



INVOLVE

Trade unionists workshop in Athens, Golden City hotel, 27-2-16

Brief notes on subjects discussed

In the workshop participated 41 persons. In the following we present briefly some of the subjects discussed following presentations.

Mr Basinas - Labor Center of Evia

I worked in Lafarge and today I am unemployed. The company announced an already made decision to close the factory in Chalkida 3 years ago. They first announced the decision of firing people and then invited us for consultation. They proceeded with 5% redundancies each month and in July they made the last ones

There has been a litigation with 20 cases brought to Court of Justice, which Lafarge lost as there was no consultation prior to decision. There were 118 redundancies (main and unfair dismissals), whilst 15 people fired had disabilities

We are trying to protect the plant in shifts, in order that it is easy to start again operating if the decision is taken. The company seems to have no financial pressure, it has nor debts and pay licenses for ports and quarries.

Labor Center of Kiato

In our area there are many people unemployed, as there is no development. There should be a national strategic plan for development and human treatment for migrants – refugees.

Labor Center of Thiva. In our area too many companies have closed and there is high unemployment.

Trade union Federation of Medications-Drug Sector.

Before the crisis, drug factories constituted a healthy export industry. Today, multinational companies are leaving Greece and re- establishing in other countries, while the commercial departments will close, and the 22 Greek companies are being sold out. There are 1200 persons working in Famar. The management wishes to sell it. Flexible forms of work are already being implemented.

One of the problems trade unionists face, despite the law 1264, is the reluctance of the employers to give trade unionists leaves. In Evia, there has been a successful resolution of the court of Justice, in a case the employer asked back for three years the money paid to the Secretary of the Trade Union for the time he had spent in trade union tasks.

Ninos: there should be included in the collective agreement

TOSOH: We engage in consultation regularly. We are keeping minutes as well as the transcript, but the employer refuses to sign the minutes.

POSPERT: In 2009 we managed to make to inverse the results of ERT (national radio-TV) from deficit 130 million € to profit 130 million €.

We are a public body regarding the obligations and a private body regarding the rights.

There was not any information and consultation, when the redundancies took place.

However, society supported us.

We have made an appeal to the State Council, and also brought our case to administrative and civil courts.

In three days the decision was made to close the channel and to fire all the employees. However, it was decided that the frequencies should stay open and so a new provisional channel was set.

After fighting hard, we managed to reopen ERT. The solution which the government opted for was not entirely satisfactory. There is no General Regulation of the Personnel. Everything is being decided by the GM. Up to now the channel functions with no business plan. How can things go on without a business plan & consultation?

In the Staff Council, there were 9 representatives of the management and 3 representatives of the Union. Actually, there are 5 and 1, respectively, and the union representative has no right to vote.

Employees feel fear, terror and insecurity. The only thing that has been left to us to address the courts of Justice. We should build our world by ourselves. The society out of poverty, fear and anxiety is bent.

We, trade unionist, should help raise their moral.

Ninos: The company, in which I work is Heineken, a multinational company with 170,000 employees. In Greece it used to employ 1,400 employees and now we are 790. Production has dropped from 3.5 million 100litres a year to 2 million 100litres a year.

We, as trade unionists, firmly believe that every possible effort in every step and should be exhausted. Before bringing the case to the court of Justice, there should take place consultation. Tourism is a great customer for beer, this meaning that beer is characterized with seasonality. When the subject of closing the factory in Athens appeared, we tried to bring the management to the table for consultation. Our principle was that no employee should be affected, that a Collective Agreement should be signed and that there should be no reduction of salaries. The two parties made an effort to find a solution, in order to avoid redundancies. Instead, employees that would retire in 1-2 years were paid very big indemnities of 180,000-200,000 € each and resigned. Younger employees took relocation allowance, for rent and to work in a factory of the company in another place in Greece. We finally signed a written agreement with 10 to 12 terms, e.g. no redundancy allowed.

We should think of the motto: There are no employees without a company and there is no company without employees.

In the company work 3 different categories of employees, the permanent one with an average salary of 1,500€, those with contracts of definite duration (seasonal staff) paid with 750€ per month and those working for sub-contractors paid with 450€.

TOSOH, Rousakis: In our company we identified problems in the health and safety measures that we be pointed out verbally to the management. To this end we made a work stoppage. Because of the harm produced the management asked from the union compensation for lost profits. The inspectorate of Labour asked us to present the complaints and the letter? Information from our part was oral instead of being written.

Ninos: Information should be written. The problem that the management often denies that could be solved by making a written appeal which the representative of the management should sign that it was delivered to him.

Praktiker: 1) We received a letter that the company was sold, but there was no consultation. Although we contacted the Ministry of Labor, the company didn't change attitude. The cost we had to pay juridical procedures was 15-20000€, something that we couldn't afford. Furthermore, employees feared that the deal of the acquisition of the company would be cancelled and we would lose our jobs.

2) Evaluation of the staff is being undertaken by the employer, and not by an external expert who would be impartial. There is the risk to have redundancies based on this evaluation. Consultation takes place with exchange of letters.

We have sent the management an extrajudicial letter based on our collective agreement and on the Internal Regulation of the company, with which we ask to sign minutes after consultation. The company says that the law does not make any provision for written minutes in consultation.

Cement Halyps: Koukoulis Aris

We are all responsible for the situation. In the past we used to be a Greek company and afterwards consecutively French, Italian and German capital was invested in it.

Because the management wanted to reduce salary costs, it has implemented job rotation, 1-3 days per year. Our lawyer is competent. There were funny responses to the questions we made to the management (e.g. what will the company gain by implementing these measures?) But there was no substantive response. We brought our case to the Court of Justice but suit is not heard yet. The management has cut through a unilateral decision, without previous information and consultation benefits valid for 30 years. We brought also this issue to trial, there we won the case.

It is very useful to have all information in written.

TITAN : Liggos : The company I work in is a Greek company, exporting to 11 countries. The management shows also a human face. Up to now there has been no real dispute with the company management. There are 5 trade unions in the company, and coordination is achieved through meeting of representatives 2 times a year and consultation with the management.

Boutaris – Martzaklis: In the company I work we encountered problems with wage reductions from 12 up to 18%. Most contracts of employment have shifted to individual contracts of

employment Employees have signed them out of fear of dismissal. We tried to inform the Labor Inspectorate but the individual employment contracts had already been signed.

Sugar Industry – Poluzas: The sugar factories in Serres, Larissa or Xanthi do not work.

BIOME – Makis Anagnostou: Four years ago we have followed the consultation process and we proceeded with trials and struggle. We started to work the factory by ourselves. We distribute our products through social movement.

Timber producing plant in Veroia. Pagouras – Papadopoulos: We are the Robin Hoods of Wood. We have even a social infirmary.

An interesting question we deal with is “How may we deal with employees having different speeds and with diversity?”

ELCO Charitidis: In our factory several Departments have been closed. The management has also used job rotation (every month each employee has one week off).

The new elected Board of the Trade Union has succeeded to stop job rotation and payments are hence forward made regularly.

There is a risk concerning the legislation on lock out jeopardizing the right of strike. 25 days ago, there was an update of a directive, which can be passed at any time, through a simple ministerial decision.