

Contribution of the Communist Party of the Workers of Spain (PCTE)

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Dear comrades,

We are living in the times of sharpening of the contradictions intrinsic to capitalism. For years, many fostered the illusion that capitalism could grow endlessly and distribute wealth fairly. The 2008 crisis tore the hopes of the supporters of capitalism down. Since then, capitalists have accelerated their plans for the increase of extraction of surplus value in companies, but also for favoring the profitability of capital via the capitalist State.

Our Party has been warning the working class in Spain for years that the 2008 crisis would be followed by a period of growth, in which the extraction of surplus value would not end — as it is inherent to capitalism. The growth had to be necessarily followed by another crisis. Such crisis was going to be more devastating than the previous one. It could not be otherwise, because the capitalist Governments implemented since 2008 major anti-workers' and anti-people's measures in order to favor capitalist profitability.

The next big crisis of capitalist overaccumulation was being prepared already in 2017. Despite that, the subsequent capitalist Governments nurtured once again the illusion of the eternal economic growth. They did so with the complicity of the forces of opportunism.

The COVID-19 world pandemic sped the development of the capitalist crisis up, but did not create it. During the pandemic, the capitalist governments had to close companies and confine the population. But they did not do it in order to protect the health of the working class, but to prevent the collapse of the health system they have been systematically privatizing all over the last years. For months, the capitalist Governments practiced measures of social control that will be used against our class. At the same time, they forced the workers of countless non-essential economic sectors to work.

The restrictive measures against the serious COVID-19 pandemic were used against the working-class mobilizations. In this sense, the capitalist Governments permitted crowds in shopping centers or in the public transport but, at the same time, limited basic rights — like the right to demonstration or to strike. In Spain, relevant strikes like the one made by Nissan workers in Barcelona suffered a hard repression in the form of fines.

Against the political use of such restrictive measures, only two voices were heard — the voice of reaction, of the far-right; and the voice of the Communist Party. The far-right denied the pandemic and ridiculed the measures from a liberal reactionary viewpoint. The PCTE recognized the severity of the pandemic, the effort of health workers, the need to implement

measures for health protection —especially at workplaces—, but also warned on the repressive use of health measures in strikes and demonstrations.

Since the end of the pandemic, mass-media in Spain, as well as the social democratic coalition Government, have repeated time after time the speech on growth. They highlight the GDP growth forecasts. Nevertheless, the fact that the growth experienced until now is just the recovery of the level prior to 2020 is concealed. Furthermore, a constant slowdown in growth is noticeable.

The growth in the Spanish GDP has been based until now on a massive investment of public funds. Such public expenses have been made by disregarding the spending and debt limits imposed by the European Union. This is a policy planned by all the bourgeois governments in Europe, not just a particular policy of social democracy.

All the financial assistances given by the social democratic government in Spain aimed to ensure consumption in order to close the cycle of capital rotation. They were concealing forms of favoring the interests of capitalists via the State.

Meanwhile, the social democratic Government prepared the conditions for capitalists to better exploit the working class when public assistances are finished. It has introduced new crime types in the Criminal Code. It has increased the Police budget. It has introduced a labor reform that condemns workers to alternate periods under suspension of contract with periods of activity. It has increased the years of contribution required to obtain a pension.

Many of these measures have been introduced with the complicity of the main trade unions. Those trade unions are strongly influenced by social democracy. They promote a speech favorable to the social democratic government and the employers' union. The labor reform and the measures of the Government are favorable to the interests of capitalists, they follow the line marked by the European Union, even though they could contain measures that could momentarily alleviate the hard situation of the working class.

The PCTE has been the only political force in Spain that has openly denounced the labor reform of the social democratic Government. We have denounced that the last labor reform means the implementation in Spain of the policy known as flexicurity, which entails a further exploitation of the working class.

The outbreak of the war in Ukraine has meant a turning point for the International Communist Movement. Some parties have aligned themselves with NATO, some with Russia. This has also happened in our country.

The social democratic government hosted a NATO Summit in Madrid in June 2022. In this summit, a new NATO Strategic Concept was prepared, pointing out to Russia and China as the main capitalist competitors of the United States-European Union bloc, and getting the world closer to the possibility of a generalized imperialist war.

The NATO Summit in Madrid was publicly denounced by the PCTE: A demonstration was organized, in which the PCTE prepared a big and combative cortege that counted with the

presence of comrades from the KKE, thus evidencing that we set proletarian internationalism against their wars. The demonstration was heavily controlled by the the same police that plunged Madrid into a repressive atmosphere the previous days.

Nevertheless, we have also repeatedly denounced the role of capitalist Russia in the war in Ukraine. We have highlighted the war in Ukraine as an inter-imperialist war, for the control of markets, resources, and transport routes in the area. We have fought against those who attempt to romanticize capitalist Russia, disguising it as an anti-imperialist force.

A correct characterization of fascism is highly important as well. In our country, just like in other European countries, the far-right is growing. This political force becomes a mass front for fascist and ultrareactionary organizations, but it is not fascist by itself.

In the last General Elections in Spain, this July, a really eroded social democratic Government recovered the banner of anti-fascism in order to gain votes. It spread fear among the working class. It told the working class that Vox and the far-right were fascists and that their victory in the elections would be a return to the times of Franco. Reality evidences that the far-right is not fascism, but also that social democracy cannot fight fascism, and even the disappointment caused by the unfulfilled expectations they create to the working class can become a breeding ground for fascism.

Luckily, there were workers who did not give in to false dilemmas, and the PCTE increased its number of votes.

Lastly, it is essential to mention the drastic worsening of living conditions in the last year and a half in our country, like in the rest of the European Union, with sky-rocketing increases of prices for all the products in Spain, quite especially for basic products. Flour, oil, eggs, fuel.

The social democratic Government answered to this by reducing taxes and assisting companies with public funds. At the same time, major trade unions repeatedly agreed in companies and labor sectors to collective bargaining agreements that were harmful for the working class. They were harmful because they generally entail wage increases lower than inflation.

The PCTE has carried out in this year —and is still carrying out— a campaign in the working-class neighborhoods and companies denouncing the high cost of living, explaining that its origin is capitalism itself. The war in Ukraine —which is a war for business— is also rising the price of products. At the same time, we denounce that all the wage increases under the level of inflation are actually reductions in the price of our workforce. The working class is increasingly poorer.

Therefore, the PCTE is getting ready to step up its confrontation with opportunism and unveil the capitalist nature of the current Government as well as future Governments. We are conveying at workplaces and working-class neighborhoods the idea that the working class should trust only in its own forces, should get organized, and should struggle for Socialist Revolution.

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