

Tragedy, popular explosion, repression, IMF: Greece into the darkness

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On May 5 the biggest workers' demonstration since 1976 took place in Athens. All the avenues of the city center were flooded by hundreds of thousands of workers who were protesting against the IMF-EU-Greek government austerity plan. It is impossible to make an accurate calculation of the crowd's number. There are estimations which start from 150.000 and end up to 500.000 people. No matter the exact number of the protesters, there is no doubt that this was an unbelievable show of the working people's force. At the same time, in tenths of cities all around Greece we had extremely massive mobilizations. You can get an impression of what happened in Athens by watching these videos here . But this was not just a huge demonstration. It was also the angriest decades expression of popular resentment since decades . Thousands of people were not just protesting. The demonstration was turning to areal popular explosion against the IMF plan, against the lies of the authorities, against the assassination of the future of an entire nation. For many hours demonstrators were clashing with the police in front of the parliament. And this time it was not just black block or the radical left. As you can in the video here these demonstrators are not wearing masks and are not organized at all. The police was attacking for many hours with tear gaz, but they couldn't disperse the demonstration.

And suddenly the crowd got silent. A real tragedy had happened. Three bank employees were killed in the Marfin's bank building at Stadiou avenue [1]. A black block group threw petrol bombs to burn the bank branch at the ground floor and the fire got out of control. Although, it was revealed by the bank employees federation that the people were locked in a building with no fire exit, there can be no excuse for those who set the fire. It is a criminal attitude to set fire to a building where there are obviously people.

The government and mass media tried to take advantage of the blood and to manipulate public opinion. For once more they tried to play the card of collective responsibility. At the same time, repression reached its highest point. Demonstrators were bitten up by the police and people were arrested without any reason, some for just sitting at a "suspicious cafe". Watch here the police breaking the windows of a cafe at Exarheia square.

Special police also stormed in our Immigrants' space-Social center at 13 Tsamadou str. [2] in a totally illegal and brutal operation that called to mind the invasion in Diaz school in Genova, special police have bitten and injured our comrades. They also destroyed our offices and took some red flags as "war loot". I have to note that there was no order for such an operation. The policemen just acted like a gang. A few minutes later special police evacuated without violence an anarchist squat also at Exarheia.

On Thursday May 6 there was an new call for mobilization by the trade unions and the Left. Despite the political atmosphere created by the tragedy, some 25.000 demonstrated peacefully in front of the Parliament. Late at evening the police attacked and dispersed some 1.500 who were still in front of the Parliament, although there was no violent action by the demonstrators.

But on Thursday the real news were inside the Parliament. Three socialist parliamentarians refused

to vote in favour of the IMF-EU austerity plan. They were immediately kicked out of the socialist parliamentary group. The plan was finally voted by PASOK (socialists), LAOS (racist extreme right) and Ntora Bacoyanni, the former right wing foreign affairs minister and rival of Antonis Samaras for ND (right wing opposition) presidency. Samaras, a populist nationalist politician who decided to vote against the plan, immediately kicked Bacoyanni out of the party. There is no doubt that the political system will not be the same after the implementation of the austerity plan. It seems that Bacoyanni wants to create a new political party that can cooperate both with PASOK and ND to build a government (the model seems to be the German Liberals).

As the time goes by, more and more people realize that the IMF-EU-Greek government plan is not only catastrophic for the working people, but it will also lead the country to an impasse. Public sector employees are losing about 30% of their income. Pensioners (both of public and private sector) are losing as well from 15% to 30% of their income. Young workers will be paid with less money (about 580 euros) than the minimum wage (Greek version of CPE) And at the end of the day, in 2014, if everything goes as planned, the debt will be 150% (now it is 115%), and the GNP will be -5% than in 2009. As you well know, reality is always worst than plans (especially of those of IMF). The economy is falling into the deepest recession, at least -4% for this year. It is obvious that with such a low GNP, the whole lot of public debt cannot be paid. Sooner or later, the debt will be renegotiated and some private creditors might lose a part of their profits. This perspective, which is getting more and more clear, is making markets extremely insecure. In two worlds, the working people are already bankrupt and in some time the country will as well go bankrupt.

Argentina is in front of us.

7/5/10

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Footnotes

[1] <http://tvxs.gr/webtv/video/αποκλειστικό-βίντεο-του-tvxs-από-marfin>

[2] http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X1DH3lFjErw&feature=player_embedded