

A letter on the Spanish air traffic controllers' struggle

8 December 2010

The WSWS replied to this letter writer from Spain defending the Zapatero government's attack on air traffic controllers.

Dear Sirs, Robert,

Your article has come as a shock to me, scaring the hell out people talking about dictatorial measures in Spain and evoking ancient fears. You should know you have it the other way around. The dictators in this case were the flight-controllers, who as a small privileged group abused their power to blackmail a whole country, taking the 300,000 people stuck in the airports as hostages.

They have threatened to do this for ages in order to force governments to give them privileges in wages and working conditions. This small group of people that earns 600,000/year in a country with 20 percent (4 million) unemployed and a mean salary of somewhat over 1,000 a year "protested" against the fact that the number of hours they spend with the syndicate are not counted towards the working hours they have to comply with in a year.

And they find that reason enough to screw up the lives of more than 300,000 people (holidays, old people, sick people, families....) and ruin the whole functioning of a society.

They are the ones acting as dictators, and for pure capitalist reasons. When they went on strike and caused Spain to collapse for this childish and irrelevant reason, what other option was there than to send others to do their work? And simply the only "others" are available from the army. But this has absolutely nothing to do with the old Franco stuff or some banana-republic coup. No force has been used.

I am from Holland myself and frankly there is a lot I still consider backward here in Spain and a lot I criticise. But this is the second time I really and profoundly approved of Zapatero's decisions.

RB

6 December 2010



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