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Greece

Ongoing and unitive mobilization urgently needed in Greece

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Even if Greece's 1st May demonstrations this year attracted many people, the general framework remains the same, that of division. There is, however, an urgent need for a massive and united mobilization against the government.

In Athens, three different rallies took place: that of the KKE (the Greek Communist Party) and its trade union fraction PAME (a few thousand, with the secretary of the KKE claiming that only that party defends the workers), that of GSEE-ADEDY (a single confederation of the private sector and the National Public Federation, without much support), and that of the rank-and-file unions and the anti-capitalist left (several thousand also, with slogans for "peace" and against NATO). No unitary perspective was on the agenda unfortunately, while popular anger, perceptible even in the polls that panic the right, grows against prime minister Mitsotakis and his far-right ministers. The health minister (the son of a Greek Nazi ideologue) has just presented a plan to privatize hospitals, which would of course result in the abolition of free care.

Between Pinochet and Orban

The desire to privatize everything is now clear to a large part of the population, with the cost of electricity as an example: on the pretext of the effects of the war in Ukraine, the government has let costs slip for users, with astronomical bills, resulting in 5,000 cuts per week for families. What is at stake here is the dirty game of the cartels controlling natural gas, as well as the remuneration of the directors (360,000 euros annually + shares for the director of DEI, the main company).

After denouncing the left and faced with the collective lawsuits initiated, Mitsotakis had to take emergency measures (in addition to the very insufficient increase in the minimum wage) to try to calm the anger, including very partial reimbursements since December. Other aspects of the neoliberal economic line: gifts to private companies to install hundreds of mega-wind turbines on the islands despite the opposition of the local population (and some victories, as in Andros), a project to privatize the distribution of water, not to mention the increasingly visible nepotism (placements of children of the right and dodgy friends). And of course, this policy is accompanied by incessant repression (of the student mobilizations in Thessaloniki against the installation of a university police, for example), pressure on the justice system (despite the massive mobilizations for a fair trial, the police officers involved in the murder of an LGBTI activist have been acquitted). And in general, attacks on rights are increasingly strong: various attacks against refugees, with illegal refoulement of those arriving in Greece, including a terrible situation on an island on the Evros River between Greece and Turkey, obstacles to schooling and so on. Mitsotakis has also attacked the free press, with Greece now ranked last among EU countries by Reporters Without Borders, down 38 places.

Combativity and a call for unity

A sign of hope for unitary mobilizations was issued on 1st May : during a big demonstration in support of port workers in Piraeus against their Chinese employer Cosco, a victim of one of the many work accidents on the quays launched an appeal from his hospital room ("Comrades, let's be united against accidents at work") and said: "Without you, the machine does not turn", repeated as a slogan on the port along with "Worker, you don't need a boss!" A combativity and a call to unity that are just waiting to be developed... over various bureaucracies and sectarian reflexes.

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PS:

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