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Greece

A blow against Mitsotakis and his liberticidal measures!

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Every 17 November the labour and student movements commemorate the 1973 revolt of the students of the Polytechnic School against the military junta. This revolt was repressed by tanks leaving between 40 and 80 dead but heralded the beginning of the end for the junta. This obviously displeases the right, which tries to neutralize or prevent these commemorations.

We knew that with the explosion of Covid-19 infection this autumn, due solely to the policy of the ultra-liberal government, 17 November would be different, without a mass character, even if the unions and left-wing parties have organized in recent months beautiful demonstrations with all health precautions.

The Covid, a pretext for gagging popular anger

Very early on, it was Chryssochoïdis, Minister of Police, who set the tone: banning all demonstrations... for health reasons. Faced with mass rejection of this policy, the last straw came with a ban on gatherings of more than three people (on pain of heavy fines)... between 15 and 18 November! As a result, a response on the ground was necessary, but even more limited this time, as the danger of infection became a reality: police repression would break health precautions. But, although this is what happened on the 17th, with violent repression, tearing off masks, arrests in several towns, these liberticidal measures reinforced popular will to contest in the streets a measure worthy of the junta!

We saw a surprise rally of 250 militants of the KKE (Greek CP) next to the US embassy, laying of wreaths to the resistance by the cadres of the KKE, and of Syriza, "demonstration" of 6 deputies of Mera 25 (Varoufakis's party), and throughout the country, thousands of (very many young) activists of the anti-capitalist left, of the KKE, trade unionists, in rallies or demonstrations often repressed with rage, notably in Athens by cops furious at the initiatives imposed in the morning. But on the evening of the 17th, it was enough to see the annoyance of Chryssochoïdis: 17 November was a big slap in the face for the right!

A first unitary step to be consolidated

This success must be an encouragement to the struggles and to the denunciation of the flagrant "orbanisation" of Prime Minister Mitsotakis and his clique, the next step being a national strike on 26 November. But to advance, it will be necessary to push very hard for unity of action, and it is necessary to underline a small important sign in the Greek sectarian context: a text protesting against the bans signed by KKE, Syriza, Mera 25 and many trade union activists. And joint initiatives here and there on 17 November. But we have work to do: on the one hand, the slogans of KKE on the 17th were often the self-celebration of KKE, on the other hand, a good part of the anti-capitalist left, including our comrades from NAR, the main group, favours only "disobedience" and withdrew its signatures from the "unitary" text because it was signed by the MPs Syriza and Mera 25. NAR also criticizes the appearances of Syriza and Mera - who certainly did not mobilize their militants - although everything that was done on the 17th was clearly perceived as weakening the right. So, more than ever before, of course an indispensable criticism of reformist paths, but also the need to build unity of action, with, why not, in perspective a mass united demonstration against the social and health catastrophe this government embodies.

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PS:

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