

If we had made Feijóo president, all this would not happen

When my party decided to vote in favour of the investiture of Pedro Sánchez as Spanish Prime Minister and allow another legislature with a left-wing government in Spain, I was fully aware of some of the negative consequences that this would entail. I anticipated some of them to my political interlocutors, who looked at me in disbelief.

I did not have to wait long. Monday, November 6, 2023 was the day we had initially chosen to make public in Brussels the agreement signed between my party and the PSOE that would allow the investiture of Pedro Sánchez. That same day, not before not after, but precisely that 6th of November, the judge of the Spanish National Court García-Castellón decided to investigate me for a terrorist crime. The case for which I am now being prosecuted as a terrorist had been on hold for a few years; no investigation had been carried out nor had a statement been taken from anyone about the alleged terrorist plot that organized the public protests in 2019 against the sentence of the Spanish Supreme Court that sentenced Catalan political and social leaders to a set of 100 years of prison. The fact that the judge decided to revive the case on the same day that the political agreement of investiture was to be announced is not a coincidence, because it has been known for years - and unfortunately it is accepted as inevitable - that some magistrates coordinate judicial agendas with the political ones.

That García-Castellón is a judge *extremely kind* to the PP is described by his curriculum vitae and also by his decisions. His prosecution against Podemos and Pablo Iglesias for an alleged plot of illegal financing and money laundering will go down in the history of lawfare manuals, also in that of judicial impunity for committing abuses and confusing personal ideological and religious derisions with judicial crusades to save Spain from Reds and Separatists.

In the weeks that followed, the political debate in Spain became tense and unrested to unimaginable levels. The investiture of Pedro Sánchez and the negotiation of the Amnesty Law triggered a harsh reaction from the right and the far-right, with weekly demonstrations, the besiege of the headquarters of the Socialist Party and calls for disobedience. Some of these demonstrations were violent, and some of those calls were clearly coupist. The European right made itself available to the PP strategy and decided to involve the European Parliament in the debate on a national law that had yet to be approved, and to turn the appearance of Pedro Sánchez, then rotating president of the Council of the EU, in an embarrassing show.

All this reaction does not occur by spontaneous generation. Four days before Judge García-Castellón decided to investigate me as a terrorist, former Spanish President José María Aznar made a statement in which he instigated it openly: "Whoever can speak, let them speak; whoever can do it, let them do it; whoever can move, let them move. Everyone from their responsibility must be aware of the situation in which we find ourselves». Aznar is the beacon for the main and true Spanish powerful right. I mean the economic right, the judiciary and the media. His words found a diligent response on the three fronts of influence. García-Castellón responded immediately, the conservative press unleashed a fierce campaign while business representatives - and the church as well - continued to mobilize against the amnesty bill.

The offensive was yet to worsen. Last 30th of January, the Spanish Congress had to debate and approve the amnesty law. In another of these completely random coincidences of agendas, a judge in Barcelona, known for his hostility to the independence process, decided to reactivate a case he had already filed away, and intends to accuse me of the crime of treason to the homeland for having conspired with Russian spies for no less than to destabilize the European Union. In a matter of weeks, I have accumulated two of the most severely punished crimes in the Spanish penal code -- terrorism

and high treason -- that no one had alerted about in more than six years. Six years in which they have not stopped watching me, spying on me and persecuting me, and they only realized that I am a terrorist and traitor to the motherland precisely a few weeks ago, coinciding with one of the most relevant political agreements that have occurred since Franco's death..

The construction of the case on the so-called Russian plot has many similarities with the construction of the conspiracy theory in the attacks of 11M in Madrid. For years - there are still people who still thinks so - the idea was fuelled that the attacks had been the work of ETA - José María Aznar himself called the media to ensure this, when all the signs already pointed to the jihadism-- with the intention of harming the electoral prospects of the PSOE and benefiting those of the PP. The amount of journalistic literature and supposed expert reports aimed at sowing doubt about what had really happened was spectacular, colossal. Rarely have so many hours of radio and television, so much print and so much rumour in the social networks of the time as on that occasion, been devoted to feeding this falsehood.

The modus operandi is the same. Conclusions are made from unrelated facts. Sufficient credibility is created that someone will end up buying a defective product and putting it into circulation duly presented as an independent investigation, and there is always a judge to whom, also coincidentally, the cases end up. The ball gets bigger, feedbacks and becomes impossible to stop, until one day it bursts.

To this strategy the European Parliament has also been dragged into. The European Parliament has become more and more a sounding board for the partisan strategies of the national delegations, instead of ensuring democracy, fundamental rights and equality between all citizens of the Union. The Spanish PP has managed to impose its standards on the European conservative majority, and it is bad news for the future of the Union. But on this issue we will have time to talk about.

The lightness with which the whole Russian affair has been treated is appalling. I am deeply concerned, because I do not see a more effective way to achieve Putin's goals of dividing and weakening the EU than to put the credibility of the European institutions at the service of strategies to destroy political opponents using improper methods of a democracy .

There has been no Russian plot or collusion with the Putin regime in any sense. No one will find in my decisions, in my statements, books and conferences, votes... anything that can be interpreted in this sense. Enough years have passed, and I've read enough Cioran and Kundera, that anyone who has taken the trouble to know my opinion on the Putin regime - then and now - has drawn an unequivocal conclusion. Unfortunately, this asks for too much effort that would contradict the easy headline.

I have no doubt that in the countries of the European Union there are intelligence agents from many hostile countries, including Russia. I hope it happens the other way around too. And I also do not doubt that these agents collect information and that the chancelleries analyse the political situation from their perspective and their interests. I am completely unaware of what the Russian strategy is in relation to the historical conflict that Catalonia has with Spain, beyond its official statements in favour of the unity of Spain. As I also do not know that of the rest of the countries in the world, beyond also saying the same thing that Russia has said. However, if someone from the outside had ever thought of using us to erode the European Union, they would have failed. It has not happened, and we would never let it happen. Catalonia's independence process has historical roots and goes back a long way in time, but not in geography. I mean you do not have to go all the way to the Urals to find the reasons that drive it.

What fuels and triggers the process of Catalonia's independence is not an enemy power.

The millions of people who have demonstrated every year asking to vote, have not been moved by the Russians. The Russians were not behind the reform of the Catalan statute of autonomy. Nor the results of the votes in the Catalan elections, that year after year have given the pro-independence majority in the Parliament of Catalonia, have been manipulated by the Russians. Nor the tenacity with which the institutions and the people of Catalonia organized the referendum on the 1st of October. Probably to certain sectors of the more nostalgic and prouder Spain it is more convenient to explain that if they did not defeat the Catalans, normal people, from the street, properly organized, was because of the infiltrated Russian spies, if not Spain would have stopped the referendum.

I feel sorry for those who buy into this story, but things never were that way.

We know a lot about dirty war, and we know that those who have interfered the most in the Spanish democracy have been precisely the patriotic police, the patriotic judges and the systemic corruption of the PP. Here the European Parliament would find very well-founded reasons to express deep concern, because there are some of its Spanish deputies who have a great deal of responsibility. There are those who are afraid and remain silent. There are others that have not done so and we will not do, no matter how many problems we face. I recommend the article published by journalist [Elisa Beni in Eldiario today, February 8, entitled "Da bastante miedo"](#); you will understand what sentiment exists right now in various sectors of Spanish society, not necessarily pro-independence or allies. "It's scary - writes Beni - to be able to trust so little in a system that is capable of creating juridical-media cahoots to force procedures for non-existent or artificially inflated crimes. This is what scares me, and so many people who know even if they prefer not to get into trouble."

I will fight to burst this indecent ball, and for all the anomalies of this procedure to be revealed. Hopefully the European Parliament and Spain can conduct a truly independent investigation, with rapporteurs who have no partisan or national interests. No apriorisms or prejudices. I doubt that they are capable of it, because the truth is not of interest here but the narrative story.

There is one other thing of which I am completely convinced. If my party had allowed the investiture of the candidate of the PP, Alberto Núñez Feijóo, or had prevented that of Pedro Sánchez, all these shows would have been spared. And we will talk about that too, when it's time. As in the "Russian plot", everything will be known.

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