



STABILITY OF THE EXECUTIVE

Espot rules out an advance of the elections due to the Liberal crisis

|| About 30 members of the blue formation want to break the card and promote a new platform

|| The parliamentary group of the General Council will not undergo any change and will continue as before

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« My obligation as head of government and that of the rest of the Executive is to complete the project we have in hand, which we started in 2019 and which has an end date in March 2023. In no case is an electoral advance, beyond a possible technical advance ». The head of government, Xavier Espot, was so forceful yesterday about a change in the date of the general elections - which according to the calendar, should be held next March - after the events experienced at the home of his Executive members, Liberals of Andorra. Espot appeared in an extraordinary way at the press conference after the Council of Ministers to send a message of reassurance to the citizens and reaffirm their commitment to continue working to « resolve, as far as possible, the economic and social situation that crosses our country ».

In this way, the Prime Minister thanked the support of the unity of the parliamentary majority made public by the four ex-liberal general councilors, and regarding the work from the Executive, he shared that « I am convinced that these fights do not they will affect the government's action », although he added that « if this happens, all the ministers know that I will act accordingly and take the necessary measures ». « The current situation requires rigor, responsibility and vision, » said Espot, who made it clear that despite the fact that the entire cabinet has its confidence, « that minister who is not perfectly aligned with the action of the Government and that it is not clear that its responsibility is to take care of the demands of its portfolio and the needs of the citizenship, will not take place in the Executive ».

In any case, despite Espot's desire to fulfill the mandate calmly among members of the Government, the reality is that the earthquake within the Liberals of Andorra has resulted in some thirty future casualties to pursue some postulates « liberal, open-minded and progressive. » This was defined by the councilor from La



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► The head of government, Xavier Espot, at a time in his appearance.



XAVIER ESPOT
HEAD OF GOVERNMENT

« I am convinced that the fighting will not affect the government's action. If that happens, I'll act accordingly »

GUILLEM FORNÉ
COUNCILOR OF LA MASSANA

« I have not been identified with the Liberal Party for weeks. The management has taken a clearly conservative turn »

Massana, Guillem Forné, who said that he would break his card due to the fact that « I haven't felt identified with the Liberal Party for weeks ». Forné declared that « what has hurt me infinitely more are the ways », especially for the accusations of treason and deception made by the same liberal president, Jordi Gallardo, on which he pointed out that he did not recognize the new side that was demonstrating. « These statements about feminism, which he considers to be rooted in the twentieth century and which can only be defended from communism and socialism, are unfortunate and do not agree at all with the ideas of liberals, » he lamented.

Thus, having been able to witness a « clearly conservative turn », and the fact that the candidate in the elections, Josep Maria Cabanes, has made

no attempt to bring positions closer to his faction, he has chosen to distance himself from it. Among the parish sections, a large part of the people of La Massana would consider making the leap to the new platform of Pallarés and company, as well as practically all of the parish. In Andorra la Vella, the Liberal councilors intend to stay in the party, while in Encamp, the two representatives have not yet made a decision.

The thirty members who would be leaving the party attended a meeting with Judith Pallarés on Tuesday evening, most of whom would break their cards, but not all of them, and some who were not there as well. It should be noted that in the last primary election the census of members was 112 people and they exercised the right to vote 101. These casualties, together with the four

general councilors, could become a platform - not a party - and present in the elections as a group of voters.

As for the parliamentary group in the General Council, according to parliamentary sources, it will not change, as the name of the group does not belong to the party, but to the parliamentary group, which acts outside the formation and has its own entity. In addition, it should be noted that two of the general councilors were chosen from D'Acord list, in coalition with the PS. In addition, the regulations of the General Council do not provide for changes in the parliamentary groups, except in specific cases such as the departure of Carine Montaner of Terceravia, who joined the mixed group. In fact, ex-liberal councilors questioned the general secretariat, and the answer was that no change was needed. ≡

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«The building for the minority was allowed to the detriment of the majority»

VICTOR NAUDI Former General Counselor of SDP and professional architect

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Former General Counselor of Andorra's mixed parliamentary group, SDP (Party of Progressive Social Democrats of Andorra) and professional architect Victor Naudi Zamora left politics aside a few years ago and devoted himself entirely to architecture. Today he manages his own bureau Naudi Arquitectura. We talked with Viktor about the history of Andorran architecture, and its evolution, and asked his opinion about some of the modern architectural projects of the Principality.

-What can you tell us about the evolution of the urban structure of Andorra in general and Andorran buildings in particular?

-In the past, as in all the mountain villages of the Pyrenees, the houses in Andorra followed a similar pattern. We are talking about stone-made constructions, either grouted with mud, with wooden floors or slate roofs on a pine wood structure. It is said that the materials of the place were used because they were the only ones available.

-What does a traditional Andorran house look like?

-A traditional house usually consisted of a ground floor, a first floor and a basement (sota coberta - cat.) known as "head of the house". Often next to the house was a corral for cattle. In the houses of more modest families, the corral where the animals were kept was often on the ground floor of the house.

For reasons of rationality, the buildings were on the sunny slopes of the valleys, usually elevated, protected from wind and geological hazards. The houses often rested on the rocks to free up the fields and pastures of the valley.

Given the composition of the materials, their typology was very uniform and only the differences stood out depending on their size. Houses had balconies and facades finished with plaster painted white or without, depending on whether it was a house rich or poor.

The most populated and therefore most important nuclei had the main street that connected the different villages, in which the horse-drawn

carts circulated. The inner streets used to be sloping and narrow. The only buildings that stood out were the churches and chapels depending on the importance of the village. In this case, the Romanesque style characterized the architecture. This style has its origins in the eighth and thirteenth centuries.

The construction system of the traditional Andorran house responded to the way of life that for centuries was perpetrated until the nineteenth century, based on a mostly agricultural and livestock economy.

-When did the first changes in the architecture of Andorra begin?

-The first changes took place at the end of the nineteenth century with the appearance of the tobacco, wool and leather industry, which saw the construction of larger industrial-style buildings of the time, especially in Escaldes and Sant Julià de Lòria. The style of these factories was more avant-garde due to the search for master craftsmen abroad, but with a Catalan influence.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, some symbolic buildings were built in Andorra la Vella, Sant Julia de Loria and Escaldes. Their architecture was the first to use granite with framed windows and attic roofs. Disciples of Puig i Cadafalch or even Gaudí, among others, built some of these buildings. The second major change occurred between 1930-1935 with the creation of FHASA (Fuerzas Hidroeléctricas de Andorra), under which, in exchange for ceding part of the country's waters for electricity generation, the company widened the main roads and built several buildings.

During this period, many people arrived in the Principality for work. Among them were refugees fleeing the Spanish Civil War.

-Can we say that from that moment in Andorra there was a demand for housing?

-Yes. Actually, it led to the beginning of the construction of a new urban fabric located along the main roads of the populated areas.

Then, after the end of the Second World War, hotels began to be built, especially in Escaldes, where the thermal water was exploited for



therapeutic and relaxation purposes.

At the same time, the Ràdio Andorra, a granite stone building, was built. It broadcast advertising in the north of Spain and in the south of France but especially considering that there was a dictatorship on the Spanish side.

This period generated the golden years of tourism in Andorra and expanded the economy based on shopping tourism and hospitality.

Then banks, large supermarkets, gas stations, educational and administrative buildings, and a housing-based urban fabric appeared. The ground floors of the buildings were normally used for trade.

-The expansion of the urban fabric in a relatively short time without land-use planning regulations caused urban plots to expand along existing roads, resulting in a heterogeneous and disordered result. How was this problem solved?

-The resulting architecture was the result of extremely limited

regulations and restricted use of materials with a predominant use of stone. There was just one exception - this is the central nucleus of Ordino, where the architectural appearance of the facades and sizes of houses are similar and arranged in a linear way to row houses.

During the 1960s, the General Council invoked the need to have urban plans. But actually, only since the 1980s, have the local authorities stopped approving local house development without urban plans.

It will be necessary to wait until the year 2000 for the General Council to approve the General Law of the Territory and Urbanism, which establishes that each Commune must approve its own plan.

Unfortunately, what was supposed to be the basis for a more orderly and rational urban fabric was reflected only in new developments. There was a lack of political involvement of state authorities and the courage to consider future generations.

When planning urban areas, they

completely forgot about the need to create new infrastructure in the form of social, medical, educational or entertainment facilities.

-What can you say about the quality of Andorran architecture and especially about the three towers being built in Escaldes?

-These three projects cause a lot of dissatisfaction and criticism among most Andorran citizens. They began to be built amid the pandemic when public protest demonstrations were impossible due to movement restrictions.

-Do you agree that these towers disfigure the landscape of a city in a mountainous country, one of the advantages of which is the magnificent views that are now blocked?

-Yes, special mention should be made of the example of the towers built in Escaldes. I can agree with the stated goal of saving more space meant for public space, but that didn't happen as a result. On the other hand, buildings of this size should generate a greater variety and architectural richness in the urban space. But now it does not seem obvious.

In some cases, the vacated space turned out to be the overhang of the roof of the first floor of private property, minimizing public space on the street. This has led to a «suffocation» of urban space.

The resulting development opportunity is justified on paper. This is allegedly the best project that could be implemented using the current rules. But the truth is that it was the other neighbors who ended up hurting as their nice views were simply blocked.

Priority was given to design, engineering and construction for purely mercantile purposes. They seem to have forgotten about urbanism and architecture and refused to consider the connections between different urban spaces and existing activities. In general, now these new buildings are being built without considering leisure and recreation areas and retail space.

The growth of building opportunities for the minority was suddenly allowed to the detriment of the majority. But that is a topic for another day. ≡

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