

# Spain's Morenoite CRT denies Trump's fascist coup in Washington

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12 January 2021

Spain's Morenoite Corriente Revolucionaria de Trabajadores y Trabajadoras (Workers' Revolutionary Current, CRT), the Spanish affiliate of Argentina's Socialist Workers Party (PTS) and *Left Voice* in America, is denying President Donald Trump's fascist coup attempt on January 6.

Their complacent response to the storming of the US Capitol by a fascist mob led by Trump is directly linked to their silence on Spanish generals' calls for a fascist coup in Spain. They are doing everything they can to politically block the development of an international political movement in the working class against the threat of fascism. Instead, they are seeking to subordinate workers and youth to the Socialist Party (PSOE)-Podemos government and the Spanish union bureaucracy, as it proceeds with the murderous policies of austerity and "herd immunity."

On January 6, Trump, working with high-level police, US military and Republican Party officials, launched a coup with the explicit aim to prevent the certification of the Electoral College results of November's national ballot. Their goal was to overturn the US presidential election.

Thousands of his supporters swarmed the Capitol, armed with guns and zip ties, which would have been used to secure hostages, aimed at halting the congressional session at which Trump's defeat in the 2020 presidential election was being certified. Significantly, Pentagon officials initially refused desperate appeals from representatives and senators to deploy National Guard forces to take back the Capitol from Trump's mob.

Despite multiple violations of the US Constitution, dozens of arrested and five dead—including one police officer—Trump has been able to retain office because powerful forces on Wall Street and in the US military and intelligence agencies are debating whether to set up a fascistic dictatorship. The ruling class unanimously supports his murderous "herd immunity" policy on COVID-19.

The reaction of CRT's Izquierdadiario.es, however, was to republish material from its US and Argentinian affiliates denying a fascist coup attempt had occurred. In an article posted on January 7, titled "The storming of the Capitol and the decadence of American imperialism," it wrote:

The storming of the Capitol building wasn't an insurrection or a coup as members of the bourgeois press insinuate, but it does show a Far Right that, far from accepting defeat after November 3, has in fact been emboldened during the transition.

Izquierdadiario.es republished a *Left Voice* article by Scott Cooper, in which the author again downplayed the coup, accusing anyone calling it by its name of being in "service" of the ruling class:

The events at the Capitol last Wednesday strengthened the incoming Biden/Harris government by creating bourgeois unity—from the liberal press to the Pentagon and including the twin parties of capitalism—in response to the "Trumpist" threat and the "defence of democracy." It is no accident that the big capitalist newspapers, including the *New York Times* and *Washington Post*, all use the rhetoric of "attempted coup" and

"insurrection" and "sedition" to describe what happened. They do so in the service of strengthening the bourgeois front against instability—embodied in Trump and his most ardent followers—and to give as much legitimacy as they can to the new administration.

It republished another *Left Voice* article by Nathaniel Flakin—a member of the German affiliate, the Revolutionary International Organization (RIO)—insisting it was "far from" a coup:

Perhaps we will now see a major crackdown on the Right. But it is unlikely to go beyond a couple of ringleaders. .... This is not to say that the mob at the Capitol was a fascist coup attempt—far from it. The point is that the capitalist state is endlessly forgiving even for much more serious right-wing upheavals.

The fact is, what happened on January 6 was an attempted coup, which the WSWS has extensively covered since June 2019, when Trump threatened to deploy the army against mass multiracial protests against the police murder of George Floyd and against "herd immunity" policies. To say otherwise is to lull the working class to sleep as to the immense ongoing dangers it faces.

Calling things by their real name is not playing to the hands of factions of the ruling class. Biden and the Democrats are doing everything they can to downplay the fascist coup attempt. Their immediate response was to plead for "unity" with their "Republican colleagues." At the same time, no calls have been raised from any section of the Democratic Party for a thoroughgoing, public investigation of the coup—like the Watergate hearings into the attempted burglary of Democratic Party materials under Republican President Richard Nixon in the 1970s.

Downplaying the fascist coup attempt, like izquierdadiario.es does, serves the Democratic Party and the American ruling class as its moves to the right. In contrast, the Socialist Equality Party (US) is calling for a full, public and live-streamed investigation of the attempted fascist coup. The key task is to alert and politically mobilize the international working class.

CRT moves to downplay Trump's coup are directly bound up with its policy of lulling to sleep the working class in Spain, amid growing agitation in the ruling class for a fascist coup in Madrid. It has been over a month since the first of two letters, signed by hundreds of former top army officers, appealed to King Felipe VI to back a coup against the Socialist Party (PSOE)-Podemos government. This was followed by:

- WhatsApp messages of retired officers calling to shoot "26 million" people and imitate General Francisco Franco's fascist coup, which launched the 1936–1939 Spanish Civil War;
- A manifesto signed by 750 officers, including 70 generals, accusing the PSOE-Podemos government of posing "a serious risk to the unity of Spain and the constitutional order";
- WhatsApp chats by active-duty officers embracing the former

officers' fascistic calls.

- The publication of videos of active-duty Spanish soldiers singing fascist and neo-Nazi songs and making the fascist salute.

- Reports on a far-right plot, code-named Operation Albatross, aiming to install a military dictatorship under the guise of a PSOE-Popular Party-Vox national unity government.

For any newspaper or tendency claiming to be progressive, let alone socialist, these threats would be taken very seriously, especially in a country that has seen numerous coup attempts and successful coups. The most famous was led by General Francisco Franco in July 1936, which sparked a three-year civil war and ended in executions of hundreds of thousands of left-wing workers. Franco's regime would last until 1978.

Yet the CRT's IzquierdaDiario.es has maintained a deafening silence on these coup threats, while it now downplays the fascist coup attempt targeting the Capitol in Washington.

The attempted coup in Washington had direct implications in Spain. The fascist Vox party, closely tied to the Spanish officers calling for a coup, waited until midnight Spanish time to condemn Trump's coup attempt—that is, until it was clear the coup would fail. On the same day, retired Lieutenant General Emilio Pérez Almán sent a letter to Spain's defence minister, Margarita Robles, denouncing her tepid criticisms of fascist officers' calls for a coup and demanding the PSOE-Podemos government "change course."

In the past month, while the WSWs has posted eight articles on the mounting coup threats in Spain, IzquierdaDiario.es posted only one, brief article on December 4, titled "The Army, the King and the Regime of 78." The article aims to prop up Podemos and its general secretary, Deputy Prime Minister Pablo Iglesias, in their efforts to downplay the significance of fascist coup threats in Spain.

The CRT tells its readers, "The letters sent to the King and the disclosed chats reveal the high number of Francoite officers [in the army ...]. Given this fact, the different reactions to the letters and chats published are pretty much what could be expected." King Felipe VI, it continues, "has not said anything, as could be expected since he is the representative of an institution imposed by the Franco regime, a direct heir to the dictatorship, and closely linked to the army."

Vox, the CRT asserts, "distanced itself from the chats," while defending "the content of the chats with the argument that 'it's private.'" The CRT insisted that this "is not surprising, considering that this political party relies on those reactionary sectors of the army." In fact, in parliament Vox openly endorsed fascist generals' chat messages, with Vox lawmaker Macarena Olona declaring: "Of course they are our people."

The fact that, given the European bourgeoisie's history, a fascist coup is not at all inconceivable in Spain means that the threat of such a coup must be taken with deadly seriousness. The criminal character of the CRT's complacent response to calls for a fascist coup in Spain, calling it "expected" or "not surprising," was exposed by Trump's coup attempt in Washington. Faced with a fascist coup taking place in real-time, the CRT went from insisting that fascist coups were unsurprising and even expected to insisting that there was no fascist coup at all.

Its one token piece on the coup threats in Spain was itself timed to match the Spanish state's attempts to downplay the crisis. It came a day after Podemos leader and Deputy Prime Minister Pablo Iglesias was sent on prime-time state television to brazenly insist that the officers' threats were unimportant. Iglesias declared: "What these gentlemen say, at their age and already retired, in a chat with a few too many drinks, does not pose any threat."

Iglesias intervened as the coup threats and calls to kill millions became

Twitter's main trending topics in Spain. For broad masses of workers—many of whom were born in the Franco era or were brought up with stories of Francoite torture and murder—the threat of a fascist coup is not taken lightly. The CRT, which speaks for the same affluent middle-class milieu as Podemos, was instead serving as foot soldiers for Podemos' campaigns to cover up the fascist coup threat.

IzquierdaDiario.es then claimed that the PSOE-Podemos government's fraudulent request to the Prosecutors Office to investigate the WhatsApp chat groups aims to struggle against fascism. It called the investigation "An attempt to separate the reactionary ideology expressed by that group of soldiers from the army and brand this fact and its announcers as an 'exception.' It is also a clear commitment to the administrative route as a strategy to confront the extreme right."

This is absurd. Even the pro-PSOE daily *El País*, which has worked day and night to downplay the significance of the coup threats, all but admitted the PSOE-Podemos's investigation was a charade, stating "sources consulted by this newspaper said it is unlikely that the complaint will get very far, because the remarks were made in a private chat group."

Podemos, like the CRT, has no intention of "confronting" the far right. Both fear explosive anger brewing in the working class against the PSOE-Podemos government over its murderous "herd immunity" policy on COVID-19, imposing a return to work and school that has left over 70,000 dead and 2 million infected, to fund bank and corporate bailouts. They are far more afraid of a movement in the working class that would turn against the capitalist system than they are of fascism.

In the final analysis, the same fears that drive hundreds of top Spanish officers to threaten the mass murder of millions of left-wing workers also drive the CRT's efforts to downplay these threats.

The CRT's reaction is not a political oversight or mistake. Over the past month, the reports of fascist sentiment among active-duty soldiers and further letters and manifestos were widely followed by millions on social media and in the corporate press. Yet IzquierdaDiario.es kept silent.

Instead, in the month since the first coup revelations, they have posted dozens of articles on various topics—notably the corruption scandal engulfing the Spanish monarchy. This is because the CRT seeks to channel rising anger at the PSOE-Podemos government behind a pro-capitalist perspective by issuing empty calls for a referendum giving workers the choice between a monarchy and a capitalist Republic.

The CRT epitomises a whole social layer of the affluent upper-middle class who are indifferent, if not hostile to the defence of democratic rights. They are organically hostile to the emergence of a mass, socialist movement that would threaten their incomes and privileges, based on the crumbs Podemos throws at them from atop the state machine.

Terrified by growing protests worldwide in the working class against the ruling class's herd immunity policy to the COVID-19 pandemic, the last thing they want is to mobilise this opposition. Instead, their function is to disorient and demobilize growing social opposition and prevent it from breaking free of the political stranglehold of Podemos.

To prevent the fascistic conspiracies from succeeding, the widespread working-class opposition to fascism must be transformed into a conscious political movement. The WSWs calls on European workers to support the demand of the Socialist Equality Party (US) for an open, public, live-streamed investigation of all aspects and all the allies of the January 6 fascist coup in Washington and the preparation of a political general strike against continuing coup threats in America.



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