

Military Resistance 13D5



**Strike Of 130,000 Students
Against Budget Cuts Rocks
Quebec:
75,000 Students, Unionists And
Political Activists March In
Montreal;
“Unions Had A Significant Presence
Of Members”
“Couillard’s Government Has
Responded To The Renewed Struggle
With Unprecedented Brutality”**



Mass demonstration in Quebec (A.J. Korkidakis | Ricochet.Media)

April 8, 2015 by Ashley Smith, Socialist Worker [Excerpts]

More than 130,000 students went on strike throughout Quebec on April 2 to protest Premier Philippe Couillard's budget cuts.

Organized by the Association pour une solidarité syndical étudiante (ASSÉ), the student strike shut down whole parts of the higher education system, from post-secondary colleges (CEGEPS) to the province's main public universities.

The day of action is part of a re-emerging student movement after its high point with the 2012 "Maple Spring," when indefinite and continual mass mobilizations paralyzed Quebec higher education and led to the downfall of then-Quebec Premier Jean Charest and his Liberal Party government.

Also on April 2, ASSÉ staged a mass demonstration under the slogan "Our Services Are Worth More than Your Profits." Over 75,000 students, unionists and political activists responded to the call.

They poured into Victoria Square, in the heart of Montreal's financial district, and marched through the city, concluding at the epicenter of the student revolt, the Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM).

Thousands of students came from Montreal itself, emerging in an almost endless stream from the Metro station by Victoria Square.

Buses brought large contingents from the CEGEPS and universities from all over the province.

Importantly, though, students did not march alone.

Unions had a significant presence of members, staffers and officials.

The placards of the Confédération des syndicats nationaux (CSN) and Fédération des travailleurs et travailleuses du Québec (FTQ) were spread far and wide through the demonstration.

Some professors and their unions joined the students in striking and protesting. The faculty union at UQAM went out on strike for the day. It organized its own contingent in the march, which was greeted with joyous applause from striking students.

The province's left-wing party, Québec Solidaire (QS), also had a large contingent of members, with their brilliant orange placards.

By contrast, the Parti Québécois (PQ), which has widely discredited itself in the eyes of the students, barely managed any kind of presence. Some of its members who mustered the courage to carry a banner were greeted with jeers and chants defaming them as a bourgeois party.

The protest had the feel of a defiant carnival. Marching bands led some contingents, students blasted vuvuzelas, and there were, of course, the obligatory giant puppets. One stunning puppet was a giant howling wolf, which has become one of the symbols of this spring's actions.

Underneath the celebratory climate burned a rage against the austerity being rammed through by the provincial government. Inspired by the Red Hand Coalition, which unites 80 student, union and community groups, many marchers painted their hands and faces red to symbolize their subjection to increased tuition and consequent debt.

This strike and protest were the largest since Quebec's Maple Spring in 2012. In that last round of struggle, students shut down higher education institutions and organized mass demonstrations that stopped Premier Charest's plans to raise tuition and eventually chased him from office, effectively ending his political career.

The PQ came to power after trouncing the Liberals in September 2012 election--only to betray expectations, demoralize their base and open the door for the Liberals to return to power only 18 months after their fall from power. Couillard's new regime promises to revive Quebec capitalism through government austerity and tax cuts for the corporations and the rich.

“Couillard's Regime Has Essentially Declared War On Workers, Public Services, Education And The Environment”

Since the 2008 economic crisis, the province's economy has been stagnant, with growth rates of about 1.5 percent a year. And corporate investment has dropped because of low returns. This sluggish economy has cut into the province's revenues, leading to large deficits and a provincial debt of over \$200 billion.

These conditions have compelled the last several PQ and Liberal governments to try to impose neoliberal austerity. Couillard's regime has essentially declared war on workers, public services, education and the environment. In doing so, he hopes to increase labor productivity and cut services, all to restore growth and corporate profits, no matter what the social impact.

Couillard's austerity program is one of the most extreme in the world. He has proposed \$729 million in cuts this year, to be followed up by another \$853 million more next year. Education is one target. The Montreal Gazette reports that budget will cut \$5 million from school boards, \$21 million from the CEGEP system, and another \$10 million from the universities. They are conducting similar cuts to the health care system.

Couillard is also taking aim at public-sector workers and their unions. He is demanding wage freezes for the next two years, followed by three years of a 1 percent raise. Given inflation, this amounts to cuts in wages for the next five years.

By contrast, Couillard plans to reduce corporate tax rates from 11.9 to 11.5 percent in the hopes of stimulating business investment.

Couillard's assault has stirred workers, environmentalists and students into struggle.

Unions have built several anti-austerity protests to stop the attacks on their members. For example, on November 29, unions joined students and community organizations in demonstrations of hundreds of thousands in Montreal and tens of thousands in Quebec City to oppose the budget cuts and defend their right to collectively bargain pensions. While they lost that right, their march could be a sign of union struggle to come.

Environmentalists have also activated in opposition to Canada's plan to run tar sands pipelines through Quebec. They have organized the Act on Climate March in Quebec City on April 11 to protest the summit of Canada's premiers.

They declare:

"Canada must leave 85 percent of the tar sands in the soil in order to help the human race avoid catastrophic climate change. That means no new tar sands pipelines. No Keystone, no Energy East, no Kinder Morgan, No Northern Gateway. Build even one, and we torpedo our chances of stopping global warming. We stand on the edge of a precipice, and a lack of political will threatens to send us over it."

The students hope to galvanize the unions and environmental activists in a united fight. Some organized outside ASSÉ in an informal grouping called Printemps 2015 agitated for students to strike this spring against Couillard's austerity measures as well as the oil economy.

They timed the strikes to coincide with the expiration of union contracts in the hopes that unions would join them in a social strike against the government. Over 60,000 students went out on an unlimited strike at the end of March. As part of the struggle, activists organized marches in Montreal and Quebec City.

"Couillard's Government Has Responded To The Renewed Struggle With Unprecedented Brutality"

Couillard's government has responded to the renewed struggle with unprecedented brutality.

The authorities have ordered police to attack smaller protests with tear gas, batons and, for the first time, attack dogs.

In one incident, police fired a tear gas canister at point-blank range into the face of Noémie Tremblay-Trudeau at a protest in Quebec City.

Far from intimidating her and the movement, she emerged from the hospital to lead another march of thousands of her fellow students.

But the cops struck again on April 2. They did not have the forces to attack the main demonstration, but after that ended, they sought out and attacked smaller contingents that continued marching through the city. In one case, after students chanted "No justice, no peace, fuck the police," police assaulted them with clubs, tear gas and pepper spray.

The Liberal Party's minister of education, François Blais, has called for university administrators to join the government's repression of the movement. He railed, "There are disciplinary measures available, up to and including expulsion." He suggested that administrators "should use them. If you were to do so for two of the people per day, that would cool the ardor of certain people."

University administrators have followed government orders. UQAM is attempting to expel nine key student leaders. Other administrations are pursuing charges against strikers for shutting down classes through picket lines and protests.

The march on April 2 was, in many ways, an act of defiance, courage and determination in the face of such state-sanctioned repression.

But the new student strike wave faces enormous obstacles to achieve the goal of a social strike that unites them with workers and environmentalists. While ASSÉ managed to bring out large numbers for the strike and demonstration last week, only about 55,000 are currently on an unlimited strike, a little over half its membership of 80,000.

Those students on strike are concentrated at UQAM, the Université de Montréal and a couple of Montreal's CEGEPS. Beyond this militant layer, there are few CEGEPS who are willing to go on an unlimited strike against austerity and the oil economy.

On top of that, public-sector unions are unlikely to go out on strike at this point. While they supported the ASSÉ's march on April 2, union officials are not legally allowed to call a strike in the immediate aftermath of their contracts expiring. They first have to go through mediation, and only after that fails can they go out on strike, a possibility for some this fall. The rank and file is not yet organized and prepared to disobey their leadership and strike illegally.

May Day promises to be an enormous outpouring of union protests and student strikes. But it appears unlikely that it will expand to reach the scale of struggle of 2012, let alone trigger a united social strike against austerity.

The key challenge facing ASSÉ will be coming up with a strategic plan to take the struggle forward. If it can do so, it has the opportunity over this summer to build solidarity with the unions, which can legally strike this fall.

So if the new struggle against austerity doesn't produce a Maple Spring, it may instead make a Maple Autumn.

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Mass. Soldier Killed In Afghanistan Recalled As 'Great Kid'



Army Specialist John M. Dawson. Defense Department/AP

April 10, 2015 By Sean P. Murphy, Globe Staff

A 22-year-old member of the US Army from Whitinsville was killed in Afghanistan when an Afghan soldier attacked his American allies earlier this week.

John M. Dawson, an Army specialist, died in Jalalabad from wounds suffered when he was hit by small arms fire while on an escort mission, the Defense Department said in a statement.

The gunman was an Afghan National Army soldier who "turned traitor" on his American allies, said Army Sergeant Paul Reis, who was assigned as a liaison to the Dawson family after Dawson's death. He said other soldiers were wounded in the attack.

Dawson's cousin, James F. Baxendale, said Dawson was a proud soldier and "the kind of kid anyone would be proud to have as a son."

He said his cousin grew up next door to him in the village of Whitinsville, about 15 miles south of Worcester.

"You hear stories of casualties, and you feel bad, but when it happens to someone next door, one of your own, it's devastating," Baxendale, 67, said.

"We mourn his loss," he said. "He was like a nephew to me. A great kid."

'You hear stories of casualties, and you feel bad, but when it happens to someone next door, one of your own, it's devastating.'

James F. Baxendale, cousin of slain Army Specialist John M. Dawson of Whitinsville

Dawson, a combat medic, was assigned to First Squadron, 33d Cavalry Regiment, Third Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, according to the Department of Defense. He trained for service at Fort Sill, Okla.; Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio; and Fort Campbell, Ky., the Defense Department said.

He is the first US servicemember killed as part of the advise-and-assist mission begun by the US military on Jan. 1 as the Afghan military takes over security of the country, according to the Worcester Telegram & Gazette.

A statement released by the American Resolute Support mission in Jalalabad said the Afghan soldier opened fire at the group of US soldiers at the provincial governor's compound in eastern Afghanistan. "We remain committed to assisting our Afghan partners in achieving sustainable security and stability," Resolute Support said. "This attack will not weaken our resolve."

Dawson, a lifelong resident of Whitinsville, graduated from Blackstone Valley Regional Technical High School in Upton and went on to the Massachusetts Maritime Academy in Buzzards Bay, Baxendale said.

He left school after a year and in 2012 enlisted in the Army.

"The Dawsons are a very close family," Baxendale said.

"He had a good attitude about being an American and being in the military," said his cousin, who last saw Dawson last summer. "He was proud to be an American, and he was proud to be in the military. "He wanted to serve, and he made the ultimate sacrifice for his country."

Thomas Melia, vice chairman of the Northbridge Board of Selectmen, said word of Dawson's death spread quickly in the Whitinsville section of Northbridge and beyond.

"It's a tragedy for the family and for the whole town," Melia said. "On behalf of the town, and the Board of Selectmen, our sincere condolences go out to the Dawson family. This touches us all very deeply."

Melia said he planned to go to Town Hall on Friday to begin planning a tribute to Dawson.

Dawson leaves his parents, Rhonda and Michael, and a sister, Ashley.

**POLITICIANS REFUSE TO HALT THE
BLOODSHED**

**THE TROOPS HAVE THE POWER TO STOP THE
WAR**

**“A Swamp Of Militants, Numbering
200 Fighters, Attacked Checkpoints
Of Afghan Army”
33 Casualties**

Apr 12 2015 By Mirwais Adeel, Khaama Press & Afghanistan Times

At least 33 service members of the Afghan National Army (ANA) were martyred, wounded or captured in an attack by the Taliban militants in northeastern Badakhshan province.

A swamp of militants, numbering 200 fighters, attacked checkpoints of Afghan army in Jurm district of the northeastern province.

Gen. Zahir Azimi, spokesman for the Ministry of Defense (MoD), confirmed that 33 soldiers of the Afghan National Army (ANA) were martyred, wounded or kidnapped in the attack.

In the meantime, another military official, said at least 14 Afghan National Army (ANA) soldiers were captured by the Taliban militants.

The coordinated attack by the Taliban militants was launched late on Friday night in Jurm district which lasted for several hours.

MILITARY NEWS

ISIS Storms Baiji Oil Refinery

April 13, 2015 By Arwa Damon and Hamdi Alkhshali, CNN

Irbil, Iraq — ISIS claimed it controlled part of Iraq’s largest oil refinery Sunday, posting images online that show the storming of the facility, fierce clashes and plumes of smoke rising above the contested site.

The group said it launched an assault on the Baiji oil refinery late Saturday.

By Sunday, ISIS said its fighters were inside the refinery and controlled several buildings

It wouldn’t be the first time that militants and Iraqi forces have battled over the refinery, a key strategic resource that has long been a lucrative target because the facility refines much of the fuel used by Iraqis domestically.

If an attack damaged oil fields or machinery, it could have a significant impact.

The refinery is just 40 kilometers (25 miles) from the northern Iraqi city of Tikrit, which Iraqi forces and Shiite militias wrested from ISIS less than two weeks ago.

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS



“At a time like this, scorching irony, not convincing argument, is needed. Oh had I the ability, and could reach the nation’s ear, I would, pour out a fiery stream of biting ridicule, blasting reproach, withering sarcasm, and stern rebuke.

“For it is not light that is needed, but fire; it is not the gentle shower, but thunder.

“We need the storm, the whirlwind, and the earthquake.”

“The limits of tyrants are prescribed by the endurance of those whom they oppose.”

Frederick Douglass, 1852

Marxists know that democracy does *not* abolish class oppression.

It only makes the class struggle more direct, wider, more open and pronounced, and that is what we need.

The fuller the freedom of divorce, the clearer will women see that the source of their “domestic slavery” is capitalism, not lack of rights.

The more democratic the system of government, the clearer will the workers see that the root evil is capitalism, not lack of rights.

The fuller national equality (and it is *not* complete without freedom of secession), the clearer will the workers of the oppressed nations see that the cause of their oppression is capitalism, not lack of rights, etc.

-- V. I. Lenin, Collected Works, 4th English Edition; Vol. 23

FYI: Military Resistance Website Visits: Top Ten Sources Of Visits Ranked 1-10 March 2015

- 1 China**
- 2 USA**
- 3 Germany**
- 4 Ukraine**
- 5 France**
- 6 “Unknown” [Source Masked]**
- 7 Canada**
- 8 Romania**
- 9 Finland**
- 10 Italy**

Readers from an additional 91 have also accessed, including Palestinian Territories, Papua New Guinea, Iran, & Afghanistan.

Source: AWStats

The Right Schemes To Bring Down The Greek Government: “This Government Cannot Survive”

**With Help From Inside Syriza Regime,
“The Second Line Of Attack By The
Right, And Much More Menacing, Is
Over Law And Order”**

**The Cabinet Minister Of Public Order,
Who Commands Police, Attacks Syriza
Government “For Being Soft On Law
And Order”**

A second sinister provocation against the government and the left has also gone without even reprimand.

On the Independence Day parade on 25 March a group of special forces soldiers chanted bellicose, anti-Turkish slogans boasting of invading Istanbul and hoisting the Greek flag.

April 12, 2015 by Kevin Ovenden, Counterfire

Two hostile intersecting axes are forming against the Syriza-led government in Athens.

Together they comprise an increasingly cohered effort to destabilise and defeat the government, to usurp the democratically expressed hope of the Greek people to break from the iron cage of austerity.

The first axis, from without, has been evident since before the 20 February deal in which the troika of creditors blackmailed Athens into accepting the principle of a new austerity memorandum.

As opponents of that deal, such as Manolis Glezos, Syriza MEP and hero of the war of liberation against the Nazi occupation of the country in WWII, argued at the time, the agreement far from providing a breathing space for the government locked it in to a four-

month course of permanent demands from the troika to force through the very austerity measures and neoliberal reforms which were comprehensively rejected at the ballot box.

Over the last month, the violation of democracy and of sovereignty – in the sense that it resides in the democratic will of the people – which the deal enshrines has become increasingly transparent and flagrant.

In response to the election of Syriza in January of this year, Jean-Claude Juncker, the president of the European Commission, selected last year with the support of Syriza leader Alexis Tsipras, said that the treaties Greece had signed up to were immune from such trifles as the Greek people's democratic will.

Now the lopping of democratic outcomes implicit in the loan-shark extortion of the Greek government is giving over to explicit interference in the internal democratic processes of the country itself.

An unnamed EU official told the Financial Times last week: "Tsipras has to decide whether he wants to be prime minister or the leader of Syriza."

Marlon Brando in The Godfather could be no blunter. Another (unelected) official said, "This government cannot survive."

I don't know in which language that was originally said. But in English, "cannot survive" has a sinister ambiguity: won't be able to/must not be allowed to.

The second line of attack by the right, and much more menacing, is over law and order, larded with racism and strong-state rhetoric.

There was a minor street confrontation following an anarchist demonstration which ended up in Exarcheia Square, at the back of the Polytechnic last week. I happened in to it. By the standards of such things in Greece it was in actuality a piece of street theatre. A few burning garbage dumpsters, a couple of cars set alight, some ritualistic stone throwing from one side and percussion grenades from the other.

The following day New Democracy seized on it with an artful line complaining of the government failing to get a grip on "hooded youths" who were running riot.

[T]here are allies on the government benches for the strong state, law and order push. And they are not only from the illiberal ANEL.

The minister of public order, with responsibility for the police, John Panousis is from Dimar – the modernising, essentially Blairite breakaway from Syriza to its right.

He recently wrote an op-ed in Ta Nea, the historic paper of Pasok, lambasting the government for being soft on law and order.

He accused the left of "nihilism".

That was a highly politically charged intervention which associated fellow ministers with anarchist protestors who had invaded the grounds of parliament.

A second sinister provocation against the government and the left has also gone without even reprimand.

On the Independence Day parade on 25 March a group of special forces soldiers chanted bellicose, anti-Turkish slogans boasting of invading Istanbul and hoisting the Greek flag.

Many observers, foreign and domestic, were shocked. Left Syriza MP Vasiliki Katrivanou called for action against nests of ultra-nationalists and the far right within the repressive apparatuses of the state.

When a few years ago a similar incident occurred the soldiers responsible – professionals, not national servicemen – were prosecuted.

This time there was not even a perfunctory investigation. The minister of defence is Panos Kammenos. He is the leader of ANEL.

MORE:

**“The Government Has
Abandoned Even The Modest
Commitments That Gave Them
The Victory In January”**

**“SYRIZA Never Really Tried To
Mobilize The Masses, Even To
Support Their Own Government”**

“This Logic Is Alien To Them”

**“Neither Of The Two Armed State Forces
Are Controlled By SYRIZA”**

7 April 2015 by Manos Skoufoglou, International Viewpoint [Excerpts]

What was primarily expressed in the vote on 25 January was massive anger and hatred about the previous government of New Democracy (ND, the traditional right party) and PASOK (the fully bourgeoisified socialdemocratic party).

These two parties have been the main actors of the violent attack which the working class and the people in Greece have suffered for 5 years.

Their government was identified with ever harder austerity, authoritarianism, arduous repression of the workers' and students' movement, layoffs and dismantling of any kind of welfare.

Wrath against that government was a perfectly justified and predictable mass sentiment. It was a perplexed sentiment, though, as at this specific conjuncture it took the form of relatively passive electoral expectation rather than active militant action.

However, at the critical point the leaderships of the big left parties, certainly SYRIZA but also the CP in its own way, had nothing else to propose but elections.

The meaning was: the relation of forces is currently overwhelming, so wait for the elections to get rid of austerity by voting. This expectation was the concrete content of the election in January.

This is actually the key question today.

The so much praised "government of the left" is not actually a left government, although it's main actor is SYRIZA, a left socialdemocratized party.

Even more, it is by no means a "workers' government".

If we had to make a definition, the most appropriate would be a "class collaboration government", both in terms of its composition and in terms of its program.

Tsipras himself has described it as a "national salvation government".

This concept explains why SYRIZA, after their victory, proposed and elected Prokopis Pavlopoulos to be the new President of the Republic. Pavlopoulos is an active ND cadre who, as the then Minister of Internal Affairs, has been the man in charge to repress the December 2008 riot.

The government of Tsipras actually consists of cadres coming from the full social spectrum. It combines older militants of the left, new cadres of the apparatus SYRIZA, left intellectuals, modern mainstream economists, technocrats and contractors, people from the world of business, bureaucrats previously linked to Simitis and Papandreou (former presidents of PASOK) governments.

The determining factor, however, is not mainly the social composition of the government, but the integration of various social-democrats and, above all, of the nationalist bourgeois party of ANEL (Independent Greeks).

Since 2012, SYRIZA and ANEL have been moving in an aligning track in the name of the anti-Memorandum struggle.

Especially after the Tsipras-Kammenos official agreement on the issue of Cyprus in spring 2013, their future governmental collaboration has been a common secret.

Contrary to a common argument used by its uncritical supporters worldwide, SYRIZA did have an alternative.

They could have formed a minority government and claim a vote of confidence from the Parliament, which would be easy to gain. Anyway, accusing the CP or even ANTARSYA of “forcing” SYRIZA to a coalition with ANEL is highly hypocritical.

SYRIZA had come to an agreement with ANEL before addressing to anyone else.

SYRIZA’s supporters would claim that these alliances are not determining, however this is not true.

“Neither Of The Two Armed State Forces Are Controlled By SYRIZA”

The Ministry of Economics is in the hands of Yanis Varoufakis, a Keynesian academic economist closely related with Galbraith Junior. Varoufakis has never been a militant of the left.

And it is even more telling that neither of the two armed state forces are controlled by SYRIZA: the Armed Forces have been assigned to Kammenos, the head of the right nationalist ANEL, and the Police was given to the social-democrat Panousis, who has been notorious for his authoritarian positions as a university teacher.

In terms of its program, the government advocates a form of class compromise that seeks to partially and temporarily stop the offensive against the working class, but not to reverse it.

They propose a mode of capitalist management which aspires to include certain concessions to the working class, without, however, being willing neither to break with any bourgeois institution nor to challenge the right to capitalist property.

They promise a campaign of humanitarian aid to the poorest, but it is absolutely unknown were they can find the money for it, since their plan to utilize funds originally meant to safeguard banks has been already utterly rejected by the EU.

They promise to re-hire certain categories of struggling fired workers (the women cleaners in the Ministry of Economics, the ERT workers etc), but at the same time they restrict new recruitments to the public sector to the very number predetermined by the ND-PASOK national budget, which means that the number of vacancies occupied by these categories will be subtracted from other sectors.

They have already rejected any kind of nationalization and, despite refusing to privatize electricity, they are willing to negotiate other major privatizations.

They have promised a modest raise of the minimum salary up to 751 euro, but they have already announced that this measure must be postponed for at least 2 years, according to the rate of economic growth.

In short, any concessions that SYRIZA promise is in fact dependent on the viability and the development of the national capitalist economy, not to the workers’ rights.

The governmental declarations move in a constant zig-zag.

What exactly can be achieved is not easy to predict, as it depends above all on the combativeness of working people.

We don't underestimate any possible democratic conquest, on the contrary we seek to use it to raise the self-confidence of the masses.

But we can have no trust in the government.

The Agreement Between The Government And The Eurogroup:

Undoubtedly the agreement has been a clear and obvious retreat.

The government has abandoned even the modest commitments that gave them the victory in January.

They have accepted to prolong the restructuring program, to fully and timely pay off the public debt, to retain the control of the so-called troika (IMF, ECT, EU).

The government has tried to present it as a victory, because we have avoided bankruptcy. But this has been the constant excuse of all the governments that have applied austerity since the beginning of the crisis.

Enthusiastic supporters of SYRIZA, unfortunately including a part of the international revolutionary left, have tried to justify the agreement in the name of some abstract flexible tactic to gain time.

But I cannot see, nor can they indicate, what space for manoeuvre the terms leave.

It is hard to believe there is any kind of intelligent plan behind the government's negotiations. In fact, something completely different than plans, be they good or bad, is at stake: a process of further incorporation of SYRIZA into capitalist management.

There is no need to speak about betrayal. I was not convinced by SYRIZA's promises before the election, anyway.

But the key question is not a matter of good or bad intentions; it is a matter of political strategy and orientation.

There is no common program for workers and capitalists, there is no way out of the crisis in favour of both.

It is therefore an illusion to expect a way out through negotiations and not a rupture with the bourgeois and imperialist institutions, and this illusion remains all the same whether intentions are good or not.

SYRIZA is to be blamed for spreading massively this illusion. Revolutionary communists have to confront this illusion in practice, by offering a concrete alternative.

What Alternative To The Blackmail Of The Troika?

There is indeed an alternative, even if for the time being SYRIZA and their political orientation are clearly hegemonic among the ranks of the left.

In order to form this alternative, one has to start from the opposite end: instead of the viability and competitiveness of the “Greek economy” in abstract (which, in particular, means viability and competitiveness of Greek capitalism), the start point should be the needs of the working class and of the deprived and oppressed social strata.

An up-to-date transitional program is needed. Raise in salaries and wages regardless the “realism” of the markets· public investments under workers’ control and reduction of the hours of work in order to confront massive unemployment· collective contracts with real workers’ rights· legalization and full rights of all immigrant workers· free education and health care for all the people etc.

These conquests need material sources, money, which can’t depend on EU or IMF funds, as it has been already obvious that there is no chance for any substantial negotiation in that framework.

They demand a radical and abrupt redistribution of wealth.

In order to achieve that, to repel tax evasion of the rich, as SYRIZA propose, is not enough, although it would have been positive.

What is needed is nationalization of the key sectors of the economy, without any confiscation to private capitalists, and under the control of workers and the people themselves, so that they can indeed function in favour of their own needs, and the cancellation of the debt, as the working class can’t and shouldn’t pay it off.

It is clear that such radical changes cannot be tolerated in the EU, so rupture is necessary, along with internationalist work for a new kind of collaboration of the peoples against their bosses.

This alternative may sound utopian, but why is it more utopian than trying to reconcile the wolf with the sheep?

After The Agreement With The Troika, Critical Voices Appeared Inside Syriza

There are critical voices within SYRIZA, and more such voices have to be expected in the march of the government towards its further adaptation to the system and to austerity, as well.

Revolutionary currents will have to work on creating paths to approach, collaborate with and attract such militants to their ranks. However, the internal opposition within SYRIZA is heterogeneous and has no concrete plan to challenge the policy determined by the leadership of Tsipras.

None of the deputies voted against Pavlopoulos for President.

Although a considerable part of the Central Committee disapproved the specific agreement with the Eurogroup, it is more than doubted that they would also vote against it in the Parliament.

In fact, the inner opposition of SYRIZA has not managed to block even a single capitulation during the process of socialdemocratization of SYRIZA.

My estimation is that the route of SYRIZA is irreversible. Neither it seems that anticapitalist currents who work inside SYRIZA can profit and grow, to the contrary the centripetal force applied by the leadership seems overwhelming.

Instead of being able to mobilize broader layers of SYRIZA members, the Left Platform of SYRIZA is forced to restrain its own public activities in the name of discipline -- for example, they would not join the demonstrations organized against the agreement with the Eurogroup.

The blackmail that any criticism weakens the government and objectively favours ND seems omnipotent, not only among members, but also (actually, even more) among voters. In my opinion, therefore, participation in SYRIZA is a totally mistaken choice for anticapitalist and revolutionary organizations.

After the election, there were signs of a possible rise of the mass movement. SYRIZA's victory has brought in a climate of optimism and a sentiment of "national dignity" against the lenders. Before the negotiations began, quite massive gatherings were organized in Syntagma Square in Athens and in many other cities. These mobilizations were contradictory regarding their demands: there were sectors that openly supported the government against "the Germans" in the upcoming negotiation, in line with the nationalist rhetoric of SYRIZA and ANEL· and there were others who denounced any negotiation and asked for the unilateral cancellation of the debt.

ANTARSYA, the anticapitalist left coalition, chose to intervene in these gatherings under our own banners and slogans, as a left and workers' opposition.

All these mobilizations immediately stopped after the agreement with the Eurogroup and the concomitant confusion and disappointment. For the time being, the workers' movement seems stagnant.

“SYRIZA Never Really Tried To Mobilize The Masses, Even To Support Their Own Government”

It has to be noted that SYRIZA never really tried to mobilize the masses, even to support their own government.

This logic is alien to them.

The case of ERT has been a very telling example. ANTARSYA militants in the union proposed to re-occupy the former headquarters of the company the very first day after the election. Despite SYRIZA promises to revive the company and re-hire workers, its unionists voted against the proposal, because this would look like a blackmail to the government. The Communist Party did the same.

In fact, the leadership of SYRIZA has always seen the mass movement as a supplement to their way towards the government.

In full contrast with the PASOK government back in the 1980's, who were able to effectively control the workers' movement, SYRIZA has a relatively small presence in the unions.

The big support they enjoy in the vote corresponds to a very modest influence in the big workers' federations and confederations. The Communist Party is clearly stronger there, and the extra-parliamentary left has a comparable influence.

For example, in the Board of the General Confederation of Workers in the Public Sector, which is actually the most important workers' union in Greece, ANTARSYA holds 2 out of the 17 seats, whereas SYRIZA holds 3 (in Greece there are no separate workers' unions for each political party and all currents intervene in the same unions through different platforms).

Among university students the far left has more than double the strength of SYRIZA, and the CP even more.

Of course this can change in the future, but in this case SYRIZA will have attracted people (and bureaucrats) for being the government and not due to their militant activity.

Anyway, the idea that there is no life outside SYRIZA is absolutely distorted. The working class voted for SYRIZA, but they don't side with SYRIZA in their everyday activity. This is a myth.

Being independent from SYRIZA is not a sectarian obsession, it is a choice based on the material ground of the class struggle.

Antarsya:

Although not obvious in the national election, there is an actual anticapitalist and revolutionary current in the Greek society and among the working class.

The stronghold and the most successful experience of this current have been a series of anticapitalist collectives or platforms in various sectors, unions, workplaces and universities. Having a history of more than 20 years, these collectives have managed to lead several important struggles.

They work on an autonomous and federal basis, which means that each collective takes their own decisions by mean of direct democracy, although there is a clear political influence by certain revolutionary or/and far left groups.

ANTARSYA came out of the maturation of this current and it has brought together the majority of it. The coalition was formed a few months after the December 2008 riot, when the far left was faced with the need to centrally combine its forces so as to be able to have a decisive impact in the class struggle.

It numbers nearly 3000 members, mostly youth.

ANTARSYA is not an organization or party, it is an anticapitalist front consisting of 7 different organizations and several independent militants. Its function is based on the principle "one member, one vote". There are about 80 local branches, who decide their local activity in general assemblies. The leading bodies are elected in the national conference.

The debt is a key class issue in the current situation.

It lies at the heart of the question: which class pays for the crisis.

The working class must refuse to pay it off – this is actually a precondition for its very survival.

YOUR INVITATION:

Comments, arguments, articles, and letters from service men and women, and veterans, are especially welcome. Write to Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657 or email contact@militaryproject.org: Name, I.D., withheld unless you request publication. Same address to unsubscribe.

The Gravedigger

By Dennis Serdel, Vietnam 1967-68 (one tour) Light Infantry, Americal Div. 11th Brigade;
United Auto Workers GM Retiree

From *Peace Speaks From The Mirror*, Dennis Serdel

**It's cold in the morning
and he shivers,
he kicks up the furnace**

he turns down at night
these heating bills are killer
he puts some coffee on
trying to remember
who he buries today
these Michigan winters
freeze the ground on down
he needs some gas
in the truck
and the digger too
it's a hell of a way
to make a living
but it's steady pay
After a cup and a half
of coffee and three cigarettes
it dawns on him who's grave
he has to dig today
it's Mary and John's son
from across the tracks
the paper had his picture
he was just a boy
played football
at the old high school
a stand out star
joined the Army after that
cause all the jobs are gone.

DANGER: CAPITALISTS AT WORK



OCCUPATION PALESTINE

Zionist Settlers Take Control Of Palestinian Children's School Bus For Four Hours: "Pretext That One Of The Children Had Extended His Hand Out Of An Open Window"

7-4-2015 PIC

NABLUS -- A group of settlers intercepted and held a children's school bus till late hours on Monday near Yitzhar settlement to the south east of Nablus.

Ghassan Douglas, a Palestinian official in charge of settlements file at the Palestinian Authority in the northern part of the West Bank, said that the settlers had stopped the school bus while on its way back from a school trip under the pretext that one of the children had extended his hand out of an open window.

The bus was returning to Ramallah from a school trip. The children are students at Shuhadaa Silwad School in Ramallah.

The settlers held the bus for four hours, and confiscated its driver and teachers' identity cards and prevented them from using their mobile phones.

Palestinian Citizen Beaten, Child Taken By Occupation Forces In Al-Khalil

7-4-2015 PIC

AL-KHALIL -- A Palestinian man in his 40's sustained bruises after he was severely beaten by the Israeli occupation forces (IOF) while a Palestinian child was kidnapped in the southern West Bank city of al-Khalil afternoon Monday.

Local sources said the Palestinian citizen Mohamed Qatouf, from al-Khalil's town of Yatta, sustained wounds and was rushed to the local hospital after he was heavily beaten up by the IOF soldiers.

The IOF troops have been deployed in the vicinity of Yatta town as part of a military campaign initiated with the advent of Jewish holidays, the same sources added.

The IOF patrols deployed near the Ibrahimi Mosque further kidnapped the Palestinian child Mahmoud Nour al-Ja'bari and dragged him to an unidentified destination after they had beaten him.

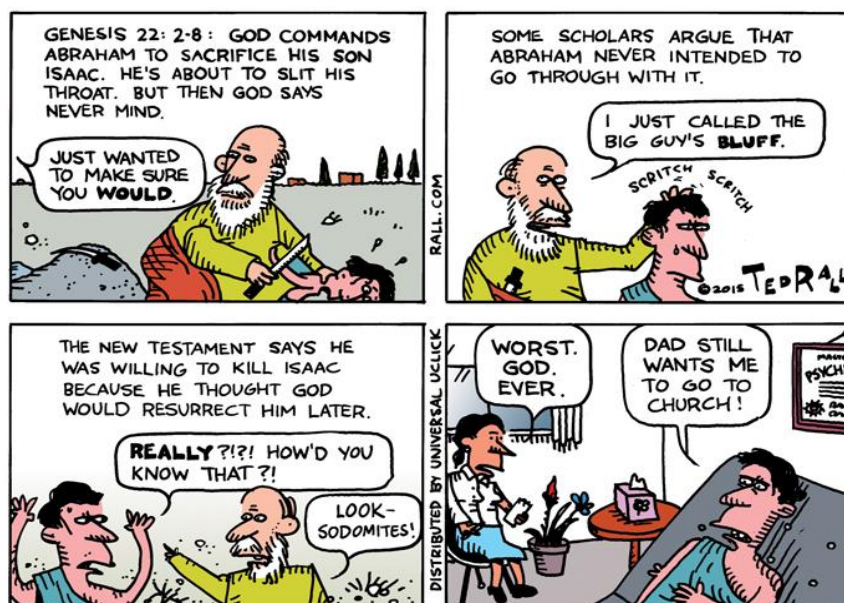
Meanwhile, hundreds of illegal Israeli settlers, escorted by army officers, broke into the Old City and the Ibrahimi Mosque in such a remarkably provocative manner. The assault cropped up a few hours before another IOF soldiers stormed Jenin city at dawn Tuesday and attempted to kidnap Palestinian civilians.

Local sources said the IOF troops broke into al-Tiba town at the crack of dawn and ravaged the family home of Khaled Ighbariya, moments before they attempted to apprehend his two sons, Mahmoud, 17, and Ahmad, 21, but failed because they were not at home.

The IOF further scoured Jenin's Old City and al-Sibat suburb and set up a series of ambushes in the process.

**To check out what life is like under a murderous military occupation commanded by foreign terrorists, check out: <http://www.palestinechronicle.com/>
The occupied nation is Palestine. The foreign terrorists call themselves "Israeli."**

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



U.S. Encouraging Cuba To Shift Toward Democratic System Of Corruption



Apr 12, 2015 The Onion

WASHINGTON — As part of the White House’s effort to mend 50 years of acrimonious U.S.-Cuba relations, members of the Obama administration called on the island nation this week to adopt a more democratic form of corruption.

“If Cuba is to thrive on the global stage, it must end its autocratic abuses of power, and hold free and fair elections to determine which officials will ultimately siphon off public resources for their own personal gain,” said Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Wendy Sherman, who called on Cuba’s communist regime to cede some political control and let opposition parties play a greater role in its shady backroom dealings and systems of graft.

“We recognize that change will not happen overnight, but by allowing influence-peddling, kickbacks, and the misappropriation of funds to be controlled by elected representatives of the people, Cuba will earn the world’s trust and respect. It’s time for Cuba to embrace the same dishonest, nominally democratic form of government that all of its neighbors have.”

Sherman went on to express the administration’s hopes for a future in which Cuba will regularly conduct transparent elections bought and paid for by powerful corporate interests.

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New Hillary Clinton Ad Features Just Kittens



PHOTOGRAPH BY EYEON/UIG VIA GETTY

4.13.14 By Andy Borowitz, The Borowitz Report

BROOKLYN — Hillary Clinton has followed up the official announcement of her candidacy with a new campaign ad featuring nothing but kittens.

The sixty-second spot stars an assortment of kittens—tabbies, calicoes, Siamese, and a dozen other breeds—in a variety of adorable vignettes.

At various points in the advertisement, the kittens are shown playing in a sock drawer, tangled up in yarn, and chasing a duckling.

Clinton herself appears only in the final seconds of the ad, saying merely, “Hi. I’m Hillary.”

The commercial immediately drew the wrath of the Republican National Committee chairman, Reince Priebus, who called it “woefully short on substance.”

“There’s no mention of what Hillary Clinton would do to grow our struggling economy, fix the disaster of Obamacare, or repair our damaged reputation abroad,” a visibly furious Priebus told Fox News. “It’s just cats.”

In defense of the ad, the Clinton campaign issued the following statement: “America loves kittens. Loving kittens makes America strong. Hillary is ready for kittens. Kittens are ready for Hillary. Meow meow meow meow.”

Hillary Clinton To Nation -- “Do Not Fuck This Up For Me”

Vows “To Fight For A Better Future For All Working-Class Families Like The One She Grew Up In”



Apr 12, 2015 The Onion

WASHINGTON—After several seconds spent sitting motionless and glaring directly into the camera, former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton reportedly began Sunday’s video announcing her 2016 presidential bid by warning the nation not to fuck this up for her.

“Listen up, assholes, ‘cause I’m only saying this once: I’ve worked way too goddamn hard to let you morons blow this thing for me,” said Clinton, repeatedly jabbing her index finger toward the viewers at home while adding that if they thought she was going to simply sit back and watch them dick her over like they did in 2008, they were out of their fucking minds.

“Seriously, don’t you dare even think about it.

“If you shitheads can just get in line, we can breeze through this whole campaign in 19 months and be done with it.

“Or, if you really want, we can do this the hard way. Because make no mistake, I’m not fucking around. Got it?”

Clinton then ended her announcement by vowing to fight for a better future for all working-class families like the one she grew up in.

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BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW, ALIVE.*



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