



La coalition au pouvoir en Grèce joue un jeu dangereux

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La dernière réunion des trois dirigeants de la coalition au pouvoir en Grèce au lendemain de la décision inattendue de fermer l'ERT, la société publique de radiodiffusion, n'aboutira pas nécessairement à des élections, même si ce n'est pas exclu, écrit Yiannis Roubatis.

Yiannis Roubatis, ancien eurodéputé grec du PASOK, est le fondateur et l'éditeur d'EURACTIV Grèce.

"The last thing that Greece needed at this point in time was a political crisis. Shockingly, however, this is exactly what it got after last Tuesday's (11 June) unprecedented decision of the prime minister to suddenly shut down ERT, the public radio and television company.

A week later, with the country's highest administrative court ordered the public broadcaster back on air, while allowing at the same time the firing of its 2,700 employees and its full restructuring, the coalition government is on the verge of collapse. A three-and-a-half hour meeting of the leaders of the three government partners Monday evening solved nothing and a new meeting is scheduled for Wednesday.

The debacle over the prime minister's decision brought to full view the simmering struggle that has been going on for some time between the three coalition leaders. The country is devastated by the crisis. Despite the high price the Greek citizens have paid the last three and a half years with close to one-third of the active population unemployed, with unemployment among the youth reaching 58%, with salaries and pensions cut by more than 30%, with health and education at its worst condition in the last three decades, the end to Greece's economic crisis seems far away.

The recent failure to privatise DEPA, Greece's major natural gas distributor, the unraveling of the privatisation of OPAP, the fixed betting and lottery company, the failure to curb tax evasion and the inability to reorganise the civil service, combined with the authoritarian and autocratic rule of the senior partner in the coalition to create an explosive mixture.

Greece's lack of experience with coalition governments and consensus procedures has not made things easier. The situation is worsened by the pressure felt by New Democracy, the main partner of the coalition, by Golden Dawn, the openly Nazi party that managed to elect representatives to the Greek Parliament and according to recent polls seems to be gaining strength. The fact that PASOK, Greece's social-democratic party and partner to the coalition government, is on the verge of disintegration, makes the situation even gloomier.

This afternoon's [19 June] meeting between the three leaders of the coalition government will not necessarily lead to elections, although no one could rule this out. However, the mirror has been shattered and it will be very difficult to put the pieces back together without major concessions by all three of the coalition partners. However, with Syriza, the leftist main opposition party on the heels of New Democracy, the senior partner of the coalition will have difficulties accepting a compromise that could be seen as giving up the original decision to blacken the screens of the televisions. On the other hand, both PASOK and the Democratic Left – the junior partners of the coalition – know that it would be political suicide to let the prime minister have his say on an issue which is seen by the majority of leftist voters as a major violation of constitutionally protected rights.

As a result, a game of chicken will be played this afternoon by the three coalition partners. In such a game, if no one swerves away, all participants are injured and suffer losses."

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