

Letter from Guy Debord to Guillermo González García 14 August 1981¹

Dear Guillermo:²

Thank you for the proposition to come to Madrid on 1 September but I regret that I am not free on those days, when I will meet with several people with whom a meeting was arranged a while ago. I hope that we can see each other again later. In any case, I have no new information to provide you. If the general evolution of the political situation in Spain has, for more than six months, appeared disastrous to me, I must say that what we have attempted to do from outside [Spain], already suffering from the irreparable fault of being undertaken too late, was almost always maladroitly executed, incompetence being frequent and bad luck permanent.

The Ruedo Iberico edition of the *Appeals*³ will not be published. Martínez has written to Champ Libre that, despite what he calls “the bait” of [*The Society of the*] *Spectacle*, he dare not publish the *Appeals*, because he must print the book in Spain for stingy, short-term economic reasons (everywhere he has the reputation as an avaricious and dishonest person who never pays his authors; this is why I wanted to leave him with regrets by indicating that I am indifferent to the question of money). I do not believe that he can publish your book. But, as for mine, I do not really desire to accept Martínez, and especially not his translator. Thus, I refused, leaving him an opportunity. If, by a surprising circumstance, he had taken this courageous step as a preliminary, I would then have had to discuss the question of the translation with firmness.

In any case, I note that you no longer want the songs. Your decision has officially put to an end a tiresome and endless debate between the comrades who agree that these means can be efficacious for agitation, but who – each with a conviction that appears very respectable – support diverse and contradictory preferences concerning the form and content of the songs. I have obviously been incapable of concluding [the debate], not knowing Castellan. Back in March, when the Spanish singer, Mara [Jerez], who lives in France, wanted to sing twenty of these songs, but demanded a delay of two months before beginning to work on the recording of a disk and cassettes,⁴ I took the responsibility of refusing such conditions, because the recordings would come too late, given that conditions in Spain change so rapidly, and thus the project clearly risked falling back into the sphere of simple “Leftist” artistic spectacle.

I hope that you will be happy to meet with Miguel [Amoros]. I myself have never met him. But we have been in contact for several months,⁵ and I can say – considering the troubles in

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² One of six libertarian prisoners released from the prison on Segovia after the circulation of Debord’s bilingual appeal *A los libertarios / Aux libertaires* (“To Libertarians”).

³ Coordination des groupes autonomes d’Espagne, *Appels de la prison de Ségovie* (Editions Champ Libre, November 1980).

⁴ See Debord’s lampoon “The Lament of Mara the Singer” (1981).

⁵ See the letter from Debord to Amoros dated 13 August 1981.

which we have found ourselves implicated together, and how he reacted – that he is someone who is very serious and rigorous.

Indeed, after the publication of the tract “To Libertarians,” several people from France, England, etc., have gone to Spain and tried to do something useful in Segovia and in the perspective of a new clandestinity. They have encountered Spanish comrades and have spoken to me about all this. Good will has not been lacking and many other people have been disposed to join them there. Nevertheless, before getting further than Barcelona or Valencia, this activity has encountered or created the most lamentable difficulties. Something similar occurs with respect to the Spanish people living abroad: after an agreement in principle, there is slowness or irresponsibility. Thus, one has recorded – for an extremely limited result – a distressing series of blunders and incompetence, and even, at least in two cases, what I believe to be deliberate sabotage or crazy provocations. Thus I estimate that, at present, the foreigners – after having caused or not known how to avoid such deplorable results – must have the decency to make themselves forgotten on this terrain. If subsequent developments must confirm that solidarity is no longer “at home in Spain” – which I do not believe – one need not do anything further to prove that it obviously cannot be imported into it.

If, as I hope, Miguel and you – [and] thus his friends and yours – find in the current moment a certain basis for agreement, one will be able to say that something good has nevertheless come from an attempt that had continuously been so unfortunate and vain.

Amicably to you and Marilo,
Guy