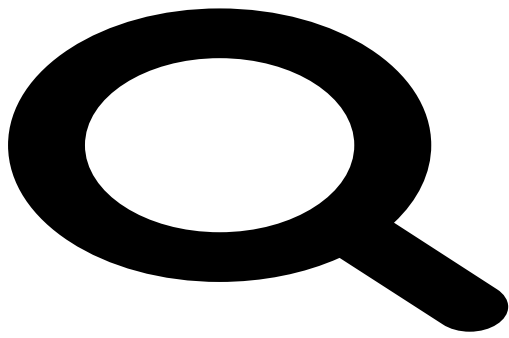


THE UNBEARABLE LIGHTNESS OF CARDBOARD UNIONISM

Posted on 29/06/2010 by Naider



The call for a general strike that the majority Basque unions called today has turned out to have a rather uneven follow-up. Regardless of the figures that the conveners offer in the next few hours, both the Government of the Basque Country and that of Navarra have estimated the follow-up in the public sector with testimonial percentages (between 2.8 and 8%) and in the sector deprived of a follow-up of 30% in the Basque Country and "very localized" in Navarra.

A general strike is called as an act of insubordination by society in the face of the excesses of economic, political or judicial power. The insubordination today has been very partial. It seems that the reason for the labor reform (with a clear aggravation of the conditions of dismissal of workers) have not been sufficient cause to take to the streets in a generalized way. His brothers on the other side of the Ebro should be a little worried, calling a general strike for September. They have time to convince. Yes indeed.

Calls like today's in the Basque Country and Navarra suggest that the representativeness of unions in society is clearly questioned. Summer is a good time for them to reflect on their own refounding as instruments of social liberation. The unions must find their space again because, despite the noise of the information pickets and the rain of leaflets, they have not finished painting anything in large layers of society and little by little they are entrenching themselves in the large traditional industries or among the armored workers of the public function.

All this despite the scandal that involves the loss of rights of workers employed by others derived from the labor reform. It would be better for them in their calls if, perhaps, they began to think about the scandal of the self-employed (who have practically no right to anything) or the scandal of small entrepreneurs (who risk even what they do not have in their efforts to create company) or in the scandal of having millions of people unable to exercise their right to work (illegal immigrants) or in the scandal that involves their own financing as entities paid at the neckline among all citizens and among all companies in this country.

There is a role for unions in this society. There are still many abuses that must be denounced and corrected. Of course. But I don't know if there is a very clear role for these unions that are only elected by those who are elected and that play bigger when in reality they do not convince more than a few. The emergence of small sectoral unions, of independent company committees, of new forms of business cooperatives, of greater vigilance by the public sector of workers' rights, of social organizations of all kinds, can make them end up becoming a new social institution to maintain (such as the Church, the Monarchy, the Army...) that, without knowing very well what they do or from which history book they fell, we all have to maintain due to their "social importance".

The fact that they end up being irrelevant will be something positive (it will mean that the workers will have finally freed themselves from the yoke of capital or that we have more agile instruments and adapted to today's society) but if, in addition to being irrelevant, they are expensive, I don't know about that yes I like it a lot. At some point it will be necessary to stop paying them for the services rendered in the past. Everything has its moment and, either they hurry up a bit, or the moment of the union movement will have passed away (even if we have to pay a few thousand for a few years still their life pensions).

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