



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on November 11, 2010

AP Coverage Skewed as UK Students Violently Protest Tuition Hikes

For those who wonder what the entitlement mentality looks like when it is out of control, they need not look beyond Europe. In Greece, what were dubbed “anti-austerity” riots by conservative pundit Michelle Malkin were violent outbursts committed by mobs. The riots were led by left-wing vigilantes angered over new austerity measures instituted in Greece to combat the burdensome financial effects of socialism.

The protested measures include new taxes and government spending cuts. A similar scenario took place in England yesterday when thousands of students took to the streets to protest an increase in tuition fees. As is typically the case, it was not long before the protests became riots.



According to the *Associated Press*, “Tens of thousands of students marched noisily through London on Wednesday to oppose plans to triple university tuition fees, in the largest street protest yet against the government’s sweeping austerity measures.”

While tripled tuition fees certainly seem a devastating blow to UK students, it is important to note that such a move would mean that those students would go from paying roughly \$5,000 a year (in American dollars) to \$14,000 a year. To any American student, who typically pays at least \$14,000 a year at a state school, and up to \$50,000 a year at a private school, the austerity measure is reasonable and does not warrant such a reaction.

The measure has been instituted in order to cut 81 billion pounds, roughly \$128 billion American dollars, from public expenditure for the next four years.

Regardless of the necessity for the tuition increase, approximately 50,000 students, lecturers, and supporters were in attendance to demonstrate against the tuition increase.

Anna Tennant-Siren, a student at the University of Ulster in Coleraine, commented, “I am here because it is important that students stand up and shout about what is going on. Politicians don’t seem to care. They should be taking money from people who earn seven-figure salaries, not from students who don’t have any money.”

Similarly, Frances O’Grady of the Trades Union Congress said the tuition increase would make colleges “no-go zones for young people from ordinary backgrounds.”

Those opposed to the tuition hikes have threatened to use recall powers to oust legislators who voted in favor of the increase, while those in support of it threatened to do the same to those who voted against it.



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Anger pervaded the crowd, and it was not long before the demonstrations became violent — though those relying solely upon the *Associated Press* would believe the violence was minimal. According to the *AP*:

Violence flared briefly during the overwhelmingly peaceful protest as a handful of people smashed windows in a high-rise building that houses the headquarters of the governing Conservative Party.

However, according to both Fox News and British Prime Minister David Cameron, the violence went far behind a few broken windows. Fox News relates,

Hundreds of demonstrators scuffled with police and burned placards outside Conservative headquarters as dozens stormed the lobby, scattering furniture, spraying graffiti and chanting.

Fourteen people, including seven police officers, were treated for minor injuries. Police said 50 people were arrested and bailed pending further inquiries.

Providing a similar account of the protests, Prime Minister Cameron asserted that the violent protestors should receive “the full force of the law.”

While still in attendance at the G-20 summit in Seoul, South Korea, Cameron explained:

People long in our history have gone to marches and held banners and made protests and made speeches and that’s part of our democracy.

What is not part of our democracy is that sort of violence and lawbreaking. It’s not right. It’s not acceptable and I hope that the full force of the law will be used.

Paul Stephenson, chief of Metropolitan police, admitted that his police force had not expected such violence and was ill-prepared to combat it initially, as a mere 225 officers were present at the protest.

“It was an embarrassment to London and to us,” he added.

Images of masked protestors smashing windows and wreaking havoc dominated media footage yesterday, leading *Associated Press* readers to wonder how the *AP* editors believed they could get away with such inaccurate and biased reporting.

And why is it that media outlets seem so forgiving of violence at left-wing protests? Imagine the outcry if even one window was broken at a Tea Party.

Photo of student protest in Britain: AP Images



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