

Leading Spanish Stalinist calls for more Gaza protests—against his own government!

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On March 13, the Stalinist Communist Party of Spain's (PCE) *Mundo Obrero* (Workers World) posted an opinion piece by Manu Pineda, calling for protests demanding the Socialist Party (PSOE)-Sumar government changes course to stop the genocide in Gaza.

The unbridled cynicism involved is breathtaking. Pineda is speaking about his own government, which has been arming the Zionist regime as it carries out its onslaught in Gaza.

Pineda is the Secretary of International Relations of the PCE, a Member of the European Parliament for the PCE-led United Left (IU) and Chair of the European Parliament's Delegation for relations with Palestine. The PCE is integrated in the Sumar Movement, which rules with the PSOE at national level. It holds top positions within the government, including Yolanda Díaz, the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Labour and Sira Rego, Minister of Youth and Children.

Under the title, "The historical priority of the Palestinian cause in the PCE", Pineda starts his piece by citing the resolution passed by the PCE's XXI Congress of July 2022. It stated: "As a party we must continue defending and supporting the majority decisions made by the Palestinian people in defence of their self-determination and sovereignty, accompanying their struggle with all the solidarity actions within our reach."

Pineda intones, "This is not abstract support, but an explicit defence of Palestine's right to resist and exist. We support all the popular expressions that the Palestinian people adopt in their struggle for national liberation. Pointing out at the same time the criminal and illegal nature of the occupation and colonisation of Palestine; and the necessary complicity and support of American imperialism and, by extension, its European butler. This is the position, tremendously summarised, that as a party we transfer to all spaces of intervention and public discussion."

Pineda omits to mention, of course, that the PCE was part of, first, the PSOE-Podemos government (2020 to 2023), and now, the current PSOE-Sumar government. During its time in office, the Spanish government increased trade,

military, and economic relations with the Zionist regime, particularly in weapons trade. Under the PSOE-Podemos, Spain sold weapons to Israel worth hundreds of millions of euros while Madrid spent millions buying weapons with the "combat-tested" mark from Israel.

Last November, Spain continued exporting lethal ammunition to Israel worth nearly 1 million euros belonging to the category "bombs, grenades, torpedoes, mines, missiles, cartridges and other ammunition and projectiles". Spain also acquired €705 million worth of products from the Israeli arms manufacturer Elbit Systems.

According to data analysed by Centre Delàs, Spain continued sending weapons to Israeli until at least last December, despite Minister of Foreign Affairs José Manuel Albares insisting several times in the media and in parliament that arms exports to the Israel were frozen since October 7, when the genocide started. In the December, the PSOE-Sumar government sent "aviation bomb stabilisers" as Israeli fighter jets destroyed over half of Gaza's infrastructure.

Pineda then calls on workers and youth to continue protesting "and bringing internationalist solidarity with Palestine to workplaces, schools and our neighborhoods". He adds, "The priority is to end the massacre, and we will only achieve this through mobilisation. Only the strength of the solidarity movement will force the governments that today protect Israel to end its impunity."

Pineda calls for protests only because he knows they will not change the government's pro-genocide orientation but will instead provide a fig-leaf to conceal the PCE's collusion in this historic crime.

Pineda's statement is a negative verdict on the leadership presently dominating these protests, not only in Spain but internationally. It points to the essential contradiction between the millions who have taken to the streets seeking to stop to the slaughter and the political perspective advanced by the various pseudo-left, Stalinist, and social democratic tendencies of appealing for their governments and the "international community" to develop a moral

conscience.

The more the tendencies dominating the mass protests have insisted that protesters confine themselves to appeals to their governments, the more brutally Benjamin Netanyahu's fascist gang has waged its campaign of mass murder and ethnic cleansing. The Zionist regime could only do this with full backing of the US and its imperialist allies, including all the European powers. This is the case even with those such as the Socialist Party (PSOE)-Sumar government in Spain, who combine meaningless appeals for a ceasefire with practical support for Netanyahu's genocidal regime.

Pineda's appeal for more protests along the same line is accompanied by a slanderous attack on anyone questioning the "unity" of these protests, based on an amnesty for the trade union bureaucracy and the PSOE-Sumar government. He states that the PCE supports "the unitary nature of the mobilisations; understanding that Palestine is above particular interests. Today, more than ever, dividing the solidarity movement—which is massive and unprecedented—is consciously or unconsciously supporting the genocide."

Pineda would like to continue with actions like those organised on February 16, when the PSOE, Sumar, Podemos, the PCE and their trade union allies, Workers' Commissions (CCOO) and the General Union of Workers (UGT), organised a photo-op protest in Madrid under the banner "Freedom for Palestine. No to impunity, end to the massacre."

Stopping the Gaza genocide requires not unity with the supporters of genocide like Pineda and the PCE and Podemos, but an intransigent break from these parties by the most politically conscious workers and youth. This means building new organisations of working class struggle and an international revolutionary leadership opposed to all nationalist political tendencies linked to counter-revolutionary bureaucracies.

As a political operative of the PSOE-Sumar government, Pineda is terrified at the prospects of mass anger at the genocide intersecting with broad social discontent against austerity, militarism and attacks on democratic rights. Workers are facing skyrocketing cost of living, soaring mortgage and rent prices, and are increasingly hostile to government inaction over human-induced climate change and pandemics such as COVID-19.

The PCE is a party steeped in counter-revolutionary violence against the working class, drowning the 1936-1939 Spanish Civil War in blood, including aiding and abetting the abduction and murder of Trotskyists and of Andreu Nin, leader of the centrist Workers Party of Marxist Unification (POUM). During the 1950s, it called for "national reconciliation" with the regime of General Francisco Franco

and in the 1970s, prevented a revolutionary reckoning with the Spanish bourgeoisie, co-writing Spain's 1978 Constitution with the fascist Francoite authorities.

Today, the PCE has no remaining mass working class base. It represents a privileged layer of the upper middle class and sections of the union bureaucracy, which has gained wealth under capitalism and fears, above all, a movement of workers against the profit system.

Pineda's piece is so grotesque that even Spain's Morenoite *Corriente Revolucionaria de Trabajadores y Trabajadoras* (Workers' Revolutionary Current, CRT)—the Spanish affiliate of Argentina's Socialist Workers Party (PTS) and *Révolution Permanente* in France, felt obliged to respond under the title, "Sumar MEP on Palestine: 'We will only be able to end the massacre by putting pressure on the governments.' Can you be more hypocritical?"

But while criticizing the most hypocritical statements in Pineda's article, the CRT ultimately puts forward the same perspective of putting yet more pressure on the government, writing, "Faced with a Eurocommunism that has become a tragic joke, we can only mobilise and confront the Government until it breaks its relations with Israel, withdraws troops from abroad and leaves NATO."

The CRT rejects the independent organisation of the working class against genocide and world war, in Spain and internationally, through strikes and a political struggle against arms deliveries to Israel.

This would cut across its links to the PCE, Podemos and its pseudo-left satellites and threaten its positions in the lower-ranks of the trade union bureaucracy and academia. It would mean adopting an openly hostile position to the PSOE-Sumar government, rather than appealing to them, and exposing rather than covering up for the trade union bureaucracy's refusal to mobilise its members against the genocide.

Workers and youth cannot wait for the union bureaucracies or middle-class groups like CRT to organise a genuine struggle against the Gaza genocide. They must mobilise themselves independently in rank-and-file committees, in workplaces, schools and neighborhoods to block the war profiteers and against the PSOE-Sumar government complicit in genocide. Above all this means building a new revolutionary party of the Spanish working class, as a section of the International Committee of the Fourth International, the world Trotskyist movement.



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