

Greece - “Economic Suicide” or Murder?

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Pundits from the left, from the right and from the center cannot stop reporting about Greece's misery. And rightly so. Because Greece, the vast majority of her people live in deep economic hardship. No hope. Unemployment is officially at 18%, with the real figure closer to 25% or 30%; pensions have been reduced about ten times since Syriza - the Socialist Party - took power in 2015 and loaded the country with debt and austerity. In the domain of public services, everything that has any value has been privatized and sold to foreign corporations, oligarchs, or, naturally - banks. Hospitals, schools, public transportation - even some beaches - have been privatized and made unaffordable for the common people.

While the pundits - always more or less the same - keep lamenting about the Greek conditions in one form or another, none of them dares offer the only solution that could have rescued Greece (and still could) - exiting the euro zone; return to their local currency and start rebuilding Greece with a local economy, built on local currency with local public banking and with a sovereign Greek central bank deciding the monetary policy that best suits Greece, and especially Greece's recovery program. - Why not? Why do they not talk about this obvious solution? Would they be censured in Greece, because the Greek oligarchy controls the media - as oligarchs do around the (western part of the) globe?

Instead, foreign imposed (troika: IMF, European Central Bank - ECB - and European Commission - EC; the latter mainly pushed by German and French banks - and the Rothschild clan) austerity programs have literally put a halt on imports of affordable medication, like for cancer treatments and other potentially lethal illnesses. So, common people get no longer treatment. They die like flies; a horrible expression to be used for human beings. But that's what it comes down to for people who simply do not get the treatment they humanely deserve and would have gotten under the rights of the Greek Constitution, but do simply not get treated because they can no longer afford medication and services from privatized health services. That is the sad but true story.

As a consequence, the suicide rate is up, due to foreign imposed (but Greek government accepted) debt and austerity, annihilating hope for terminally ill patients, as well as for pensioners whose pensions do no longer allow them to live a decent life - and especially there is no light at the end of the tunnel.

Now, these same pundits add a little air of optimism to their reporting, as the rightwing New Democracy Party (ND Party) won with what they call a 'landslide' victory on the 7 July 2019 elections; gathering 39.6% of the votes, against only 31.53 for Syriza, the so-called socialist party, led by outgoing **Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras**, who represents a tragedy that has allowed Greece to be plunged into this hopeless desolation. The ND won an absolute

majority with 158 seats in the 300-member Greek parliament. Therefore, no coalition needed, no concessions required.



The new Prime Minister, **Kyriakos Mitsotakis** (51), son of a former PM of the same party, in his victory speech on the evening of 7 July, vowed that Greece will “proudly” enter a post-bailout era of “jobs, security and growth”. He added that “a painful cycle has closed” and that Greece would “proudly raise its head again” on his watch.

We don’t know what this means for the average Greek citizen living a life of despair. What the “left” was unable to do – stopping the foreign imposed (but Greek accepted) bleeding of Greece; the strangulation of their country – will the right be able to reverse that trend? Does the right *want* to reverse that trend? – Does the ND want to reverse privatization, buy back airports from Germany, water supply from the EU managed “Superfund”, and repurchase the roads from foreign concessionaires, or nationalize hospitals that were sold for a pittance and – especially – get out from austerity to allow importing crucial medication to salvage the sick and dying Greek, those who currently cannot afford treatment of their cancers and other potentially deadly diseases?

That would indeed be a step towards PM Mitsotakis’ promise to end the “painful cycle” of austerity, with import of crucial medication made affordable to those in dire need, with job creation and job security – and much more – with eventually a renewed Greek pride – and Greek sovereignty. The latter would mean – finally – it’s never too late – exit the euro zone. But, that’s an illusion – a pipe-dream. Albeit – it could become a vision.

If the ND is the party of the oligarchs, the Greek oligarchs that is, those Greek who have placed literally billions of euros outside their country in (still) secret bank accounts in Switzerland, France, Lichtenstein, Luxemburg and elsewhere, including the Cayman islands and other Caribbean tax havens – hidden not only from the Greek fiscal authorities, but also impeding that these funds could, crucially, be used for investments at home, for job creation, for creation of added value in Greece – if the ND is the party of the oligarchs, they are unlikely to make the dream of the vast majority of Greek people come true.

Worse even, these Greek oligarch-billionaires call the shots in Greece - not the people, not those who according to Greek tradition and according to the Greek invention, called "democracy" (Delphi, some 2500 years ago) have democratically elected Syriza and have democratically voted against the austerity packages in July 2015. Now, that they are officially in power, they are unlikely to change their greed-driven behavior and act in favor of the Greek people. - Or will they?

Because, if they do, it may eventually also benefit them, the ND Party and its adherents - a Greece that functions like a country, with happy, healthy and content people, is a Greece that retains the worldwide esteem and respect she deserves - and will by association develop an economy that can and will compete and trade around the world, a Greece that is an equal to others, as a sovereign nation. - A dream can become a reality - it just takes visionaries.

Back to today's reality. The Greek Bailout Referendum of July 5, 2015, was overwhelmingly rejected with 61% 'no' against 39% 'yes', meaning that almost two thirds of the Greek people would have preferred the consequences of rejecting the bailout, euphemistically called "rescue packages", namely exiting the euro zone, and possible, but not necessarily, the European Union.

Despite the overwhelming, democratic rejection by the people, the Tsipras government reached an agreement on 13 July 2015 - only 8 days after the vote against the bailout - with the European authorities for a three-year bailout with even harsher austerity conditions than the ones rejected by voters. What went on is anybody's guess. It looks pretty obvious, though, that "foul play" was the name of the game - which could mean anything from outright and serious (life) threats to blackmail, if Tsipras would not play the game - and this to the detriment of the people.

President Tsipras' betrayal of the people resulted in three bailout packages since 2010 and up to end 2018, in the amount of about €310 billion (US\$ 360 billion). Compare this to Hong Kong's economy of US\$ 340 billion in 2017. In that same period the Greek GDP has declined from about US\$ 300 billion (€ 270 billion) in 2010 to US\$ 218 billion (€ 196 billion), a reduction of 27%, hitting the middle- and lower-class people by far the hardest. This is called a rescue.

The democracy fiasco of July 2015 prompted Tsipras to call for snap elections in September 2015, hélas - he won, with a narrow margin and one of the lowest election turnouts ever in Greek postwar history; but, yes, he 'won'. How much of it was manipulated - by now Cambridge Analytica has become a household word - so he could finish the job for the troika and the German and French banks, is pure speculation.

Today, the ND has an absolute majority in Parliament, plus the ND could ally with a number of smaller and conservative parties to pursue a "people's dream" line policy. But they may do the opposite. Question: How much more juice is there to be sucked out of broken Greece? Of a Greece that cannot care for her people, for her desperate poor and sick, cannot provide her children with a decent education, of a Greece that belongs into the category of bankruptcy? - Yes, bankruptcy, still today, after the IMF and the gnomes of the EU and the ECB predict a moderate growth rate of some 2%? - But 2% that go to whom? - Not to the people, to be sure, but to the creditors of the €310 billion.

Already in 2011, the British Lancet stated "the Greek Ministry of Health reported that the

annual suicide rate has increased by 40%", presumably since the (imposed) crisis that started in 2008. From this date forward the suicide rate must have skyrocketed, as the overall living conditions worsened exponentially. However, precise figures can no longer be easily found.

The question remains: Is the Greek population dying increasingly from diseases that could be cured, but aren't due to austerity- and privatization-related lack of medication and health services - and of suicide from desperation? - Is Greece committing suicide by continuing accepting austerity and privatization of vital services, instead of liberating herself from the handcuffs of the euro and very likely the stranglehold of the EU? - Or is Greece the victim of sheer murder inflicted by a greed-driven construct of money institutions and oligarchs, who are beyond morals, beyond ethics and beyond any values of humanity? You be the judge.

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