

Letter from Greece

Mounting outrage over Syriza betrayal

26 February 2015

The following letter was sent to the World Socialist Web Site from Evel Ekonomakis, a reader in Athens, Greece.

“I’m never voting again, go f--- yourself!”

“We’re all tangled in a filthy embrace, in an orgy in the sewer!”

“We said Revolution, man, burn the damn bridges and don’t look back...but the sheep remain sheep, and become the main dish on the table of every werewolf.”

Such have been the comments from the lips and pens of many good people in Athens following Syriza’s shameless capitulation last Friday at the Eurogroup meeting in Brussels. The anger here is molten-red. Unlike the view from outside Greece, most folks here realize that those who voted on January 25th for Tsipras’ “Coalition of the Radical Left” were not naïve. As one commentator wrote yesterday, “No, they just had the hope that Syriza might perhaps punish the right-wing collaborators who’ve ravaged us all these years.”

The consensus here among leftists is expressed with a bitterly ironic smile on the lips: Syriza has the same mentality as the previous bourgeois governments. This is it, in a nutshell: “You don’t talk, I won’t talk”. Or, “I’ll whitewash you now, so you whitewash me later when you’re back on top.”

So quickly, so suddenly! Syriza has broken the world-record in political back-flips as it reversed its pre-election promises to send the troika bailiffs packing, and to take care of a bleeding, destitute nation, a nation of unspeakable suffering and injustice, a land of 7,000 suicides in record time—and put an end to austerity on January 26, the day after the elections, as promised.

But “back-flip” doesn’t do justice to the kind of level Syriza has sunk to... in less than a few short weeks. Better borrow terms from the world of mollusks, gastropods, to be precise. This is how a friend of mine

blasted Tsipras: “His is the method of the snail—he licks, and licks, and licks, and drags himself forward.” Another posted: “With so much f---ing and sucking going on in Parliament, the deputies ought to be 69—not 300 good-for-nothings” (there are 300 seats in the Vouli, or Parliament).

Among the milder remarks addressed to Varoufakis and Tsipras was this one: “Satan was an angel; in fact, he was the primo angel. And if an angel becomes a devil that tells me that even religion admits that no one is perfect.”

Another leftist wrote: “Syriza, a party that says it doesn’t believe in corrupt bourgeois ways, ought to lift the immunity parliamentarians enjoy. There are quite a few deputies, especially among the center-right New Democracy Party, who ought to be behind bars for the crimes they’ve committed against the Greek people.”

About the Nazis here: everyone knows who attacked and murdered people. But that’s the way things go in the rotten “left-wing” kingdom of “Syrizalnd”. Only the far-right New Democracy government of former PM Antonis Samaras could put the racist fanatics in prison (for its own reasons, of course), and only the “left-wing” government of Alexis Tsipras will find them innocent (again, for its own reasons).

The comments posted by a journalist called Nikos Boyopoulos, a member of the KKE (Communist Party of Greece), were particularly poignant. Unlike many in the leadership of the oldest political party in Greece, this man is neither sluggish, nor self-interested, nor conservative, nor...well, you get the point. He’s not your typical Stalinist. Boyopoulos put fingertips to keyboard, firing off a wonderfully vitriolic and highly insightful article entitled “Varoufakis...at Brest-Litovsk”.

In this article, Boyopoulos addressed all those Syriza supporters who refuse to face up to the fact their party

has duped them. He talked to all those unfortunates who are trying to convince themselves there is a parallel between Finance Minister Varoufakis' signature in Brussels last Friday and the Bolshevik government's signing of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, on March 3, 1918.

Boyopoulos ridiculed the parallels many "leftist" pundits are making between Syriza's so-called "tactical" move toward its "partners", and Lenin, who agreed to the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, the better to serve his strategy. "Are you people serious?" he asked. "As far as we know, Lenin was a communist, not a friend of mild social democracy or a supporter of moderate Keynesian policies." "The Bolsheviks," he continued, "led a social revolution with the...clear aim of overthrowing all class bonds of the old regime" and not simply to re-baptize these bonds (the troika) "institutions". "For example," he went on, "when the young Soviet state signed the treaty, Lenin didn't talk about 'friends', 'partners' and 'allies'. Lenin went to the people and referred to the 'imperialists' and 'thieves'. He didn't speak of 'victory' or 'triumph' or 'successful negotiations', as Tsipras and Varoufakis have. Lenin spoke clearly of blackmail. He signed the Brest Treaty for one reason alone: if he hadn't done so, the Imperial German armies would've throttled the young Soviet government in its cradle. By signing that ignominious piece of paper, Lenin guarded the flame of revolution alive.

What exactly did the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk guard and protect? Simple, as Boyopoulos pointed out: a number of extremely important decrees, beginning with the Decrees on Peace and Land, signed the day after Trotsky's Red Guards stormed the Winter Palace and seized control from Kerensky's forces in Petrograd, on October 26. The first decree pulled Russia out of the imperialist game and World War One. In other words, Lenin—unlike Varoufakis et al—didn't sign any document recognizing Russia's continued presence in a "common European house" with imperialists. Lenin put no pen to paper placing the internal politics of Russia under the "supervision" or "control" of the imperialists. Similarly, the Decree on Land abolished land ownership by the Russian *pomeshchiki*, or land-owning nobles, including land owned by the royal family and the Church. Boyopoulos is astute and to-the-point: "Lenin...never signed any piece of paper giving

the green light to privatizations. By contrast, Alexis Tsipras has condoned the continued existence in the port of Piraeus of Cosco, the giant Chinese shipping concern."

What followed these two decrees was a string of other powerful laws on Labor, Nationalization of Banks, Nationalization of the Merchant Fleet, and the Annulment of all Internal and External Loans.

These are the things the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk protected! Lenin, Trotsky and the Bolsheviks refused to give in to the imperialists. They told the local and foreign thieves, robbers, and usurers to go packing. Now it's the turn of the Greek people to take matters into their own hands and get rid of Syriza. Only after we've done this can we deal with the external enemy. But we can't do it alone.

Evel Ekonomakis

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