

Greece: towards a pro-austerity “grand coalition”? - “Better a horrible end than a horror without end.”

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The avalanche of austerity measures (all included in the 3d Memorandum signed by Tsipras) passed by the Greek parliament in the last weeks (possibility of home repossession for the bad-payers, series of new taxes) - and the imminence of new ones - combined with the first surge of social mobilization (successful general strike of 12 November, multiple sectoral mobilizations), provokes the first cracks in the Syriza-Anel majority.

Two MPs (one of Syriza, the other Anel) who refused to vote the measures were expelled from the parliamentary groups of Syriza and Anel. A third MP resigned from his seat. And not any MP: Gabriel Sakellaridis was the spokesman of the first Syriza government and a candidate for mayor of Athens in 2014 (he nearly won, achieving a surprising score). He was also in the first circle of collaborators, and even a personal friends, of Alexis Tsipras. In his resignation letter he announces that he “cannot support the policy of the government” and his withdrawal from politics, while assuming its share of responsibility for what has happened over the last ten months.

The government’s majority in parliament is now reduced to 153 seats (out of 300) and voting the next draconian austerity package, that will lead to the end of the peasantry by overtaxation and the destruction of what remains of the pension system, becomes a high-risk exercise. Tsipras is therefore reduced to begging the President of the Republic Prokopis Pavlopoulos (rightwing but elected by the Syriza-Anel parliamentary majority in February) to act as mediator to broaden the support for the government in parliament.

The way is open for a more organic form of co-management of the implementation of the Memorandum by the parties that support the parliament, ie all except the KKE and the neo-Nazi Golden Dawn.

As for Syriza, we can say that here Marx’s adage in the 18th Brumaire fully applies:

“Better a horrible end than a horror without end.”

Stathis Kouvelakis
