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Greece

Immense mobilizations against the coup d'etat in public radio and television

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Everyone agrees, in Greece and elsewhere: the wild decision of the Prime Minister Samaras to announce, at midday on Tuesday 10 June, the closing of the public audio-visual service ERT for the same evening is surprising and of course requires explanation. And a massive response!

In the final analysis we come back to the incredible truth: the government has handed over to the Troika, currently on an inspection trip, the 2000 job cuts demanded as immediate proof of governmental effectiveness in implementing the imposed plan of dismissal of tens of thousands of civil servants. Samaras lays off 2670 workers today and promises to recreate a public channel of 600 employees. Those are the figures and we must think that this is if not the only in any case the principal explanation to this foolish takeover by force. Here in any case, is talking about a coup d'etat.

Massive reactions to the coup d'etat

This coup d'etat was not completely impromptu: everyone knew the threats of "reorganization" of ERT, and a constitutional expert had produced a plan that Samaras wants to implement, but in which the author is now refusing to take part as long as ERT remains closed! This is one of many political contradictions which has exploded since Tuesday, opening a crisis within the government, the interior troika as it is called here. Indeed, Samaras, product of the most reactionary and nationalist right, surrounded by advisors open to the far right, made an arrogant decision, believing that the last surveys giving him two points more than Syriza empowered him to rule without having to worry about tedious democratic procedures any more. The result: the ministers Pasok and Dimar did not sign the decision to close ERT; and today the only group supporting the takeover by force of the right (New Democracy) against ERT, are the nazis of Chryssi Avgi (Golden Dawn)!

However, as soon as the decision was known, an exceptional mobilization started. Since Tuesday, the buildings of ERT in the Athenian suburbs have been surrounded by thousands of people, activists or not, with support from artists and various personalities. The confederation of unions in the private sector (GSEE) and the federation of the public sector unions (Adedy), which had recently refused to support the teachers' strike, were obliged to call on Thursday for a general strike that was quite successful. Protest meetings took place everywhere in the country. The occupation in front of ERT was massive, even if the place is rather out of the way. Most important perhaps, is to see side by side the trade-union, political, associative flags, of various currents which usually do everything not to demonstrate together. This de facto unity in the fight, linked to a very cordial environment, is for the moment a pledge of determined resistance: KKE (Greek CP) has welcomed to its TV channel the news programmes produced by the ERT journalists, the radio of Kokkino (Syriza) is connected permanently to the takeover mobilizations. It is clear that Samaras had not envisaged such a broad response to its small manoeuvre.

Solidarity with the ERT struggle

International solidarity, which has been very strong, going as far as some not very diplomatic statements by foreign governments, is felt to be an invaluable help. It gives a very practical meaning to the slogan of "Troika out!" last Sunday's demo in Athens concluding the Altersummit. In this context, it illustrates what for three years has been too weak: that international solidarity reinforces the working-class response in Greece. This solidarity must continue and intensify. On Thursday, the police entered the ERT buildings in Salonica to evict the workers occupying their

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workplace. Although Samaras is obviously destabilized at the moment, it is known that the only answer will be repression. There has to be the strongest solidarity for the defence of ERT and all jobs! The struggle continues, with a solidarity concert Friday at the ERT location. There is of course a common feeling that the current struggle in Taksim square in Turkey Greece has a lot in common with the popular assemblies at ERT!

Athens,
14 June 2013