Campaign deals expose French Greens' subservience to big business

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The French nuclear industry's last-minute rewriting of the common 2012 election program of the Socialist Party (PS) and its junior partner, Europe Ecology-The Greens (EELV), has exposed the fraudulent character of the EELV party. As a political adjunct of the big-business PS and a servant of French imperialism, they are hostile to the principles of ecological safety they claim to represent.

The PS and EELV are preparing for legislative elections are due in June 2012, soon after the presidential elections of April/May. The PS has promised EELV 15 to 20 percent of the 577 seats in the National Assembly—including two constituencies in Paris for Cécile Duflot, the EELV national secretary, and party dignitary Philippe Mérieux.

The EELV-PS common program was adopted by the PS national bureau in the afternoon of Tuesday November 15. However, as *Le Monde* reported on November 16: "The agreement signed in the afternoon spoke of 'the reconversion without loss of jobs of the recycling and MOX manufacturing industry.'" This passage of the program, agreed upon by a 33-5 vote of the PS national bureau, disappeared from the version of the text distributed to the press, however.

MOX is a nuclear fuel used in many French nuclear power stations, derived from recycled nuclear waste. A recent report from the Environmental Authority said that, in the opinion of many scientists, MOX is "very dangerous."

On November 17 *Médiapart* confirmed that the text finalized and signed by EELV leader Cécile Duflot and Martine Aubry First Secretary of the PS at 3.30 p.m. on November 15 had been rewritten when presented to the press. Henry Proglio, CEO of the national electricity company EDF, and Luc Oursel, CEO of the Areva nuclear energy firm, had leaned heavily on the meeting.

Areva, a largely state owned company, produces 95 percent of the world's MOX, which accounts for €1.7 billion out of Areva's €9 billion turnover. If MOX were no longer used by French reactors, its production would reportedly be unprofitable.

One participant told *Médiapart*: "We all received text messages in the middle of the national bureau (BN). We couldn't come to an agreement so we cut out the paragraph in cavalier fashion, after the vote."

Médiapart cited another participant in the BN meeting: "At the end of the BN, just after the vote, Stéphane Le Foll [a longtime lieutenant of PS presidential candidate François Hollande] burst into the room saying: 'Wait, wait we must remove....' and Aubry cut in and said 'Yes, yes, it's OK, we're voting.'"

A PS communiqué issued on November 17 announced that the missing lines had been restored, but without giving any timetable for phasing out MOX. "Both parties stated that they were satisfied," commented *Le Monde*. However, the two parties continued to debate the content of the agreement they claimed to have made.

Last week, PS candidate Hollande said he would only seek to apply "measures that seem the most essential" of the PS-EELV accord. This means that the PS can let EELV write whatever it wants in the program, and then ignore any measure the PS does not want to implement.

From its foundation in France in 1974, the Green movement has always functioned as a middle-class adjunct of the PS, advocating an individualistic and pro-

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capitalist approach to environmental problems and denying the fundamental role of class in politics. It claims that problems of global warming and pollution brought about by the destructive operation of the profit system can be solved without the overthrow of capitalism by the working class.

The Green movement has long been a refuge of former radicals—of whom Daniel Cohn Bendit, the "Danny the Red" of France's 1968 student revolts and now a prominent bourgeois politician in Germany, is the best known example.

This time, however, EELV's posturing crossed basic interests of French imperialism, which rapidly called it to order. An adjunct to the production of France's nuclear weapons—former President Charles de Gaulle's much-vaunted "force de frappe"—the nuclear industry also boosts French imperialism's waning international influence. It produces 75 percent of France's electricity, provides export revenues, and is deeply involved in French imperialist operations in regions, like West Africa, with significant deposits of uranium or other key minerals.

In the context of the Fukushima nuclear disaster and the decision by a number of European states to announce withdrawals from nuclear energy, moreover, the industry is deeply opposed to any change in French policy that would undermine its position.

It was left to EELV presidential candidate and former investigative magistrate Eva Joly to try to keep up appearances, making a show of outrage and cancelling her participation at various meetings and events. She criticized the PS "for having yielded so blatantly to the nuclear lobby," adding: "The suspicion will now weigh on the Socialists that they are made of the wood of puppets."

In fact, there is not much room for "suspicion" on this score: the PS is well known to be party of the French bourgeoisie and it manifestly takes its orders from the major corporations. In this regard, as always, EELV played the role of junior partner to the PS. It is Joly and her criticisms of the PS that have the character of a puppet—albeit one briefly upset with manners of the operator pulling its strings.

Joly was quick to make clear her continuing support for Hollande and the PS. Asked on RTL radio whether she would call for a vote for Hollande in the second round of the presidential elections, she initially refused to reply. However, by November 16 she signaled that she would call for a vote for Hollande if he made the run-off: "I know who the enemy is, I want to beat Nicolas Sarkozy."

Joly was selected as EELV's 2012 presidential candidate because she could pose as untainted by the Greens' long history of rotten deals and right-wing policies, particularly as part of the PS-led Plural Left government (1997-2002) of Lionel Jospin.

During the 1990s, she investigated political scandals involving French oil interests and political financing, such as the Elf affair. After inconclusive approaches in 2007 to rightwing leader of the Modem (Democratic Movement), François Bayrou, she joined the Greens. In 2008, she stood in the European elections on a list headed by Daniel Cohn-Bendit and was elected to the European Parliament.

With repeated political-financial scandals involving leading politicians being fought out in the courts today, she has posed as an advocate of clean government. This was entirely fraudulent. Her political agenda in joining the Greens was to somewhat reshuffle the deck in the French bourgeois "left" by giving a new face to EELV, a secondary bourgeois "left" agency of French imperialism.

France's Greens and Eva Joly supported NATO's neo-colonial intervention in Libya, as did their German counterparts. They have made no statements in opposition to France's military presence in Mali to protect Areva's uranium mining operations in Mali and Niger.

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