



HEALTH

The elderly do not see clearly the podiatry service in the manor houses

The federation calls for an increase in the lowest pensions of 8%, as it predicts inflation of 7%

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After the celebration of the big party this past Tuesday, the federation of the elderly assessed yesterday the announcements made by the head of government, Xavier Espot, some of which were long-awaited claims, especially the introduction of the third payer in medicines, but in the case of podiatry they introduced some element of doubt.

Precisely on the new podiatry service in primary care centers (CAP) and in manor houses that would be negotiated with the College of Podiatrists, the president of the federation of the elderly, Fèlix Zapatero, assessed that «we had a proposal, while now the Government has nuanced it a little, since old people's homes have been introduced, which we don't see completely clearly, because we understand that podiatry needs a healthcare environment with the specific tools, and the ma-

They celebrate the measure of the third payer in drugs and hope that they start with the most expensive ones

nor houses of the country at the moment do not have rooms prepared from a health point of view», but regarding the CAP «it is what we have always wanted». The proposal of the group of seniors was that a podiatrist paid by the SAAS provide the service to the CAP, but «if the Government has negotiated with the college another model, that is also fine, although it is necessary to establish a protocol of action». The service would cost around 5 euros – a lower price than usual – and would require a prior prescription from the referring doctor.

Regarding the announcement of the introduction of the third payer for the elderly in the acts and pharmaceutical drugs, gradually, starting in January and until next summer, Zapatero stated that «it is what it was necessary, although some issues are still pending; what the head of government did is to make the implementation periods more specific, and we assume that they will start with the most expensive medicines, because it can have more impact for patients and it is the most important issue for the elderly». So, «if we do what he told us, there will be nothing left to implement as far as our group is concerned. It seems that the Government has woken up, partly thanks to our pressure, and al-



►► Xavier Espot, Albert Font and Fèlix Zapatero, this week at the big party held in Encamp.



►► Access to the manor house of Andorra la Vella.

so because we had been dragging it out for many years, so sooner or later it had to happen. Our board has been very negotiator, and the sum of drops over many years has meant

that in the end the glass has been filled», he said. In addition, he recalled that since October 1st there are already new benefits under the third-party payer regime that affect



Felix Zapatero

PRES. ELDERLY PEOPLE FEDERATION

«You need a health environment with the specific tools, and the nursing homes do not have prepared rooms»

«The sum of drops over many years has meant that in the end the glass has been filled; sooner or later it had to happen»

the elderly group, and that, in addition to medicines, dentists would still be pending.

On the other hand, in a scenario in which at the end of the year the increase in wages and rents will have to be set based on inflation, pensions also come into play. In this regard, the elderly believe that pensions below the minimum wage (about 1,200 euros) should be increased by 8%, as they predict that inflation will reach 7% (in June it was above and now it is slightly below). As for pensions above the minimum wage, they propose that they be frozen. «It's a minimum start, since depending on the numbers from the CASS or the Government, they will be able to do it one way or another, but our proposal is for the lowest pensions, including those for widowhood», affirmed Zapatero, who clarified that, at the moment, they have not had a response from the Executive, still pending the approval of the budget.

Espot also announced during the big party more prevention in colon, rectal or prostate cancer, a measure also celebrated by the federation of the elderly. In addition, they propose campaigns to prevent dermatological diseases, as skin cancer has increased in recent times. ≡

«The West has never known how to calibrate who is in front; he doesn't know who Vladimir Putin is»

MANEL ALÍAS TORT Ex-correspondent in Moscow

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After seven years living in Moscow, Manel Alías Tort (Berga, 1977) decided to settle in Catalonia without knowing that, a few days after landing, Russia would invade Ukraine. His experience as a correspondent for Catalunya Ràdio and TV3 in the Russian capital made him immediately return to a country that he describes as «the biggest stage in the world» where anything is possible. Tomorrow he will take part in a conference at the Lagoon (7:00 p.m.) on journalism in times of war, together with the ex-correspondent in Afghanistan Mònica Bernabé.

-In his book, *Russia, the biggest stage in the world*, he says that «I don't believe it» is a phrase that always accompanies you. What has surprised you the most?

-A little bit of everything. There are many aspects, both of Russian history and of Russia today, that are amazing. For example, the cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin was the first man to travel in space, a fact that is surprising in itself, but within him he has a series of everyday mini-stories that make him even more extraordinary. In the book I explain how on his first trip, Gagarin did not go to space, but to a potato field, where there was a 5-year-old girl with her grandmother who had a death scare, because never before no one had seen an astronaut, it was a secret. On one of my crazy trips inside Russia I decided to go look for that 5-year-old girl and I found her, but at 65. And her life is fascinating, not only because she met the first cosmonaut in history, but because of everything what happened to her afterwards and which I collect in another chapter of the book. Wherever you look in Russia there is always a story behind it; some are surreal and others, many, are linked to the harshness of the climate, politics, history... I have often had to rub my eyes to see things that are true.

-Was the invasion of Ukraine predictable?

-As we are seeing it, no. We could suspect that Russia could fuel the conflict that has existed since 2014 between Donetsk and Lugansk and the Ukrainian army, but an invasi-

on like the current one I don't think there was any expert who predicted it. In fact, I know that Putin is capable of everything, would have said that it was not possible, because, frankly, I do not see the performance that can be taken from him, beyond appearing in the history books. I am very confused about this.

-And what do the Russians say about the war when no one hears them?

-It is clear that with the war Putin has lost support in his country, and that is why I am surprised that he started it. Until then, he had the situation very well under control: he had annihilated the opposition, which is in prison or in exile, he had changed the Constitution in order to stay in power as long as he wanted and he lived quite quietly. Now people who believed in him blindly are turning against him, although it is also true that there are many people who support the war, but because they believe that everything that comes out in the Russian media is harsh propaganda.

-We already knew that Russia makes propaganda. Does Ukraine do it too?

-Yes of course. When there is a war, all sides make propaganda. What happens is that it is not the same to do it from the point of view of the aggressor than of the attacked; it is always easier to put yourself in the victim's skin and tune in to their message. It is also true, however, that in Ukraine there is more freedom of expression and the means to counter the government's version.

-Is Zelenski a hero or is he an invention of the Western media?

-When Putin explained why he was attacking Ukraine, among his arguments there are a few that have backfired and one of the clearest is the Zelenski factor: Putin said he wanted to de-Nazify Ukraine and appealed directly to him, despite being Jewish and that his family was retaliated against during the Second World War. The theory was invented that all Ukrainians are Nazis, starting with the president, but Zelenski, who before becoming president was a well-known actor in his country, but completely unknown to the rest of the world, has taken advantage of this and become a he-



«Putin is capable of everything, but I don't see the performance he gets from the war, beyond appearing in the history books»

ro I don't know what calculations Putin and his advisers made, but they were wrong; between the facet of Zelenski as an actor and the facet that his environment is that of an audiovisual production company, they have been able to use communication and social networks much better than the Kremlin and Ukraine has clearly won this battle.

-How did you live the first days of the war?

-Very bad. I was in shock; I'm very involved, I have family in Russia, and I couldn't believe it. I already knew I was living in a dictatorship, but I didn't expect a war.

-However, anyone who has seen his chronicles knows the harsh conditions in which he works. How do you reach the audience?

-I have tried to work as always, which is to get as close as possible to the victims, but without distancing myself from the news. In a context of war, it is very easy for the local public to whom I am addressing - Catalonia - to see me as the one suffering for being in the middle of the conflict. In addition, after seven years living in Russia, I know it very well and I also speak Russian, which allows me not to depend on other intermediaries.

-You are one of the few international journalists who has experienced the annexation of Donetsk from the inside.

-In this war we are used to having international media in Ukraine, some in Russia and only pro-Putin press in the Donbass. I, by a series of coincidences, have been one of the few journalists who have been there and the day of the annexation was a coincidence: before the summer, TV3 decided to make a special program on Peace Day and while the presenter of the news was in Kyiv, I proposed to go to the Donbass. In other words, I was there for the special program, I extended it for a few days to do some reports that have not yet been broadcast and I caught the announcement of the annexation referendum. It was a coincidence, my only merit is to have achieved accreditation, which is a very long and arduous process. I even got a call from the BBC to verify information.

-How do you explain the truth without falling into sensationalism, without benefiting from the victims?

-It is that a war must be covered in a very well thought out, very delicate and very careful way. You can't turn war into a television scenario just because of the morbidity it generates. I see many live connections that do not contribute anything, «and now we are going to Moscow» or «now we are going to Kyiv».

-What would you blame Europe for?

-Many things, especially that more has not been done to avoid war, even though Putin is who he is and if he wants to fight you, he will fight you. It was a mistake that Europe considered stopping buying gas from Russia once the war was over. If they had thought of it earlier, it might have been a way of applying pressure to avoid conflict.

-Next week he brings out a new book, *The Last Victory of the USSR, which collects the stories of the ex-Soviet winners at the Olympic Games in Barcelona 92*. Is it a mistake to veto Russian athletes?

-I want the measures applied against someone to be objective: either we decide that from now on any country that starts a war will be banned from all international acts or not. In this case, I think that the West has never been able to gauge who is in front of it, who Vladimir Putin really is, and now he is giving him a gift by helping to demonstrate the Russophobia that he says exists in the world. There have been few actual cases, but in Russia it has been magnified and implied that certain Russian artists or athletes have been banned simply for being Russian, regardless of the war.

-Tomorrow you will participate in a talk in Andorra with Mònica Bernabé. What will we find?

-I know that the framework deals with journalism in times of war and dictatorial regimes, but I am open to anyone asking me whatever they want. I think I will be a little disappointing because I don't mythologize the war correspondent at all; I wish it didn't exist.

-Will you live in Russia again?

-If I go back, I hope it will be under a true democracy. ☰

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