

TO TELL THE TRUTH IS REVOLUTIONARY¹

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Following the imposition of the third Memorandum of Understanding on 12 July 2015-despite the triumphant result of the Referendum some days ago-, the democratically imperative elections of last September (which, however, were organized with the leadership ignoring the decision of the Central Committee to hold a Congress during the same month) and the party's split, the second government of the "new SYRIZA" (unfortunately, again, with the right-wing party of ANEL) is confronted with serious problems.

People were frustrated and disappointed from our inability to abolish the Memoranda and implement an anti-austerity programme within the Eurozone- that led us to the historical victory of January 2015. Nevertheless, popular classes renewed their confidence to SYRIZA in the elections of September, under the party's commitment to administrate the neoliberal Memorandum in a much more fair way than that of the Right and the Social Democrats, the so called Extreme Center. Today, we can see the difficulties and the limits of this effort. The party's President spoke about the optimism of the will. However, communists and leftists know that this goes together with the pessimism of the intellect.

It is true that the government members are negotiating hard with the Quartet, that certain social policies are being implemented in order to bring respite to the poorest sections of the population, that-given the extremely tight financial restrictions- a serious effort is being made to increase efficiency, reduce waste and fight corruption in various fields, such as healthcare, education, social assistance and public administration, that the effort to face the acute refugee problem is permanent and insisting-despite some serious strategic, but also administrative mistakes- and that there also other achievements which are included in the report of Prime Minister.

¹ This is the complete speech of the author at the SYRIZA Congress.

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However, the Memorandum, which is not the government's "property"-and this must be continuously emphasized to every direction- but was imposed on it by a "coup", is unrelenting and the guardianship merciless, as we have been claiming since 2010. This is the reason why the popular alliance (workers, precariat, traditional and new petty bourgeoisie, unemployed, youth, but also pensioners and peasants) that led us to government twice seems to take distances from SYRIZA, a situation that is also reflected in the opinion polls. Unfortunately, unemployment continues to be very high, part-time employment at very low wages which condemn working people to poverty keeps increasing, social expenditure is very limited, privatizations continue, pensions have been cut, arbitrary police behavior does not seem to decline.

What can we do then?

- a) Understand that without getting rid from the guardianship of the institutions, without writing off a large part of the non-sustainable debt and without the radical decrease of primary surpluses which could bring a relaxation of austerity, any effort to counter the catastrophic social effects of the harsh Memorandum, i.e. the pauperization of the people, is doomed to failure. Under the present circumstances a "left success story" is impossible.
- b) Given the need to overthrow the existing situation through a "war of positions" which does not exclude ruptures, alliances at geographic level (with the countries of Southern Europe) or at political level (like the dialogue with the Greens and Social Democracy, which must be selective and careful in order not to disrupt the relation of SYRIZA with the parties of the European Left and other left European political forces, the left wing of socialdemocratic parties, as well as trade-unions and social movements of various countries, are useful and the government rightly tries to forge them, provided they do not exhaust the party's European strategy. However, these policies should of course be incorporated in a general plan of the party and the government, with the latter not acting without prior notice of and in consultation with the former, something that doesn't usually happen- and not only on this issue.

- c) The “Refoundation of Europe”, referred in the Theses, is a basic prerequisite for a potential success of SYRIZA’s effort. Neoliberal and undemocratic really existing European integration is being shaken to its foundation and it is highly possibly to collapse as it happened in 1989 with the so called really existing socialism, this time under the hegemony of populist and extreme Right. This applies much more to the Eurozone which was problematic from the outset. It is a common place that the European Monetary Union is not sustainable, unless it is radically changed, a rather improbable eventuality under the present balance of forces in Europe.
- d) However, no credible plan for the “Refoundation of Europe” can exist without a discontinuity with the past, without ruptures and-why not?-disobedience to the diktats of both institutional (Commission, ECB) and para-institutional (Troika or Quartet, Eurogroup, independent competitive commissions in every EU country according to the Five Presidents’ Report etc) organs –ruptures not disorderly and isolated, but internationally organized and coordinated- without the strengthening of democracy and the respect of national and popular sovereignty. If we are to achieve all these, it is necessary that the radical Left-united if possible- plays a dominant governmental role in more than one country, mainly in some of the larger in size, and to be based on a robust national and European movement.
- e) Within the framework of the Party of the European Left, SYRIZA can pursue a policy of “enhanced cooperation” with the Southern Europe’s parties of the radical Left, aiming to promote common policy proposals and coordinated interventions at EU Councils of Ministers (mainly at ECOFIN), at the Eurogroup, but also within the European movements. Cooperation for interventions at the European institutions can be extended at an ad hoc basis for specific issues (i.e. the refugee problem, CETA and TTIP etc) also to parties of other political families which are in government.
- f) SYRIZA should participate in the developing debate throughout Europe on the issue of the Eurozone and generally of European integration, i.e. in public events organized either by groups and initiatives friendly to or tolerating SYRIZA (i.e. the Party of European Left, GUE/NGL, transform,

Alter Summit, even the pro-European DIEM 25 of Yianis Varoufakis) or/and hostile to it (i.e PLAN B). This is the only way not to lose its necessary contact with the movements that are developing in Europe and attract many young people. Our continent is very angry and in turmoil and we should not leave the populist and extreme Right to benefit from this situation.

- g) Given that the conflict with institutions will continue in the future and for an unspecified period, while developments in Europe and the stances of some EU countries' governments-mainly that of Germany-towards Greece are anything but predictable, we must be prepared for any eventuality.
- h) Finally, I support the view that we do not govern at all costs, but only if we can really defend popular interests-to whatever degree we can do this in the suffocating blanket of the Memorandum. Given that the future lasts a long time, SYRIZA should be a strong, democratic party of the radical Left, with tendencies and currents, not depending on the charisma of its leader, and steadily aiming to social transformation of Greece and Europe, even if it is out of government.