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Obituary

Jes s Albarrac n (1942-2001)

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Jes s Albarrac n has died at the age of 57 following a long illness. Born in Madrid, an economics graduate, he had been a university lecturer since 1967 and a member of the Department of Studies of the Bank of Spain since 1968. He began his militant activity in the early 1970s, joining the Liga Comunista Revolucionaria (LCR - section of the Fourth International in the Spanish state), of which he was for many years one of the leaders.

In the last period of his life, he was a member of Izquierda Unida (IU) and its Executive Commission. A militant in the Workers Commissions since the time of the dictatorship, he was one of the organisers of the currents critical of the leadership in this trade union federation. We reproduce below the speech made at his funeral, attended by representatives of the entire Spanish left, by his comrade and friend Pedro Montes.

"The death of Jes s is a hard blow for his comrades and leaves a vacuum on the alternative left which it will be very difficult to fill. As Brecht put it, many people are necessary, but some are indispensable. Jes s was one of the latter.

At such a difficult time, where the prevailing tendency is to adapt passively to a repulsive world and accept the idea of the lesser evil, the left had in Jes s a stubborn resistant who continued to defend with enthusiasm its values and projects. His vigour and his intellectual passion, his polished Marxist training, the tenacity of his political commitment, in the LCR, later inside Izquierda Unida, and always in the Workers Commissions, allowed him to represent an unflinching opposition to conformism, to ideological poverty and to degenerate practices. A vigorous polemicist, he exploited his inexhaustible energy, his eloquence and his consistent thought to fight capitalism and defend the working class and socialism. He was always the ally of all those who fought against the rightist drifts and for the reconstruction of democracy in the left organizations. This is how the militants of the LCR, IU and the critical sectors of the Workers Commissions will remember him.

Endowed with a rich and unshakeable background in Marxism and an indisputable intelligence, he was a fertile economist, skilled and imaginative. He left his imprint as much at the Department of Studies at the Bank of Spain, as at Complutense University (where he led the struggle of anti-Francoist lecturers) and more recently the Carlos III University.

Jes s left many publications of which his books and articles are only the tip of the iceberg. The hidden part is constituted by a great number of reports, documents and contributions to the debates of left organizations, to which he devoted all his qualities in the most fair-minded fashion. Nobody could be mistaken as to his motivations and the causes he defended.

Ideologically incorruptible, he always maintained his resolve even in the most difficult times without ever becoming demoralised, confident in the historic role of the working class and in its potential to finally overthrow capitalism. He combined this political resolve and toughness with a generous, open and simple attitude on the personal level.

It could be said that he died without ceasing to struggle, despite his grave illness. Until the last he worked on an essay on the causes of the decline of the left. He always behaved in an exemplary manner as a communist and lived life to the full. We will not forget him."