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Interview of comrade Giorgos Voutsis-Vogiatzis (Greece)

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2010

Your court of Appeals is on June 7th. If you got out today how would you choose to live?

While I've been here I haven't planned my life outside. I try to be vigilant every day, to be in a physical and mental alertness. I live the present as intense as possible and when the door opens, I will look at the future.

"I do not regret my action but i would not do it again because the personal weight for me, my family, friends and my comrades is enormous," you said. Is this a sign of remorse?

The appeal of the prosecutor on the existing sentence of eight years imprisonment imposed on me at the first trial is an order that was given by high ranks, police and judicial leadership. I am in prison for almost three years accused of bank robbery. Those who have the audacity to ask me to regret for the expropriation of stolen social wealth are the main responsible for the systematic terrorizing of the Greek society. Because for me, terrorism is the bank that seizes homes and the predatory interest rates. Terrorism is working all your life for the bosses and then they take your salary and pension. Terrorism is living with the stress of survival. Terrorism is trying to lie to convince the goodness of the dictatorship of the I.M.F. (international monetary fund) I do not regret my action, but the reason why I would not choose the practice of robbery has to do with my personal development as a person and the priorities I have from now on in my life.

Giorgos Voutsis-Vogiatzis

Michalis Chrisohoidis (minister of protection of the citizen, ex ministry of public order) is considered a very successful minister. What is your opinion about him?

“We have war,” he has declared. Beyond that, this war is not about a vendetta between cops and anti-authoritarians as deliberately presented by representatives of the regime, to spread confusion and to separate the whole of society from a war that eventually involves them and touches them directly. Bosses and oppressed, dead workers in LARCO, in Corinth Pipework, in the ship repair zone of Perama, guards with bats and prisoners in the dungeons, torturing psychiatrists and human experiments in blue cells, sadistic prosecutors and convicts sentenced to a life of suffering. Police murderers, young people and immigrants packed into the cells and police vans. In democracy there are torturers, but its so smart that it gives other definitions to the crimes it commits. Because how else can you describe those who committed crimes for two months on the mind, body and soul of fighter Savvas Xiros (imprisoned for participation in the revolutionary group “17th November”) in “Evangelismos” hospital after the bomb exploded in his hands? If we consider success synonymous with effectiveness regardless of the methods used to reach the ultimate goal, then the minister to protect the snitches is a successful minister. The problem is that society should understand that nowadays success is synonymous with cannibalism, self-interest and personal ambition. That to be successful you should not have morals, you should be a liar, you should sell your soul to the devil, or rather the Americans.

Tell us about your detention conditions, about your life in prison.

Life inside a prison is quite routinized. When I entered prison, I received a letter from a very good friend and comrade, former prisoner, stating that the prison is a revolutionary’s monastery. Nervously and clumsy, I replied that prison is bullshit and that we should get out of here as quickly as possible. Three years after my imprisonment I understood the true meaning of his words. Prison is a place away from the mundane, which allows you to reconstruct yourself. It’s a test that if you come out untouched you’re a winner. The strengthening of personal faith in the struggle and boost of revolutionary self-esteem is a reward that cannot be earned even with all the money in the world. Deeper meanings for higher ideals.

The hearing for the appeal of anarchist comrade George Voutsis-Vogiatzis, arrested for bank robbery, was set for June 7th, 2010 but was postponed for May 6th, 2011. Here’s a translated interview he gave to the newspaper “Proto Thema” on May 9th 2010

The tragic account of the march last Wednesday counts three deaths, among them a pregnant woman, which with other victims were locked inside Marfin bank. Murders attributed to the anarchists Molotov. . .

The emotional and political gap in the last hours after the death of the three workers in the bank from asphyxiation can not be described in words or replaced by actions, counterbalancing or convictions. The value of human life when its not jointly responsible for the criminal plans of authority is the purest in the world. Of course, the anarchist movement is not accountable towards this event. Anarchists are not representatives of abstract violence. Anarchists express revolutionary violence. A violence expressed by targeting state and capital. The operation of de-politicizing the anarchist movement will not work for them again. Anarchists are proving, especially in recent years, through carrying out attacks with Molotov cocktails, gas canisters and other means of action against targets of authority that they never turned against the life of the workers since in every case, people involved in those actions first make sure to evacuate the buildings or attacking them at night when they are closed.

What label would you put on what you are? Are you a bank robber? Was your aim the money?

The bank robbery as a practice is part of the overall rupture with the system of injustice. This is the basic difference between the revolutionary-anarchist and the career-robber. Revolutionary experience consists of a total of practices and tactics of battle, that have as their purpose to attack the enemy forces and to destabilize the existing social situation to make the transition to a free society. Beyond that a bank robbery remains a decent choice over the years, since it is an act against the predatory role of the banks.

What was your first thought when you heard about the arrest of the people belonging to the “Revolutionary Struggle”?

Initially I followed with great care the operation or dislocation of the comrades, allegedly members of the “Revolutionary Struggle”. Once again we became receivers of the cultural poverty of a system that is

collapsing. Of course the presumption of innocence and the respect of prisoners lives are completely unknown to the man-preying vultures of the media, the audacity of which has exceeded all limits.

In what recent case do you think that the media have gone beyond the limits?

In the case of the strange death of a 15 year old Afghan refugee, (meaning the 15 year old Afghan boy that died when a bomb he found in a bin exploded in his hands, also injuring his sister) which was the backbone of the “anti-terror” campaign in the part of the ideological devaluation during the arrests of comrades who are persecuted for their involvement in “R.S.”.

The media handled the incident with the now usual tactic of publicizing made up (fictional) telephone calls that are not a result of police surveillance, but leaks from the police.

In the conversation comrades, suspected members of the “R.S.” are supposedly giggling with an incredible amount of cynicism when one of them is watching the kid looking over the already placed bomb. A conversation that is not included in any court documents. Beyond that, the imperial Greek government, allies of the Americans and their genocides, of course, in Afghanistan, is calling for a social consensus against “terrorism” in response to a dead boy from Afghanistan. How many such boys has the Greek Army assassinated in Afghanistan? This is an interesting survey that unfortunately never took place, since a missile to the U.S. embassy in Greece is a terrorist act and is punishable with decades in prison, unlike the murderous Greek troops in Afghanistan who are portrayed as “humanitarian assistance” and are decorated by their bosses.

All this time I remain consciously away from any kind denouncing of revolutionary action and continue to defend the substance and scope of the practice of which I’m prosecuted for. The captors are not only interested about your imprisonment, they are especially interested when you are a political subject, in a statement of renouncement or repentance. The capitulation to the oppressors and the admission to a futile struggle are elements that do not suit us. I came out untouched from their penitentiaries and the factories of manufacturing repentants. I belong to the proud generation that does not apologize in the courts, does not speak

to security forces and does not bow the head in the prison courtyards. In the generation that knows how to honor their dead and punish their enemies.

According to police leaks, you belong to the “Bandits in Black No. 2” (fictional anarchist-terror-bankrobbery group created by mainstream media) What is your answer?

That I belong to the “Bandits in Black No. 3” But do not tell anyone . . .

Couldn’t the reaction of the youth be expressed within the official Left parties? What is your opinion on this specific ideological movement?

The leftist regime can no longer inspire the larger sections of the youth. For the same reasons as the official trade unions can no longer manipulate the workers. Pieces of the youth realize that the right to life, is not begged for with votes and peaceful protests or complaints and convictions. The message of the youth that rose up in December was clearer than any political doublespeak: “If you don’t respect us, you will fear us.” The role of the leftist regime will be proven particularly dangerous in the period that will follow. Because I believe that as an alternative apologist of the regime will help alleviate social contradictions, since the practices it chooses are delineated within the framework of the existing legitimacy and the commitment to parliamentarianism.

Your father is a member of SYRIZA. (greek left wing political party) What is your opinion about politicians?

Personally, I grew up in a warm environment, full of books, political files, a place infused with the values and traditions of the left political culture. My father to me is a benchmark in terms of morals and values as a man.

Do you believe that your father is one of those responsible for the current situation of the country?

As grateful as I am to my father for the way he raised me, equally my political beliefs do not allow me to exclude him of the politically responsible for the current political situation of the country. The leftist regime has its own responsibilities for what we are experiencing today.

What message would you send him from inside prison?

With my father i have a very strong relationship, a strong personal contact and see each other regularly on visiting hours.