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TRIAL TO THE AIRBUS 8 – TRIAL TO THE RIGHT TO STRIKE

The solidarity with “the Airbus 8” increased on Tuesday 9th February with the beginning of the trial where the Prosecutor demands a total of 66 years in prison, eight years and a month each. One more day, colleagues from the factory and other workers clearly stated that they are not 8, they are thousands, we are thousands, and we are by their side in defence of the right to strike and the freedom of association, going with them on Tuesday from the Airbus factory gates to the Court in Getafe. Walking, step by step, more than 10.000 people, with their support to the Airbus 8, also demanded the derogation of Article 315.3 of the Penal Code, the one used by the Government of the Popular Party to criminalize the right to strike and to scare, tie up and muzzle the trade union organizations and all those who mobilize in defence of their rights.

Day 1 – 9th February

The trial against the Airbus 8 symbolizes –because of the unjustified accusations and the harshness of the sentences demanded- the persecution unleashed by the Prosecution, on the instructions of the PP Government, against more than 300 trade union members, some of them already sentenced, for taking part in the general strikes called by CCOO and UGT against the labour reforms. CCOO General Secretary explained it at the beginning of the demonstration: “This trial is a clear symptom of a setback for democracy in our country, a step backwards to a time we thought we had left behind. A false accusation has been organized, because the accusation is absolutely false, as it will be proven in Courts; these workers are being prosecuted with the purpose of attacking the right to strike, as they have done with the right to demonstration with the so-called ‘Ley Mordaza’ (Gag Law)”.

The day was cold, 8° in the thermometer at 8.30 am, when the 8 trade unionists charged, accompanied by the General Secretaries of CCOO and UGT, Toxo and Méndez, carrying a banner that read “They are not 8, we are thousands”, left the factory and joined the hundreds of people who were at that time gathered at the factory gates. Cold, and later rain and wind, did not stop the thousands of people who walked along the streets of Getafe, with a stop in the Plaza de la Constitución, where representatives of the municipal groups of Ciudadanos, PSOE, Ahora Getafe and IU-CM showed their solidarity to the Airbus 8. Cayo Lara, IU coordinator, and representatives of other political parties, Pablo Iglesias (Podemos) and Mari Luz Rodriguez (PSOE) were also there.

With cries of “They are not 8, we are thousands”, the long column of red flags grew to more than 10.000 people when arriving to the Court where the trial had began one hour earlier. “The right to strike is on trial today, the right to strike is in the dock today”, said CCOO’s secretary of Trade Union Action, Ramón Górriz, from the platform where a few speeches and musical performances followed a few meters away from the Court where the trial was taking place. It is planned to last for four days, during which trade union members will gather at the Court gate for stating their solidarity and asking for the charges to be dropped.

The solidarity with the Airbus 8 has crossed frontiers. Together with the numerous solidarity messages received during the last few weeks, representatives of the European and international trade union movement came to the Court in support of the charged trade unionists. Luc Triangle, from IndustriAll Europe, Nico Cué and Benoit Gerits, from the Belgian FGTB, Thomas Baudoin and Jeermy Brochard, from the French CGT, and Adam Lee, from IndustriAll Global Union, were there. Lee resumed the

trade union support saying “they are not 8, we are millions”. The former President of Uruguay, José Mujica, also wanted to be with the Airbus workers and sent a solidarity message.

José Álcazar, trade union member of CCOO, and one of the charged, welcomed the support actions and affirmed that Tuesday was a “historic day”, showing his conviction that justice will be done and, consequently, they will be acquitted of all charges.

Day 2 – 10th February

During the second day of the trial, which was attended by CCOO Secretaries, Ramón Górriz and Empar Pablo, the 11 policemen witnesses for the Prosecution declared with a clear contradiction between what they said in 2010 and what they said yesterday; and between the facts occurred and their words. In the opinion of Górriz and Pablo, the police officers confessed “having instructions to report to their superiors if there were any representatives of CCOO and UGT in the picket lines, to whom they even called “ringleaders” (*cabecillas*), a word used in pre-democratic times”.

For CCOO leaders, the enforcement officers did not identify any of the trade unionists as “aggressors”, a term used in the complaint report. “The injury reports submitted then do not correspond to what has been declared today, and none of the police officers allegedly assaulted caused sick leave because of those injuries. It seems clear that the witnesses for the prosecution have refined their declarations according to the request of their superiors”, denounced CCOO representatives.

Talking about the shots fired by the police, one of the officers recognized that “it is not usual having shots in a situation like this”, while the chief of the first group of police admitted that “with the Party that was in Government they knew what might happen”. The police officers confirmed that they received the corresponding compensations, even though they did not recognized the aggressors.

Ramón Górriz and Empar Pablo believe that the good job of the defence lawyers in their questions to the police officers has permitted to show glaring contradictions between the content of the complaint and their declarations, “and everything points to a systematic intervention of the police commanders and of the Ministry of Interior in their pursuit to criminalize trade union activity and to intimidate workers and their representatives, a failed attempt regarding CCOO”

Day 3 – 11th February

Tomorrow, we will send some information about the 3rd day of trial when the hearing of witnesses for the defence is expected to occur. We will also inform about the demonstration called by 12 trade union organisations (CCOO together with UGT, USO, CGT, CSIT UNIÓN PROFESIONAL, AMYTS, SATSE, SOLIDARIDAD OBRERA, GESTHA, UNIÓN DE ACTORES, STEM, ALTERNATIVA SINDICAL DE SEGURIDAD PRIVADA) **today, Thursday 11 February, at 6.30 pm in Madrid, to support the more than 300 workers and trade unionists charged**, and to call on the Government and the Parliament to repeal Article 315.3 of the Penal Code, the Gag Law and the Labour Law reforms adopted in 2010 and 2012.

(Poster in page 3)

#HuelgaNoEsDelito, es un derecho

Amnistía trabajadores/as represaliados/as

MANIFESTACIÓN

Contra la criminalización del Derecho de Huelga,
por la derogación del art. 315.3 Código Penal



11 FEBRERO 2016
CIBELES - SOL
18:30 HORAS

CONVOCAN: CCOO, UGT, USO, CGT, CSIT UNIÓN
PROFESIONAL, AMYTS, SATSE, SOLIDARIDAD OBRERA,
GESTHA, UNION DE ACTORES, STEM, ALTERNATIVA
SINDICAL DE SEGURIDAD PRIVADA