

Morenoite CRT offers political alliance with Spain's PSOE-Podemos government

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Spain's Morenoite Workers' Revolutionary Current (CRT), linked to Argentina's Socialist Workers Party, is reacting to mounting opposition to the Socialist Party (PSOE)-Podemos government's criminal "herd immunity" policy by trying to tie it to the Spanish capitalist state.

After Podemos leader Pablo Iglesias intervened in the snap Madrid regional elections by calling for a common "anti-fascist" struggle, the CRT called for a political front with Podemos. As Podemos remains in government, this is simply a call for a political front with the PSOE-Podemos government against the working class.

In a little over a week, the CRT's main online newspaper *Izquierda Diario* has written eight articles appealing to parties working within Podemos to build an "anti-capitalist front." These include:

*Revolutionary Left and its student front, the Students Union, both of which work within Podemos;

*Anticapitalistas, a political tendency that co-founded Podemos with Stalinist professors in 2014 and which maintains close ties to Podemos after leaving the PSOE-Podemos government last year;

*Red Current, a tendency which previously worked within the Stalinist-led United Left, now part of Podemos, and earlier joined a number of nationalist Basque and Catalan separatist groups.

The Popular Party (PP) called the May 4 elections in Madrid in an attempt to ally with the fascistic Vox party and capitalise on the collapse of the right-wing liberal Citizens Party and is framing the vote in terms of recalling the 1936-39 Spanish Civil War. Its election slogan is "communism or liberty," the slogan of the fascistic Spanish Confederation of Autonomous Rights on the eve of the Civil War. Madrid PP leader Isabel Ayuso even said on prime-time television, "When people call you a fascist, you know you are doing well, that you are on the right side of history."

Two months since Trump's attempted January 6 coup in Washington D.C. aimed to overturn the US presidential elections, the PP's alliance with Vox points to the growing danger of fascism for the working class in Spain and internationally.

The opposing bloc between the PSOE, Podemos and More Madrid—a right-wing Podemos split-off led by Podemos founder Inigo Errejón—will not, however, fight the danger of fascistic rule in Spain. Indeed, it bears central responsibility for implementing the European Union's (EU) "herd immunity" policies and the buildup of police-state surveillance and repression in recent years. It has furiously downplayed the danger posed by the fascistic

officers who openly boast of preparing a coup in Spain.

Amid this crisis, CRT is calling for a political front with Podemos and offering to do what it can to revive its tattered political credentials. In an *Izquierda Diario* editorial, CRT leader Santiago Lupe warns: "The bankruptcy of neo-reformism leaves it much worse off than when they emerged to be able to repeat the role of containment and diversion to face the social unrest."

Even after Podemos' herd immunity policies have let COVID-19 claim over 100,000 lives in Spain, the CRT stresses it is prepared to vote Podemos. Incoherently complaining that Podemos "renounces any independent perspective" from the government of which it is a part, the CRT adds: "Now, imagine that [Unidas Podemos] called to defend a minimally independent programme of the capitalist parties, against the rich, in defense of the working class, women and youth. In such a case, even if your strategic perspective were reformist, a critical vote could be of some use."

The bankruptcy of Podemos poses a decisive question to the working class in Spain and across Europe—the building of a new, socialist revolutionary leadership. The only way to halt the EU's criminal herd immunity policy is to build a political movement in the working class fighting to expropriate the financial aristocracy and transfer state power to the working class. This requires a determined political break with Podemos and all the bankrupt petty-bourgeois parties that orbit around it.

The CRT, in contrast, aspires to do nothing more than provide political cover to the Spanish government, whose left flank is exposed by growing working class anger at the reactionary role of Podemos. It hopes to leverage the wide media coverage it has obtained in the past month since the outbreak of youth protests against the PSOE-Podemos government's jailing of rapper Pablo Hasél. Its programme combines "left" demagoguery with tacit support for Podemos' herd immunity policy of prioritising profits over human life.

Lupe states: "What we need is a left without complexes, which openly defends a programme so that the capitalists pay for this crisis. A programme that defends measures such as the distribution of hours without salary reduction to end unemployment, the repeal of all labour reforms—also those of the PSOE—earlier retirement age, taxes on large fortunes, the expropriation without compensation of real estate owned by speculators and large holders or the nationalization under control of their workforce of strategic sectors and companies that lay off workers or close."

Remarkably, Lupe proposes not one measure on the COVID-19 pandemic, which has resulted in 123 million infections and 2.7 million deaths worldwide. In Spain, the PSOE-Podemos government policy has left over 100,000 dead and over 3.2 million people infected. Its reopening of schools and the economy to save “summer profits” is now rapidly provoking a resurgence of cases expected to create tens of thousands more avoidable deaths.

Lupe’s omission is not accidental. It could only be done by a tendency that works out its perspective based on the manoeuvres of Podemos and with contempt for the health and lives of the working class. The fact is CRT defends the herd immunity perspective put in practice by the both PSOE-Podemos government and the PP, backed by Vox, in the region of Madrid.

Instead of calling for nonessential work to be put on hold, workers to shelter at home on full pay, and for aid to artists and small businesses, CRT has repeatedly denounced the PSOE-Podemos’ limited lockdown and social distancing measures from the right. The CRT insists that crucial social distancing measures are “limiting our liberties and movements at their will,” in a statement from January.

In a statement for the Madrid elections entitled, “It is not enough to ‘move a piece,’ we must break the game board: we need an anti-capitalist and class front,” CRT explicitly defended herd immunity policies, while attempting to reduce the struggle against the pandemic as a budgetary and staffing problem.

It called for “A programme that, in the face of the serious health crisis, intends to increase healthcare and education budgets, and the intervention of all the private health resources that are necessary to combat this crisis, hiring more staff and moving to fixed contracts for all temporary and interim staff.”

CRT’s reference to an increase in the “education budget” is aimed at defending the continuation of in-person education. Last September, as the fall semester began, CRT advocated reopening education centres, while admitting the safety of teachers and students “cannot be guaranteed.” This was in complete alignment with PP in the Madrid region where its leader and regional premier, Isabel Ayuso declared, “It is likely that practically all children, one way or another, will be infected with coronavirus.”

This policy has led to a disaster. One article published by *Metropoli Abierta* last month before the recent resurgence of the virus, explained that COVID-19 was spreading rapidly in schools. In one region, Catalonia, “it maintains a constant acceleration ... schools in quarantine due to Covid-19 infections have increased by 1,703 compared to those recorded” the day before, reaching 26,284 (1.83 percent of the total), “a figure that means an increase of 6,361 students confined in the last three days.”

The political allies of Podemos to which the CRT is appealing have responded to make clear that they are firmly oriented to Podemos. For its part, the CRT is responding by making clear that it is still seeking an alliance with them, even as these organizations ally with Iglesias and Podemos.

Red Current has posted a statement calling for a vote for Podemos if Iglesias includes “more social content” in its programme. It states, “We ask that beyond the slogans they should give us compelling reasons to all those who, like us, do not find reasons to vote for them. We have never made a religion of voting

or not voting. We need a solid reason, one that goes beyond the hackneyed and failed ‘stop the right’ and that demonstrates change on tangible ground for the lives of the working class and youth.”

Revolutionary Left and the Student Union took only a few hours to endorse Iglesias after he posted his electoral video calling for an “anti-fascist front.” They claimed they would “participate decisively and actively, supporting the candidacy of Pablo Iglesias with a class, socialist and anti-fascist programme.”

CRT complained about this “unfortunate” decision but repeated its appeal to the Revolutionary Left: “We insist that our comrades of the Revolutionary Left ... defend our perspective: let’s build an anti-capitalist front.”

For its part, Anticapitalistas has called for “the critical vote for the two parties that are to the left of the PSOE,” in other words, More Madrid or Podemos.

After the decision, CRT continued to leave the door open to an alliance. While critical of this decision by its “comrades,” it welcomed Anticapitalistas’ decision to hold “open assemblies” to debate new political fronts.

If the “debate is sincere,” states the CRT, “then there is no time to lose to generate the frameworks for a broad debate among those of us who are committed to a recomposition of an anti-capitalist and revolutionary left for the class struggle. Nothing prevents us from starting to form an anti-capitalist pole to build a programme based on class independence in the face of the crisis we are going through. Let’s keep going.”

In fact, Anticapitalistas was part of the PSOE-Podemos government, which attacked migrants, showered the military with billions of euros, and responded to strikes of steelworkers and protests by 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. This excuse is now routinely used by the PSOE-Podemos government to ban protests.

The record of Anticapitalistas provides irrefutable evidence of the hostility of this tendency to the working class. CRT’s attempt to promote Anticapitalistas with a new left-wing guise underscores that it is itself a barely disguised wing of Podemos and the capitalist state.

Building a socialist opposition to Podemos is an urgent necessity. The decisive question facing workers and youth in Spain and internationally is to ensure their political independence from all these middle class forces. This entails a conscious and determined break with the petty-bourgeois class orientation and anti-Marxist traditions represented by Podemos and all its satellites. Build sections of the International Committee of the Fourth International in Spain and around the world.



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