

Letters on the crisis in France

3 May 2002

Below is a selection of recent letters on the crisis in France.

To the Editorial Board,

I would like to congratulate you for exercising an insightful foresight after the French general elections. I believe your call “No to Chirac and Le Pen! For a working class boycott of the French election” is a powerful expression of your ability, not only to analyze, but also to act in the heat of the events. In my mind, with this very call to the masses, you demonstrated the maturity required for a revolutionary leadership.

If I may attempt to simplify it, in your site, you have already managed to build a very expensive x-ray machine for the dirty policies of the ruling circles and put it at the mercy of the working people, thanks to the technology first proposed by Marx. When we contrast this to the countless machines of finance capital tuned to produce dirt by its very nature, we better understand the magnitude of your success in this compartment.

For now, thanks for taking charge.

OS

Belgium

30 April 2002

Dear WSWs,

I wrote you earlier asking you to reconsider your attitude towards LO [Lutte Ouvrière] and I'm happy to see you've done so. I told you not to outright condemn LO but to encourage them to change their ways. I think they can be convinced to see the light. They see themselves (wrongly) as genuine Trotskyists but I still see their success as a positive development. Your letter to LO and other pseudo-Trotskyists in France is by far a better strategy than bashing them simply as petty-bourgeois radicals. Whether or not they realize it, they have been placed in an incredible position of historic responsibility. The working class has suffered far too many betrayals, defeats and splits, and it is time to give the LO a little nudge in the right direction.

In solidarity,

IO

29 April 2002

Comrades of the WSWs,

I read some of the French newspapers today about the anti-Le Pen demonstrations. The interesting thing is the almost complete absence of right-wingers in the demonstrations. The Chirac supporters and others rightists claiming to be incensed by the FN's ideology obviously aren't outraged enough to join in the protests. They are happy to allow the so-called left to do the work for them. Does anyone else see that the absence of the rightists in these “leftist” protests is practically an olive branch to the fascists? Isn't it obvious that the right doesn't want to upset the FN in case they find it advantageous to collaborate with Le Pen in the future? Why are the French workers so blind?

In solidarity,

IO

2 May 2002

Dear comrades of the ICFI,

I've been actively following the French elections on TV. Like all of us, I'm worried about the rise of the right wing and Le Pen. I visited also the web sites of LO and the LCR [Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire], which “tacitly” appeal to vote for Chirac on 5 May. I think your text “For a boycott of the French election” is very correct and comes at the right time.

Comradely greetings,

GA

Bucharest

27 April 2002

The recent French election results remind me of the United States presidential election of 2000. Those of us who voted our consciences and rejected the Democrats as an alternative to the rightist Republicans, those of us who voted for Ralph Nader for instance, were accused of “handing” the election to George W. Bush by not

voting for the insipid Al Gore. Just as the anti-Le Pen factions are now urging people to vote for Chirac in order to defeat the fascist National Front, so those of us on the left were harangued with the same arguments being used in France to get us to vote Democratic. Well, I voted for Nader because there was no other way to vote even a tiny piece of my conscience. The alternative would have been to stay at home on polling day (also, as many people have done in France). So, while at first blush your call for a boycott of the election seems a doomed effort that might put Le Pen in office, I understand very well the reason for it. The push-me-pull-you between the right and the far right ignores the enormous significance of all of those voters who either stayed at home or voted for the parties of the left. On the other hand, now that we (and the rest of the world) are burdened with Bush, it seems to be a great risk to have taken. Remember, those in power interpret low voter turnout not as a protest against candidates that have nothing to offer them, but as mere indifference on the part of the populace. They then describe those who vote their consciences as some kind of “fringe” element and therefore beneath notice. Well, that “fringe” element is growing larger every election cycle. I will be watching France with great interest.

CZ

26 April 2002

Dear Comrades,

I have just read your piece on anti-Semitism and anti-Arab sentiments in France. This is the most coherent and intelligent article I have so far read on this topic.

Fraternally,

PF

London

26 April 2002



To contact the WSWS and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact