

Morenoite CRT seeks to subordinate housing protests to Spain's union bureaucracies

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The eruption of mass protests across Spain against the housing crisis, following the eviction and subsequent death of 87-year-old Maricarmen Abascal, has brought millions of workers and young people into confrontation with the Socialist Party (PSOE)-Sumar government. As demonstrators call for a general strike, the fundamental opposition between their demands and the existing order is evident. They oppose the relentless escalation of militarism and war, of fascist parties and the police state, and of austerity and social inequality that have dominated Europe for decades.

The critical tasks are to broaden the movement among workers and youth, to prepare for a general strike, and politically arm the working class for the revolutionary tasks that would emerge if the working class developed into a total blockade and shutdown of the capitalist economy. This requires the independent organization of the working class in rank-and-file committees independent of organizations tied to the government.

The Corriente Revolucionaria de Trabajadores (CRT), the Spanish affiliate of the Morenoite tendency led by Argentina's Socialist Workers Party (PTS), and sister party of Révolution Permanente (RP) in France, is intervening to block such a struggle. Behind its calls to build a strike "from below", the CRT advances a perspective of pressuring the Workers' Commissions (CCOO), politically aligned with Sumar and Podemos, and the General Union of Workers (UGT), historically aligned with the PSOE, to lead the movement.

They work ceaselessly to sow illusions that the one-day nationwide protest strike called for November 11 by these pro-government union bureaucracies is a step forward for the working class. While the protest is clearly aimed against the PSOE-Sumar government and its reactionary housing policies, the CRT constantly seeks to hand the initiative back to bureaucracies tied to the government.

From demanding a general strike to supporting the bureaucracies' November 11 call

On October 5, as PSOE Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez called snap elections for November 29, the CRT and the allied Corriente Roja-Cuarta Internacional party published a joint statement titled, "Sánchez brings forward elections to November 29 to resurrect the lesser-evil vote against the right and empty the streets."

The statement noted that Sánchez was seeking to divert the housing protests into an electoral campaign by presenting his government as the only alternative to the right-wing Popular Party (PP) and the neo-fascist Vox party. It continued:

Today it is more necessary than ever to demand that CCOO, UGT and all the trade unions jointly call a general strike. [...] A strike to demand an immediate end to all evictions, the expropriation of large landlords and vulture funds, and a radical reduction in rents so that they do not swallow up our wages.

The CRT acknowledged that CCOO and UGT would likely attempt to postpone any strike indefinitely because of the elections. Nevertheless, it concluded by proposing that smaller unions "fight to transform that day of struggle into a genuine general strike, demanding that CCOO, UGT and all the major trade unions in other territories call it. ... We need to build, in a united manner and from below, a great general strike that makes governments and capitalists tremble."

A stark contradiction lies at the heart of the CRT's argument. Why should workers in struggle against the government subordinate the timing, organisation and political direction of its strike actions to union leaderships whose record demonstrates their hostility to a mobilisation of the working class against the PSOE-Sumar government?

The CCOO and UGT bureaucracies have spent years policing the working class on behalf of the PSOE-Sumar government to impose the very attacks against which workers are now mobilising. They have repeatedly shut down militant strikes, including those of metalworkers in Cádiz and Cantabria. They backed the PSOE-led government's pension reforms, including measures extending the period used to calculate retirement benefits, and hailed these attacks as historic achievements of "social dialogue".

Both CCOO and UGT have championed increased military spending and the expansion of Spain's arms industry under the banner of European "strategic autonomy", portraying weapons production as a source of jobs and prosperity. UGT even proposed imposing a tax on European citizens to finance rearmament. These bureaucracies have functioned as pillars of its policies of austerity, militarism and social peace.

Their sudden decision to support the call for a general strike does not represent a turn towards militant struggle, but an intervention from above aimed at policing the working class and bring a movement back under control. By postponing the strike for over a month, to a one-day stoppage on November 11, just ahead of the November 29 elections, the unions are seeking to dissipate the growing opposition and channel it behind renewed support for the PSOE and Sumar.

Indeed, their leaders have insisted that the action is not directed against the government. CCOO leader Unai Sordo declared that it was "not really a strike against the government", while UGT leader Pepe Álvarez insisted that it was "not a classic general strike".

The CRT demands that CCOO and UGT organise the strike

Having demanded that CCOO and UGT call a strike, and having obtained precisely such a call, the CRT's next demand is that they organise it. On October 8, *Izquierda Diario* published an article by Diógenes Izquierdo celebrated the announcement of the November 11 strike and called on the unions to organise the strike:

And we must demand that CCOO and UGT immediately call assemblies in every workplace. If they say they support the strike, let them demonstrate it by organising it, not merely signing up to

it. This is what we have been arguing in *Izquierda Diario* at least since the mobilisation of April 5, 2025, when we denounced the leaderships of the major unions for turning up for the photograph without organising anything in the workplaces.

The article also calls for building workers committees in workplaces and neighbourhoods. Yet, these do not, by themselves, resolve the central issue. Genuine rank-and-file committees have as their task to independently organise workers struggles under the democratic control of the struggling workers themselves, in order to prepare to go beyond the limits the union bureaucracies seek to impose on the struggle. They can, if the class struggle evolves to its full revolutionary conclusion, become organs of workers power.

The CRT's "committees from below" exist not to prepare such a development, however, but rather to assist the CCOO and UGT bureaucracies in arriving at a more apparently "militant" policy. But this means to strangle the fight to liberate workers' struggles from the grip of the pro-government union bureaucracies and prepare a general strike against the PSOE-Sumar government.

The Morenoites' false perspective of trade union unity

On October 9, the CRT's youth organisation Contracorriente published an appeal to the Coordinadora Juvenil Socialista (CJS) and Organización Estudiantil Socialista (OES), calling for united worker-student committees ahead of November 11. It argued:

The Tenants' Union and the militant trade unions (CGT, Co.bas, Workers Solidarity) have proposed a central orientation for organising the strike with which we agree: building it from below by promoting united committees in every company, every educational institution and every neighbourhood. Committees open to all workers, young people, tenants and pensioners, to prepare pickets and organise a militant strike.

The statement criticised the CJS and OES for proposing their own youth strike committees, arguing that separate organisations would divide the movement. It declared:

For those of us who identify as revolutionary socialists, the tradition of the united front is summed up in one formula: strike together, march separately. Unity in action and complete freedom for each tendency to defend its ideas. What makes no sense is to march separately when it comes to striking together."

But this invocation of the united front is false. The question is not whether workers belonging to different unions, political organisations or no organisation should unite in struggle. They unquestionably must. The question is whether such unity is achieved through the independent mobilisation of workers against the bureaucracy or through an agreement between existing trade union and political apparatus.

The presentation of smaller unions like the Spanish CGT as a militant alternative to CCOO and UGT is false. They are experts at criticising CCOO and UGT sellouts when they have a minority position and are incapable of preventing a sellout, but they carry out their own sellouts when they determine the course of a strike.

During the 2021 struggle against the closure of Airbus's Puerto Real plant, the CGT denounced CCOO and UGT for abandoning industrial action, but confined its own protests largely to isolated actions, without

mobilising workers across Airbus's other plants. In 2022, the CGT joined CCOO and UGT in ending the Barcelona bus drivers' strike, accepting a two-tier wage agreement that left newer workers facing substantial losses in real wages.

The CRT has provided political cover for this process. In 2021, it presented the CGT as the only union defending the Puerto Real workers, and in 2022 its *Izquierda Diario* celebrated the Barcelona bus agreement as a victory, approvingly quoting a CGT representative involved in the negotiations.

The CRT's appeal to unity thus becomes a mechanism to avoid clarifying the programme and leadership required to defeat the government's offensive.

No less revealing is what the CRT leaves out. As mass protests erupt across Europe, its perspective for the Spanish general strike remains confined within Spain's national borders. It makes no attempt to link the movement with the youth protests shaking France, the demonstrations against austerity in Belgium, or the thousands who took to the streets of neighbouring Portugal against soaring rents and the cost-of-living crisis. These are not isolated national struggles, but expressions of an international resurgence of the class struggle, driven by the same capitalist crisis, attacks on living standards and diversion of vast resources towards imperialist war.

The CRT's *Izquierda Diario* reports on these developments, yet its programme offers workers in Spain no perspective for unifying their struggles. This silence flows from a national-reformist orientation of the CRT, that sees the horizon of the struggle in more favorable negotiations with Sánchez.

The urgent task is to build independent, democratically elected rank-and-file committees in workplaces, schools, universities and working-class neighbourhoods, wrest control of the struggle from the union apparatus, and prepare a genuine general strike against the PSOE-Sumar government.

Such a movement must unite workers across Spain with their class brothers and sisters throughout Europe and internationally, linking the fight against evictions, austerity and falling living standards to the struggle against imperialist war and capitalist rule. This requires the building of a revolutionary socialist leadership fighting for the political independence and international unity of the working class, not another round of bankrupt appeals to the trade union bureaucracies.



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