The reckoning of a city guerrilla

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After 14 years in prison for my involvement in Revolutionary Struggle, I have reached the end of a long and harsh ordeal.

Being a revolutionary is demonstrated by the cost of the choices one is willing to pay and by defending the choices of struggle for which one found oneself in prison.In our case, a long-term imprisonment or death in a confrontation with the servants of the state and the bosses, as happened to comrade Lambros Foundas on March 10, 2010, is the price of our choices –something I knew from the very beginning.

In struggle, as in life in general, nothing comes without a price. Because whatever is worthwhile is difficult and requires sacrifices. However, the cost of the choices applies to everyone without exception, even the enemy, as well as to the servants of the state who were wounded by the weapons of Revolutionary Struggle: in Exarchia in 2009 after the murder of Grigoropoulos; during the expropriation of Piraeus Bank in Kleitoria in 2014; and in Monastiraki, also in 2014, when they nearly killed me.

For several years, the structures and mechanisms of the state and capital experienced the power of Revolutionary Struggle's bombs, including the ECB branch, the Bank of Greece and the IMF office, the Athens Stock Exchange, the Ministries of Employment and Economy, the Evelpidon courts, police stations such as those in Kallithea and Perissos, and banks such as Citibank and Eurobank. Of course, the United States will never forget the anti-tank rocket attack on its embassy in Athens in 2007. Meanwhile, the former Minister of Public Order, Voulgarakis, realized that no government official, regardless of how senior they may be, is invulnerable.

Revolutionary Struggle is part of a historical tradition within the revolutionary and anarchist movement dating back to the era of the First International of Workers, which employed armed struggle and guerrilla warfare, as did the organization Narodnaya Volya (People's Will) in Russia, or as did the anarchists with what they called "propaganda by the deed" when they carried out bomb attacks and assassinations of kings, heads of state, and prime ministers. It is part of a historical tradition whose constituent elements included the armed resistance against Franco, the guerrilla struggle against the Axis forces in occupied Europe, and urban guerrilla warfare in recent decades.

Revolutionary Struggle is part of a historical tradition based on the struggles of peoples for social liberation from the yoke of the state and capital, for self-organization against the centralized state, whatever form it may take. A tradition based, among other things, on the Paris Commune of 1871, the anti-state tendency of the Russian Revolution –including the Kronstadt Commune of 1921 and the Makhnovshchina (1918–21) in Ukraine, which fought against the tsarist White counterrevolutionaries, the nationalists, and the rising Bolshevik totalitarianism– the Mexican Revolution, and the Spanish Revolution (1936–39), which was murdered both by the Stalinist counterrevolutionaries and the Francoist fascists.

Throughout my life of struggle, I have spent 18 years in prison for my choices, which I honored and defended publicly in society and before the enemy. Of those 18 years, 14 were for the actions of Revolutionary Struggle. However paradoxical it may seem to some, freedom fighters passionately love life, sometimes risking being killed, while they love freedom, risking ending up in prison.

The founding of Revolutionary Struggle in 2003 and my participation in it were the result of a militant and political maturation. From this ordeal, as comrade Roupa did as well, I emerge victorious, with my head held high. Because we defended our political identity as members of Revolutionary Struggle. Because we defended our actions and every attack carried out by Revolutionary Struggle, one by one, as well as all 18 operations from 2003 to 2017, in all the trials against the organization. Because we defended our comrade Lambros Foundas, a member of the organization who was killed in a clash with police officers. Because if we had renounced our political identity in the hope of saving ourselves from repression, if we had not assumed political responsibility, that would have been the highest form of alienation; we would have betrayed our dead comrade Lambros Foundas, who was killed during a preparatory action by Revolutionary Struggle against the First Memorandum, and who gave his life so that the crisis could become an opportunity for the Social Revolution.

We emerge as political victors because we remained unrepentant, because we did not renounce our choices. If in earlier periods in Greece –such as, for example, during the Metaxas dictatorship, the civil war, and the 1967–'74 dictatorship– the issue at stake in repudiation and repentance was communism, in our time the issue at stake is renouncing one's status as a member of the guerrilla organization and, by extension, in practice, renouncing the guerrilla struggle and the revolution.

We emerge as political victors because we did not retreat in the slightest, because we remained frighteningly consistent and they failed to break us. Because defeat is not "military" defeat, arrest and imprisonment, nor being killed in the struggle, but political defeat –something far worse: the renunciation of one's political identity and activity, the renunciation of the collective to which we belong, something that the enemy and the judges seek to achieve.

We emerge as political victors, despite having literally passed through fire and iron on this historic journey. Along this journey, we lost our comrade Lampros Foundas in the clash in Dafni on March 10, 2010. During our own "stone years," we saw our son Viktor Lampros be born and spend the first months of his life growing up in prison, since our comrade Roupa was six months pregnant when we were arrested on April 10, 2010.

We escaped death: me in Monastiraki, when I was shot during the clash with the police officers who were pursuing me, and comrade Roupa when the helicopter nearly crashed during the hijacking attempt in 2016 that she carried out in order to free me from Korydallos Prison.Let me remind you that the police officer –the "protector of the citizen"– from the DIAS motorcycle po-

lice unit who shot me in Monastiraki, two years later –in 2016– robbed and murdered a citizen (a taxi driver) and was sentenced to two life terms, proving the nature of those whose real job is to protect the regime.I spent more than a year with one disabled arm, my humerus fractured by the gunshot in Monastiraki, while the "Justice" Ministry sent me –as it had announced beforehand– as the first political prisoner to the Type C prison in Domokos in December 2014, disregarding my medical care and the fact that I needed a second operation to restore my injured arm.

We felt the "extremity" of state repression firsthand when comrade Roupa and I were sentenced under a 1969 junta law to life imprisonment for the attack on the ECB branch, the Bank of Greece, and the IMF office -one of the most significant attacks by Revolutionary Struggle and the only guerrilla action directed against two of the three supranational mechanisms that imposed the onerous memoranda on the Greek people.

But the worst of all, before which all the previous events pale, was the confinement of our then six-and-a-half-year-old son, Viktor Lampros, in the psychiatric ward of the Children's Hospital and the removal of parental custody from us, following the arrest of our comrade Roupa on January 5, 2017.

An act drawn from the darkest moments of the Greek Civil War of 1946–49, when the children of DSE fighters were confined for "re-education" in the "children's cities" of Frederiki; an act resembling the practice of Videla's junta in Argentina, which took the children of dissidents and gave them to families sympathetic to the dictatorship. Except that in our case it was carried out by the left-wing SYRIZA government, which deceived the people by claiming that it would lead the country out of the memoranda, even violating the 2015 referendum that it itself had organized, in which 62% of the people said NO to the lenders. In our case, they demonstrated how hypocritical they are when they invoke "human rights," social struggles, or the National Resistance. The removal of parental custody from us for our own child took place, as the ruling stated, because we were both convicted and imprisoned for the activities of the Revolutionary Struggle organization, thereby demonstrating the political nature of this decision, since such a practice is not applied to parents who are criminal prisoners –both of whom are in prison– but only to parents who abuse their own children.

They applied this disgraceful provision to us because we are revolutionaries, members of the guerrilla organization to which we belong. The hostility and treatment we received as Revolutionary Struggle were unprecedented. This was because, throughout this entire historical course, we maintained an uncompromising and unwavering stance; because we did not surrender in 2013, at the end of the organization's first trial, in order to go to prison, but instead went underground without abandoning our son and continued the action of Revolutionary Struggle with the attack on the ECB–Bank of Greece and the IMF office. And also because Comrade Roupa did not surrender after my arrest in Monastiraki in 2014, but continued to remain underground, carrying out the attempted hijacking in 2016 with the aim of securing my release and continuing the action of Revolutionary Struggle. Our stance, as well as the fact that Comrade Roupa broke several patriarchal and sexist taboos as a woman, revolutionary, and mother, resulted in the enemy treating us in the manner it deemed "appropriate," to the point that the state placed our own child at the center of its war against Revolutionary Struggle. Yet none of this broke us.

The legacy that Revolutionary Struggle has already left behind is considerable, both on the theoretical level and in terms of action. It aptly analyzed the capitalist system during the period of intensified globalization, whose component elements were the war on "terror" and neoliberal reforms. Through its words and attacks, it challenged the omnipotence of the system and its

ability to reproduce itself indefinitely in an era of "prosperity" when many –even in political circles of resistance– believed this to be the case.

Through its analysis, it understood that capitalism rests on a debt-based economy, something that, in an era of interdependence among the system's functions, could be transformed into a time bomb at its foundations in the event of an outbreak of an international crisis. We were the only ones who, in 2005 –two years before the outbreak of the global crisis– when the organization had attacked the Ministries of Employment and Economy, said –in contrast to the state's dominant propaganda about a "strong Greek economy"– that Greece was in a dire economic position, that it had an enormous debt resulting from a class policy of strengthening capital and redistributing social wealth from the bottom upward, and that a potential collapse of the Greek economy in the event of an outbreak of an international economic crisis was a realistic prospect.

That is why Revolutionary Struggle understood early –before many others– the significance of the 2007–'08 crisis, the earthquake it would cause in the global system, and the opportunity for Revolution that would arise in countries such as Greece, which would face the risk of collapse due to its enormous debt.

That is why, from 2009, even before the country was placed under the programs of the IMF, the ECB, and the EU, when Revolutionary Struggle launched a campaign of attacks focused on the state's measures to address the crisis (armed attacks against riot police officers following the murder of Grigoropoulos, bomb attacks against Citibank, Eurobank, and the Athens Stock Exchange), it called for the creation of a revolutionary movement, a political-military structure that would necessarily include armed struggle in its strategy in order to exploit the delegitimization of the system that the crisis-management measures would cause and attempt to carry out the Revolution. The organization had also predicted Greece's inclusion in an IMF and EU program when it carried out the attack on the Athens Stock Exchange in September 2009, and had likewise predicted the social uprising of 2010–12 against the measures imposed by Greece's inclusion in the IMF, ECB, and EU memoranda. Everything that Revolutionary Struggle had risked predicting publicly and that was subsequently confirmed is historically documented in the organization's proclamations, and no one can refute it.

Revolutionary Struggle had unwaveringly expressed the position that the only realistic response to the crisis is the Social Revolution: the overthrow of the state and capital, of the system that reproduces and creates crises.

On the contrary, it considered –and we considered– any positions advocating an improvement of conditions within the existing system and within the memorandum programs to be delusion and illusion. We considered the prospects for a social-democratic policy in the era of globalization and the dominance of neoliberalism to be an illusion, as well as the rhetoric about "tearing up the memoranda" without a comprehensive rupture with the international system of power and a transition to revolutionary forms of social, political, and economic reconstruction.

That is why we believed that the measures imposed by the lenders could not be revoked by any government of any political hue, even a left-wing one. Precisely for this reason, a year before the "anti-memorandum" SYRIZA came to power, we had predicted –through our attack on April 10, 2014, against the ECB branch, the Bank of Greece, and the IMF office–that SYRIZA would follow to the letter everything dictated by the lenders and the memorandum obligations. This was confirmed by the imposition of the Third Memorandum and the extension, for decades, of the repayment of the debt (Fourth Memorandum).

Revolutionary Struggle is the only group that, viewing the crisis as an opportunity for the Revolution and speaking of the creation of a mass revolutionary movement with armed struggle among its objectives, formulated positions and proposals that a revolutionary movement should have for a different social organization before and after the destruction of capitalism and the state –something expressed in the campaign of attacks in 2009 and in the 2014 proclamation concerning the attack on the Bank of Greece and the IMF office.

Positions and proposals concerning the unilateral suspension of payments and the cancellation of the debt; withdrawal from the Eurozone and the European Union; the expropriation and socialization of the property of Capital and the State. The socialization –municipalization– and self-management of the means of production, industry, public utilities, healthcare, and education by municipalities and communities, workers, and the social base. The replacement of the State by a Confederated Union of Municipalities and Communities (Communes), Popular Assemblies, and Workers' Councils, as crystallized in a publication of ours in 2020 from prison, **"FOR OVERCOMING THE STATE AND CAPITAL-FOR A CONFEDERATED STATELESS, CLASSLESS SOCIAL ORGANIZATION."**

However, the best assessment of the Revolutionary Struggle's actions has been made by the enemy itself –the state. Just as when they arrested us for the first time in 2010, on the eve of the First Memorandum, and found 150 kilograms of ANFO explosives ready for an attack, when a government official stated anonymously that "they had prevented an attack that would have brought the economy to an end within hours." Just as when the prosecutor in the organization's third trial in 2018, in which Comrade Roupa was tried alone and sentenced to life imprisonment, had ruled that the Revolutionary Struggle's action was capable of bringing about the collapse of the economy, when he stated that "it was only by chance that the building of the Bank of Greece and the IMF did not collapse, an event that would have caused the collapse of the country's banking system and of the economy in general." In this way, he thus proved that the strategy we had adopted to undermine and destabilize the system was correct, while simultaneously invalidating the 2010 opinion of the Supreme Court that the practice of armed struggle –"terrorism," as they call it– is not capable of achieving systemic overthrow, except through military coups. At the same time, the Revolutionary Struggle's practice of attacks proved successful and innovative for the Greek urban guerrilla movement: the use of car bombs containing large quantities of explosives against critical infrastructure of the system, such as the stock exchange and the Bank of Greece IMF.

We also forced the appeals court of the second trial, in which we were both tried for the attack on the Bank of Greece–IMF and had argued that the Revolutionary Struggle's actions were lawful, even on the basis of Article 120 of the Constitution, since they were directed against the illegal Loan Facility Agreements, to rule that our actions cannot be recognized as "lawful" because they are carried out by a minority! The value of this argument lies more in what it does not explicitly say, due to the restrictions placed on judges as state employees. If we had been many, or if there had been a revolutionary mass movement, as we had already proposed since 2009, with armed struggle among its objectives, then obviously, even according to the argument of the judges of the appeals court in the second trial of the Revolutionary Struggle, we would have been lawful!

Of course, the legality of struggles, uprisings, and revolutions has historically not been determined by whether participation in them is majority-based or minority-based. Such a thing would be completely absurd and ahistorical. It is determined on the basis of the natural human right to resist the arbitrary actions of the respective state authority. The legality of revolutionary action

is determined by the illegal nature of the power of the state and capital itself. And this legality has its origins in the primordial natural law on which the first stateless and pre-state societies were founded, long before the emergence of the state and class divisions –societies founded on communal ownership, solidarity, and mutual aid. The legitimacy of the right of resistance, primarily armed resistance, has run through the entire history of humanity: the struggle of peoples against the State and the ruling class, the class struggle.

History is in reality the struggle of the Commune (Community), which took the form of the municipality or the collective, against the state. The right of peoples to resist and revolt against the lawlessness of state power and rulers was set down in the constitutional charters of medieval cities (Communes) in Europe, just as it had been recorded earlier in the ancient Athenian democracy against those who sought to overthrow the authority of the Municipality, where tyrannicide was a right and a duty and was honored by the citizens (the Decree of Demophantus, 411 BC). Likewise, the Constitution of 1793 of the French Revolution contained a provision recognizing the people's right to revolt against the government when it violated their rights. Remnants of this natural right of resistance also exist in modern constitutions, such as Article 120 of the Constitution, which should have been activated by the insurgent people during the period 2010–2012, who should have taken up arms against the illegal and unconstitutional memoranda, since the right and obligation to resist "by every means," as it states, necessarily also means taking up arms – which would have been the only effective means of preventing the imposition of the memoranda, which constitute a modern form of serfdom.

We never apologized for anything and we never regretted anything. We never felt even the slightest bit guilty about anything. We had, and still have, justice on our side.From this ordeal, I emerge politically victorious because, despite the 14 years I spent in prison for Revolutionary Struggle, I continue to believe in the positions of Revolutionary Struggle; I believe in the justice of the Social Revolution and the overthrow of the State and Capital, in the necessity and enduring relevance of armed struggle as a fundamental and historically inseparable part of the revolutionary popular movement.

The armed action of the Revolutionary Struggle, from whatever angle one views it, was a lawful political, natural, and moral right to resist and overthrow an illegal authority –that of the State and Capital.

LONG LIVE REVOLUTIONARY STRUGGLE

HONOR FOREVER TO LAMBROS FOUNDAS

LONG LIVE THE SOCIAL REVOLUTION FOR A GLOBALSTATELESS, CLASSLESS SOCIETY

FOR A GLOBAL FEDERATION OF COMMUNES (COMMUNITIES)

Nikos Maziotis

Member of Revolutionary Struggle

P.S.: However, this account would be incomplete, because the truth is that we had to confront not only the state, but also attacks from "militant" sections of the milieu from which we emerged.

We experienced the political division within the "solidarity" movement, where for many in the "movement" it is more "familiar" to stand in solidarity with those who declare that they have no connection to the charges, invoking a conspiracy –a historically unique Greek phenomenon in the history of the international revolutionary movement– and not with those who assume political responsibility for their participation in the guerrilla organization to which they belong and whose actions they defend.

We experienced the "solidarity" of falsification and distortion, of "cutting" and "stitching" Revolutionary Struggle and Lambros Foundas to fit their own purposes, placing emphasis not on why the comrade was killed –as a member of Revolutionary Struggle and for the organization's strategy, as they should have– but on other, supposedly more "movement-oriented" and more "mass" practices in the name of the "multiform" struggle.

A defense witness (a member of the so-called Solidarity Fund) for a defendant who denied the charges at the first trial of Revolutionary Struggle went so far as to declare that, "for security reasons," one cannot be a member of a guerrilla organization while simultaneously participating in the "mass movement" and its milieu. A statement dissociating Revolutionary Struggle –and us as anarchists– from the political milieu from which we came; a lie about our comrade Fountas, who participated in Revolutionary Struggle. This statement of dissociation handed our heads "on a platter" to the enemy –that is, to the judges.

We realized during the years underground, 2012–2017, that for some "comrades" and "solidarians" we were "convenient" as prisoners for "solidarity," but not as those continuing the Revolutionary Struggle's activities –as persecuted, wanted fugitives, each with a €1,000,000 bounty on our heads.

We were useful as Revolutionary Struggle until 2010, but not afterwards.

Another reason for the campaign against us was our consistent hostility as anarchists toward SYRIZA, which quite a few people in the milieu voted for or supported politically in a completely opportunistic manner, on the one hand hoping that, as a government, it would take a milder approach toward political and anarchist prisoners at the time –something that also concerned the Type C prisons established by the New Democracy government in 2014–and, on the other hand, harboring the political illusion that SYRIZA would genuinely resist the lenders (EU, ECB, IMF) and that there might be "prospects" for struggle or an alternative government, with the country leaving the EMU. Or that there might be "prospects" for struggle because of the referendum organized by the SYRIZA government in the summer of 2015 –which they "strategically" supported– the result of which SYRIZA itself violated.It is no coincidence that some of those who held that stance at the time, as SYRIZA's "appendage," provided political cover for a former member of the organization who made a statement of repentance and disavowal at the appeals trial of the first Revolutionary Struggle trial –someone who had said, "I have never declared that I am a revolutionary," and who disassociated himself from us in front of the enemy, declaring that "Revolutionary Struggle was defeated in 2010," while we continued our activity with the 2014 attack on the ECB–Bank of Greece and the IMF office.This political cover for the repentant individual was reflected in the fact that some "activists" also testified as defense witnesses (e.g. from T.A.) on his behalf at the appeals trial of the first Revolutionary Struggle trial, thereby also contributing to the attempt to separate the organization's history into the period before 2010 and the period after 2012 –something that suited all those who did not want Revolutionary Struggle to continue its activity.

An unprecedented event in the history not only of the domestic "movement" but also of the international one, since such political cover has never been provided by movements in Europe or elsewhere to repentant members of the urban guerrilla struggle, something that constitutes yet another "innovation" of the domestic "movement."

Naturally, we do not forget that the arrest of comrade Roupa in January 2017 was the result of an informant's tip, as was reported in the regime's press.

The polemic against us reached the point where we were subjected to instigated attacks inside the prison by other "militants." No other militants have faced such fury as we have, the members of Revolutionary Struggle.

All these, however, are not isolated events, but are situated within a specific historical context and a period that began with the defeat of the social anti-austerity uprising of 2010–'12, and at the same time with the failure and defeat of the anarchist–anti-authoritarian and broader anti-capitalist milieu to play the role it should have played for us at that time: namely, to transform itself into a genuine revolutionary movement in order to attempt a Revolution –something we had proposed as early as 2009. Thus, this defeat led the "resistance" milieus toward introversion, the strategy of negotiating with SYRIZA, and competition among the new formations that emerged in the milieu during that period for political "hegemony" within it.

And under these conditions of defeat and decline, the existence of Revolutionary Struggle seemed "foreign" and "inconvenient."There was a direct connection between state repression and the hostility we faced from sections of the milieu. Because the hostility and lack of solidarity that existed, particularly from the years of clandestinity and after our arrests, did not go unnoticed by the state.

That is why we experienced the full extremity of state repression in all its forms (life sentences, removal of parental custody of our son, isolation).

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