



General election 2A Last assault

The big debate of the leaders of the national candidacies took place last night. PS SDP+ represented by Pere López, Democrats in the person of Xavier Espot, Liberals in Josep Maria Cabanes, Concòrdia with Sergi Escalé, Judith Pallarès at the head of Acció and Josep Maria Cabanes for Liberals.

It started strongly with the proposals of the leaders of all the political formations competing in Sunday's elections. Pere López, candidate for head of government for PS SDP+ emphasized that the country's challenges are the same as those of four years ago, stressing that young people and the middle classes do not see a future in Andorra. He emphasized that the time for change has come to turn Andorra into a country where you can carry out a life project, ensuring a dignified future. Xavier Espot, Democrat candidate and current acting head of government, expressed his intention to revalidate and regretted that the past legislature has been difficult due to the pandemic and the energy crisis. The Acció candidate, Judith Pallarès, defined her program as a commitment to social well-being. Josep Maria Cabanes, leader of Liberals, spoke of the will to build the Andorra of the future with sanity and serenity. On the part of Concòrdia, Cerni Escalé followed the same line and, also speaking of sanity, emphasized his commitment to ensure people's well-being. From Andorra Endavant, Carine Montaner criticized the government's mismanagement with the Grifols project and during the coronavirus pandemic. He also highlighted his party as one that does what it says.

Entering the first block, the economic one, Escalé criticized the increase in public debt, which has grown significantly. The debt shows a variation from the 500 million in 2007, to the 2,300 that are currently there. He also pointed to the rise in house prices. In the same vein, the leader of the socialist and progressive coalition pledged to have between 3,000 and 4,000 affordable homes, which will not exceed 30-35% of income. López assured that a public entity will rent apartments to private individuals. From the Liberals, Cabanes took concern from his management at the head of the Ministry of Economy, emphasizing that the GDP shows that the Andorran economy is working. Montaner went further by talking about promoting economic diversification, one that generates jobs. The he-

The debate



ALBA
Cladellas
SÒNIA
Lecha

The national debate is once again putting housing and integration into Europe on the table

ad of Andorra Endavant emphasized that foreign investors must invest in luxury apartments and not those belonging to the working class. And, he ended his speech criticizing that people will leave because they cannot afford housing and this will lead to a lack of staff. Espot said that we cannot talk about a catastrophic situation and mentioned that there is a part of the population with problems accessing housing or making ends meet. In the same line of Andorra Endavant, the candidate for Acció expressed herself, asking that work be done on an economic diversification table. Cerni Escalé, expressed that the housing crisis is a crisis related to foreign investment.

Aside from housing, Pere López spoke about issues that affect citizens and presented proposals such as reducing the IGI to 0%, lowering FE-DA rates, setting the minimum wage at 1,400 euros and using 1,500 million reserve euros to improve current pensions. Also, as he has already expressed during the campaign, his party is betting on a single national Tax Agency.

Espot attacked the fiscal proposal of the PS SDP+, ensuring that it would have a neutral effect, and bet on raising the minimum wage to 60% of the average wage. Pallarès followed the same line as the leader of the PS SDP+ proposing an increase in the minimum wage to 1,400 euros. For a few minutes, other topics were discussed, as it immediately returned to housing with the help of Escalé, who criticized that in four years the price of housing has risen by 80%. Montaner blamed the shell companies and their owners for the housing problem in the Principality, ensuring that they block the rental market.

Pere López criticized Espot for working to protect those who pay zero euros to make those who pay self-employed pay.

Referring to mobility, Cabanes suggested a third lane to La Seu d'Urgell, and Escalé is betting on a tram connecting Sant Julià with Escaldes-Engordany.

In the social blog, the candidates focused on health. Pere López lamented the lack of health professionals in the country, the long waiting lists and the lack of mental health resources. To take pressure off emergency rooms, he proposed organizing the out-of-hospital system and providing hospital care with more human resources. Espot, for his part, emphasized again that during his mandate important steps have been taken

in the health field. Carine Montaner pointed to the poor organization of SAAS, comparing it to an inverted pyramid with many people who coordinate, but few who do the work. In addition, he criticized the lack of nurses and doctors if we compare it with the large number of traumatologists that the country has.

Regarding education, Concòrdia agreed with the PS SDP+ proposal in which it proposes free schooling from zero to three years.

The last block, one of the most anticipated of the debate, was that of international relations and the European Union in which, as it could not be otherwise, the association agreement was discussed. It was initiated by the leader of Andorra Endavant, asking to preserve the historical neutrality of the country. Montaner asked to stop the negotiations because there are many internal problems that need to be stopped. He emphasized that what is needed are more agreements for double taxation. The head of government, without replying to Montaner, spoke again about the work done saying that they have strengthened «these relations enormously». The leader of Acció was in favor of the association agreement with the European Union, and was convinced that «it will maintain our security levels». Cerni Escalé was critical of the government, and expressed his surprise that Espot is positioning itself and «already confirming the approval when the negotiations are still in progress». Following, he emphasized the importance of having more information about possible impacts and hypothetical scenarios. Pere López, PS SDP+ candidate, supports the calm and well-negotiated agreement, although since his formation they do not want to commit to the calendar as Espot has done and criticizes the government's haste to have the deal closed before the end of the year. The Democrat candidate, as he has been repeating throughout the campaign and before it began, wanted to emphasize that they aspire to participate in a «progressive and structured way in the European market». He spoke of indications about what the European Union will do in the free movement of people, but without specifying. The leader of Liberals, Josep Maria Cabanes, is betting on a binding referendum and rebalancing relations with neighboring countries. Despite the various opinions on the association agreement with the European Union, the most critical of the Democrats' gover-

ment was Pere López, denouncing the lack of transparency in this area, and speaking of documents hidden by the secretary of State for European Affairs, Landry Riba. ≡



XAVIER ESPOT
DEMOCRAT CANDIDATE

«I think, Mr. Escalé, that you are wrong in your analysis of the housing problem»

PERE LÓPEZ
PS SDP+ CANDIDATE

«In four years, the number of social apartments that the democratic government has built has been none, zero»

CERNI ESCALÉ
CONCÒRDIA CANDIDATE

«We agree with Mr. López's proposal on free education from zero to three years old»

JUDITH PALLARÉS
ACTION CANDIDATE

«The rapprochement with Europe is seen from the point of view of problems, but we see opportunities»

CARINE MONTANER
ANDORRA ENDAVANT CANDIDATE

«We are committed to promoting successful economic diversification, which generates jobs in the country»

JOSEP MARIA CABANES
LIBERAL CANDIDATE

«It is important to recover and retain talent, but it is also necessary to create it by investing decisively in education»

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General election 2A  Politics

Dolsa appears to answer the Consul Major of Ordino

The councilor refuted the arguments that Mortés referred to him



Enric Dolsa
COUNCILOR OF X'ORDINO

«By mistake, I used the word public buildings, but in the subsequent press conference, I said singular buildings»

«It was a mistake on my part, but Mortés cannot take the opportunity to campaign in the Municipal House of Ordino»

ceiving the refusal of the rest of the attendees and answering that it would be from borrowing by the country, and that it will now be 36 million. At this point, Dolsa asked himself that, in the event that Grifols leaves in 15 days as stated in the agreement, «at the time when all this loan has been carried out, who will have to deal with all this will be the Government?»

Dolsa indicated what his wish is «is that it not be done. Neither French, nor Grifols. Because one thing is clear, that with the laboratory here, nowadays, no one has made it clear to me that it brings us anything». The one from X'Ordino clarified that, in addition, the risk of incidents occurring is dangerously high, in addition to generating a media image abroad that will greatly hinder the arrival of new people who want to come to live and work in Andorra.

With regard to the Town Planning Plan, the Ordino councilor accused Mortés of «hanging on medals, they say that they are now making a modification of the town planning plan, which is abnormal and atypical» since revisions in this respect occur every 6 years, being the last changes of 2019. According to the councilor, the consul apologizes for this sudden alteration to «not put in so many cranes», but already, in the last modification of the urban planning plan it was already carried out with the warning of Dolsa that the plan would bring «an avalanche of projects» builders to the parish and the Consul repeatedly denied that this could happen. In December 2019, before the parish elections, the town planning plan was approved and Dolsa says that «we have the result here». And now, Consul Mortés, wants to carry out a reform that will stop this growth of buildings «as if he were a savior», declared X'Ordino. In addition, he stated that the owners have expressed their dissatisfaction with this situation. Dolsa commented that this modification by Mortés is supported by article 103.2 of the general law. The majority has sent a request document to the Government, so that they take on an exceptional level, several legislative points and it is possible to carry out the reforms that fulfill the will of Consul Mortés. ≡



►► Enric Dolsa, during the press conference, at the Hotel Coma of Ordino.

EL PERIÒDIC
ESCALES-ENGORDANY
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Yesterday afternoon, Enric Dolsa wanted to appear before the press at the Hotel Coma of Ordino, to express his thoughts on the statements made by the Consul Major of Ordino, J.Àngel Mortés, referring to Dolsa and his interventions during the municipal meetings regarding the Grifols affair. The councilor wanted to offer a press conference outside the municipal house, since he considers it an inappropriate act on the part of the Consul to make that intervention with possible electoral interests. This is why Dolsa decided to appear outside the institutional sphere, and deal with the subject in a more appropriate environment.

The councilor of X'Ordino acknowledged that he was surprised of Mortés' statements since «that morning a works commission had been held and there was no discussion of his strategy that he carried out in the afternoon», declared Dolsa. The orderly stated that «his appearance was totally inappropriate and I think he did it in very bad way. The reason I think so is because this morning, during the municipal meeting, I wanted to make a correction to the minutes of the last act of March 9th, and when the Grifols buildings were discussed. I, by mistake, used the word public buildings, but in the subsequent press conference after the

municipality, I spoke of singular buildings». This error was pointed out by the Consul Major of Ordino, claiming that this concept does not exist, «and he makes it as something abysmal against me, and if you see the appearance, practically, he says that I am stupid and what I do not understand nothing about urban planning, because this figure does not exist», declared Dolsa. Even so, the councilor referred, in the press conference following that municipal session, to singular buildings. This errata was used by Mortés to carry out a disproportionate media exaggeration due to a simple dialectical confusion. «That was a mistake on my part, but what he can never do is take advantage of this to run an electoral campaign, as he is doing from the Municipal House, with the flag at his side and explaining these insults to the population.» stipulated Dolsa.

The councilor of X'Ordino asked about «where is the public tender» that Grifols did not have to go through for the construction of the P3 laboratory? Dolsa stipulates that «an international base contract would have to have been drawn up, and that any company of this type could be presented in this edict in Andorra. And I know that, if that had been the case, despite the fact that I do not agree with the substance, some important French laboratory would have come.»

Regarding the zero-health risk, Dolsa was forceful when affirming



Enric Dolsa
COUNCILOR OF X'ORDINO

«The appearance (of the Consul) was totally inappropriate and I think he did it in very bad way»

that the total neutralization of the risk involved in a P3 laboratory «does not exist in anything, and least of all in these matters». Dolsa responded to the former health minister, Martínez Benazet, who frequently uses the argument that the Andorran hospital has a laboratory with similar characteristics to the one Grifols wants to build. X'Ordino's alleged that, if this is the case, «where are the (experimental) mice? Since 1 million euros have been budgeted for the maintenance of the mice. Therefore, where are the rodents in the hospital and what are they spending these million euros on?»

Then, Dolsa referred to the economic diversification that, according to Mortés, will be promoted with the P3 laboratory. The councilor from Ordino alleged that «the economy does not diversify with companies that are in deficit. The economy is diversified with organizations that provide added value and, in addition to this added value, they also provide benefits». Dolsa mentioned the change in the laboratory's funding, which has gone from 25 million euros to 36 million euros, which he described as «mind-boggling». Related to this sudden change in investment, Dolsa recalled a telematic meeting held during the most restrictive times of the pandemic, where Martínez, Marquina, Gelabert, the Ordino consuls and himself attended. In this meeting, the councilor asked if these 25 million will be from foreign investment, re-