

EU-Crisis and Concrete Alternatives

The need of a progressive European front*

The sixth ESF takes place at a time when Europe is undergoing existential crisis and where aggressiveness of financial capitalism and the respective governments in the pursuit of their neoliberal logic are leading the societies on to the brink of the abyss.

The present crisis of the Euro and the E.U. – one of the centres of the crisis – is not just the consequence of the worldwide financial collapse. It brings right out into the open the failure of the Euro and the serious defects in the building of Europe, in a way that has been rejected by a majority of the voters during the referenda in France, Holland and Ireland. Neither the E.U. nor the respective governments have observed the decisions of the peoples but, on the contrary, have continued to implement the same trends as before.

The very nature of European integration has turned out to be a crisis factor. The crisis has been fraught with particularly serious consequences in Europe. Even though the intensity and the concrete effects of the crisis are not the same in all the countries, in the North and in the South, the East and the West, the trends are nevertheless identical. The Euro and the E.U. orientations were not designed to stimulate real cooperation in favour of the populations, of a new industrial or agricultural policy, public research, the development of public services and infrastructures, in short, in favour of a new mode of development. The treaties that encouraged fiscal and social dumping, the stability pact (that has been completely exploded) sought to direct the flow of money towards the markets. The whole collection of measures to set wage-earners and regions into competition against each other only help the big business groups, the financial markets and the most competitive economies of the most powerful countries. In fact, the Stability Pact – which is now being permanently violated by most countries of the EU – has burst asunder.

The present-day acute debt crisis is the result of 30 years of economic and political development,

of the global financial and economic crisis and of the state intervention that had become necessary in the wake of the acute international financial crisis. It represents a new phase in the great crisis of the entire accumulation and regulation model of finance market capitalism. It is also the consequence of the policy of deregulation which has been practised by right but also by left-wing governments for many decades. The progressive integration of the EU on the basis of the neo-liberal dogma (Lisbon Treaty, Stability Pact, independence and orientation of the ECB...) is responsible for the particular intensity of the crisis in the European dimension.

The debt crisis crystallises a variety of the causes of the crisis and makes the general crisis concretely felt by the people in the countries concerned. In all societies the issue of public debts will become the central issue of social and political conflicts. Under present-day conditions, the great crisis might lead to a crisis of political systems, to a de-legitimisation of political protagonists, to authoritarian solutions. The social situation might become explosive and lead to disruptions of all kinds. Splits inside society may lead to dramatic conflicts between the victims of the crisis and prevent them from forming a joint front against those responsible.

We are at a turning point in the class struggle in Europe. The violence of the methods used by this capitalist front shows its determination. Against them, we need a dynamic social and political front in every country, and to build a common European alternative as answer to human and environmental needs. We need to discuss what political response (see page 2) we propose as concrete and ambitious alternative.



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About *transform!*

With this special issue, transform!, european journal for left thinking and political dialogue introduces itself to you. Its first issue was published in March 2007 in English, German and Greek.

Multilingualism is one of the pre-conditions for the development of a common political culture within the Left, and that's why transform! now appears in eight languages (English, German, Greek, French, Portuguese, Italian, Hungarian and Turkish) and further editions are in the state of preparation.

The current regular issue of transform! (nr 6) comprising 200 pages focuses on the 10th anniversary of the World Social Forum.

However transform! europe is not only a magazine. It is a network of currently 16 associations, foundations and journals from 13 European countries and it is still growing. It was founded in 2001 to initiate and promote alternative thinking and political dialogue aimed at transforming contemporary society according to social, feminist, ecological, democratic and pacifist values.

From its inception transform! europe has worked towards a new and common political culture of the Left. It is one of the most active networks within the European Social Forum and the World Social Forum, it became a partner of various European initiatives on social, economic, ecological and political issues as well as of trade unions and is at the same time working within social movements.

It provides a space to generate left synergy, in part by initiating projects or supporting those of other innovative left forces.

Compared to most European organisations of the radical Left, transform! Europe comprises organisations of a very diverse character. Some of its participants define themselves in relation to parties of the European Left (EL), others feel close to parties of the Nordic Green Left Alliance, and others in turn belong to neither of these groupings and maintain a completely independent position.

Cutting across all differences, the partner organisations of transform! are united in their resistance to neoliberal ideological hegemony and in the struggle for alternatives which can increase the Left's emancipatory potential. In this way, the network regards itself as a part of the European Left in the broadest sense of the word. With this understanding, it was recognised last year by the European Left Party as a partner organisation in the context of the creation of a political foundation, which made possible access to European Union funding as well as the network's capacity to support concrete forms of cooperation.

We look forward to receiving your criticism and suggestions as well as your substantive contributions regarding the topics covered by our journal.

Walter Baier
(Editor, transform!)



* This paper contains large extracts of the article published by the magazine Transform! 06|2010 "Crisis, Europe, Alternatives and strategic challenges"

What Political Response for Greece, for "PIGS" and for Europe?

The peoples or the markets? That is the choice we must make. Emerging from the crisis requires a radical change of policy. Today, every major demand comes up against the logic of the capitalist system in an acute state of crisis.

On a European scale as well as in each of our countries, it is a case of **fighting for real political breaks** as well as emergency measures also inspired by an alternative logic.

The governments, who have a high responsibility for the arrival of the crisis, must be brought to breaking with this logic of debts for the states, tightened belts for the peoples, a casino for finance. Instead of consulting experts with interests of their own in the markets, they must make democracy work by **taking measures and undertaking reforms in favour of social and economic democracy.**

- Finance must be democratised, re-directed, resized in a responsible manner. The entire credit sector must selectively favour useful projects and penalise speculative operations. Speculation that is detrimental to the common good must be prosecuted according to the criminal law. The entire banking and finance sector must be structured anew, with deposit banks and merchant banks being separated, public banking centres being set up and even certain bodies being integrated into the public sector. No more public means must be provided for bailing out the banks without a simultaneous expansion of public decision-making and controlling-rights!
- The EU must decide to apply specific ways of controlling the movement of capital and to tax financial transactions. The tax havens must be closed. Bank secrecy must be reviewed. A tax on financial transactions can help finance internationally administered funds, the means of which serve the enforcement of a new model of social and ecological development.
- The banks must – by a convergent effort of the governments and the EU – immediately be brought to change their orientation, to stop using savings for speculative activity on the Stock Exchanges and to re-orient credit towards the financing of useful activities and the creation of jobs and infrastructures.
- All policies must be aimed at stopping the crisis of over-accumulation, at intervening massively in favour of the fairest distribution of surplus value in favour of work and public interest and of freeing them from the power of the market.

At the international level, the EU must counter the aggressiveness of the United States and act in favour of the stabilisation of the real economy; the use of SDRs as a reserve currency; replacing the G-20 by a Global Economic Council under

UN auspices; the development of instruments to favour equity in trade; removing common and public property from speculation; in favour of multi-lateral and bi-lateral agreements as opposed to setting up competition between peoples, wage earners and regions; ambitious and shared policies for resolving the ecological crisis. The EU must contribute towards preventing raw materials from being turned into "financial products". In international bodies the EU's voice carries some weight: it must be heard in favour of a world of solidarity, which presupposes a radical change of direction.

We must break with the dogmas of European neo-liberalism that Juncker, Trichet and Gonzales continue to defend tooth and nail.

- The Stability Pact, designed to ration social expenditure must be abandoned; the European peoples need a pact of cooperation, in favour of social and ecological development and of solidarity
- The European budget must be significantly increased and must enable positive actions by the EU. Fiscal, social and ecological dumping must be banned. The introduction of a European capital tax could contribute to increasing the EU-budget and so facilitate an intervention by the EU in favour of an inter-European cooperation so as to counter-act the inter-European asymmetry.
- The European social model must be renovated and re-invented. A radical break with unemployment, precariousness, working poor and the strategy "Europe 2020" is urgent.
- The privatisation of whole areas of retirement benefits – urged by the Lisbon strategy and particularly developed in the Eastern countries – has led to serious dangers because of losses in the context of the financial crisis.. Stopping the privatisation of pensions, one of the motors of the financialisation of the economy, is therefore a major issue.

"Tightening the Belt" is Not the Answer. The Public Debt Must be Reduced in Another Way. Every Measure that suffocates the Real Economy is Irresponsible.

- By rejecting any rapid budgetary restriction, which would lead to the danger of a massive plunge into recession.
- From a short-term-perspective it is necessary to relieve the immediate pressure of the finance markets and the creditors on the public budgets by means of a European moratorium. There should be moratoria to stop the growth of public debt, to reduce the growth of public indebtedness and the pressure on the states, to gain the time needed to set up instruments that favour transparency (enquiry commissions etc.), to set up new democratic policies and methods.

A selective treatment of debts must also be envisaged. Instead of the markets, the ECB must grant loans to the states on favourable terms.

- New means (new deals) must be mobilised, bypassing the markets, so as to meet the needs of public expenditure, to face the crisis and emerge from it. Budget policy must be restructured along principles of solidarity. Real economy must be strengthened vis-à-vis the finance markets and institutions.
- Interest for public expenditure must be radically reduced. The ECB must be endowed with the power to buy public bonds to the extent that they could be useful for a new kind of development of jobs and of industrial and research policies, for restarting public services and social protection. The assignment and management of the ECB as well as its orientation of credit must be altered to support objectives of development, by abandoning the straightjacket of monetarist policies and modulating the conditions of access in accordance with the contents of the projects, making it impossible for credit to contribute to speculation and overdraft loans.
- New public revenues are necessary and also possible to be raised from taxation of incomes gained from finance and big property, from socially just tax reforms which stimulate the real economy, from a stop to tax reductions and a closure of tax havens.
- The domestic economies have to be stimulated, in particular by means of structural policy and higher mass incomes. The re-valuation of labour, the reduction of precarisation and unemployment (reduction of working hours at the expense of big capitalists), the improvement of primary distribution all amount to creating new incomes for social funds and public budgets and reduce necessary social insurance contributions.

Economic Redistribution and Democracy as Principles for Anti-Liberal Reforms.

- A fairer distribution of surplus value is indispensable to fight the development of the crisis. Income from work (including insecure jobs...) must be valued more highly than that from capital. A greater part of business profits must be invested in favour of human and ecological development. Solidarity economy should be promoted and also the rights and powers of wage earners.
- The directive "on the rights of shareholders" and its adaptation in the various countries must be suspended and measures taken to counter the volatility of investment and to make more permanent the relation between firms and investments, to separate management from shareholder logics, to strengthen the "social in-



terest of firms" and the requirements of the real economy as against the interests of shareholders, investors and the market.

- The use of public money must be democratically controlled. The mobilisation of public funds, particularly in favour of big groups must be based on democratic principles (their use must generate new power for public authorities and wage earners), on social (the criteria of creating or defending decently remunerated jobs of quality...) and ecological objectives (in favour of a new kind of development). The means of local authorities to react must be strengthened rather than restricted.
- Any commitment of public money must help develop economic democracy and open the way to a change in power, in property and orientation, accompanied by new power for wage earners and citizens.
- With regards to banking systems, the setting up of public financial centres, subject to control by the state and society, is more than ever indispensable to ensure that credit works in favour of public interest.
- The development of economic democracy can be effective as a lever for intervention by state institutions and civil society to shift the power relations, to support the implementation of new criteria in the economy and to re-establish the primacy of politics. The EU-Treaty as well as the Stability Pact and the function of the ECB must be subjected to a radical re-orientation.

Portugal: 300.000 People on the Streets – What Do We Want?

By Carla Luís

Last 29th May a huge demonstration took place in Portugal: 300.000 people took the streets of Lisbon and protested against the political and economic Portuguese situation.

Called by CGTP, the biggest Portuguese trade union organisation, this demonstration was one of the biggest organised reactions to the political situation Portugal is facing now. Being one of the PIG's (Portugal, Ireland, Greece and Spain, some of the peripheral EU countries under financial markets' attacks), Portugal was "forced" (I will analyse this below) to adopt anti-crisis measures. But does it really have to be like this?

The Government has just approved the "PEC" (a "Plan for Growth and Stability"), allegedly to adopt anti-crisis measures, the main of which imposing severe cuts on workers and on social policy.

This plan foresees a cut on unemployment social benefits, including both its amount and extension. Facing an official unemployment rate of more than 10%, this will leave many Portuguese without any social support. Furthermore, it is estimated that about 50% of the unemployed al-



ready have a social benefit of less than €420 per month.

The tax rate for workers has also been increased in 1% to 1,5%. With a minimum wage of €475, and a medium wage of about €600, this will burden even more Portuguese workers. Several studies have also showed that these measures will have a greater impact on lower wages.

The Government will also increase the VAT on 1%. This will include an increase of the minimum rate, currently of 5%, that applies only to essential goods, such as bread, milk, food in general and medicines. All these measures will be adopted when the small growth on the Portuguese economy, in the beginning of the year, was due to internal consumption – that will now face a deep cut.

On the other hand, nothing seems to have changed on the taxation of financial profits. The Government keeps refusing to duly tax capital transferences to off shore companies. The effective tax rate for banks will also remain much below all other tax rates, as banks are able to deduce items such as legal reserves, provisions, among many others. Banks still pay an average effective tax rate of just 10%, while all other commercial companies, even familiar commercial units, pay a tax rate of 25%. It is even ironic: the financial system, which can be held responsible for the major origins of the crisis, and has largely benefited from state aids, will remain immune to all emergency measures.

These 300.000 people have stated clearly their disagreement with these measures, reflecting a deep social and economic injustice. The problem remains, though: further social cuts are expected at anytime. It is important that our voice is heard and the message comes clear: we shall not pay for their crisis.

Climate Change Crisis: Solidarity Will Be the Great Issue

By Josef Baum

Financial debts and "ecological debts"

In Europe we look currently rigid with fear at financial debts and discuss possibilities and probabilities of paying back.

But what about "ecological debts"? In comparison with the – fierce – current financial crisis the developing "climate crisis" will be stronger by many dimensions. E. g. the financial crisis, which hits Greece and maybe other southern European states is marginal in comparison with the impacts of climate change predicted for Greece, southern Italy and southern Spain (droughts, water shortage, desertification). The climate issue will develop to a deep and long climate crisis (probably not in the next years but within some decades) – EXCEPT we immediately and comprehensively start with a dedicated low carbon policy.

New fundamentals in the age of climate change

The fundamentally new global situation is that we have "deadlines" for the solution to the climate issue, which has become an existential question of humanity. Currently we still have action options. But if we exceed the time thresholds we will shift to a reactive mode, in which we are driven out of control and we would act in a defensive and adaptive manner. In short the message is the well known scientific consensus that this threatening can be avoided by reducing the use of fossil energy globally by at least 50 % until 2050 globally. And: every delay in acting will make things more difficult and programmes more expensive every day.

Remaining amount of CO₂ for a socio-ecological transition

In order to achieve the 2°C target – declared in Copenhagen – and not to exceed thresholds there is only a certain amount of greenhouse gases that

still can be emitted. This certain amount of greenhouse gases remaining for use has to be used to develop, rebuild and renew all infrastructure, energy production, buildings, and transportation in a low carbon technology mode. This task is therefore not a task of years but of decades. The task will be successful if we do not waste this remaining amount but use it for a socio-ecological transition.

Basic milestones for a global solution could be:

A binding treaty for all on the basis of historical responsibility. A definition of a fair convergence process in emissions per capita. And immediate actions against irreversible measures

The lesson of Copenhagen: Only fair solutions are feasible solutions

A further fundamental issue of climate change policy is: Individual, regional and partial solutions only can be steps towards a comprehensive solution. But there is no reasonable possibility of strategic coexistence with fossil dominance. The global characteristic of climate change enforces global solutions and a systemic alternative.

Basically the necessary transition is a social process; it is also a matter of (new) technologies and their implementation and diffusion, but the (new) social organization and its regulation will be decisive for success. But to start we have to look on the status of development or the current status of global distribution, which is blocking a take-off.

The environmental and climate mess has not been caused in an equal manner. The causation is disparate and highly differentiated, and thus the responsibility to clean up the mess. Thus some general principle of causation ("polluters pay-principle") and responsibility has to be implemented.

Revival of equality and fairness

Since the industrialisation in Europe and the accumulation of capital – not only the accumulation of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere – has increased tremendously. But also various disparities on the national, continental and on the global level have increased.

Because of the great divergences, effective low carbon policy will be only possible on consideration of development necessities, and principles of justice and fairness considering historical responsibility – on the global level but also on the national level.

Because of the historic use of resources by industrial countries and the level of development achieved by this use a fair global solution would implicate a reduction of the use of fossil energy by 80 – 90 % until 2050 in developed countries. This is a tremendous challenge never seen in history before.

The lesson of Copenhagen obviously is: there will be fair global solutions or no solutions. The danger of a global chaotic development in a deepened climate crisis is real. But then almost all will be worse off. So there seems to be no alternative to the general principle of justice and causation and its implementation.

And the necessary socio-ecological transition on this road will bring a healthier life and more quality of life for all, and by (global) redistribution and participation more potential of innovation.

Thus comprehensive low carbon policy has to solve the environmental problem and the distributional problem simultaneously within a historically short time.

One basic question to be determined: how equal are human rights?

The parameters of the proposed solutions are rather clear; there are only two variables to be

determined (in negotiations): this is firstly and most importantly the equality character of human rights. Should there be "equal human rights" for the atmosphere? Or do some people have the right to use the atmosphere much more?

When "equal human rights" for the atmosphere would be accepted, the solution basically is clear. And then there would be only some "technical" details to define the exact result. And further the generosity* of the historically low emitters towards the low emitters would define the convergence process in emissions per capita.

The European Parliament basically has adopted a resolution in the sense of "equal human rights" in climate change issues but unfortunately without concrete date. But this principle generally would result in a convergence to an equitable distribution of emissions rights on a per capita basis.

Anyway the basic idea of equality, justice and fairness, and equal human rights for all people on earth will have a revival because it is necessary for feasible solutions to safeguard the living conditions for mankind.



Josef Baum
Transform Austria

* If the USA would emit zero as long as the cannot reach their "just" (world average) share on the total amount of historical global emissions – the USA would have to stay around 150 years in the status of zero-emission to reach their share.

Gaza Flotilla: The Israeli Government Chose the Worst Alternative

By Uri Avnery

On the high seas, outside territorial waters, the ship was stopped by the navy. The commandos stormed it. Hundreds of people on the deck resisted, the soldiers used force. Some of the passengers were killed, scores injured. The ship was brought into harbor, the passengers were taken off by force. The world saw them walking on the quay, men and women, young and old, all of them worn out, one after another, each being marched between two soldiers...

The ship was called "Exodus 1947". It left France in the hope of breaking the British blockade, which was imposed to prevent ships loaded with Holocaust survivors from reaching the shores of Palestine. If it had been allowed to reach the country, the illegal immigrants would have come ashore and the British would have sent them to detention camps in Cyprus, as they had done before. Nobody would have taken any notice of the episode for more than two days.

But the person in charge was Ernest Bevin, a Labour Party leader, an arrogant, rude and power-loving British minister. He was not about to let a bunch of Jews dictate to him. He decided to teach them a lesson the entire world would witness. "This is a provocation!" he exclaimed, and of course he was right. The main aim was indeed to create a provocation, in order to draw the eyes of the world to the British blockade.

What followed is well known: the episode dragged on and on, one stupidity led to another, the whole world sympathized with the passengers. But the British did not give in and paid the price. A heavy price.

Many believe that the "Exodus" incident was the turning point in the struggle for the creation of the State of Israel. Britain collapsed under the weight of international condemnation and decided to give up its mandate over Palestine. There

were, of course, many more weighty reasons for this decision, but the "Exodus" proved to be the straw that broke the camel's back.

I am not the only one who was reminded of this episode this week. Actually, it was almost impossible not to be reminded of it, especially for those of us who lived in Palestine at the time and witnessed it.

There are, of course, important differences. Then the passengers were Holocaust survivors, this time they were peace activists from all over the world. But then and now the world saw heavily armed soldiers brutally attack unarmed passengers, who resist with everything that comes to hand, sticks and bare hands. Then and now it happened on the high seas – 40 km from the shore then, 65 km now.

In retrospect, the British behavior throughout the affair seems incredibly stupid. But Bevin was no fool, and the British officers who commanded the action were not nincompoops. After all, they had just finished a World War on the winning side.

If they behaved with complete folly from beginning to end, it was the result of arrogance, insensitivity and boundless contempt for world public opinion.

Ehud Barak is the Israeli Bevin. He is not a fool, either, nor are our top brass. But they are responsible for a chain of acts of folly, the disastrous implications of which are hard to assess. Former minister and present commentator Yossi Sarid called the ministerial "committee of seven", which decides on security matters, "seven idiots" – and I must protest. It is an insult to idiots.

The Preparations for the flotilla went on for more than a year. Hundreds of e-mail messages went

back and forth. I myself received many dozens. There was no secret. Everything was out in the open.

There was a lot of time for all our political and military institutions to prepare for the approach of the ships. The politician consulted. The soldiers trained. The diplomats reported. The intelligence people did their job.

Nothing helped. All the decisions were wrong from the first moment to this moment. And it's not yet the end.

The idea of a flotilla as a means to break the blockade borders on genius. It placed the Israeli government on the horns of a dilemma – the choice between several alternatives, all of them bad. Every general hopes to get his opponent into such a situation.

The alternatives were:

To let the flotilla reach Gaza without hindrance. The cabinet secretary supported this option. That would have led to the end of the blockade, because after this flotilla more and larger ones would have come.

To stop the ships in territorial waters, inspect their cargo and make sure they were not carrying weapons or "terrorists", then let them continue on their way. That would have aroused some vague protests in the world but upheld the principle of a blockade.

To capture them on the high seas and bring them to Ashdod, risking a face-to-face battle with activists on board.

As our governments have always done, when faced with the choice between several bad alternatives, the Netanyahu government chose the worst.

Anyone who followed the preparations as reported in the media could have foreseen that they

would lead to people being killed and injured. One does not storm a Turkish ship and expect cute little girls to present one with flowers. The Turks are not known as people who give in easily.

The orders given to the forces and made public included the three fateful words: "at any cost". Every soldier knows what these three terrible words mean. Moreover, on the list of objectives, the consideration for the passengers appeared only in third place, after safeguarding the safety of the soldiers and fulfilling the task.

If Binyamin Netanyahu, Ehud Barak, the Chief of Staff and the commander of the navy did not understand that this would lead to killing and wounding people, then it must be concluded – even by those who were reluctant to consider this until now – that they are grossly incompetent. They must be told, in the immortal words of Oliver Cromwell to Parliament: "You have sat too long for any good you have been doing lately... Depart, I say; and let us have done with you. In the name of God, go!"

This Event points again to one of the most serious aspects of the situation: we live in a bubble, in a kind of mental ghetto, which cuts us off and prevents us from seeing another reality, the one perceived by the rest of the world. A psychiatrist might judge this to be the symptom of a severe mental problem.

The propaganda of the government and the army tells a simple story: our heroic soldiers, determined and sensitive, the elite of the elite, descended on the ship in order "to talk" and were attacked by a wild and violent crowd. Official spokesmen repeated again and again the word "lynching".

On the first day, almost all the Israeli media accepted this. After all, it is clear that we, the

► Jews, are the victims. Always. That applies to Jewish soldiers, too. True, we storm a foreign ship at sea, but turn at once into victims who have no choice but to defend ourselves against violent and incited anti-Semites.

It is impossible not to be reminded of the classic Jewish joke about the Jewish mother in Russia taking leave of her son, who has been called up to serve the Czar in the war against Turkey. "Don't overexert yourself" she implores him, "Kill a Turk and rest. Kill another Turk and rest again..."

"But mother," the son interrupts, "What if the Turk kills me?"

"You?" exclaims the mother, "But why? What have you done to him?"

To any normal person, this may sound crazy. Heavily armed soldiers of an elite commando unit board a ship on the high seas in the middle of the

night, from the sea and from the air – and they are the victims?

But there is a grain of truth there: they are the victims of arrogant and incompetent commanders, irresponsible politicians and the media fed by them. And, actually, of the Israeli public, since most of the people voted for this government or for the opposition, which is no different.

The "Exodus" affair was repeated, but with a change of roles. Now we are the British.

Somewhere, a new Leon Uris is planning to write his next book, "Exodus 2010". A new Otto Preminger is planning a film that will become a blockbuster. A new Paul Newman will star in it – after all, there is no shortage of talented Turkish actors.

More than 200 years ago, Thomas Jefferson declared that every nation must act with a "decent

respect to the opinions of mankind". Israeli leaders have never accepted the wisdom of this maxim. They adhere to the dictum of David Ben-Gurion: "It is not important what the Gentiles say, it is important what the Jews do." Perhaps he assumed that the Jews would not act foolishly.

Making enemies of the Turks is more than foolish. For decades, Turkey has been our closest ally in the region, much more close than is generally known. Turkey could play, in the future, an important role as a mediator between Israel and the Arab-Muslim world, between Israel and Syria, and, yes, even between Israel and Iran. Perhaps we have succeeded now in uniting the Turkish people against us – and some say that this is the only matter on which the Turks are now united.

This is Chapter 2 of "Cast Lead". Then we aroused most countries in the world against us,

shocked our few friends and gladdened our enemies. Now we have done it again, and perhaps with even greater success. World public opinion is turning against us.

This is a slow process. It resembles the accumulation of water behind a dam. The water rises slowly, quietly, and the change is hardly noticeable. But when it reaches a critical level, the dam bursts and the disaster is upon us. We are steadily approaching this point.

"Kill a Turk and rest," the mother says in the joke. Our government does not even rest. It seems that they will not stop until they have made enemies of the last of our friends.

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ESF Istanbul Seminars co-organised with **transform! europe**

Thursday (1st July)

■ 9.30 – 12.30 | N° 231 | **What future for the ESF and the European social movements facing the global crisis?** | Italian Coordination for ESF and WSF, Campaign for the Welfare State, Norway; FSU, France; Attac Germany; Austrian Social Forum, Karakedi Kultur Merkezi, Turkey; CADTM; FGTB, Mezopotamya Sosyal Forumu; Transform! | with the participation of the representatives of the networks | TR, EN, FR, KR

■ 14.00 – 17.00 | N° 136 | **What can be a left perspective of ecology?** | TAKSAV; Left forum, Finland; transform! austria, Rosa Luxemburg foundation; Espaces Marx | Laura Tuominen (Left Forum, Fi), TAKSA (Turkey), Marysa Matias (MEP/GUE, Pt), Rosa Luxemburg foundation (Ger), Joseph Baum (transform! austria), Chantal Delmas (Espaces Marx, Fr), Mirek Prokes (social forum CZ) | EN, TR, FR

■ 17.30 – 20.30 | N° 88 | **After the social and political greek crisis, shall we build another europe?** | Charter for another Europe, Transform!, Copernic, Nikos Poulantzas foundation | Louis Marie Bannier (Fondation Copernic, Fr), Michel Rousseau (Marches européennes), Trahanatzis Stathis (Vice President of Center of Athens Labor Unions), Gaby Zimmer (MEP/GUE, Die Linke), Francine Mestrum (LDH, Be), Christine Mendelsohn (European Left Party), Kinga Kalocsai (Green Left, Hu) | EN, TR, FR

Friday (2nd of July)

■ 9.30 – 12.30 | N° 120 | **The gender question in the economical crisis** | transform!italia;

forum donne, Italy; KESK – The Confederation of Public Workers' Unions, Turkey; In Gender, Greece; FGTB | Eva-Britt Svensson (MEP/GUE, Sw), Annette Groth (MP Die Linke, Ger), Litsa Doudoumi (In Gender, Gr), Maite Mola (European Left Party, Es), Dominique Fervaille (FGTB, Be), Zubeyde Kilic (Tu), Angela Lombardi (Forum donne, It) | IT, FR, EN, TR

■ 9.30 – 12.30 | N° 28 | **Anti-crisis programs of left and social movements: a comparative analysis towards a common platform** | Transform! network, [<http://www.transform-network.org>] Rosa Luxemburg Foundation, Germany [<http://www.rosalux.de>] ATTAC Hungary [<http://attac.zpok.hu>], CADTM, Belgium [<http://cadtm.org>], Alternatives, Network for political and social rights, Greece; Copernic | Frederique Viale (ATTAC, Fr), Alexandre Buzgalin (Alternative Russia), Elisabeth Gauthier (Transform), Pascal Franchet (CADTM, Be), Stephanie Treillet (Copernic, Fr), Carla Luis (Cultra, Pt), François Auguste (regional council PCF, Fr) | EN, FR, DE, GR, RU, TR

■ 14.00 – 17.00 | N° 58 | **What Greek crisis revealed beyond the Lisbon treaty** | Charter for another Europe; Copernic | Franco Russo (Charta network, It), Søren Bo Søndergaard (MEP/GUE, Dk), Trigazis Panos (Nikos Poulantzas Institute, Gr), Emmanuelle Reungoat (Copernic, Fr), Louis Weber (Espaces Marx, Fr), Frédéric Viale (Attac, Fr), Gilles Garnier (territorial council, PCF, Fr) | IT, EN, TR

■ 14.00 – 17.00 | N° 7 | **Which political answer to the crisis?** | TAKSAV, Turkey; Transform!; Nikos poulantzas foundation, Greece | TAKSAV (Tu), Jürgen Klute (MEP/GUE, De), Alexis Tsipras (President of Synaspismos, Gr), Pierre Laurent (national secretary PCF, Fr), Elisabeth Gauthier (Transform!), Angela Lombardi (Forum donne, It), Asbjørn Wahl (Campaign for the Welfare State, No), CADTM (Be), Attac (Es) | FR, EN, TR

■ 17.30 – 20.30 | N° 32 | **Finally we are all P.I.G.S.? (Europe in crisis)** | Greek Social Forum; Transform! | Elisabeth Gauthier (Transform), Haris Golemis (Greek Social Forum), Aurelie Trouvé (ATTAC, Fr), Annik Coupé (SUD-Solidaires, Fr), Piero Bernocchi (COBAS, It), Gianni Rinaldini (FIOM, It), Horst Schmitthenner (IG Metall, Ger) | TR, EN, FR, GR, ES

■ 17.30 – 20.30 | N° 185 | **The neoliberal reform of higher education: student struggles of the last period** | Neolaia Synaspismou; Genclik Muhalefeti; Linksjugend/Solid; Nikos Poulantzas Institute; Genclik Federasyonu; transform!austria | Barbara Steiner (Transform, Austria), Simone Oggioni (Giovani Comunisti, Italy), Katharina Dahme (Linksjugend/Solid, De), Eleni Hafvani (Neolaia Synaspismou, Gr), Maite Mola (EL, Spain), Selcuk Ozbek (Genclik Muhalefeti, Turkey) | EN, TR, GR

Saturday (3rd of July)

■ 9.30 – 12.30 | N° 13 | **Economy and Democracy: How the lack of democracy causes the crisis of economy. How the promotion of**

democracy will promote a social economy | Espaces Marx, France; Utopia; Copernic; Labor and Globalization Network; FGTB; Verdi; CSC | Véronique Sandoval (economist, Espaces Marx, Fr), David Flacher (economist, Utopia, Fr), Dierk Hirschel (Verdi, Ger), Evelyne Zabus (CSC, Be), Daniel Van Daele (FGTB, Be), Klaus Busch (Verdi, Labor and Globalization network) | FR, EN, TR

■ 9.30 – 12.30 | N° 29 | **Analysis of the car industry crisis: What kind of social and ecological reconversion do we need?** | espaces marx, France; Labor and Globalization Network; TAKSAV; Transform; Rosa Luxemburg foundation; IG Metall; CGT; CGIL | Sigfrido Ramirez (researcher, Be), Uwe Fritsch (Volkswagen IG Metall, Ger), Christian Pilichowsky (CGT, Fr) Gianni Rinaldini (ex responsable FIOM Fiat/CGIL, It), CGT/Seat (Es), Mario Candeias (Rosa Luxemburg foundation, Ger) | FR, EN, TR

■ 9.30 – 12.30 | N° 131-132 | **Link between social and environmental crises – The transition to a different economic model** | Labour and Globalization Network; Fiom-CGIL, Italy; FSU, France; Campaign for the Welfare State, Norway | Gianni Rinaldini (FIOM-CGIL, It), Asbjørn Wahl (Campaign for the Welfare State, No), and other members of the network | EN, FR, IT, TU

■ 14.00 – 17.00 | **Final Assembly on Labor** | Labor and Globalization Network, Italy

Current issues of the *transform!* magazine are available in English, German, French, Hungarian and Turkish

The magazine *transform!* European journal for alternative thinking and political dialogue is published twice a year.

While the English edition of the *transform!* magazine vol. 6 was released in May, the French and the German edition came out last week. Also last week a second volume of the *transform!* magazine has been published in Hungarian. On time for the European Social Forum in Istanbul the first edition of the journal *transform!* is released in Turkish.

The sixth issue of the *transform!* magazine on "Porto Alegre – The World Ten Years After" presents a broad spectrum of texts relevant for the left discussion and includes contributions by Walter Baier, Nicolás Muzi, Moïse Postone, Maria Karamessini, Judith Butler, Jacques Fath, Haris Golemis, Hans-Jürgen Urban, Eric Canepa, Elisabeth Gauthier, Simon Tremblay-Pépin, Raffaella Bolini, Christophe Ventura, Chico Whitaker, Asbjørn Wahl, Louis Weber, Lothar Bisky and Barbara Steiner.

■ The PDF-file of vol. 6 as well as former issues of the journal can be found under: www.transformnetwork.net/en/home/journaltransformeurope.html

■ For ordering printed versions of the *transform!* journals, please refer to: www.transformnetwork.net/en/home/journaltransformeurope/order-journal.html

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