

If you love Greece, help us get rid of Alexis Tsipras and his zombie party

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The Greek prime minister and Syriza have betrayed their people and their principles. They have to go.

Last week was the third anniversary of the [2015 referendum](#), in which the Greek people voted no to more austerity, and no to the violation of democracy by the creditors.

The week before Alexis Tsipras, the prime minister who betrayed the brave no of the Greek people, visited London to present his capitulation to the troika of the European commission, the International Monetary Fund and the [European Central Bank](#) as an achievement.

Imagine how the British people would view a prime minister elected to end privatisation, and who instead privatised almost every piece of public property; who was elected to serve peace, and who instead facilitated military action against targets in Syria and [agreed to sell weapons](#) to countries accused of committing international crimes; who was elected to protect people's homes, and who stood by while [banks seized them](#), leaving people homeless; who was elected to serve democracy and the independence of his country, and who instead turned it over to the EU, the IMF and the ECB.

This is what Tsipras did to the Greek people.

I was a Syriza MP and president of the Greek parliament during the seven months of the first Syriza government. When Tsipras signed the toxic [third memorandum in 2015](#), I fought hard to protect our parliamentary procedures that he and the troika violated. In spite of continuous pressure, I refused to bend our democratic rules and accept more illegal debt for our people. Together with [dozens of other Syriza MPs](#), I voted against the monstrous agreement.

Tsipras then dissolved parliament prematurely to get rid of me and the dissenting MPs.

Three years on, his capitulation to the troika has proved the disaster many of us predicted. People's lives have become unbearable. [Youth unemployment](#) has become the norm and an estimated 8% of the population has left in search of work. The minimum salary doesn't pay the bills, and hundreds of thousands of families go without electricity for extended periods of time.

This tragedy began in 2010, but Tsipras's so-called left government has done everything to prove that it can implement austerity better than its predecessors. It even brags about exceeding the troika's cruel targets in cuts and taxes.

During the 2015 snap elections Tsipras claimed to have signed the third memorandum because the troika promised him debt-relief discussions. The Eurogroup only agreed on 21 June to [a 10-year extension of Greece's debt repayment schedule](#). This means more children and youngsters will

become indebted against their will. Each newborn child in Greece starts life €40,000 in debt – and fewer and fewer babies are being born since the imposition of austerity measures.

Tsipras celebrated the debt repayment extension with a speech referring to 21 June as “a historic day”. I doubt anyone will remember it next year. Greece’s debt, the source of our troubles, was found to be “[illegal, illegitimate, odious and unsustainable](#)” by the parliamentary debt audit committee I convened as president of parliament in 2015. Tsipras never used the committee’s official reports. Under his governance, Greece’s debt increased and is projected to reach explosive levels.

The Eurogroup imposed on Greece budget surplus targets of 2.2% of GDP or more until 2060. Tsipras claims that [Greece](#) will have a “clean exit” from the memorandum of understanding this August: he has already legislated for new troika-imposed austerity until 2022, accepted surveillance of the economy until 2060 and surrendered control over public property until 2114.

Tsipras had vowed to destroy media oligarchs. Today, the old oligarchs still control Greece’s media, while a new generation, the “Tsipras-era oligarchs”, have established themselves.

His foreign policy met with the same fate. Last October, representing a bankrupt state, he spent [\\$2.4bn to buy F-16 fighters](#) from the US. He then praised Donald Trump for continuing the “tradition of democracy and freedom” that was born in Greece. As Washington’s poodle, Tsipras built close relations with Benjamin Netanyahu’s Israel, agreed to sell weapons to Saudi Arabia – a regime that has been accused of bombing children in Yemen – and lifted Greece’s veto to Nato expansion in the Balkans. He also signed agreements on refugees, bluntly violating international humanitarian law.

Since 2015 he has implemented a shameless privatisation programme, selling our ports, airports, sea-shores, railways, electricity, water and gas companies, archaeological and cultural sites, theatres, court-houses, goldmines and other profitable enterprises for a pittance. None of his neoliberal predecessors dared go this far.

In 2017 his government launched the electronic auction of homes of families unable to pay their debts to banks, using unconstitutional methods and police violence. As a lawyer, I witnessed the police use teargas inside a courthouse. To please the troika, he even criminalised protests against the auctioning of homes.

As leader of the Course to Freedom party, I have called upon the Greek people to resist the troika and its client [Syriza](#) government. We ask for the support of all progressives, including our friends in the Labour party.

Syriza is not the leftwing party it claims to be. It has become a political zombie, crushing every progressive value as it sleepwalks to its electoral demise. Its removal from power is the first step towards restoring democracy in Greece.

Zoe Konstantopoulou

On 27 January 2015, as a member of the Coalition of the Radical Left (SYRIZA), Zoe Konstantopoulou was nominated as Speaker of Parliament.[1] She was elected to the post on 6 February 2015 with the record number of 235 out of 300 votes. Apart from SYRIZA, her candidacy

was also supported by the Independent Greeks, The River, PASOK and New Democracy parties. Konstantopoulou supported the Popular Unity party, formed by former members of SYRIZA's Left Platform, in the September 2015 parliamentary election. In April 2016, Konstantopoulou launched a new party named Course of Freedom, of which she is currently the leader.

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The Guardian

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