

STORIES BY JUSTYN L. J. MELROSE
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Mursitpinar, Turkey

After repeatedly refusing to allow Iraqi Kurdish forces to cross the Turkish-Syrian border, Turkey is now permitting the military to cross and combat ISIS in Kobani, Syria, according to The New York Times. Turkey approached the request with hesitation due to the ongoing war between the Kurdish Workers' Party-affiliated fighters and the Turkish government, yet were finally convinced as a result of international pressure and rising concern regarding the Islamic State.

New Hampshire, USA:

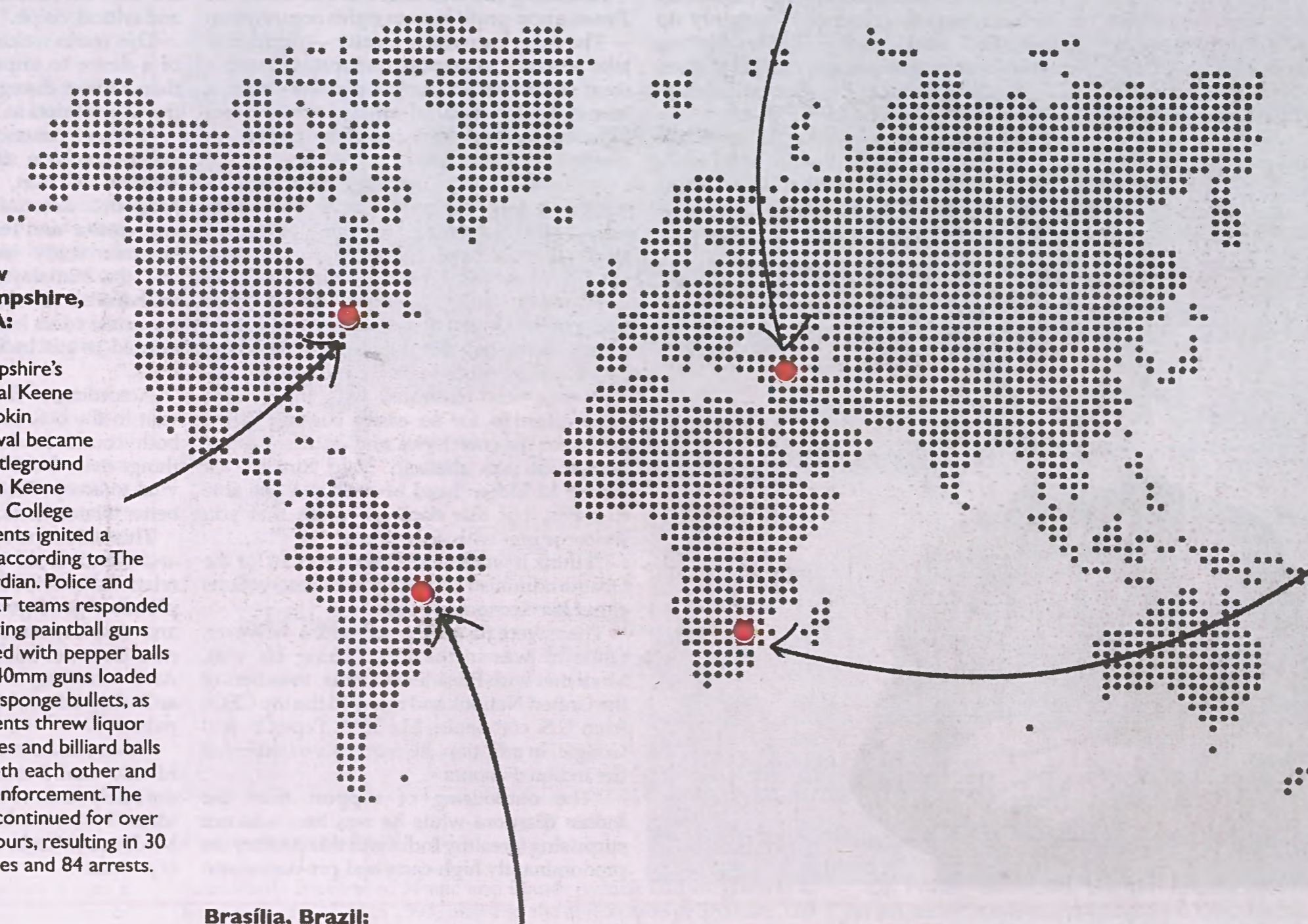
New Hampshire's annual Keene Pumpkin Festival became a battleground when Keene State College students ignited a riot, according to The Guardian. Police and SWAT teams responded by firing paintball guns loaded with pepper balls and 40mm guns loaded with sponge bullets, as students threw liquor bottles and billiard balls at both each other and law enforcement. The riot continued for over 12 hours, resulting in 30 injuries and 84 arrests.

Brasília, Brazil:

Brazil's presidential election grew even more heated as the nation enters a runoff election. Leftist incumbent Dilma Rousseff, with 41.6 percent of the votes, and centrist Aécio Neves with 33.6 percent are now competing for the final 21 percent of votes taken by ousted third-place candidate and environmentalist Marina Silva, according to Reuters. Silva supporters are largely expected to move toward Neves in response to Rousseff's campaign against Silva that led to her elimination from the race.

Pretoria, South Africa:

South African Olympic runner and double amputee Oscar Pistorius has been sentenced to five years in prison after shooting and killing his girlfriend, Reeva Steenkamp through a bathroom stall door, according to CBS News. Pistorius's family has accepted this sentence, as Steenkamp's family continues to struggle with their loss. "I really don't think any of us will heal anytime soon," said Gina Meyers, a friend of Steenkamp, to CBS. "There will always be questions."



Students protest in Hong Kong for better representation

BY CLARE FORRISTER
STAFF WRITER

Whether in Hong Kong or at Guilford, students know how to get fired up for what they believe in.

Recently, outspoken members of Hong Kong's population have clashed with mainland China's conservative central government. Students and supporters began demonstrating peacefully on the busy Hong Kong streets on Sept. 28, as part of Occupy Central with Love and Peace and have persisted ever since.

The demonstrators demand better government representation via direct election of the region's chief executive, something the Chinese government had promised by 2017. But the government recently changed their terms, announcing any candidates who ran for the office would have to be pre-approved by Beijing.

"Economic growth and reform has made Hong Kong a very successful, educated and independent state that is not willing to back down to a repressive, backward-looking Beijing government," said senior Darren Foster, a history and political science double major with a focus on China, in an email interview. "The residents of Hong Kong have become accustomed to a way of life (that is) more liberal and free, and they are not ready to cede that so quickly."

Hong Kong was a British colony until Britain returned it to China in 1997. Due to its Western influence, Hong Kong differs from mainland China in its greater desire for freedom and independence. Because of the region's economic success, China allows it to continue with some degree of freedom in what is known as "one country, two systems."

The recent protests have been controversial even within Hong Kong, however, because many want to avoid provoking the government. Nevertheless, people are heartened by the successful civil disobedience which compels the government to pay attention to their message.

Larry Au, an activist in the movement, tweeted "even if they forget #UmbrellaMovement, they'll remember the civility behind its tactics, a new standard for

protests everywhere."

Umbrellas began to be associated with the movement when demonstrators used them to protect themselves from the pepper spray of the police and soon became a symbol for the cause.

"People will remember this protest as being one where students were not only polite, but peaceful, willing to negotiate and determined, but not aggressively threatening," said Eric Mortensen, chair and associate professor of religious studies, initially hired as a professor of East Asian religions. "I think it did set a standard, but I don't by any means think that they invented the notion of, shall we say, civil disobedience."

The success of Hong Kong in creating an ongoing movement contrasts strongly with the rest of the country.

"It really surprised me because I would

ask my host dad, 'If you don't like what your government is doing, why don't you protest? You should stand up for what you believe in,'" said first-year Izzie Raizen, who spent six months in Beijing during her gap year. "He just said, 'No, that doesn't happen here.'"

In Hong Kong, however, waves of dissent swell throughout the city.

"The fact that these protests have prevented Hong Kong citizens and businesses from going about their daily activities and making money demonstrates the magnitude of the protesters' message," said Early College student Jordan Richmond in an email interview. "The size of these protests is astounding."

The protesters have the numbers, but do they have a chance?

"Do not expect in one day a change from

one system to another system," said George Guo, professor of political science. "That's what we call shock therapy. Democratization needs the right conditions, needs a base, needs structure. The structure needs economic foundation and education. They need to have a certain kind of culture built around tolerance. It needs time. All of those need to be twined together."

Student activists in China have a long history of bringing change, as Assistant Professor of History Zhihong Chen pointed out.

"As Hong Kong enjoys a special status within the Chinese political system, it is possible for the movement to succeed as long as both sides avoid extreme and inflammatory speeches and actions," said Chen. "If both sides remain calm, I am positive that people will find a compromise or a solution."



Protesters occupy Harcourt Road in Hong Kong on Sept. 29, 2014, as part of recent demonstrations rejecting changes to standards for city elections.

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