



Papandreou: lost confidence

## Grecian Turn

**The national elections in June produced a new balance of political forces in Greece. The conservative party, New Democracy, won 44.2% of the vote, but under recent electoral reform which introduced an element of PR, failed to win an absolute majority of parliamentary seats.**

Andreas Papandreou's socialist party, Pasok, in office since 1981, came second with 39%, while the 'Alliance of the Left and Progress' won 13%. The latter is a coalition formed a few months before the elections between the traditional Communist Party (KKE), the small party of the 'Greek Left' (EAR), small centrist parties and social-democratic politicians and ex-Pasok ministers. EAR was set up two years ago after the split from the Eurocommunist party 'KKE Interior' by those in it who advocated the abandonment of a specifically communist ideology.

New Democracy is the big winner, having now managed to form a short-term government with the support of the Left Alliance. What both wings of the government share is an avowed intention to proceed with a 'clean-up' ('catharsis') of the state from the scandals and corruption associated with the former Pasok government. The new coalition, under conservative MP Gannis Gannetakis, claims that with catharsis completed it will resign, with new elections probably in October.

For the first time in Greek history, the Right appears as the guarantor of the democratic functioning of state institutions. The danger for the Left Alliance is that by endorsing New Democracy as a credible agent of democratisation, it may help increase its hegemony and its success at the next election.

The dilemma for the Alliance would have arisen had it chosen to support a Pasok government, thereby providing legitimation for a party which during its eight years in office applied conservative policies and became associated with corruption and scandals in many spheres of public and political life.

Pasok frustrated the expectations of those who in 1981 saw in it a political force for real radical change in Greek society. But the Left did not

benefit from Pasok's decline and has proved incapable of halting the conservative shift in Greek society.

There are now two clear strands on the Left. One is represented by the parties of the Alliance, which in an attempt to avoid electoral haemorrhage have formed a coalition with manifestly reformist orientation. For KKE in particular, the creation of the Alliance expresses its attempt at modernisation and growing adherence to the Gorbachev line, and enables it to side-step opposition within its own ranks to this stance. Indeed, an 'ideological truce' was necessary for the Alliance to be possible, given its inclusion of diverse political forces. The two main political targets identified in its programme are firstly, modernisation and democratisation of the economy and state; and secondly, the co-management of state power.

The other strand in the Left is represented by a few small parties such as KKE Interior-Renovative Left (that part of the Eurocommunist party which remained explicitly communist). These groups converge on the immediate necessity of socialist transformation, but have proved unable to articulate such strategic aims in effective political terms. The radical Left has thereby failed electorally and the Left Alliance may well prove to be unable to stem the increasing hegemony of neo-conservatism in Greek society.

*Voula Tsinorema*

**Marxism  
Today**

### Coming Next Month

The September issue includes an interview with Rogan Taylor, the man behind the Football Supporters' Association; Kathy Acker and Derek Jarman on Andy Warhol; Koltun Lee on black film-making in Britain; Rosalind Brunt on working-class voices; and David Marquand and Peter Glotz on the *Manifesto For New Times*.

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