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Greece

The future of the workers of Europe is being decided in Greece

- Debate - Perspectives in Greece -

Publication date: Friday 25 May 2012

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For two years the Greek people have fought against the austerity imposed by the Troika (the IMF, the European Commission and the European Central Bank). After seventeen one-day general strikes, after mass demonstrations and the occupations of squares by the *aganaktismeni* (the indignant), after occupations of workplaces, in the elections held on May 6 it rejected the parties which had accepted the memoranda imposed on Greece by more than 60 per cent of the votes cast, and gave 37 per cent to parties to the left of the antisocial liberalism of PASOK. [1]

For two years, crushed by public debt, which has been used as a channel for the over-accumulation of financial capital, Greece has become the laboratory of policies aimed at making the population pay for the capitalist crisis. The rescue plans imposed on Greece have only one goal: to guarantee the payment of the debt by the Greek state to the banks, to preserve the speculative money of the financial bubble that they have created. The "memoranda" which accompany these plans are aimed at testing in Greece how far capital can monopolize the wealth produced by the workers by reducing them to poverty. The effects of this policy are the brutal reduction of wages and pensions; the deconstruction of labour laws and regulations; the brutal rise in unemployment (which already affects in Greece 21.2 per cent of the active population, nearly 30 per cent of women and 50 per cent of young people); a recession similar to that of 1929-1930 (a drop in GDP of 6.9 per cent in 2011, with an estimated further drop of 5.3 per cent in 2012; a reduction of industrial production of 4.3 per cent in March 2012 compared to March 2011 ...); the destruction of the health system (closing of 137 hospitals and disappearance of a fifth of employment in health, a lack of drugs because of unpaid bills of 1.1 billion euros ...) and of the housing market (200,000 residences are unsellable ... while the number of homeless people has sharply increased), malnutrition ...

Confronted by the policy imposed by the Troika, the Greek radical Left, and in particular Syriza, which today occupies a central place in the Greek political situation, defends a 5-point emergency plan:

1. Abolition of the memoranda, of all measures of austerity and of the counter-reforms of the labour laws which are destroying the country.
2. Nationalization of the banks which have been largely paid by government aid.
3. A moratorium on payment of the debt and an audit which will make it possible to denounce and abolish the illegitimate debt.
4. Abolition of immunity of ministers from prosecution.
5. Modification of the electoral law which allowed PASOK and New Democracy to govern to the detriment of the Greek population and to plunge the country into crisis.

The Fourth International calls on the whole of the international workers' movement, on all the indignant, on all those who defend the ideals of the Left, to support such an emergency programme.

We want the Greek people to succeed in imposing, by its votes and its mobilizations, a government of all the social and political Left which refuses austerity, a government capable of imposing the cancellation of the debt. It is in this perspective that we call for the coming together of all the forces which are fighting against austerity in Greece â€”

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Syriza, Antarsya, the KKE, the trade unions and the other social movements " around an emergency plan.

The crisis is not Greece's crisis, but the crisis of the European Union subjected to the will of capital and of the governments in its service. It is the crisis of the capitalist mode of production in the whole world. It is not up to the Troika, but to the Greek people to decide on the policy to be followed in that country. The attempts of the German Chancellor, Angela Merkel to impose on the Greeks a referendum on the euro on the occasion of the elections on June 17 " a real electoral putsch " must be rejected. It is not the euro, but the diktats of the Troika that have to be combated today.

More than ever, the struggles against austerity policies make it necessary to fight for a break with the policies and the treaties which constitute the basis of the construction of the European Union. More than ever, fighting austerity does not mean retreating into nationalism, but the development of a movement for another Europe which defends the sovereign democratic and social rights of each people and the perspective of the Socialist United States of Europe.

Greece has become a laboratory for Europe. They are testing out on human guinea-pigs the methods which will then be applied to Portugal, Spain, Ireland, Italy and so on. The Greek people have revolted, in the workplaces, in the streets and at the ballot boxes, against these cruel policies. The resistance of the Greeks is our resistance, their struggles are our struggles. This resistance shows that the defence of the vital interests of the popular classes implies a confrontation with the ruling classes, on the national and European levels. We must multiply unitary initiatives in support of the struggles of the Greek people and of its radical Left. But the best form of solidarity with the Greek people is to imitate their example in all countries by developing and coordinating resistance against the inhuman policies of austerity and destruction. This is exactly what capital, which is responsible for the crisis, fears: the contagion of struggles!

May 24, 2012

Executive Bureau of the Fourth International

[1] Following the publication of this statement there was an exchange between the Bureau and the Greek section which is in the [June edition of IVP](#).