

THE LERNEAN HYDRA

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Greece emerged from a seven-year period of military rule in July 1974 only to step straight into a prolonged political cycle of division, debilitating partisan politics, and unprecedented corruption.

The period after 1974 became the “fourth round” of the conflict between the communist Left and the “accursed” Right.¹ In this fourth round, the Left finally succeeded in conquering politics. The so-called “conservatives,” lacking ideological conviction and frightened out of their wits lest they appeared “non-progressive” after seven years of military dictatorship, tried to prevail by emulating the Left’s grass roots agitation only to fail dismally.

This post-junta cycle ended in 2010 with Greece’s bankruptcy upending a revolving door “democracy” and putting the country at the mercy of her creditors. Back-to-back EU “bailouts,” hinging on German-inspired brutal austerity, scuttled the economy, destroyed the middle class, and demolished the two main political parties, the “conservative” New Democracy and the “socialist” PASOK.

Post-2010 Greece is often [described](#) as “Weimar Greece” for good reason, her domestic situation in steep and steady decline since the crisis began. The main effects of this collapse are easily observable with the naked eye:

- The invasion of the creditors has shaken already weak and corrupt state institutions rendering them practically dysfunctional;
- austerity has destroyed the private economy and impoverished millions;

¹ The previous three rounds consisted of (a) the rise of communist resistance against the Nazi Occupation (b) the attack of the communist ELAS partisans against the nationalist resistance groups, 1943-44 and a communist attempt to take over the country when the Germans left, which was defeated during the Battle of Athens, December 1944-January 1945 and (c) the communist insurgency aiming to overthrow the postwar Greek government, 1946-49, which led to a catastrophic conflict and bled an already exhausted country white.

-- the cascade of draconian EU/IMF directives, mutilating incomes and promising ever harsher budget measures to come,² has stirred deep rejection of European “institutions” and has convinced the majority of the people that “there’s no light at the end of the tunnel;”

-- the Greek government “... is using highly dubious methods to create the illusion of a budget surplus - and it is ordinary Greeks who are paying the price.”³

-- and the economic collapse, contrary to predictions, not only did it not affect the established corruption networks, known among Greeks as “the intertwined interests,” but offered them fertile ground to continue to grow and undermine an already brittle Greek “democracy.”

On top of all that, the human disaster of 500,000 young educated Greeks packing up and leaving to seek better fortunes elsewhere now threatens the country’s very existence—demographically, politically, and economically. With the majority of her active segment of the population almost gone, Greece is morphing into a country of the elderly and the retired. Combined with a veritable invasion by largely Moslem undocumented aliens from neighboring Turkey, the loss of so many young Greeks is turning into a national catastrophe.

On top of all, “Weimar Greece” is dangerously slipping toward **authoritarian leftism**.⁴ A protest vote in January 2015 allowed SYRIZA, a radical anarchist groupuscule once lingering on the far fringes of parliamentary party politics, to form a government in coalition with a most unusual bedfellow, the far right-nationalist ANEL, a splinter of the mainstream New Democracy conservatives.

The SYRIZA-ANEL (or SYRANEL) coalition, after a brief period of attempting to challenge the Brussels mandarins on the murderous bailout terms, was pounded into political pulp by Mrs. Merkel and the creditors and rushed to apply austerity measures that left even hard-core totalitarian neoliberals in awe.

Not unexpectedly SYRIZA’s naked collaborationism with the creditors is now pushing SYRANEL ever so close to a humiliating electoral defeat. In response, PM Alexis Tsipras has launched a not-so-veiled effort to manipulate and undermine what is left of democratic institutions so that **SYRIZA and**

² Both the EU “bailout” wizards and the IMF have mercilessly targeted pensions. Since the onset of the crisis, the average pension has been reduced by 70% and more cuts are on the way with the ultimate target of pushing all pensions down to a mere pittance and thus leaving hundreds of thousands of old people in abject and life-threatening poverty in the name of “streamlining budgetary policies.”

³ Themistoklis Sofos, “Kafka in Greece: a struggle against tax bureaucracy” at <http://bit.ly/2FCCqaa>

⁴ The original Weimar republic came close to extinction because of communist subversion but was ironically “saved” by its eventual destroyer, Adolf Hitler, who also saw the communists annihilated in the most brutal manner.

*the radical Left may dominate the political landscape as “kingmakers” even after they certainly meet disaster in the next general election.*⁵

SYRIZA-sponsored creeping “de-democratization” is a fundamental threat to Greece’s already crippled domestic stability. SYRIZA cultivates an “enemy-at-the-gates” mentality by pretending to be the long-suffering democratic maiden under attack from all corners by subversives belonging to previous regimes, both “conservative” and “socialist.” To add spunk to the recipe, SYRIZA deploys “point men” to vilify, abuse, and attack its opponents with unfounded accusations of corruption and nonstop drilling of the public ear on how SYRIZA’s “overthrow,” by all these lurking enemies of the people, would surely cause the end of Greece as we know it.⁶

Under pressure, SYRANEL has chosen *deliberate abstention from enforcing the law in the face of daily anarchist gang violence* to stir fear and insecurity. SYRIZA “strategists” hope that spreading trouble would allow their wobbling party to somehow win the mantle of the only “credible” actor capable of restoring order—which they themselves have deliberately undermined. It is obvious SYRIZA has chosen to play this dangerous game to the very end. Athens experiences [daily violent anarchist attacks](#) with no one ever arrested and charged. While SYRANEL pays lip service to “law and order” and the “reorganization” of law enforcement, its ministers openly direct the police not to touch the gangs, who use their own police-no-go ghetto section in the middle of Athens to raid, pillage, and burn unmolested.

Even if SYRIZA is somehow pushed out of government, the current situation won’t change much. None of the current parliamentary parties has enough electoral support to form a strong one-party government—and SYRIZA, to reinforce the prospect of ungovernability, passed an election law introducing simple proportional representation, a system which, in a country with Greece’s political history, almost *guarantees perpetual instability through weak coalition governments.*⁷

The critical question of how to protect “Weimer Greece’s” domestic security thus becomes all the more urgent. Any SYRANEL successor will face a dismal domestic security situation, not to mention severe threats of war from neighboring Turkey sliding toward Islamist dictatorship. *If there is a future government determined to break with a long tradition of empty rhetoric on security, and discard the*

⁵ Polls routinely discover the main opposition New Democracy ahead of SYRIZA by 19-25 percentage points.

⁶ Ironically, this disaster has already occurred thanks to the EU “bailouts” and the auctioning of the country at fire sale prices.

⁷ Greece’s fractured political party system won’t be recovering any time soon as creditor “monitoring” and what looks like perpetual demands for more “reforms” stand to continue well into the distant future. Currently, SYRIZA and the creditors are busy peddling the fake story of “successful recovery” to push the devastated Greek economy back onto the markets. It is almost certain Greece will be thus subjected to added severe walloping from which she won’t be able to recover without added cash “stability cushions” and European credit lines. The latter though are most unlikely given the urge of Greece’s northern EU “partners” to get rid of the Greek troubles.

fear of what the Left might do or say to protect “popular freedoms,” the following should be reform objectives for immediate action:

FIRST: Dismantle the Greek Police (HELAS) and reinstate the French system of policing, comprising a city police and a paramilitary armed gendarmerie, which existed until 1984 when the PASOK socialists discarded it.⁸ The new system must prioritize (a) a special investigation bureau against illegal immigration and human trafficking gangs promoting the breach of Greek borders (b) an intelligence unit targeting “activists” arriving in Greece to stir ethnic minority trouble, promote secessionist movements, and buttress the “rights” of undocumented aliens, and (c) a special gendarmerie border patrol detachment, in close cooperation with the Armed Forces, which will succeed the existing civil service-based Border Protection Services (est. 1998).

SECOND: Antiterrorism must obtain its own dedicated judicial arm, in cooperation with the Antiterrorist Branch, tasked to pursue the criminal prosecution of terrorists in special closed courts. Equal priority must be given to introducing a completely new antiterrorist law, which would introduce a special emergency penal procedure divorced from the civil Criminal Code.

THIRD: The bureaucratic and cumbersome National Intelligence Service (EYP) must be radically reorganized by utilizing experience of allied countries whose intelligence services have already adjusted to the post 9/11 environment. Emphasis must be placed on new technologies, specialist recruitment, and an esprit de corps dismissing petty partisan internal political quarrels.

FOURTH: A National Strategic Action Plan (NSAP) should be created *to articulate in detail* the objectives of national security, the methods to pursue them, and the directions of intelligence collection and analysis. NSAP should also establish rules of expanding EYP’s interface with government ministries and mass and social media.

FIFTH: Personnel development should be the task of a university-level national intelligence academy divorced from the current ossified model of the various armed forces service colleges. An interservice National Graduate Academy of Intelligence & National Security should acquire tenured professorial staff and provide intensive coursework according to curricula applied in similar institutions in allied countries. Students of the academy should be eligible for further training abroad and for opportunities to attend specialized education programs as visiting observer scholars in allied countries.

Postwar Greece confused for the most part intelligence gathering and analysis and domestic policing. In the post-junta period “reform” moved the system to the other extreme via “democratization” that

⁸ PASOK’s was an act of revenge upon the Royal (later Hellenic) Gendarmerie for its role in suppressing domestic communism and fighting against the communist insurgents during their attempt to overthrow the government, 1946-49.

paralyzed both intelligence and police via the notorious monster of Greek government bureaucracy, subversive public sector syndicalism, and partisan manipulation.

If SYRIZA's successors succumb to the same temptations, Greece will undoubtedly suffer crippling disasters. What remains to be seen, therefore, is whether Greek politicians will succeed in fending off the Lernean Hydra of what Greeks are fond of calling "Greece's particularity" of social manner and political behavior. Just like Hercules found the way to slay the Hydra, Greek politicians must try the same. If they fail, there's little hope of stopping "Greece's particularity" from bringing down the house for good.