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The new ridicule of the Spanish army in the shipment of weapons to Ukraine

The Spanish Leopards do not give even to demoralize. It would be better to stop the war than to need weapons or training from Spain. "Is the enemy? Could you stop the war for a moment?"



Miguel Gila is, for sure, one of the best comedians in the history of Spain. For many, the best. And for the story there has been a hilarious sketch about the war, in which, uniformed and dressed in helmets and binoculars, he telephoned the enemy and had a completely surreal conversation. However, this delirious monologue could not be more representative of the negligent and extravagant situation of the Francoist Spanish Army. However, he knew what he was talking about, because he himself had verified it, and suffered, in the first person: in 1938, when he was only nineteen years old, the Francoists

shot him along with thirteen other people in one of the multiple massacres they perpetrated.

Gila, fortunately, survived to tell the tale and, although after the shooting, he had no choice but to serve four years of military service –as punishment for not dying–, after thirty he turned his knowledge of the Spanish Army into a continuous tribute to the Spanish militia, and to the war in general, in the scenarios of Spain and Latin America.

Unfortunately, the Francoist Spanish Army also survived and, with each passing day, it seems that I would like to pay tribute to the great Spanish humorist and remind us that that Francoist Spanish Army is, in essence, the structure of the Spanish Nato Army of today. I refer to the tests: the last one, in particular, the frustrated shipment of Leopard tanks to Ukraine after it was found that they are not even worth scrap.

The cars were stored in 2012 after Peru's refusal to acquire them almost at a bargain price, since it was not convinced by the state of them. And there, and on the date of acquisition, we find the first controversy.

A shipment reminiscent of the best Gila: "Mr. Emilio, I call you for a matter of claims, that of the six cannons that you sent yesterday come two without a hole. That we are shooting with the bullets on the outside... And you don't sell the loose holes? Well, send me two counter-recitals. Or three, in case you miss one."

The Bad Joke of Leopard Tanks

However, in theory, the Spanish Army had stored a decade ago just over fifty of the 108 Leopard 2A4 tanks, which were acquired in 2005 after being loaned by Germany on a rental basis in the mid-1990s. These are second-hand tanks that were used by the Germans since the mid-eighties and that, after the fall of the Berlin Wall, became unnecessary – Germany had more than 2,000 tanks. Of these more than 108 tanks, the Spanish Army planned to reuse, through the cannibalization of parts, at least forty units. Thus, at first glance, what Spain intended to send to Ukraine seemed obsolete material obtained from gathering pieces from here and there from tanks more than forty years old, but appearances are deceiving: they were not even old iron.



Leopard 2A.4

The cars were stored in 2012 after Peru's refusal to acquire them almost at a bargain price, since it was not convinced by the state of them. And there, and on the date of acquisition, we find the first controversy: why were tanks acquired in 2005 that only a few years later, in 2012, would be rejected by Peru for a lower price than paid?

It wasn't the only skate. The leak of the news of the sending of the tanks to Ukraine in the media of the PSOE – El País – and with the head journalist of the Ministry of Defense – Miguel González – at the beginning of June, tried to probe the Spanish public opinion, but ended, as is usual in bad and rude jokes, with few laughs and many hot flashes. And off too many.

Tanks could not be ceded by Spain without the consent of the German Federal Security Council, which they were either unaware of or belittled. Thick error, although most common. The scandal in Germany was huge and, at the moment, the German authorities, according to Der Spiegel, denied the request: the promised tanks would not be sent nor would there be, therefore, instruction of the Ukrainian military in the Baltic republics, where Spanish soldiers are deployed with the modern version of the Leopard tank -2E-. Spain was, again, ridiculed by the Leopard 2A4 tanks, but it would not be the last occasion.



[The new ridicule of the Spanish Army in the shipment of weapons to Ukraine.](#) The Minister of Defense of Spain, Margarita Robles. photo: Europa Press/Abaca/Sipa USA / Legion-Media

At the beginning of August, Spanish Defense Minister Margarita Robles said, before meeting with the Ukrainian ambassador, that the Leopard tanks that Spain intended to send to Ukraine were "in conditions that cannot be used." He added: "We can't give them because they would be a risk to people." That is: Leopard tanks cannot be sent to Ukraine because Germany does not want to and because "they are in an absolutely deplorable situation". Hence another of the great questions of the case arises: why have dozens of tanks been stored for years at a cost of 80 euros per hour of disassembly if ten years later they are useless, because either they could not be stored or they were stored badly?

In the great parody of Gila, at least, the tanks were vehicles: "Six hundred with a dwarf who, instead of shooting, insults. It doesn't kill, but it demoralizes." The Spanish Leopards do not give even to demoralize.

An endless repertoire

However, the bad joke of the Leopard tanks only constitutes one more in a wider repertoire than that of the great Spanish comedian. Because if Spain is a joke, the Spanish Army is the quintessence of humor. Black, clear. It is enough to review the previous shipments of military equipment to Ukraine: expired helmets and anti-fragments, defective machine guns and, in general, obsolete material.

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Such has been the esperpento that the ambassador of Ukraine in Spain, Serhii Pohoreltsev, complained because, according to his version, the weapons that Spain has sent to Ukraine "would only serve for two hours of combat", since the two hundred tons of weapons sent by the ship Ysabel only constitutes 0.03% of all the material received.

For Margarita Robles it is not a joke, but a matter of State

Just yesterday, the Minister of Defense, Margarita Robles, visited the 35th Wing of the Air and Space Army, which is now called what was once the Air Force. Let it not be by names. In his visit, he criticized that the Popular Party described as a 'laughing stock' that Spain intended to send tanks to Ukraine that were not even scrap and cataloged its action as "frivolous" and called for "prudence, sense of state and responsibility." This is how Margarita spends them: for her, all criticism, even if the greatest ridicule has been made, is due to a lack of loyalty and a sense of statehood. To have a sense of statehood, for her, is to always applaud the king, especially when he is naked.

During the traditional talk with the media, because Margarita Robles does not visit military units to improve or change the situation of the Spanish Armed Forces, but to promote herself, she said that 1) Ukraine thinks about buying tanks from Spain – it is to be imagined that it will not want to buy the stored ones; 2) Spain has offered to train the Ukrainian military in the handling of Leopard tanks; and 3) the most delusional: every week he meets with a technical team to see what they send to Ukraine.

Meetings that, according to the material sent, should be memorable:

—Are there expired antifrags or helmets?

"No, Madam Minister.

"And faulty machine guns?"

"No, neither. I am sorry.

And stored tanks, those that are in such bad condition that they were not rejected by Peru?

"Of those there are a lot left.

"Well, hey, we sent them to the Ukrainians.

So memorable that the minister asked for confidentiality and discretion about the Spanish material sent, as if the weapons that the different countries send to Ukraine were in all the newspapers, detailed to the extreme, or as if the Spanish weaponry was going to change the course of the confrontation – those machine guns that are pigeonholed, those expired helmets and anti-fragments or those tanks that are only scrap metal and that nobody wants even to demoralize anymore. to the enemy—.

And thank you

Perhaps, both Ukraine and the Ukrainian ambassador should give thanks, because the Spanish Army does not have cannons without a hole, like those of the great Gila, but it still has armored with high accident rate – more than forty dead – planes in such a state that they have caused the death of dozens of pilots in recent years, frigates with design flaws that have generated protests from Australia, a submarine that went twenty years without floating, pilots who lose missiles in the Baltic Republics, commanders who run aground minehunters in La Manga del Mar Menor, admirals – today JEMAD – who send a ship to Lampedusa without knowing that it does not have enough draft for its entry, Tiger helicopters stored to be cannibalized... It would be better to stop the war than to need weapons or training from Spain. "Is the enemy? Could you stop the war for a moment?"

*As a clarification, it should be noted that the Leopard 2A4 tanks were loaned by Germany in 1995 on a rental basis, at a rate of 10,000 marks (850,000 pesetas) per unit and year. In total, the cost up to the year 2000 amounted to 5.4 million marks (2.7 million euros), a sum that Germany threatened to multiply tenfold in the following five years (54 million marks or 27 million euros) after the sale of Santa Barbara to the United States instead of Germany. In 2005 they were acquired for 15 million euros. Thus, between 20 and 50 million euros were paid for some tanks that, later, Peru did not want to buy for 11 million euros.

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Edited by [María Piedad Ossaba](#)

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