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Greece :

Victorious mobilizations in Greece against the backdrop of the police state

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The commemorations of the revolt and massacre of the students of the Polytechnic University under the colonels' junta in 1973 are every year a rather reliable barometer of the social and political temperature in Greece.

Although last year the extreme right-wing government of Mitsotakis used the pandemic as a pretext to ban the demonstrations - which nevertheless took place! - the pretext would have been too big this year. The Prime Minister's policies are starting to be massively disavowed, despite the efforts of the media (to which the government has generously distributed 40 million euros).

On 17 November, the demonstrations were massive everywhere, and of course in Athens (30,000 demonstrators), with an impressive presence of the youth, and even if Mitsotakis didn't dare to push the provocation (while deploying 6,000 policemen), the repression was strong in Thessaloniki, with also intimidations to prevent young people from going to the demonstrations.

A promising social autumn?

What has changed in recent months is above all the social climate. While the government is adopting laws made to measure for the employers, massive mobilisations have taken place recently. The mobilizations in the delivery and catering sector culminated in September, with an exemplary strike by the delivery workers of the efood company, supported by many customers who cancelled their subscriptions.

The result: more than 2,000 employees were given permanent contracts, with their seniority taken into account. The mobilization in the sector continued against the precarious working conditions: another successful strike for safety equipment on 9 November... And against the refusal of their union leadership to mobilize further against evaluation, many teachers continue the battle against a minister who may be worse than Blanquer!

Right-wing flight to safety

Faced with this growing anger, the right is visibly worried and there are some signs of division. Mitsotakis chooses to reinforce the "Orbanesque" course, supported by the far-right current in his party and in government. Thus, while international surveys indicate that Greece has the highest level of antisemitism in Europe, this summer he appointed a former fascist lawyer (son of the Greek ideologue of Nazism) as Health Minister, known for his antisemitic declarations, provoking the concern of the Jewish community, and perceived as a provocation in the face of a very serious health situation (about 80 to 90 deaths from the virus every day), with the right refusing to strengthen the public health service.

A series of laws reminiscent of the dark ages have been passed, such as a penal code repressing freedom of expression... The intelligence services, under the sole control of Mitsotakis, are harassing journalists, lawyers and activists. The police seem to be able to do whatever they want: recently, a young Roma man was killed (36 bullets were fired) by police officers who disobeyed orders to stop the pursuit... and who were supported by the (ex-fascist) Minister of Development and by the Minister of Police!

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This climate of intimidation linked to a catastrophic ultra-liberal policy, far from provoking the desired submission, reinforces an obvious combativeness in everyday life. The next step is how to amplify and organize this combativity in the coming period, in the face of recent laws against the right to strike and the fighting unions.

PS:

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