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Spanish state

Windows, balconies and terraces for the public health service

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After the success of the popular initiative to "reunite" local neighbourhoods through singing from the windows of houses in many Italian streets and cities, the proposal arose in different networks in the Spanish state to supportively applaud health professionals, fighters in the front line against the corona virus Covid19. Immediately proposals arose to extend this to all those who work in that front and in care work, whatever their role, at the same time that slogans in support of public health and against cuts were raised. In parallel, through informal networks and by more conventional means in Portugal, a similar initiative arose that could be summarized in the motto "Todos somos SNS" ("We are all SNS" - the initials of the country's national health system, also at risk). In both countries the initiative has been a success. [1]

For this reason, we must continue promoting it every night. Most of the people in the Spanish state may have "come out" due to fairly general slogans about public health, but there is also a collective feeling of support and recognition for those who are at the forefront in all aspects, including healthcare. And, the fact is, these professionals need it, because not only are they more exposed to contagion, but they are also working with overload in a health system weakened, if not ruined, after years of cutting personnel and technical resources, which induces high degrees of stress.

Obviously our idea is not to remain in a sentimental support, what must be demanded of central and regional government are the means to work, an increase in staff, decent remuneration, fair and healthy working conditions, which requires providing all the means of protection that ensure the prevention of occupational hazards. This aspect can be extended to all those who in the performance of their work also have greater exposure to contagion.

But we must take advantage of that collective attitude, that feeling of being part of a community of people who suffer a common danger. And to argue to the extent of our small forces from a position of defence of the interests of the working classes, of the interests of the social majority against those of the economic and financial elite that promotes the privatization of healthcare as a business and now prepares to exit from the crisis at the expense of the workers, as in 2008. We have to ensure that there is no monopolizing of the discourse by Sánchez, who as president of the state government speaks directly with each individualized and isolated citizen. Let's get together, let's get the people together as much as we can. A people that at least mobilizes in unison on this with these few means, can react better in the future than if everyone passes the storm at home, alone. This is the best antidote against the neoliberal "everybody for themselves", that is, those who have the most money. And I think we should be leading any form of "protest/expression" because in addition to being fair we cannot leave that field to the right.

Beware of the right and the extreme right. Although in the "Salamanca neighbourhood" of each city there was no concert of clapping and casseroles or whistles, the right wing is trying to appropriate last night's action. [2] And they are going to bring out their anthem and their flag. And they are going to talk about national unity against the virus to replace the popular unity last night. We will have to make an effort to have a repertoire of slogans that can be shouted in unison and with rhythm or songs like the residents of Donostia. It can be any song even if its meaning is merely symbolic or poetic; the tacky pop song "Resistiré", the combative "Bella Ciao" and even better "L'estaca" in Catalonia to give some examples. And, if we have the materials, make posters and banners to put on the windows and balconies.

These are basic, simple, but essential ways of acting and creating collective identities. We have to build on even those minimal demonstrations and develop new awareness and new collective practices in the popular towns and neighbourhoods. We have to dispute every millimetre in our streets in favour of the public health system. I borrow

and put in another context the words of Leon Trotsky “In order to implement great plans, one must devote great attention to very small trifles!” [3] And, when dealing with public health issues, I refer to those of Nikolai Aleksandrovich Semashko, first people's commissioner of health after the triumph of the Russian revolution: “We need to be demonstrative; We will achieve little if we limit ourselves to taking positions or even to propaganda. In contrast, demonstration will have more impact than a thousand perfectly made and edited brochures.” [4]

Very soon we will see in Parliament calls for policies of national unity above class interests to overcome the health crisis and the economic crisis. And, in that sense, because here I am not referring to the existing democratic national question in the Spanish state, in the face of the coming social crisis there is not one nation, but two: that of those at the top and that of the people below.

Translated by **International Viewpoint** from Poder Popular “[Ventanas, balcones y terrazas por la Sanidad P blica](#)”.

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[1] This idea has also been taken up in France. - IVP

[2] Salamanca is an area of Madrid known for its rightist sympathies.

[3] Leon Trotsky, Marxist Internet Archive “[Attention to trifles!](#)”.

[4] “El muerto se as a al vivo”. Noticias del Comit  Central number 8, April 4, 1923.