

Anticapitalistas leave Spain's Podemos-Socialist Party government

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Anticapitalistas, a petty-bourgeois political tendency that helped found the Podemos party in Spain in 2014, announced last month that it would leave the Socialist Party (PSOE)-Podemos government.

Mass anger is building against the PSOE-Podemos government and the disastrous impact of its austerity and back-to-work policies in the COVID-19 pandemic. The role of Podemos marks another bitter experience of the working class with so-called “left populist” parties following the treachery of the pro-austerity Syriza (“Coalition of the Radical Left”) government in Greece.

Anticapitalistas voted to leave the government this winter after a strike against PSOE-Podemos pension cuts in the Basque Country and “yellow vest” protests by Spanish farmers in rural areas.

The May 14 statement of Anticapitalistas that ultimately announced its departure from the government also declared that in an internal vote 89 percent of its members decided to leave Podemos as well. It claimed Anticapitalistas would build “an anti-capitalist movement open to all kinds of struggles and experiences, allowing us to look to the future in an open way.”

The strongest possible warnings must be made about the reactionary role that Anticapitalistas and allied “left populist” parties like the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA), Unsubmissive France (LFI) and the German Left Party will play in the struggles of the working class. An overpowering stench of political cynicism surrounds the manoeuvres of Anticapitalistas.

Anticapitalistas is not leaving Podemos because it opposes any of Podemos’ signature policies: its back-to-work order amid the pandemic, its austerity policies, its ties to Spanish intelligence and the officer corps or its jailing of Catalan-nationalist political prisoners. In fact, its statement hails the framework of the PSOE-Podemos government, declaring: “Of course, we will support all the gains made within this framework and we will fight together against the extreme right.” It adds that “there is no doubt that we will find ourselves in many common struggles with the people of Podemos.”

While the name of Anticapitalistas proclaims it to be “anti-capitalist,” it is no such thing. It is being sent out of Podemos to serve as a paid agent of the Spanish capitalist state, intervening on social media and in protests and strikes hostile to Podemos to spy on and strangle them. As explosive class struggles are prepared internationally amid the ruling elite’s malign neglect of the population during the COVID-19 pandemic, a political leadership must be built in the working class that is irreconcilably opposed to pro-imperialist, petty-bourgeois groups like Anticapitalistas.

The departure of Anticapitalistas from Podemos is a long-debated, carefully staged state operation. In February, Anticapitalistas announced that it would not stand candidates in the March 21 Third State Citizens Assembly of Podemos, the party’s key leadership body. This was widely interpreted as a sign that it was leaving Podemos. Then a joint video was posted of Anticapitalistas leader Teresa Rodríguez and Podemos General Secretary and Deputy Prime Minister Pablo Iglesias.

In the video, Rodríguez signalled in feminist language that Anticapitalistas would leave Podemos but remain politically close to it: “I believe that in politics as in life, there are ways of separating that are aggressive, violent and patriarchal, and then there are civilized, respectful, empathetic and even loving ways, which are the healthiest, which can be built and are possible in politics. That is the significance of the message we are sending today.”

Iglesias responded by praising Rodríguez for giving an “example of how to do things right,” repeating, “There is not good-bye, only see-you-soon.”

Over the following months, Podemos allowed state subsidies to flow to Anticapitalistas via its local, regional, national and European Podemos representatives. Podemos’ Anticapitalistas members like European MP Miguel Urbán and Cádiz Mayor José María González continued in their posts.

Rodríguez herself leads both Anticapitalistas and Forward Andalucía, a regional electoral coalition in Andalucía between Podemos, the Stalinist United Left and the Andalusian nationalists. She has been allowed to retain control of the organisation even after Anticapitalistas technically left Podemos, as all these organizations continue working side-by-side in one electoral platform. This lets Anticapitalistas keep control of a €1.7 million yearly subsidy to fund its operations.

Anticapitalistas will continue to work with and receive funding from many such electoral fronts with Podemos at local and regional levels.

Attempting to give a “left” veneer to this political operation, Anticapitalistas presents its departure from Podemos as part of an anti-fascist struggle. Rodríguez stated in her organisation’s online magazine *Viento Sur*: “To lay all the eggs in the co-government basket [with the PSOE] is to leave opposition to right-wing forces... In other European countries, the dark side of the coalition governments with social democracy has been the growth of the extreme right. When we leave the space of opposition to the extreme right, we are messing up, because we make them grow while our space shrinks.”

Anticapitalistas’ claim that it is fighting the far right is a lie, aimed at convincing left-wing youth and workers disillusioned with Podemos that they have a duty to support Anticapitalistas’ agenda.

In fact, Anticapitalistas consistently sought to block an independent movement of the working class and tie workers to the PSOE, including by acquiescing to far-right policies when it was in government. Rodríguez’s comment that Podemos leaves opposition to the far right simply underscores that Anticapitalistas did not and does not serve as an oppositional tendency. This vindicates the warnings made by the International Committee of the Fourth International (ICFI) about such pseudo-left groups.

The real relationship of the “left populist” parties to the far right was illustrated most clearly in Greece. Podemos’ Greek ally Syriza formed its government coalition with a far-right party, the Independent Greeks (ANEL), after winning the 2015 election. Anticapitalistas Euro deputy

Miguel Urbán then hailed it as “the first government that can be called worthy in Europe since the crisis, the only one that is defending the interests of the people... This is why we have to defend it like our own.”

Soon after this statement was made in June 2015, Syriza imposed a set of austerity measures more severe than any government in modern history and carried out the most draconian anti-refugee policy in Europe, while selling weapons to the Saudi monarchy for its genocidal war in Yemen. Last year, a frustrated and impoverished electorate threw Syriza out.

It not an overstatement, but an entirely warranted warning to call tendencies like Anticapitalistas political agents of the state. When Rodríguez gives “loving” reports about workers and youth engaged in struggle to Podemos, she is speaking to a party whose leader, Deputy Prime Minister Pablo Iglesias, sits on the leading body of the National Center for Intelligence (CNI), set up by fascist dictator Francisco Franco in 1972 to suppress left-wing opposition.

Other leading Podemos members include former judges and police officials and the former chief of the Armed Forces General Staff, General Julio Rodríguez, who led Spanish participation in the bloody 2011 NATO war in Libya that left 30,000 dead. The target of the “common struggles” Rodríguez will organize jointly with Podemos is not the financial aristocracy, but the working class.

The “broad left parties” theory of Anticapitalistas and the founding of Podemos

The evolution of Anticapitalistas, and of Podemos since its foundation in 2014, is not the result of a tactical error. Their integration into the police state apparatus is the necessary outcome of their reactionary class orientation, reflecting the material interests of affluent layers of academia and trade union bureaucracies, which finds theoretical expression in their conception of the building a political movement. Rejecting a historically grounded, international and Marxist perspective, they seek unprincipled alliances for manoeuvres within the framework of national politics. They are organically incapable of principled opposition to right-wing policies—even austerity measures that have led to a catastrophic breakdown of health warning and health care systems amid a deadly pandemic.

Their conception was formulated in calls to build “broad left parties” advanced by Anticapitalistas and its affiliates internationally. Their French affiliate, the New Anticapitalist Party (NPA), gave perhaps the clearest statement of this perspective and its rejection of Trotskyism. In 2009, it stated:

The NPA does not claim a specific relation to Trotskyism, but continuity with those who, over the last two centuries, have confronted the system all the way. The NPA is a pluralistic and democratic party. [There has been] participation of comrades from various components of the social movement, of the anti-globalization left, of political ecology, of comrades from the PS [the Socialist Party, a party of bourgeois government] and the PCF [the French Communist Party, its main coalition partner], from the anarchist movement, from the revolutionary left. Without becoming bland, the NPA has everything to win by opening itself even further.

That is, the NPA allied with Stalinist parties that supported the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the restoration of capitalism, and bourgeois parties with decades-long records of austerity and war.

Anticapitalistas and Podemos followed this orientation virtually to the letter. The party names need only be translated from French into Spanish. While the NPA’s François Sabado stressed that a “broad left” party is “not reduced to the unity of revolutionaries,” perhaps the clearest statement of the nature of these parties came from the NPA’s Danish

affiliate, the Red-Green Alliance (RGA).

In an essay on “broad left” anti-capitalist parties published in 2010, leading RGA member Bertil Videt wrote: “Political parties are of course moving targets, which are difficult to capture and categorize... We have no guarantee that an anti-capitalist party will not be tempted by the taste of power and give up on main principles, as did the Italian Communist Refoundation Party, which supported the Italian military intervention in Afghanistan and US bases in Italy.”

Such a political organization, which declares that it is willing to betray the “main principles” it asserts in public, is a reactionary fraud posturing as “left” while orienting to imperialism. This assessment was vindicated by the trajectory of Syriza and the NPA’s support for imperialist wars in Libya and Syria.

Ultimately, one of the “main principles” these parties betrayed was the anti-fascism Rodríguez now puts forward as Anticapitalistas’ supposedly principled reason for leaving Podemos. In early 2014, before Podemos was founded, the NPA supported the CIA-backed putsch in Ukraine led by the fascist Right Sector militia, claiming that it would build “the left sector of the Right Sector.”

These were the thoroughly rotten political foundations upon which a collection of middle-class media operatives, political science professors and union bureaucrats built Podemos.

Podemos was founded in 2014 as a political trap for youth protesting European Union (EU) austerity policies after the outbreak of revolutionary working class struggles in Egypt in 2011. Imitating the hundreds of thousands of workers and youth who occupied Tahrir Square in Cairo, thousands of urban youth occupied squares in Madrid, Barcelona and cities across Spain. The 15M, or *indignados* movement, was launched with protests at the Puerta del Sol in Madrid on May 15, 2011 called by associations like Real Democracy Now and Youth Without Future, which worked closely with Anticapitalistas, which at the time called itself the Anticapitalist Left (IA).

IA put forward post-modernist rhetoric dismissing the working class and indicating its openness to unprincipled alliances in order to market itself within more petty-bourgeois layers of the 15M movement and win support for its Podemos “broad left party” initiative.

IA sources told *El Diario* that Podemos “is not so much an IA initiative as an initiative of part of its leadership that, thanks to some polls held together with members of the CEPS Foundation and members of Youth Without Future, has gotten going.” The Centro de Estudios Políticos y Sociales (CEPS) was a vehicle for Stalinist professors like Pablo Iglesias to receive fat pay checks from bourgeois nationalist governments in Venezuela and Ecuador for consulting services.

The central concern of IA in founding Podemos was rising opposition among workers to the PSOE and its decades-long record of austerity and war, as well as to its ally, the Stalinist United Left (IU). The IA bulletin stressed that the key factor in founding Podemos was “the presence of a series of personalities with a media presence as the public face of the project, who make it possible to connect with sections of the left-wing population dissatisfied with the traditional organizations.”

The document bemoaned “the rightward shift of IU, which is ever more openly preparing a ‘left’ government with the PSOE.”

IA’s arguments were a political fraud. It complained of IU making alliances with the big business PSOE, but it worked to tie youth and workers to social democracy and imperialism. This was the only perspective that Podemos itself ever seriously pursued after its foundation, as the WWSW warned at the time. Anticapitalistas’ Podemos project, the WWSW wrote, was aimed at “preventing a rebellion by the working class against the social democratic parties and the trade union bureaucracy and channelling discontent into supposedly radical, but pro-capitalist, formations.”

In Pablo Iglesias, Anticapitalistas found a leader for its operation—a

Stalinist professor and media hack who made no bones about his contempt for the working class. He was on a first-name basis with Santiago Carrillo, the long-time leader of the Stalinist Spanish Communist Party (PCE). In 2012, he wrote a sympathetic obituary of Carrillo—who, during the 1936-1939 Spanish Civil War, aided and abetted the Stalinist abduction and murder of Trotskyists and of Andrés Nin, the leader of the centrist Workers Party of Marxist Unification (POUM), and then co-wrote Spain's 1978 Constitution with the fascist Francoite authorities.

The title of Iglesias' obituary for this butcher of the Spanish revolution was: "Despite everything, Santiago was one of ours. Now and forever."

In 2013, just before Podemos was founded, Iglesias wrote a piece in *Público* dismissing the revolutionary role of the working class. "For a long time, in Europe, the working class represented a huge mass of the wage-earning population," he wrote, adding that during this period it "represented a subject moving towards progress." He then wrote, "But employment has changed."

Now, he claimed, "Those who are today at the base of the economic structure are not reducible to a single symbolic unit," and "only the myopia of a certain left can insist on grouping them all under the label of workers..."

The ties of Iglesias and Anticapitalistas to top state figures and their hostility to the working class conditioned them to play a reactionary role in the crisis that erupted after they founded their party.

In December 2015, the duopoly between the PSOE and the right-wing Popular Party (PP) that had dominated Spanish electoral politics since the end of the Francoite regime collapsed. The 2015 elections produced a hung parliament and a vote divided between the PP, the PSOE, Podemos and the right-wing Citizens Party. Amid successive inconclusive elections in June 2016, April 2019 and November 2019, discussion inside Podemos became obsessively concentrated on how to work out a government coalition with the PSOE.

Anticapitalistas, Podemos and the legitimization of fascistic politics

While Rodríguez presents Anticapitalistas' exit from Podemos as an initiative to combat the far right, her tendency's carefully scripted entry into and exit from government serve a very different purpose. These moves have been choreographed to prevent mounting social anger in the working class against fascistic policies from erupting against Podemos and Anticapitalistas itself. While Anticapitalistas peddles illusions that Podemos can be "reinvigorated" by integration into "social mobilisations," Podemos, in fact, has accommodated itself to and supports police state policies of the Spanish and European bourgeoisie.

In 2017, amid a growing conflict between Madrid and the regional Catalan authorities in Barcelona over how to implement drastic EU austerity policies, the Spanish bourgeoisie tried to address the political crisis caused by the collapse of its previous two-party system. Seizing on the October 2017 Catalan independence referendum, it sought to shift the framework of bourgeois politics far to the right in order to openly re-legitimize Francoism and set up a police state regime.

Ahead of the referendum, the minority PP government that had ultimately emerged from the June 2016 elections mobilized thousands of police, arrested Catalan officials, closed down hundreds of web sites, seized millions of posters and leaflets, closed print shops and banned meetings. On the day of the referendum, the PSOE openly backed the PP as it unleashed violent riot police on peaceful voters. Over 1,000 were injured, including elderly women beaten bloody by the Guardia Civil.

The PSOE supported the PP's onslaught in Catalonia, as the Spanish ruling class frantically worked to legitimize police state and fascistic

policies. A dozen Catalan nationalist politicians were jailed as political prisoners on trumped-up charges of rebellion and sedition. The pro-Francoite Vox party, previously an insignificant force, received wall-to-wall coverage as the bourgeoisie whipped up anti-Catalan hysteria and Spanish nationalism. Preparations were made and publicly discussed in the media to mobilize Spanish armoured infantry troops to attack Barcelona.

Neither Podemos nor its Anticapitalistas faction reacted to the offensive unleashed by the PP by opposing these fascistic policies. Rather, they intensified the push for an alliance with the big-business PSOE while the PSOE supported the PP's onslaught in Catalonia. Appealing to PSOE leader Pedro Sánchez, Iglesias said: "We need a Socialist Party that finds its own path, far away from the reactionary and authoritarian one of the PP. Comrade Sánchez, don't fall into the trap of a common front with the PP!"

In 2018, amid mounting popular opposition to the PP and its hard-line policies in Catalonia, Podemos organized a parliamentary manoeuvre, ousting the PP and replacing it with a minority PSOE government. Anticapitalistas welcomed this, admitting that the PSOE was "not a real alternative," but claiming that it would be more subject to "strong pressure in the institutions and the streets" from Podemos.

The Podemos-backed PSOE government continued the PP's austerity budget, showered the army with billions of euros, attacked migrants and continued the fascistic anti-Catalan campaign. It allowed Vox to officially join its public prosecutor in prosecuting Catalan officials on bogus charges of violent rebellion for organizing the peaceful 2017 referendum. In June, the Supreme Court issued an extraordinary ruling honouring "don Francisco Franco," declaring that his 1936 fascist coup that triggered the Spanish Civil War had made him the "legitimate" ruler of Spain starting with his October 1, 1936 declaration.

Throughout this period, the initiatives of Anticapitalistas were directed not at organizing opposition to the fascistic trajectory of the ruling class, but at safeguarding essential strategic interests of Spanish and European finance capital. These included not only pursuing austerity measures targeting the working class, but above all trying to avoid too overtly exposing Anticapitalistas as a reactionary tendency supporting far-right policies, which would risk provoking attempts to launch a political alternative opposing Anticapitalistas and Podemos from the left.

When Catalan nationalist parties threatened in early 2019 to oppose the budget, the PSOE government called new elections in a desperate and ultimately failed bid to shore up its support. In the aftermath of the April 2019 elections, which produced another hung parliament, a bitter debate erupted in the Spanish ruling class over how to assemble a government. The PSOE was determined to announce a draconian sentence after the show trial of the Catalan nationalist prisoners, in October 2019, in line with demands from fascistic forces like Vox.

While factions of Podemos argued for directly going into government with the PSOE during the summer, Anticapitalistas ultimately won the debate. It called for caution, advising Podemos to wait and not immediately enter into a PSOE-led government. It was willing to support adaptation by Podemos to the PSOE and to Vox, but it insisted that Anticapitalistas could not be seen to be doing so.

This argument was made explicitly by Professor Jaime Pastor, a leading Anticapitalistas member, after Podemos broke off government talks with the PSOE and the November 2019 elections were called. In *Viento Sur*, he explained why he opposed Podemos' participation in a government with the PSOE before the end of 2019: "It was difficult to think that Podemos could have developed left-wing policies from within the government and, on the other hand, by its silence it would have had to admit it was complicit in right-wing policies on economic and social questions and repressive policies in Catalonia."

Pastor did not oppose entering into a PSOE-led government and being

complicit in right-wing policies, which is, indeed, what Anticapitalistas went on to do. Rather, he insisted that Anticapitalistas and Podemos could only do so after new elections, and after the PSOE had repressed mass protests that were certain to erupt in Catalonia against the jailing of Catalan political prisoners. This would avoid openly associating Anticapitalistas with the PSOE's fascistic repression in Catalonia. It could then join in the policies of austerity, militarism and attacks on democratic rights like the "digital gag" censorship law, hoping to avoid provoking uncontrolled opposition on its left.

As Pastor put it, this "allows us to force the PSOE leadership to accept public commitments to minimal points of agreement... while also guaranteeing our political independence to develop firm opposition from within parliament and in popular movements so we can demarcate ourselves, overflow or confront this party, the regime and EU austerity if it is ever necessary."

There was, of course, no trace of "political independence" or "firm opposition" in the policies pursued by Anticapitalistas. Once the Catalan nationalists were jailed on trumped-up charges and the mass protests this provoked had died down, Anticapitalistas happily joined the new government on November 12, 2019. Days after the PSOE-Podemos agreement, Anticapitalistas member Raul Camargo told Europapress that Anticapitalistas would "be vigilant" and would judge the government "for its actions."

Anticapitalistas ultimately decided to leave the government a few months later as the ongoing upsurge in the international class struggle spread to Spain. Internationally, strikes had erupted in the US and Mexican auto industries, against French President Emmanuel Macron's pension cuts and against anti-Muslim laws in India. In Spain, a general strike in the Basque region paralysed the region under the slogan "Jobs, pensions and decent lives," and was followed by farmers' protests denouncing the PSOE-Podemos government.

Always afraid of being exposed, Anticapitalistas soon announced it would leave the government. It tried to concoct a reason for doing so, absurdly criticizing Podemos for not opposing the government of which it is a part: "The current leadership of Podemos has discarded our proposal to agree to invest the PSOE [in power] and then go to the opposition to continue fighting to build a project that articulates a constituent majority." It announced that it would hold an internal debate on its membership in Podemos while "trying to promote a new cycle of struggles that avoids the emptying of the streets."

Anticapitalistas was ready to leave when the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted its plans. The leave vote took place on March 28, but it was not until May 14 that it publicly announced its departure. According to its statement, "we decided to wait until today to make this decision public; our priority has been attending to the COVID-19 pandemic that is hitting our country very hard and affects the most vulnerable sectors of the popular classes."

The main priority of the Spanish government was not, however, to tend to the sick. The pandemic has exposed the PSOE-Podemos government and governments internationally, as their austerity cuts left health care systems overwhelmed, and as they worked with the trade unions to force millions of workers back to work without protective equipment, while bailing out the banks and large corporations.

Since early May, the PSOE-Podemos government has lifted confinement measures, knowing this will provoke new outbreaks claiming thousands of lives. There have been nearly 50,000 excess deaths attributable to the epidemic in Spain, as hospitals starved of funding by austerity, including that imposed by Podemos, were swamped by COVID-19 victims.

Why did Anticapitalistas wait seven weeks to leave the government? It has furnished no clear explanation. It is, however, quite obvious that had it left the government in the early stages of the pandemic, denouncing

Podemos and its record, it would have been seen as a statement of opposition to the government and to its disastrous record on the pandemic. This was not part of the plan for the "loving" split with Podemos. And so, once it had waited long enough after the onset of the pandemic, it slipped away.

Once Anticapitalistas believes the time is right, it will begin posturing, altogether falsely, as a force for "opposition" to the government it recently left.

Where is Anticapitalistas going?

The COVID-19 pandemic has already provoked the greatest jobs massacre and economic collapse since the Great Depression of the 1930s. Hundreds of millions worldwide have lost their jobs. Massive social attacks are being prepared even as banks and major corporations are showered with trillions of dollars and euros by governments and central banks. According to Spain's central bank, the country should implement brutal austerity measures in the next 10 years of around €60 billion, or €6 billion every year.

On the pandemic, Camargo has emphasized that, as before, Anticapitalistas will promote broad alliances with all manner of reactionary bourgeois or petty-bourgeois organizations: "The fundamental thing for us is to form a very broad social bloc to address what is to come, what lies ahead... This is going to be wild. In this context, the most important thing will be the articulation of a plural social bloc to respond to the acts of aggression that will undoubtedly take place."

The policies implemented by the PSOE-Podemos government while Anticapitalistas was a part of it show the repressive measures Anticapitalistas is prepared to support against the workers. The PSOE-Podemos government responded to strikes of steelworkers and protests by Glovo delivery workers against unsafe working conditions by unleashing riot police. It also banned protests and rallies, cynically arguing that health considerations had to prevail over the right to protest—while sending millions of workers back to work amid the pandemic. Thanks to its "digital gag" law, the police and the army are monitoring social media and carrying out stepped-up mass electronic censorship.

Camargo signalled in his interview that Anticapitalistas does not oppose this record. Asked point-blank if he believes Iglesias betrayed the "original principles of Podemos," Camargo evasively replied: "I wouldn't use those words. We believe the current Podemos is not the original Podemos."

The record of Anticapitalistas, Podemos and their government in Spain provides irrefutable evidence of the hostility of the "left populist" parties to the working class. The period when these organizations used their links to Stalinist parties to falsely posture as connected to the October Revolution or Marxism is long since passed. It is ever more obvious that their limitless treachery is bound up with their defence of the capitalist state—that is to say, with their class opposition to Marxism.

Their theoreticians today explicitly repudiate a revolutionary struggle of the working class for socialism. In her 2018 pamphlet *For a Left Populism*, the post-modernist writer and associate of Syriza and Podemos Chantal Mouffe declared: "What is urgently needed is a left populist strategy aimed at the construction of a 'people,' combining the variety of democratic resistances against post-democracy in order to establish a more democratic hegemonic formation... I contend that it does not require a 'revolutionary' break with the liberal democratic regime."

In fact, the pandemic, imperialist wars, police repression and the obscene levels of social inequality produced by EU austerity are proof of the bankruptcy and inhumanity of the capitalist system. They are also

irrefutable evidence that the nationalist perspective advanced by Anticapitalistas is a dead end for the working class. Such organizations, totally oriented to entering national bourgeois governments, have nothing to say under conditions where every great problem—the control of globalized industry and financial markets, the pandemic, war, social inequality, climate change—presents itself as an international problem.

These parties' adoption of the "left populist" label today only underscores that their earlier claim to be "post-Marxists" did not represent an attempt to continue the Marxist traditions of revolutionary struggle by the working class, but rather a repudiation of them.

The International Committee of the Fourth International's opposition to Anticapitalistas, based on a struggle for proletarian internationalism and the political independence of the working class, is not a factional or tactical dispute. Rather, it represents the principled opposition of a Trotskyist organization, defending the historical legacy of Marxism and seeking to provide revolutionary leadership to the international working class, against reactionary petty-bourgeois defenders of capitalism. It is the tendency that has to be built in Spain and in countries around the world to arm the working class for struggle against the reactionary "left populist" organizations.

The ICFI is irreconcilably opposed not only to Anticapitalistas, but to the other petty-bourgeois populist tendencies that failed to find a way to join Podemos but are now jumping at the opportunity to make an alliance with Anticapitalistas and defuse opposition to the government.

Anticapitalistas' departure from Podemos has exposed groups like the Morenoite *Corriente Revolucionaria de Trabajadores y Trabajadoras* (Male and Female Workers' Revolutionary Current—CRT), the sister party of the Argentine Socialist Workers Party (PTS). On the same day the Pabloite Anticapitalistas published its statement, the CRT published a statement titled "A Letter to the Revolutionary Left of the Spanish State: Let us advance in taking steps towards a unified party of the revolutionary left, the working class, women and youth."

The CRT hailed Anticapitalistas, speculating absurdly that it would break with capitalism. It appealed to it to form a revolutionary "pole" regrouping Anticapitalistas, the CRT and Catalan and Basque nationalist organizations. The CRT claimed that "a revolutionary pole like what we propose to build would also make it possible to convince other organizations on the left of neo-reformism, like our comrades of Anticapitalistas, to definitively break with the management of the capitalist state and plans for seeking unity with left reformism."

This is absurd. Anticapitalistas is not seeking to carry out a left-wing program, any more than it is implementing reforms to improve workers' living standards. It is a party of capitalist government that has worked to slash living standards, wage war, attack democratic rights and block working class opposition to the bourgeoisie's fascistic agenda. Whether or not the Anticapitalistas joins a coalition of parties including miserable charlatans like the CRT, it will remain a hardened defender of capitalism. Indeed, the CRT's reference to Anticapitalistas as "comrades" underscores that the CRT is itself a barely disguised wing of Podemos and the capitalist state.

The decisive question facing workers and youth in Spain and internationally seeking to struggle against the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, social austerity, war and military-police repression is to ensure their political independence from these middle-class forces. By confusing and demoralizing workers with an impotent nationalist perspective, and by handing information to officials like Iglesias directly linked to intelligence and police circles, they work to strangle and demoralize workers and youth.

The reactionary record of Anticapitalistas underscores that the decisive strategic question today is building the ICFI as the revolutionary leadership in the working class. This requires building sections of the ICFI in Spain and internationally, based on the colossal political experiences

embodied in its history, to wage an uncompromising struggle against groups like Anticapitalistas.



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