

Greece: Four years of struggles against the “Mitsotakis memorandum”

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Since his election in June 2019, Mitsotakis has been attacking young people and workers, taking advantage of their resentment of the four years of Syriza and the division on the left.

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Despite the brutal anti-social and repressive measures, the struggles have never stopped since 2019, and even if they have not changed the landscape on the left in depth, their diversity and massiveness remain a sign of hope beyond the parliamentary elections on 21 May.

Workers’ struggles despite the obstacles

As under the memoranda, the struggles have been about wages and conditions of employment, which the government has made harder and harder. At the beginning of this year, fatal accidents at work have multiplied. In the public sector, the government is trying to outlaw the numerous strikes against the “evaluation” policy, which is synonymous with “merit” salaries and regressions.

However, an important obstacle is that of trade union structuring: faced with the bureaucratic leadership of the single confederation of the private sector and with division, the question of the revival of the trade union tool is a central issue linked to a question that has not been advanced enough, that of the unity of the class, which is decisive for the near future.

Beyond the national strike days (24 hours) which are always well attended, the activity of demands was maintained in many sectors: victorious struggles for collective agreements at efood and among the dockers at Cosco. Popular struggles with trade union participation, such as the one underway against the privatisation of water, are strengthening the fighting spirit: recently 25,000 people gathered in Thessaloniki, and the Athens town hall is refusing to grant the central square for a demonstration of the same type today. The support continues for the exemplary struggle of the VIOME factory occupied for ten years and revived by the workers!

Struggles against the police state and in many sectors!

Resistance was shown in the summer of 2019 against the end of asylum and then against the creation of a university police force: the student movement made the government back down. During the pandemic, big mobilisations took place against the police state wanted by Mitsotakis and against the catastrophic medical management, with energetic struggles in public hospitals. If the

environmental movement has not spread nationally as in other countries, there are numerous local struggles in defence of the increased attacks on the environment, with Mitsotakis planning to accelerate underwater drilling with the anachronistic ambition that Greece becomes a champion of hydrocarbon extraction...

“But the most striking struggle, which brought hundreds of thousands of Greeks into the streets, broke out in March after the Tèmbi railway tragedy.”

Anti-racist struggles have decreased in intensity despite the activity of associations like KEERFA, but anti-fascist vigilance remains strong, as witnessed every year by the big demonstrations commemorating the murder of the rapper Fyssas by the Nazis. Let’s also mention the recent struggles in the cultural and archaeological sector (privatisation of national museums) or against property seizures...

But the most striking struggle, which brought hundreds of thousands of Greeks into the streets, broke out in March after the Tèmbi railway tragedy: despite the manœuvres to cover up his blatant responsibility, Mitsotakis will not be able to prevent the elections from resounding with the anger expressed in the slogan “Our dead, their profits”, with all that this brings in terms of breaking with the headlong rush of capitalism!

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P.S.

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