

European Union: social and democratic rights radically challenged!

Thursday 12 February 2015, by [TOUSSAINT Éric](#) (Date first published: 7 January 2015).

If the governments, the ECB and the European Commission truly intended what they claimed—that is, to reduce unemployment, boost economic activity, clean up the banking sector, increase and stimulate lending to small businesses and consumers, increase investment, reduce debt, and so on—, then their policies have clearly failed. But were these ever their true intentions?

The mainstream media often mention the dangers of the Eurozone falling apart, the failure of austerity policies to fan the embers of the economy, tensions between Berlin and Paris or Rome, or even London and the Eurozone, disagreements between ECB directors, the enormous difficulty in agreeing on the EU budget or the wincing of certain European governments concerning IMF remarks about austerity levels. These problems are real but they should not overshadow the essential issues.

The leaders of the strongest European countries and of big business alike are delighted to have created a common economic, commercial, and political zone in which European transnational corporations and the major Eurozone economies benefit from the collapse of the Eurozone's Southern economies. The stronger economies gain a competitive advantage over their North American and Chinese competitors. Their objective at this point is not to revive growth to reduce differences between the stronger and weaker economies of the EU.

Furthermore the European elites see the economic collapse in the South as an opportunity to privatise public companies on a large scale and acquire common goods at give-away prices, helped by the Troika (ECB IMF and European Commission) with the active complicity of the peripheral governments. Big Capital in the Southern European countries is in favour of this prospect, hoping to get a piece of the cake it has been ogling for a long time. The grabbing of public sector companies in Greece and Portugal foreshadows what will happen in Spain and Italy, where public companies are relatively much bigger in respect to the size of their economies. The leaders of the strongest European economies are hoping to pass another wave of important privatisations in their own countries.

The collusion between governments and big business has gone public. At the head of several governments, in important ministerial posts and at the presidency of the ECB, we find men and women who are part and parcel of the world of high finance, [1] in particular former directors of Goldman Sachs. [2] Certain high-profile politicians are rewarded with jobs in big banks once they have fulfilled their loyal service to Big Capital. [