

Press release

# Greece, brutal takeover by the government and the Troika

Monday 17 June 2013, by [CADTM](#) (Date first published: 14 June 2013).

This Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> June the Greek government decided to close down the public service in radio and television, the ERT. The police neutralized the main emitter and the special forces were used to cut the regional relay stations serving the rural areas. Screens receiving national and local public service television broadcast went blank at 11 pm local time. These closures meant the immediate laying off of 2,656 ERT employees and the loss of 1,400 indirect jobs.

The government proceeded by issuing a decree announced only five hours before its application, bypassing parliamentary validation. In the national unity government only the New Democracy party, cheered on by the neo-nazi Golden Dawn party, approved the text. Yet the responsibility of the Troika (IMF, ECB, and the European Commission) is not to be dismissed. It is this infamous trio which has created and aggravated the current Greek situation. The Greek government's willingness to obey their orders is a clear indication of the complete loss of national sovereignty in the face of the financial sector.

Immediately, hundreds, thousands, then tens of thousands of Greeks were in the streets to protest against this overruling of democracy and to support the ERT employees. Resistance was organised in Athens and in the rest of the country, in the towns of the north and in the Peloponnese, but this struggle will not be won without the active support from workers in other European countries. All over the continent calls are rising, appeals to rally are launched. Solidarity strikes sprout up in different countries. The message is clear: what is happening in Greece will spread to the whole of Europe. This is what is at stake in today's movements: prevent by all possible means the spread of the jackboot. As never before we must build another Europe together, breaking away from the Europe of "fair and undistorted competition". Otherwise it will be a sombre European century.

This unspeakable action, condemned by all, is not the first of its kind and raises questions about the future of Greek democracy. The Greek government is gaining experience in the matter. The step taken on Tuesday bears typical features of a coup. Remember the repression of the Pirée dockers strike in 2010, that of the Athens metro workers, who were requisitioned and threatened with imprisonment in January 2013, and the teachers strike, that was prohibited and declared illegal in May 2012. Remember also, the memoranda (austerity plans) adopted without parliamentary debate or amendment possibility. These are some of the illegalities enacted by Greek governments since the beginning of the crisis. The constitution is constantly being swept aside by the decisions of Troika officials occupying key posts in the ministries.

These austerity plans, decided as a remedy for public debt and deficits, are directly responsible for the deterioration of the catastrophic economic situation in the country (in recession since 2009 and with increasing debt) and especially for the considerable impoverishment of the vast majority of the population. More than one third of the population no longer receives social benefits and 60% of the youth is unemployed. Unemployment officially stands at 28% for the whole of the population (Eurostat figures). The employees have seen their collective conventions disappear, replaced with

individual employment contracts that are often paid three or four months late. Retirement pensions have been slashed by an average of 35%...

It is the women who have the hardest struggle and patriarchal retrograde values are making a strong recovery. Even free choice in contraception is being challenged. Life expectancy has diminished by three years since the beginning of the crisis. Overcrowding with family members or neighbours having to live together results in spreading illnesses in a population that has lower and lower access to medical protection. Under nourishment has become a common occurrence. The fundamental right to health is not recognised in practice. Hospitals close one after the other, medicines and elementary medical materials are not delivered. Thousands of hospital beds have been withdrawn, and treatment, when it is available, must be paid for. Receiving medical treatment has become unaffordable for a large part of the population.

The IMF's hypocritical "apologies" change nothing. Ever stronger austerity measures continue as the massive laying off of the audiovisual sector employees shows. Using the pretext of having to pay for the public debt, the Troika violates the economic, social, civil and political rights of the Greek people. These jackboot policies, imposed on the Greek people before being imposed on the rest of Europe, could not be possible without the active complicity of the ruling political parties (PASOK, DIMAR and New Democracy) and the unions that are under their influence. A radical political change is necessary.

CADTM affirms that the whole of the Greek debt to the Troika is illegitimate and odious. It must not be repaid. It corresponds to the three criteria which determine the illegitimate or odious character of a debt:

- the lack of consent of the population;
- lack of advantages for the population and non respect of the general interest;
- awareness by the creditors of the two preceding criteria.

The remaining part must be the object of a citizens public audit.

CADTM is united with the Greek people and will work for the construction of unified European movements of workers and peoples.

**We are united in struggle: THEY SHALL NOT PASS!**

---

**P.S.**

\* [www.cadtm.org/](http://www.cadtm.org/)

\* Translation Mike Krolkowski and Christine Pagnoulle.