

Beat: Politics

Sentenced several high socialist leaders for corruption in Andalusia

Two former regional ministers

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USPA NEWS - The biggest corruption scandal starring the Spanish Socialist Party ended this Monday with the conviction of its top leaders. Two former ministers of the socialist governments, Manuel Chaves and José Antonio Griñán, who were presidents of the regional government of Andalusia between 1990 and 2000, in the case of Manuel Chaves, and between 2009 and 2013 in the case of José Antonio Griñán, and the first, president of the Socialist Party between 2000 and 2012, they were sentenced by a Court to jail time and disqualification for public office, for their responsibility in the design of a parallel structure responsible for illegally diverting public funds for the unemployed.

The Provincial Court of Seville sentenced former Andalusian president José Antonio Griñán to six years and two days in jail and 15 years of disqualification, and former president Manuel Chaves to nine years of disqualification. Both were retired from public life. In addition, another 16 senior officials of the socialist governments of Andalusia, including former socialist minister Magdalena Álvarez, were sentenced to prison terms and disqualification for the crimes of prevarication and embezzlement. The Court considers it proven that they all developed an illegal system in Andalusia to provide and grant 679 million Euros at their discretion, avoiding all controls, with the aim of putting out the social fires that, as of the year 2000, threatened the hegemony of Socialist Party in the region.

According to the Court of Seville, in the subsidies that were granted the public interest never prevailed and those now condemned were aware of their "palmaria illegality", affirms the sentence. "The decision to give these grants was not based on the Employment Department but was a decision of the government as a whole," the judges say. During the process it was proven that the Andalusian Socialist government approved countless budgetary modifications to cover the illegal system developed. A system through which employment regulation files were irregularly financed in companies with labor disputes. However, "a significant number of unemployed people were deprived of aid," the sentence highlights.

Between 2000 and 2009, 9,461 employment regulation files that affected 120,829 workers were registered in Andalusia. However, according to the sentence, the aid money only reached 6,000 workers in 270 employment regulation files. To this we must add that among the workers benefited include people who had never worked in the affected companies.

For the current president of the regional government of Andalusia, the conservative Juan Manuel Moreno Bonilla, Monday was a sad day for the region. However, he said the sentence confirms that the times of political corruption in Andalusia are over. The Andalusian Socialist Party insisted on the "honorability" of former convicted presidents, as they did not enrich themselves personally. And, in Madrid, the Spanish Prime Minister, the socialist Pedro Sánchez, said he did not feel concerned about the sentence and considered that the sentenced socialist politicians are part of the past.

Faced with that, the conservative Popular Party claimed Sánchez that, in the same way that he evicted the Conservative Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy from the Government, holding him responsible for corruption in his party - responsibility that the courts did not recognize -, now assume his responsibility for the corruption of the Socialist Party in Andalusia and present his resignation.

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Editorial program service of General News Agency:

United Press Association, Inc.
3651 Lindell Road, Suite D168
Las Vegas, NV 89103, USA
(702) 943.0321 Local
(702) 943.0233 Facsimile
info@unitedpressassociation.org
info@gna24.com
www.gna24.com