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Greece

Tsipras cedes to the Troika's arrogance: Popular mobilization in Greece and Europe should block the diktats of Merkel and Hollande

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The conservative and social-democratic reactionary forces are celebrating. After the advisers of French president François Hollande "playing the soft cops" helped in writing it, Tsipras and the Greek government sent a draft agreement that more or less faithfully followed the terms of the one that was massively rejected last Sunday by the Greek population, notably the wage-earners and unemployed.

If sixty-two per cent of the voters rejected the agreement it was because they know very well what they have put up with during the last five years and that any new austerity plan would push them even further into precariousness and poverty, and that the Greek people wants to regain its dignity and the mastery of its fate.

In going against this vote the Greek government is obviously responding to pressure from the Troika that has only increased in recent weeks, and even more so since Monday.

Tsipras has reached the end of a new battle of will that pits him against the troika. After the success of the referendum the signal sent by the European leaders was unambiguous: no question of accepting the will of the Greek people. The first choice of alternative was to break with the institutions and the rule of the European Union, which would mean taking control of the banking system, stopping payment of the debt and organizing popular mobilization to block any attempts at internal or external sabotage. Up to now the Tsipras government has refused to take this path which, while it does not exclude the necessary manoeuvres in relation to the institutions clearly commits the population to organize and mobilize in order to be the direct actors of their own destiny. The other choice was the immediate acceptance of the Troika's measures in order to avoid strangulation. By accepting the agreement and avoiding bankruptcy perhaps hopes to loosen the stranglehold of the debt repayments and even later to implement measure breaking with austerity. But the European watchdogs do not see it like that and will not accept any unilateral "that is to say sovereign" measure. Without a new confrontation with the leaders of the European Union these latter will implement unending austerity in Greece and elsewhere.

This is where the bar has been placed by Merkel, Hollande, Junker and Lagarde. None of them can accept any longer a people thus defying the rules of the European capitalists.

They will only accept a rescheduling of the debt, or its partial cancellation, as they did in 2012, against a total submission by the Athens' government to structural adjustment plans. Claiming to speak in the name of the people, the European leaders want the Greek government and people to be in their grip so that other people understand the lesson "there is no alternative" as Margaret Thatcher said in the 1980s.

The Greek government cannot stand up to this pressure while continuing to accept the rules of the European Union.

But we must not be spectators in this battle and the new act which has just opened. Even if Tsipras can find support in Parliament among the parties devoted to the Troika there will be many voices in Greece, in Syriza and the whole of the radical left, in the social and trade-union movements, that will be raised to remind him of the promises made before January 2015 and reaffirmed that week. These voices will find an echo with those who throughout Europe must mobilise again the European governments and the ECB so that this blackmail of the debts ceases, that this odious and illegitimate debt is cancelled and that Greek people are no longer gripped by the throat.

Like after 20 February the match has not yet been won by the Troika.

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