

Countering the Far-Right in Greece

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Region: [Europe](#)

Theme: [Police State & Civil Rights](#)

How is Europe to deal with all those displaced by U.S. / NATO wars on Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya, Syria ? What responsibility does Greece have for the refugees of the West's new world order ? Forced into debt, Greece is additionally burdened by several hundred thousand displaced people seeking refuge. Of these about fifty thousand are officially noted as "refugees" by the UN Refugee Agency.

A recent poll shows popularity of the extreme-right political party, "Golden Dawn," has risen from 7% (435,000 votes) at the last election to 13.5%. With the same formula as the "Jobbik" Party in Hungary, or Geert Wilders' "Party for Freedom" in the Netherlands, "Golden Dawn" appeals to the majority's racial, religious, language identity, and rises through making vulnerable groups scapegoats for political gain.

Once started, this mechanism extends as additional groups are sacrificed to deflect populist anger. Historically the parties are a danger to refugee, immigrant, Roma, Jewish, Muslim and LGT communities, and find power to effect their policies through parliamentary alliances with establishment conservatives. In Austria the far-right now includes "Team Stronach," recently founded by the Austrian/Canadian auto-parts magnate. As the crushing austerity programs are forced on Greece, a nationalist extreme right gains power to serve the enforcers. The *European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI)* describes "Golden Dawn" as a "neo-Nazi, racist and xenophobic political party."

To protest "Golden Dawn," *Mouvement Antiraciste Européen / European Grassroots Antiracist Movement (EGAM)*, has called for a march in Athens, December 15th at 3 PM, from the Greek Parliament to the Acropolis. EGAM (egam-eu.blogspot.ca/) attempts to mobilize decency beyond ideologies in a European society suffering from anti-communism, Disneyland, the *Heimat* syndrome, and austerity programs. In France EGAM has organized for Roma pride. Last May thousands internationally, signed its petition "We are all Greek Jews" (still open to signature at <http://weareallgreekjews.eu>). But to understand what decency is up against, consider what "Golden Dawn" is:

In WWII, EAM (the Communist Party and aligned resistance) freed Greece from occupation. The Allies formed an army of royalists and the right wing to fight against EAM, and won after resistance groups fought each other. The resulting 'democracy' was taken over by NATO supported Greek special forces, and a military junta ruled from 1967 to 1974. Return to democracy allowed superficial stabilization. In the 1980's "Golden Dawn" was initially sponsored by the imprisoned leaders of the military junta. Covert military organizations were officially dissolved in 1988, but their chain of command, loyalties, and m.o., were not reliant on Greek officialdom. Could remnants of these have been activated to "control" the influx of refugees ?

NATO operations in Greece have shown some parallels to descriptions of the CIA's Operation "Gladio" throughout Europe, which left covert paramilitary units in each country at the end of WWII to fight Communist takeovers. These were used to counter the democratic election of Communist candidates. With proven application in Italy, operational tactics included destabilization, assassination, false flag operations, terrorizing voters, mobs with a purpose, individual murders, car burnings, chaos, which shifted the voting public to the right. "Gladio" elements were based in right wing fringe parties, police, military and intelligence networks:

"General Geraldo Serravalle, a former head of 'Office R', told the terrorism commission that at a crucial Gladio meeting in 1972, at least half of the upper echelons 'had the idea of attacking the communists before an invasion. They were preparing for civil war.' Later, he put it more bluntly: 'They were saying this: "Why wait for the invaders when we can make a preemptive attack now on the communists who would support the invader?'" The idea is now emerging of a Gladio web made up of semi-autonomous cadres which - although answerable to their secret service masters and ultimately to the NATO-CIA command - could initiate what they regarded as anti-communist operations by themselves, needing only sanction and funds from the existing 'official' Gladio column." (*The Guardian*, Ed Vulliamy, Dec. 5, 1990, quoted in Wikipedia]

Their alleged operations were not unlike those subsequently in evidence in Rwanda. Amid the overwhelming materials of Peter Erlinder's *Rwanda Documents Project*, is "Operation Order no. 11" from the UN Mission to Rwanda, of May 1994, which finds a "Third Force" in the war between Paul Kagame's RPF and Rwandan Government Forces (RGF) during the genocide:

"There is however a third element or force that has significantly affected the overall situation behind the RGF lines. This force has been mixing with the general population and seems to have its base in the political militia, youth wings and the local quarter self-defence groups with some overt support of the Military/Gendarmerie. These groups have often demonstrated fanatical and ruthless actions and quite often are under the influence of alcohol and drugs while at the barricades or while roving the streets and hillsides. They seem to have been the principle authors, as far as can be ascertained, . [sic.] of the terrible atrocities and destruction throughout most of the country."

"Each individual military or self-defence cell seem to have a self appointed leader who does not necessarily obey or take orders from anyone in the normal chain of authority. They are mostly armed with traditional weapons but several of them carry arms and grenades. They seem to have enough money. [sic.] to sustain their sections. ...etc." Faced with a huge influx of people escaping NATO's destabilization of devastated countries, the Greek government is pursuing its policy of deporting and detaining those the media call "illegal immigrants." These are often refugees, with the human rights of refugees. In the tradition of *Festung Europa*, Frontex (The European Union's collective border defense force) is deployed. The Greek government is building 50 new detention camps.

The screw of fascism's advance is tightened in Greece with "Golden Dawn's" overt racist insults in Parliament, epithets, provocations and public acts of violence against innocents. Some of these events are widely reported or shown on TV. Extreme right wing street tactics instill fear. The Church of Greece speaks from both sides of the aisle. Police inaction pushes the frightened to cooperation. Nationalist curricula are introduced into schools. A tactic of Greeks-only economies is developing. While "Golden Dawn" is the only party that takes to

the streets to feed people (the press doesn't reveal its funding), to be fed you have to be Greek, white, and not LGT, and you have to speak Greek. Refugees, migrants, immigrants, are not fed. With a cloak of thuggery and neo-fascism, "Golden Dawn" puts aside decency to effect a single group's agenda without implicating its masters.

In its early stages "Golden Dawn" seemed to operate as a psychological warfare unit. Initially a tiny group, the smooth transition from a fear unit to political machine garnering 435,000 votes suggests a pre-planned operation, with deep organization and funding.

On December 15th, hundreds perhaps many thousands of Greeks will join the professors and teachers who have signed with *EGAM* to walk the walk from Parliament to the Acropolis. Last week a "Golden Dawn" office was bombed with a crude device. Anti-fascist protests continue to occur throughout Greece. Anti-fascist motorcycle club patrols appear in Athens. In September shipyard workers storm the defense ministry for their pay.

In October 70,000 protest austerity measures at Parliament. On November 17th to mark the killing of a student which started the uprising against the military junta nearly forty years ago, 20,000 march on the U.S. and Israeli embassies. In Thessaloniki, November 28, 8000 people protest resource extraction by Canada's Eldorado Gold Corp. In Athens the Federation of municipal employees calls a strike for Dec. 14th. Migrants in two of the detention centres riot because conditions are unsanitary. No one can adequately protest the closing of fifty hospitals. The strength of resistance remains with the students, the Unions, the people at large.

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