of the market in the name of a deceitful and pseudo- progressive democratic modernisation. We reject the commercialisation of knowledge because not only by definition, but also because "by cause" is against the public character of goods and services that the state *owes* to its citizens.

We fight it back, because it sells out education as a public and free state and free of charge good, a conquest of long-lasting democratic and social struggles.

The lack of an educational planning with central objectives the social equality and the qualitative upgrade, constitutes another major problem of our education. The applied policy, on the contrary, leads to the reinforcement of private expenses for education and at the same time decreases the prestige of both public education and teachers.

The reproduction of educative inequalities through the educational system shows that it lacks effective policies that could compensate, at least up to a point, the deep educational and social inequalities.

The shrinkage of teaching hour in order to apply the anti-pedagogic exam-centred system of the so - called "educational reform", continues to be a serious problem that requires direct confrontation. **The reduction of the maximum number of students per class** is another major demand, that Government seems to ignore in spite of the Minister's repeated commitments.

The Technically Vocational Schools (TEE) did not constitute a reliable alternative

choice. The anti-educational and meaningless policies which were applied during the recent years, led to their devalorisation and, as we have repeatedly stressed out, to their transformation into schools of premature specialization and training. **The students who attend these schools are dealt with by the State as "children of an inferior God"!**

WE REQUIRE:

- ✓ **Establishment of a 12 years obligatory Public and free of charge education for all**
- ✓ **Abolition of the Pan-Hellenic Exams of the B and C classes of Lyceum, for the access to Tertiary Education**
- ✓ **Detachments of Lyceum from the system of access to the Tertiary Education**
- ✓ **Immediate and essential improvement of Technical Vocational Education aiming at its equivalent integration into the Lyceum level**
- ✓ **No abrogation, fusion or suspension in the operation of specialities classes in the existing Technical Vocational schools**
- ✓ **Abolition of the relevant laws of the "educational reform"**

ECONOMICS

As teachers we are faced with the State's indifference and we experience social devalorisation. Our salaries remain at a lower level than that of the rest public servants and at the lowest level of our European colleagues. We have repeatedly been mocked by the authorities, but last year's mockery was incomparable.

The announcement of the governmental proposal of the "*new salary scale*" for the public servants has justifiably caused feelings of rage and indignation in all the educational world. By this is maintained and once more repeated the **policy of austerity on the expense of the public servants** while the general and special benefits remain intact without incorporating into the basic salaries. The maintenance of the so-called "*motive of performance*" paves the path for the **connection between salary and productivity**, the individualisation and dissolution of any concept of collectiveness in the public administration as well in education.

TRAINING

The implementing of a modern system of initial education and continuous training of teachers, remains the major demand for the Greek Education. We have to point out that Greece is the only country in the E.U. that has no obligatory training for the candidate teachers. Furthermore, in spite of all our interventions to the Ministry of Education and in spite of the glamorous foundation of the so-called "*Organism of training*", a complete planning for the training of the working teachers still does not exist. The only training the teachers get are some part-time fast-learning seminars.

ASSISTANT TEACHERS - APPOINTMENTS

One of the basic requests of our trade union is to put an end to this labour-hostageship of the substitute teachers, acquiring permanent and steady jobs for all of them. We demand, in other words, the abolition of the unacceptable arrangement of the Ministry to fill constant and organic needs with either substitute teachers or by-hour working teachers.

WORKING CONDITIONS

The legislative frame that was enforced by the government as well as the governing party's choices of superior executives of education during the past years, has created a stifling and authoritarian environment for the teachers, men and women.

Our trade union with decisions of the General Assembly of the Chairmen of the Regional Trade-union Organizations of Teachers has rejected the "evaluation-guidance" proposed by the Ministry of Education and asked for the abolition of the relevant law "On the evaluation (assessment) and the administration of Education".

OUR URGENT DEMANDS

We consider all our demands powerful and claimable. However, we think that the government has to take, in the very near future, two concrete decisions, if it wishes to prove that all its declarations about its concerns for education and teachers are sincere.

The first decision is **to increase the budget for education from 3,5% to 5% of the GNP , which is the average percentage of the E.U. countries. The second is to increase our salary substantially, so as to "enable" us to live on it with dignity** which is our favourite economic slogan.

WE STRIVE FOR:

- ✓ **5% of GNP for the education for the year 2004**
- ✓ **25% increase in our recompenses and incorporation of all the benefits into the basic salary**
- ✓ **free salary development - no connection of salary with the performance - evaluation (assessment)**
- ✓ **withdrawal of the new salary scale of austerity and precarious salary**
- ✓ **complete pension after 30 years of service**
- ✓ **complete labour, insurance and retirement rights for the substitute teachers. 12 months conventions of employment for all of them. No redundancy of substitute teachers. Appointments for all of them after three conventions (maximum limit) based on their previous teaching experience**
- ✓ **respect to our labour rights and complete pedagogic freedom and democracy in school with the abolition of all the frame by which teacher's manipulation is attempted (Law 2986, duties-list). We reject the evaluation (assessment)-guidance and the social categorisation of schools via the evaluation (assessment) of school units. We organize collective resistance against any attempt of implementing that assessment-guidance. We will not accept any evaluator in our classroom.**
- ✓ **A full time annual training**
- ✓ **To establish 25 as the maximum number of students per class in Gymnasium and Lyceum, 20 students in the Lyceum's section classes as well as the classes of Technical Vocational Schools and 10 students per teacher in the labs**

Within the frame of our financial requirements we consider it obvious to be granted with the 176 Euros, amount which has already been given to the most public servants as a benefit retrospectively from 1/1/2002, as a measure towards the lifting of the injustice that continues against us.

The President	For the E.B. of OLME	The Gen. Secretary
Antonis Antonakos		Gregory Kalomiris