

MOTION A

The left against the debt

The demonstration of September 15th changed the country.

The largest demonstration in recent decades showed that the people are not resigned to austerity.

But this is a long struggle: besides the fiscal burden on labour, the State budget will bring drastic cuts in public services that are already at risk of collapsing.

The Bloc is responding in the fight to overthrow the power of the troika, treading the path of a left-wing government. From the censure motion to the congress of alternatives, from popular demonstrations to the general strike.

1 THIS DEBT IS NOT OURS

The debt became a dominant argument of the central Bloc and an accusation against the people: "we are living above our means". The crisis of the sovereign debts serves a powerful ideological attack and a massive transfer of wealth from labour to capital.

The troika was called on to aid the financial system and the benefits for private banking amount to 30% of the troika's loan. The State indebted itself to safeguard the banks' shareholders.

The indebtedness of the States is being taken advantage of to attack people's rights, salaries and the public services.

The single currency deepened the inequalities of European construction and worsened the indebtedness of the peripheral States. The model of construc-

tion of the Euro has reduced the States capacity to intervene in the economy and has made salaries the only variable for the adjustment of heterogeneous national trajectories.

Breaking the dictatorship of the creditors is to break the stranglehold of the debt. The Bloc considers it essential to hold an audit of the debt that would identify the part which is illegitimate and require the cancellation of this part, at the same time as a renegotiation that would impose the State's commitment to constitutional rights.

2. THE GOVERNMENT OF THE TROIKA IS THE GOVERNMENT OF UNEMPLOYMENT AND POVERTY

Austerity is a dead-end street. The steep decline in State revenue, even with the tax hike, shows that the deficit is out of control. The debt increases and society is drowning in recession and unemployment.

3. THE TROIKA IS THE FRONTIER

The troika's policy presents no alternatives to these changes. The memorandum was signed jointly by the Socialist Party (PS) and by the parties on the right. Until now the PS has approved and made viable all of the fundamental decisions for the application of the memorandum, and participated in the consensus of the European budget treaty. The PS' vote against the OE/2013 does not free it from the troika's memorandum.

Greece demonstrates that, with regard to the policy of the memorandum, the way is opening up to an alternative for government against the troika. Based on this lesson, in Portugal, space is opening up to the left for the systematic confrontation of the PS' basis of support with the social crimes of austerity. This is our centre: the whole political and social unity of the field of rupture with the memorandum.

The Greek elections demonstrated the destiny of the ambiguous discourse to the left: those who refused to disagree with the memorandum are now part of the parliamentary support for Samaras' government. On the other hand, Syriza, with an independent strategy of confrontation with the troika, was the expression of a leftist Europeanism that refuses bankruptcy and leaving the Euro, thereby gaining the support of a broad sector of society.

The country needs the opposite of austerity. A greater clarity over the need to break with the troika's memorandum is a condition for greater daring in convergence.

4. THE FIGHT FOR A GOVERNMENT ON THE LEFT

The Bloc has its political program of response to the troika and to the crisis. In the next elections, it will update its program of essential social transformations for the electorate to see.

The Bloc proposes a left-wing government based on a break with the troika's memorandum. This is a proposal of unity, of a broad political alliance.

In the devastation caused by austerity, the anti-capitalist left should demonstrate capacity and the will to generate a majority and a government of rupture with the troika based on clear points:

- (1) Cancellation of the abusive debt, reduction of the debt to 60% of GDP and renegotiation of repayment periods and interest with all the credit institutions, public and private, national and international;
- (2) Reinstatement of incomes that were cut and a guarantee of essential rights to public Education, to the National Health Service, to the Social Security;
- (3) Nationalization of the banks that were assisted by the State, with mobilization of resources for public investment and for full employment, and of the common property that was privatised or put under concession (electricity, fuel, telecommunications);
- (4) A new fiscal system, fighting fraud and moving the fiscal charge away from labour to capital and patrimony.

This government should correspond to a reconfigured political map, immediately influencing the political and social field of the PS, so that many people can unite in opposition to the memorandum. It also requires the full availability of the PCP (Portuguese Communist Party) and, above all, a new popular protagonism.

5. LEFTIST EUROPEANISM

Under the dictatorship of the creditors, only two alternatives are offered: the authoritarianism of a European State that is imposed on all peoples; or expulsion from the Euro as punishment, borne primarily by the workers, the first victims of the abrupt devaluation that would follow. The Bloc refuses both.

This crisis shows that the alternative between intergovernmentality and federalism as political models for the governance of the EU is false and that both are authoritarian.

A European Union piloted by the intergovernmental game will only bring European deconstruction.

European construction should respect the cultural identity and sovereignty of all States. The Left Bloc does not accept the imposition of the budgetary pact.

The Bloc comes forward with a European alternative – and not only national – to austerity and the recession. This response includes:

- (1) The pooling of the debts through the emission of European debt securities;
- (2) A more robust Union Budget, which would permit common projects for employment and the “upwards” levelling of social rights;
- (3) Combating fiscal dumping throughout the European Union, establishing minimum taxation thresholds on capital and eliminating the tax havens within the European space and imposing a tax on financial transfers;
- (4) Make the European Central Bank subordinate to the elected institutions, centred on the creation of employment and guaranteeing the financing of the States;
- (5) European social minima and a policy of coordination for increasing salaries.

A European response to the crisis implies the rejection of the Treaty of Lisbon, its logic and its subordination to the strategy of NATO.

The left should fight for the peripheries to present a united front. A more dense collaboration with our allies of the European Left Party, as well as with all current socialists, in Europe and in the World, with those with whom we can construct common debates and agendas.

6. THE LEFT FOR SOCIALISM

The elite that is directing the conservative modernization of the country cannot and does not want to change the social regime in favour of the interest of the majority of the population.

Socialism is the name of an emancipation that com-

prises all emancipations. For this reason, we assess each struggle by the value of the rights that it defends. We want to make the Bloc the common home of the concrete struggles for liberty and justice.

The Bloc assumes the legacy of all the struggles and revolutions that have challenged exploitation and injustice, war and colonialism, over the last centuries. This legacy involves the plan to overthrow capitalism.

7. GREATER URGENCY IS THE SOCIAL RESPONSE

Eruptions of indignation are a characteristic of our period in history and demand an open attitude and the involvement of the left, instead of reactions of fear or conservatism.

The demonstration of the 15th of September 2012, which brought together a million people throughout the country, heralded a new popular protagonism in Portugal.

The Left Bloc challenges the 99% so that its indignation does not dissolve in the game of musical political chairs. The Bloc is dedicated to the construction of spaces of participation and broader popular struggle, in order to resist the troika’s policy and austerity.

In recent years, important steps have been taken in the organised expression of workers in precarious employment. These should be supported and multiplied. They need to grow better social roots.

In the movement of workers committees, there is a need for a national network of such committees. In terms of trade unions, more activists need to come forward as leaders and trade union delegates. We will encourage the active participation and political intervention of those who join to form these networks, which is decisive for the Bloc to grow as a party of the masses.

8. TASKS AND METHODS OF ORGANIZATION

For the 8th Convention, the priorities in terms of organization are: (1) the creation of active forms of participation in decision-making and paths towards collective activism; (2) the enlargement of the network for the communication of ideas.

9. REGIONAL, LOCAL AND LOCAL AUTHORITY INTERVENTION

The Bloc clearly opposes the changes in electoral law which reinforce the precedence of the majority and that make representativity and the rights of oppositions residual.

In its proposals the Bloc will further develop all the mechanisms of participative democracy, essential for reinforcing and structuring local democracy.

In the elections of October 2013 we will have a leftist program for the local authorities. This program will

be defended by specific candidatures, dedicated to disputing the political space and greater representation, open to independents and local activists who share these objectives.

We are in favour of all possibilities of convergence with citizens' movements which represent genuine expectations of change and that have programs that are coherent with these principles.

If and where there exists the possibility of convergence of the whole of the left with a clear program to defeat the right installed in local power, the Bloc will not be to blame for such convergence not taking place.

The Left Bloc will continue its struggle for the construction of Regional Autonomies founded on democracy, on discipline in public accounts, on the fight against the abuse of power and breaches of the Constitution.