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IDEOLOGICAL AND POLITICAL BASIS OF THE GALICIAN WORKERS PARTY (POG)



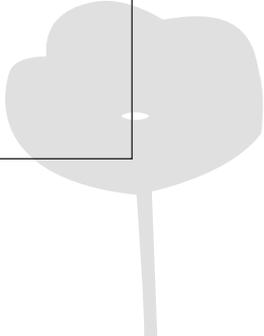
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CONTEXT

Galician Workers Party (in Galician: Partido Obreiro Galego) was a political party in Galicia founded in October 1977. POG was led by Camilo Nogueira and Xan López Facal. The founders of POG saw autonomy as a first step towards Galician self-rule. In the 1979 general and municipal elections POG formed part of the coalition Galician Unity (Unidade Galega). In the 1980 plebiscite on the Galician Statute, POG propagated for a blank vote. In December 1980 the party was reconstructed as Galician Left (Esquerda Galega).

ABSTRACT

Excerpt from the generated document on the first congress of the Galician Workers Party (POG, Partido Obreiro Galego, in galician language). The POG defines itself as a people's Marxist, revolutionary party who fights for democracy, the national liberation of Galicia and socialism.

LINKS

Fundación Galiza Sempre: <http://www.galizasempre.org>





IDEOLOGICAL AND POLITICAL BASIS OF THE GALICIAN WORKERS PARTY (POG)

1. THE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES OF THE POG (Galician Workers Party)

The POG defines itself as a people's Marxist, revolutionary party who fights for democracy, the national liberation of Galicia and socialism (by way of a classless society), confirming itself at the same time to be a popular Labour Galician national party.

The POG fights for the national liberation of Galicia by seeking a free and sovereign nation that can coexist equally with all other nations.

The POG in fighting class sees socialism as a transition phase to a classless society where the exploitation of a man exploiting another one disappears, together with the private ownership of the means of production, the social division of work into intellectual and manual and all kinds of oppression.

The Galician Workers Party fights against all kinds of tyranny of citizens and peoples in the search for a democratic society where there is no oppression based on race, gender or religion. The POG considers that the fight against oppression is related to democracy and to a classless society, but also that the elimination of all oppression is not guaranteed just by the disappearance of capitalist social relations, as that struggle has a specific social political and autonomous field that is not mechanically subordinate to a struggle for socialist production relations.

1) The Galician Workers Party considers that democracy, characterised as a political regime based on respecting the will of the majority of the population, is that there should be democratic freedom (association, meetings, demonstrations...) for the group of people, and this is a goal of the popular labour movement. The defence and foundation of democracy, as well completely achieving it (it is only possible in socialism) are our party's irrefutable aims.

But as a Marxist party the POG rejects the possibility that the main characterisation of a political system could be any other than the character determined by the ruling class on

a social level. In contemporary society the political systems, which make up their class character are exclusively just two: bourgeoisie or socialists. "Pure" democracy does not exist and cannot exist. There is bourgeoisie democracy and socialist democracy.

Bourgeoisie democracy, with very different specifications surrounding its democratic depth (with regards to the level of participation of its citizens in public life) beyond the verbal statements of total equality amongst citizens, is deeply handicapped by the real inequality that exists among men under capitalism as a consequence of class division in society.

On the other hand, socialist democracy means achieving total democracy, because socialism means a progressive disappearance of the private ownership of means of production, and it allows the establishment of material bases for full equality amongst men.

The discovery of the bourgeoisie democracy's handicap does not make us undervalue its importance as an achievement for the workers, and as a political regime that in European capitalist countries favours popular progress in the face of socialism. Increasing democracy, the drive that every day increases with the participation of citizen groups in public life, is a necessity to progress with socialism as well as to resist the ruling classes who will inevitably oppose, maybe even violently, the loss of their economic and political powers.

The need for democratic freedom and respect for the wishes of the majority of the population that today form part of an ideological system that rules the vast majority of the population in Western Europe and the assessment that the POG makes of this phenomenon is positive.

The rise to power of popular Labour forces, in these conditions, inevitably means (except under events we could consider catastrophic: a war, a very severe economic crisis,... which we think unlikely) they will become mainstream political forces through democratic channels as well as promising to respect democratic freedom and the choice of the majority of the population.

On the other hand the existence of a socialist democracy is an essential condition to be able to build up socialism.

2) The fight for a socialist Galicia, socialism as a different social system, which can overcome capitalism, is the POG's strategic aim, because only socialism can overcome exploitation, inequality and injustices inherent to capitalism.

And as a Marxist party, socialism is a necessary transition stage for the POG after the arrival to power of the popular labour block, so that we can attain the classless society that Marx himself called a communist society. The idea of communism is the only thing that gives coherence to a labour and socialist policy that seeks to overcome society's class division and the end of exploitation of some men by others.

To proclaim oneself Marxist is not to define a classless society in favour of communism at the same time, as some parties do, so we must be careful as it is a contradiction that inevitably leads to social democratic positions for the mere management of capitalism.

But although the POG is a party that fights for socialism and communism, it is neither a socialist nor a communist party as these parties appear today on the political scene respectively "occupying" the socialist or communist "space".



The current situation of the popular labour movement seeks a different response to those traditionally considered as socialist or communist, which is fruit of the Marxist labour movement's division more than 50 years ago.

The traditional trend considered as socialist, which stated a greater value for democratic liberties, did not mean in practice, in the majority of cases, any other thing than social democracy that renounces creating socialism. The traditional communist trend swears with a firm will to finish off with capitalism, as stated a long while ago, although it has an internal system that impedes internal democracy and is linked to an authoritarian and anti-democratic concept of building up socialism.

The relinquishment to revolutionary Marxism and adulteration and dogmatisation on behalf of traditional socialist and communist parties puts the POG in a Marxist position that overcomes these ideological and political trends of the labour movement.

3) Our idea of socialism is inseparable from the existence of socialist democracy because we know that without democracy it is impossible to progress in constructing socialism.

Socialism, as a transition stage between capitalism and communist society starts with political power being taken over by the historical popular labour block and is characterised by the progressive substitution, of a long progress of capitalist productions by those of communist production, which entails a slow but progressive process, which gets rid of the State (as this is fundamentally, the material specification for the reason why some men are exploited by others).

The main outline of socialism, that which really allows a country to be defined as socialist, is that political power, which materially controls the production of wealth is really in the hands of the group of workers. Obviously for this to be possible other conditions must be met (elimination of the private ownership of means of production, economic planning, tendency to suppress commercial categories, etc. but we feel that socialism's outline is the progression to a classless society.

The existence of democratic freedom (associations, meetings, strikes,...) are an essential condition to create socialism. It is only through its existence that it is possible that workers can really control political power, economic production and the State's ideological devices. Only under this democratic framework is it possible to go forward and establish communist production relations (progressing by getting rid of hierarchical differences, the divide between intellectual and manual work, the difference between country and city workers, etc.) and with this development making it possible to produce forces that are specifically socialist, as well as gradually substituting the State for new ways of organising political and cultural life that radically exclude coercion (an inherent element in all States, fruit of class division in society).

The restriction of democratic liberties, which can only be allowed in circumstances where the Socialist State is in extreme danger, act objectively against the advance towards a classless society as they are an element that restrict the possibility of workers participating in country's political, economic and ideological life. It is because of this that any limitation on democratic liberties in socialism can only be temporary and we must be very aware of the danger that this could suppose.

Creating socialism also means explicitly rejecting any form of identification between the Socialist state and a political party, something that is only possible under a framework

where democratic liberties do not exist or if it means there is an insurmountable obstacle in the face of creating socialism.

4) Galicia is a nation that is economically dependent and culturally and politically repressed. The POG is a National Liberation party that fights for self-government, for complete sovereignty over the Galician nation.

Getting a free Galicia is a process that cannot be separated from creating a socialist Galicia. Socialism and national liberation are intimately linked tasks in Galicia.

Galician self-government means making the Galician people the only holders of political sovereignty because of their rights as a national community. To really want self-government means, if you do not want to make verbalism and opportunism, a lot more than being able to recognise the links that the Galician people want to maintain with other peoples. To really want self-government means, on the one hand, recognising the right to self-organisation, the need for political organisations that are exclusively Galician, which will establish the progress in national creation and at the same time are a guarantee in creating political sovereignty without foreign interference.

On the other hand really wanting self government also means recognising the right that the Galician people have to count on the mechanisms that can guarantee political sovereignty in present day society, which are no other than the State's power, in creating a Galician national State.

5) As well as the contradictions generated by capitalist production in our society there are other contradictions that are not covered or similar to those of capitalism, which have a previous origin to it, and determine the exclusion and oppression for certain groups and social sectors.

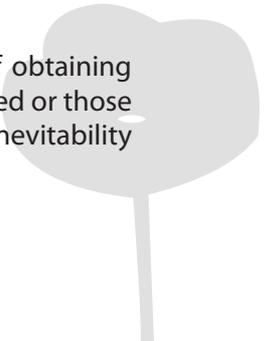
a) We specifically refer to the secular contradiction of men-women, which translates into the domination that the group of men have on the group of women; a domination that adopts different forms according to which social class you belong to.

Although it is true that capitalism wants to maintain the oppression of women, because of the benefits they get from it, it is also true that this oppression is not a product of capitalism, and therefore breaking with this does not mean that the problem will be solved.

Therefore women's struggle is a specific and precise situation that differentiates it from the rest of the popular movements, although at the same time it has in common with them the inevitability of confronting the capitalist system, unable to meet its demands.

For the Galician Workers Party the ideal framework, which would be able to set the bases to resolve the contradiction of men-women is socialism. But for this to be possible it is necessary that the workers parties make the women's struggle their own, respecting its specific and autonomous character; and that the feminist movement, without forgetting its own aims should join together with the popular movement groups in the fight for socialism.

b) In a society like ours, governed by criteria of maximum profitability, of obtaining maximum benefit, groups and social positions that are not useful are excluded or those that do not conform to the ideology the ruling party has; consequently and inevitability



these social groups are excluded from society or relegated to a category of “abnormal”: youths considered the country’s property, underage children who are not respected their adult political civil rights who can be exploited as apprentices, etc; old people who are not “profitable” and mean they are a “burden” for their family; disabled people who have been excluded since childhood from everything , which is considered “normal” by everybody else. Homosexuals, listed as “dangerous” because they go against the principle of sexual output institutionalised in the family.

The POG affirms its respect for the different sexual practices that do not go against the sexual freedom of the rest of individuals and of the group.

The P.O.G: defends social reinsertion of those excluded such as psychiatric social prisoners and drug addicts (alcoholics etc.) who are sometimes the product of some current social injustice, encouraging the creation of non-repressive institutions, which encourage their reincorporation into society, being conscious that this aim can only take place by getting rid of the current social conditions that provoke their existence and exclusion.

All these groups have specific problems, sometimes very severe, which make them fight against and confront the current social system.

The struggle against all oppression should have a relevant place in our party’s and all revolutionary party’s policies. Only then will it be possible to build a socialist society which will make the aims of liberating all those who are oppressed or exploited under capitalism reality.

6) Another non-exclusive contradiction of the capitalist system is that which confronts man against nature. The planet’s over-population as well as industrialisation based on maximum economic profitability and asphyxiating consumerism could make our planet uninhabitable. Our party, as a party that fights for human society, puts forward our ecological fight and will investigate and develop in this struggle.

[...]

10.- THE QUESTION OF PROGRESSIVE SELF-GOVERNMENT IN GALICIA FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF NATIONAL LIBERALISATION AND SOCIALISM.

The breakdown of the capitalist state is joined in Galicia to the breakdown of economic dependence and political and cultural oppression exercised by the Spanish State over our nation.

As well as the political and cultural oppression and Galicia’s economic dependence, the formation of alliances and the ability of the Galician popular labour block’s political structure to play a role in national liberation and socialism are not encouraged. On the other hand, as well as establishing an over-exploitation of Galician workers and causing a stagnation and ageing of the population, this gives numerical predominance to the small bourgeoisie and non wage-earning classes, especially farmworkers, as well as there being little development in industrial proletariat. On the other hand, political and cultural oppression has not until now given place to a significant growth in national awareness, which stops the formation of working class type alliances, favouring the political support of the small bourgeoisie and the Galician non wage-earning classes not to block the Spanish State’s power.

The current growth of the productive forces in Galicia, in the sense of creating material conditions that will allow us to overcome this situation, or are at least not produced with the speed and appropriate characteristics. The action of vanguard and cultural policies has also until today not achieved the support of a significant part of the Galician working classes in the fight for national liberation and socialism.

In this sense we have to take into account the fact that Galician dependence is not strictly carried out with violence and formal inequality of rights, as occurs in third world colonies, but by political and ideological means (although they are not exempt for coercive aspects that affect all States), and this makes any strategy for national liberation unviable if it is based on immediate frontal confrontation.

The progressive goal of self-governing institutions does not mean they are an alternative in the route to Galician national liberation. A self-governing situation would create some more favourable political and cultural conditions for the progressive increase of national awareness between the Galician working classes and would favour – or at least create more suitable conditions – for the Galician economy's development, factors that are all favourable and necessary for the formation, in the class struggle, of the Galician national block, under working class management, which needs not only national liberation but to achieve socialism.

Galician self-government would contribute in weakening the political and ideological bases of Spanish nationalism in our nation, thus weakening the capitalist block in the Spanish State's power, whilst at the same time workers would gain positions in society and in the Galician State's devices, which would contribute to the breakup of the Bourgeoisie state.

In achieving this strategy it is necessary to boost from right now the Galician people's self-organisation at all levels, especially in organising their own and independent popular labour political forces, which will make the people fully aware of Galicia's national circumstances. The labour parties have the impulse of this process, in such a way that enrichment of national awareness is not detrimental to class awareness, but mean promoting and making clear the reference to the socio-political context in which it is produced, making the dialectic interrelation that exists between the struggle for socialism and struggle for national freedom effective in practice.

[...]

12.- IDEOLOGICAL AND CULTURAL HEGEMONY AS A NECESSARY CONDITION FOR THE ACCESS TO POWER OF THE GALICIAN POPULAR CLASSES.

In our country's social reality, where insurrectionary and avant-garde routes are unfeasible, reaching ideological and cultural hegemony is an essential condition to be able to obtain political hegemony and the access to power for Galician workers.

Ideological hegemony is fundamental for a historical block to have success. The ruling block instills its conception into society, into history, into economy, into the State, into politics, into ethics, into rights, etc., fundamentally through ideological State devices and above all, through the educational and information system.

Ideological hegemony creates social agreement that includes the acceptance by the majority of the population to the power of the ruling block and that is set in the acceptance of economic, social and existing political order.



The ideology of the ruling block in the Spanish State tends to justify unlimited private ownership of means of production as well as worshipping the unit of "Spanish homeland" which denies any other nations existing in the State and their rights to full political sovereignty. The defence and justification of capitalism and Spanish nationalism are the two main axis of the ruling block's ideological system in the Spanish State.

The popular Galician block (together with the workers of other nations in the State) have to fight to decrease ideological hegemony of the ruling block and through a presumably long process, get the majority of the population to reject this hegemony and accept a radical ideology contrary to the current rulers and that will have as their axis, the ring of socialism together with that of Galician national liberation.

To achieve the conscious and organised support, not just momentarily but steadily, of the majority of the Galician population is a previous requisite to be able to break the capitalist system and Galicia's national dependence.

The progress of socialist and nationalist alternatives are especially important among the workers that teach, those in administration, in the media of the masses, etc., ideological and administrative State devices that exercise a great influence in maintaining the current consensus favourable to the dominance of the monopolist bourgeoisie and Spanish nationalism. The Galician workers' parties should carry out special work on these ears so as to make them more permeable to socialist and Galician nationalist ideas.

The role that the struggle for Galician national culture must play in the task of reaching ideological and cultural hegemony is fundamental. To promote our culture, put it forward as a vital manifestation of the Galician people, to fight against all the manifestations of Spanish cultural oppression in Galicia is an essential task in the path for a free and socialist Galicia.

[...]

