



## My Hilarious Encounter With Greek Communists

Joe Weisenthal | Jun. 14, 2012, 8:34 AM |

**ATHENS, GREECE** -- It seems to be an unwritten rule of politics that the fringier you are in your beliefs, the more likelier you are to splinter with into small factions, and despise people who are incredibly close to you ideologically.

That's why conservatives can live under the 'big tent' called the Republican party, but Libertarians factionalize into Objectivists, and Austrians, and GMU libertarians, and Koch libertarians, and Cato Institute Libertarians and so on and so on.

And of course, the same phenomenon is seen on the far left end of the dial.

That phenomenon is playing out right now in Greece.

See, previously we had talked about how in the last election, the Communist Party had taken a substantial number of seats, but that's actually an inaccurate thing to say, because there is no one communist party. There are several fielding candidates.

So for example, all over Athens you see posters like this, with the unmistakable hammer and sickle logo that symbolizes communism the world over.

But then as I was walking with a guide -- a student at the local university -- he pointed out these totally different signs, that also had a hammer and sickle.

When I asked him the difference, he said he had really no idea why there were two separate communist parties, and he suspected even they weren't sure what they disagreed about.

I wasn't totally satisfied with that answer. Surely they had to have some substantive differences, and so I went up to one of the volunteers working for the fringier communist party.

The volunteer first explained how her party was for more "independence" than the main communist party, and that there were actually several communist parties but when I pressed her for more differences, she said she couldn't explain it in English, and chalked it up to a language thing. Her English seemed fine to me. I began to suspect that my guide was correct, and that there really weren't any differences.

The good news is, out on my walk, I saw a third (!) communist party.

That's George, and his party is called Antarsya.

He explained that his communist party (which he said got over 1.2% of the vote in the first election last month) is less about taking power, and more about using direct action like strikes to bring prosperity back to the workers.

And his English was excellent, but again, when I pressed him on the real differences between his party and the others he said... he couldn't really put it into English.

That being said, he and the rest of the volunteers for his party were incredibly friendly and posed for this nice photo.

So that's the world of Greek communist politics.

It's highly factionalized, and nobody can put in English what the differences between them are... and these were just the communists I encountered on one block. Apparently there are way more.