

A Small Contribution to the non-resolution of the Cyprus Problem

Antiauthoritarians-Internationalists of Southern Cyprus

1989–1990

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A two-day meeting of Greek Cypriots (GC) and Turkish Cypriots (TC) was held in mid-September at the Ledra Palace Hotel (a hotel located in the buffer zone and monitored by UNFICYP) to discuss ways of “citizen participation in the Federation”. The meeting was organised by a group of Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot intellectuals from the broader reformist left who first met last winter in Berlin under the auspices of an organisation of the German Green Party. After the first meeting in Berlin, it was decided to continue and expand the contacts through further meetings in Ledra Palace (again under the auspices of the German Greens). The Greek Cypriot group undertook to send some 40 invitations to Cypriots. The invitations to the Greek Cypriots were sent by name in order to exclude from the meeting any Greek Cypriot who could spoil the image the Greek Cypriot side wanted to present to the Turkish Cypriots (we do not know what exactly happened with the Turkish Cypriots).

While “personal” invitations were sent to all political “ rapprochement” political spaces, the Marxist editorial group Workers’ Democracy [Ergatiki Dimokratia] was deliberately left out (and even after a vote by the Berlin “group”), which constitutes an important part of the anti-nationalist and anti-patriotic front built mainly around the committee of support for the conscientious objector Giannis Parpas. This ‘front’ has recently come under repeated political attacks which, for various reasons, have for the most part fallen on the Workers’ Democracy group. To these attacks is now added that of their exclusion from contact with the TCs (the only reason why it might have been worthwhile to be at this meeting was contact with TCs). Two nominal invitations were sent to the Limassol milieu, which is the other important part of the anti-patriotic, anti-nationalist ‘front’. The main aim of this action was to split this front on the one hand, and on the other hand to ensure the alibi that some people from the committee of support for Giannis Parpas had been invited anyway. Here we have to admit that because Workers’ Democracy is a much more coherent political group than the disparate milieu of Limassol, it was also much more dangerous for them.

After many discussions, a part of the Limassol milieu together with antiauthoritarians-internationalists from other cities decided to denounce the GC hypocrisy at the meeting and published the proclamation that we publish here and which was also sent to some Turkish Cypriots who took part in the meeting (through our comrade who held the invitation).

The main reasons why we refuse to participate as antiauthoritarians-internationalists in such “rapprochement” events are set out very briefly in the following text.

1

What Greek Cypriot (GC) capitalism seeks today is to secure a political “solution” to the Cyprus problem that will allow it to re-impose its total economic and political domination – as it did before ’74 – on the entire island. Securing such a “solution” is necessary for GC capitalism so that it can proceed unhindered in further upgrading its position within world capitalism as it is taking shape in this transitional phase and play a more substantial role in international political developments (like Europe’s window on the Middle East and the Non-Aligned Movement).

2

Within the framework of this pursuit of a political “solution” favourable to GC interests, GC capitalism will have to make “proper” use of all the current political and economic data: its upgraded position in relation to the EEC and the international isolation imposed by the Greek and GC side on the TRNC;¹ the advantageous position of the Greek state due to its connection with the EEC vis-à-vis Turkey, the international political circumstances that encourage a climate of recession and healing of the ‘open wounds’ scattered all over the world caused by the conflicts generated by international capitalist competition and finally the reaction of the TC masses against the militaristic regime of the TRNC as expressed recently, mainly through the newly established leftist peace movement.

3

It is this reaction of the TCs that the Greek Cypriot capital state is rushing to exploit and turn against the rival power bloc, the Turkish Cypriot state, not because it suddenly cares about the future of the TCs, but to use them as a means of imposing its own domination.

For this purpose, a campaign has recently been launched to win the trust and consent of the TCs to what GC state-capital is seeking to achieve. A campaign planned in the wet offices of the government technocrats and carried out by all sorts of state ideology’s delinquents: the political parties, the mass media, the press, up to the ‘alternative’ left of the state intelligentsia and social-patriotism that took on the role of a broker between the GC state and the ‘reacting’ TCs, by organizing and participating in the meeting at Ledra Palace.

The truth is that such actions that promote ‘rapprochement’ serve the advancement of the interests of GC capitalism through this kind of ‘process’. This is why the meeting in Ledra Palace was so much welcomed by the GC state and was so strongly promoted by the state and party media. Moreover, this meeting paved the way for a new meeting that took place in the same place between representatives of the GC and TC parties about two months later. That is why the government itself made sure to place its lackeys in key positions within the GC part of this movement. A movement that has no other goal than to secure the trust and consent of the TC through slogans such as “reunification, “freedom”, “federation”, etc. — to what the GC state wants to impose.

The ‘alternative’ leftist intelligentsia confirms once again its international historical role as a modernizer of state and capital. If in the European countries the Greens were keen to point out to the state how it should be reformed in order to overcome its contradictions that are mainly generated by the contradiction between industry and ecological balance, in Cyprus the leftist state intellectuals and social-patriots put forward proposals on how the state transformation would be more viable, i.e. more effective: through the social participation of the GCs and TCs in the Federation, ensuring of course the GC supremacy.

¹ Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus

4

But GC capitalism cannot proceed with its restructuring plans without generating new contradictions. Thus, all the ‘rapprochement’ steps of GC capitalism, all those proclamations about the “reunification of Cyprus” and about “our fellow TCs”, the announcements about financial aid to TCs, the provision of pensions from the social security fund to those TCs who are entitled to them, the employment of TCs in the South (efforts to demonstrate the robustness of the GC economy), party and other events with TC guests, and so on – are taking place simultaneously with the military parades and the arming of the National Guard (which all parties support without exception), with the nationalist outbursts as expressed through the recent chauvinist marches of women and priests (and not only), the nationalist hysteria in the Alexia-Jengis case, the events, fund-raisers and taxes to support defence, the forthcoming submission of the bill on the conscription of women, and so on.

In order to deal with these contradictions created by the GC state-capital itself and which already appear as conflicts of the various subsystems of the state ideology – contradictions that explode in the process of the transition of capitalism into each new era – it needs a strong state mechanism. A mechanism that is diffused downwards through the diverse ideological bodies of expanded reproduction of capitalist authoritarian relations.

In this mechanism, the ‘rapprochement’ left-wing state intelligentsia and the left-right EOKA B nationalists are the guardians of the two opposite sides of its borders.

5

Having been stripped of any revolutionary and anti-state perspective (which is implicit in the term), the ‘rapprochement’ for the GC side can only be a part of the **tactical planning of GC capitalism**, which, taking advantage of all these facts mentioned at the beginning of the text, and which weaken the negotiating position of the Turkish side², is currently on the offensive.

6

‘Rapprochement’ is the key word that covers all the crimes committed by the Greek Cypriots against the Turkish Cypriots during the years of ‘independence’, which wants to present the alleged peaceful coexistence of the Greek Cypriots and the Turkish Cypriots during the same time as ideal.

² **1** For the TCs who come to such meetings as those of the Ladra Palace, things are very different. For they do not do so with the blessing of their state, but at the risk of their own heads.

2 The historical experience of the TCs has proven what it means to ‘live together’ with the GC under the rule of the Greek Cypriot state. During the famous ‘independence’ period, the TCs were treated as second-class citizens, without any substantial political rights, living in enclaves (areas that were blocked and controlled), and used as cheap labour, which of course implies their economic impoverishment.

However, today one of the slogans of the TC peace movement is “Out with the Turkish Army”. When the TCs were under Greek occupation from ’63 to ’74, which GCs found themselves shouting against the Greek Army and the National Guard? How many GCs, even today, dare to speak about the massacres of the TCs of ’63-’64, of ’67, of ’74?

This is a ‘reproach’ that continues to conceal the fact that only internationalist -revolutionary solidarity could bring for the first time in real contact between the Greek Cypriots and the Turkish Cypriots when they are free of these ideological-national identities.

Our internationalist-revolutionary solidarity will either be practical (which means first of all a break with our own state-capital, a break with our own bourgeoisie) or it will be part of the GC state propaganda. And this rupture will have to take place regardless of what form the state takes or tends to take, be it Federal or any other.

Antiauthoritarians-Internationalists of Southern Cyprus

Minimal Contribution for Communicating to the Turkish Cypriot Revolutionary Internationalists the Hypocrisy of the ‘Rapprochement’ Elite of the Greek Cypriot State Intellectuals and Social Patriots.

Until today, we knew that the mechanisms of repression of the state and capital were the army, the police, the schools, the psychiatric hospitals. Now we know that along with them have been added the Greek Cypriot ‘rapprochement’ state intellectuals and social-patriots. How else could we explain the fact that these gentlemen invite representatives from all the supposedly re-reunificationist areas to such a meeting – for representatives of various areas and political organisations are involved, and the tricks of personal invitations are always the same – and leave out a political organisation whose contribution to the unmasking of Greek Cypriot nationalism and to the cause of reunification has been substantial. How else could we explain the fact that some of us from the more general autonomous-antiauthoritarian-internationalist milieu in Limassol (and not only), while initially invited to participate in the meeting, are then excluded from all the processes of constituting this initiative by not being notified of the meetings-discussions of the Greek Cypriots participating in this meeting and which preceded today’s meeting in Ledra Palace.

No, we are not pretending to be the lawyer of Workers’ Democracy [Ergatiki Dimokratia], nor are we agents of Denktaş, as EPIKAIRI will have informed you, dear Greek Cypriot ‘rapprochers’. It is just that all this makes Stalin turn in his grave with joy feeling proud of the descendants he left on this planet. For if Stalin had suppressed by brute force an entire revolutionary movement because they simply disagreed with him, these gentlemen, with the power granted to them by the Greek Cypriot state, are suppressing by the force of exclusion a part – if not the whole – of the internationalist-revolutionary milieu that was built mainly around the committee of support for conscientious objector Giannis Parpas, who is still in prison for believing in Reunification and refusing to take up arms against the Turkish Cypriots.

This meeting is not about rapprochement. This meeting is part of the plan of the Greek Cypriot state which is looking forward to spreading its totalitarian rule on the island. The Turkish Cypriots are again the instrument whose desire and need for another life as well as their disgust for the militaristic regime of the TRNC is now being exploited by the “leftist public relations ministry” of the Greek Cypriot state. Because when the Turkish Cypriots attend these meetings they do so at the risk of losing their heads while the Greek Cypriot state intellectuals do so with the blessing of KEMA and its technocrats.

But let's see where all these present-day "re-appropriationists" were when they had to "risk their heads" for this purpose.

The magazine 'Within the Walls' [Entos ton Teihon] — whose people organise these meetings from the Greek Cypriot side — even devoted an entire issue to the chauvinist women's marches. Now about their 'indifference' to the issue of Parpas, the increase in the army levy, Alexia and Jegis, we admit that we have no argument against the magazine since it is obviously declared social-patriotic. For them the only thing worth dealing with is the 'Independence' of the Greek Cypriot state, even if this would have to step on the throats of the whole society and much more so the Turkish Cypriot community as it was the case before 1974. For 'Entos' there is no necessity to form an internationalist front to defend against the rise of nationalism. Of course, since 'Entos' has its own 'defences', its editors will tell us. But the truth is that the 'Entos' is not even under attack.

The left wing of the EDEK.....eh this left wing of the most chauvinistic party sold G. Parpas (of which he was a member until recently) only to thicken his skin and to learn to comply with the ideological dictates of the 'people's militia' of the organization's leaders. They even called the man a green and Jehovah's Witness. Who? Those who are currently involved in an initiative that is under the high protection of the green modernists in the European Parliament.

As for the newspaper EMPROS, which openly supports the chauvinist marches and the arming of the National Guard, we did not understand what it can have to do with the rapprochement, just as we did not understand what EDON youth, who have even held events to raise money for the army, have anything to do with it.

Moreover, while a large part of the Turkish Cypriots have many times openly expressed themselves against the Turkish army, again at the risk of their heads, who among all these main Greek Cypriot rapprochers ever spoke about the massacres of Turkish Cypriots in 1963–1974, 1967 and even 1974 (after the coup and before the invasion). Which of them actually got under the skin of the Turkish Cypriots before 1974 to say that indeed the Greek contingent and the National Guard were for them an occupation army.

For all of them rapprochement is a romantic stroll back to the years of independence when Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots were supposedly living happily together. A lie and you all know it.

ANTIAUTHORITARIANS-INTERNATIONALISTS

Note

After the proclamation was released, and because it was drafted and printed under great time pressure, we noticed two points where it falls short.

1. The exclusion of the editorial group 'Workers' Democracy' from the meeting was not because the people are Stalinists, but simply because they are patriots.
2. The phrase in the penultimate paragraph in brackets "after the coup and before the invasion" should have been omitted because it is time to overcome all our prejudices: it was during the conflicts of '74 that the Greek Cypriots were clearing Turkish Cypriot villages, killing civilians.

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