

*Communist Party of Spain M-L (PCE M-L)*

# Comrade Elena

## An Appreciation

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By Francisco Caraballo \*

The life of comrade Elena Ódena is the story of an authentic and exceptional militant and communist leader; its history is an open book that teaches its theoretical contribution and its consequent activity in the defense, dissemination and practice of the fundamental thought of the Marxist-Leninist Communist Party of Spain, of which it was a founding member and also, from the beginning, one of its most outstanding leaders.

In her career as a leader she contributed a legacy of qualities, among which are the keen ideological formation, the political lucidity that allowed her to orient herself correctly in the midst of the turbulence of the reality of Spain and the international arena. In that sense, it is worth emphasizing her irreducible defense of Marxism-Leninism as a current theory and as a compass for revolutionary action, which illustrated her relentless struggle against the various expressions of revisionism and opportunism, of successive betrayals, of the duplicity of supposed comrades or friends. , of those who usually use different faces and masks to disguise their positions and their shady intentions.

Endowed with those unique qualities that can only be forged in the heat of revolutionary practice, always played advanced positions in the different forms of struggle in the midst of great upheavals at the national and international levels derived from the Second World War, the division of the Communist Party of Spain and the International Communist Movement, the Francoism and the Civil War. It is appropriate to remember that the Communist Party of Spain ml and its leaders, among them Elena, guided the anti-fascist political struggle with the

slogans of the Republic and when the conditions demanded it, they promoted the confrontation against Francoist terrorism, placing high the red flags with an irreducible value that, of course, cost him dead, blood, sacrifices, sweat and tears.

Precisely in the framework of the admiration and respect of the Communist Party of Colombia towards the Brother Party, I had the opportunity to meet Elena Ódena in the autumn of 1976; her adopted name and surname have a special political significance linked to the meaning of her struggle.

In our meetings at the office of the Vanguardia newspaper, the exchange of points of view on current issues, on common problems related to the different political positions that were debated in the world and in the Marxist-Leninist International Communist Movement, was always at the center. In this environment, our ideologies and political coincidences became more solid, the relations for the common struggle and the commitment to join forces and efforts to advance towards the strategic objectives, in accordance with the demands of historical development, were strengthened.

The convulsive situation that developed in that period and the enormous demands derived from it, stimulated in the Marxist-Leninist International Communist Movement an offensive for the defense of the foundations of Marxism-Leninism; Given these conditions, Elena, Raúl and I set out to form a research and study group aimed at pursuing with dedication the defense of the principles that have guided our activities, with the certainty that to advance in that direction it was essential to contribute to the unmasking of theoretical errors in vogue and at the same time clarify some issues of theory and practice, which abounded in misrepresentations and confusions even within some Marxist-Leninist parties. Due to adverse circumstances and difficulties that could not be overcome, this project remained unfinished, although some progress was made, especially in relation to the unmasking of erroneous theories propagated worldwide by Maoism and influenced by practical social democratic positions. It is worth recognizing the contributions that Elena recorded in the promotion of that commitment that remains fully valid today.

I had the privilege of meeting Elena and I am convinced that her life and her activity will be an accurate guide for the militants and for the Marxist-Leninist communist leaders, predisposed to carry out without hesitation the demanding tasks of their militancy. It is worth remembering that Elena, from an early age, was committed to communist ideas and ideals; She was always indefatigable in the work of the Party that she used to fulfill with an overflowing enthusiasm, with an enviable tenacity to face the adverse circumstances. Strict with herself and rigorous with others, she did not accept half-baked or badly made things.

It is necessary to indicate that the scope of her ideological and political education was extended and complemented thanks to her knowledge derived from research, readings and a remarkable cultural training that allowed her to relate with intellectuals of different disciplines, either to offer their contributions or to expose their points of view and their criticisms when necessary. It is a very valuable example, of course, because it highlights the obligation that communists have to be interested in cementing an integral formation, based on the conviction that communists should be interested in all areas of knowledge, for everything

that is related to with the world, with society and with human beings.

The truth is that I learned a lot from Elena, as a comrade and friend, about her life and her work. And I will continue to admire her forever.

(\* F. Caraballo, former First Secretary of the PC of Colombia (m-l) and Commander of the PLA. He has spent 18 years in the Colombian dungeons. His brave and lucid statements before the court that judged him are an example of revolutionary dignity and courage. Among other affirmations, he said: "I am a conscious rebel, a consistent revolutionary and a convinced communist."