

Pseudo-left New Anti-capitalist Party backs France's "war on terror" agenda

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2 October 2014

In an article, titled "Anti-terror law: a big step towards all-out law and order," on the recently approved French anti-terror law, the pseudo-left New Anti-capitalist Party (NPA) legitimizes the agenda of the ruling Socialist Party's (PS) "war on terror" as France begins bombing Iraq.

The author begins by complacently implying that there will be parliamentary opposition to the law, which was backed by the Left Front—an alliance of the Stalinist French Communist Party (PCF) and the pseudo-left Left Party. "We should note that the PG [Left Party] has disavowed the vote for the law of the Left Front and called on Left Front senators to vote against," it writes. This is designed to promote false hopes that a section of the ruling elite can be counted upon to defend democratic rights, in the place of the working class.

In fact, PG leader Jean-Luc Mélenchon has regularly aligned himself with French imperialism's reactionary campaigns: for the euro and the 1990-1991 Iraq war under François Mitterrand, then in the 1997-2002 PS-led government, of which he was a part, and afterwards. The criticism of the Left Front by the PG, which founded the Left Front, is of a piece with the PG's attempts to distance itself from the collapse of the PS. Presenting it as an opposition to the PS is a miserable political fraud.

The NPA article accepts the reactionary framework of the "war on terror" adopted by the PS, which is in fact the agenda of US, European, and French imperialism for wars of pillage. After briefly mentioning that there are sinister aspects to the law, the article concludes by asking the question: "How effective will this be against terrorism?" It responds, "Not very, or even not at all."

The central issue is that the law, now overwhelmingly approved by the National Assembly, constitutes a

mortal threat to democratic rights. It allows the Interior Ministry to block individuals from leaving the country or to put them on wanted lists shared with all European countries. These bans can be renewed indefinitely, and authorities can confiscate or cancel passports of individuals who are considered "radical."

The state is receiving draconian powers to spy on the Internet, mail servers, and Internet clouds. The law allows police to intercept and record telephone calls including those made by Internet, with programs like Skype, on the same principles as the National Security Agency's illegal spying on the American people. The law's provisions for blocking web sites have been correctly criticized as a drastic attack on freedom of speech and the right to a fair trial, two essential components of a democratic state.

The NPA, however, claims that the main problem raised by these sinister measures is not that they are building a police state, but that they are inefficient against terrorism.

Claiming that terrorism is the danger facing the working class is a political lie. The main danger facing the world's population is a world war provoked by the imperialist powers. Their wars, including those led or supported by French imperialism in Africa, the Middle East, and Ukraine, each day make such a conflict more likely.

France's current "war on terror" does not escape the rule that imperialist wars are launched based on historical and political lies. If terrorism from Al Qaeda or the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) poses a threat, this is due to American and European imperialism. It trained and promoted the forces of Al Qaeda during the Cold War in Afghanistan, then more recently in its proxy wars in Libya and Syria. A true struggle against terrorism can only take the form of a

mobilization of the working class against terrorism's imperialist backers.

The NPA, on the other hand, has maintained from the beginning of the war for regime change in Syria that the reactionary Islamist militias mobilized by Paris, London and Washington against the Assad regime were waging a democratic "revolution."

It has constantly called for the French government to arm the Islamist militias. NPA spokesman Olivier Besancenot insisted a year ago that "[French Foreign Minister Laurent] Fabius is like a broken record, he's been saying the same thing for months. He should graciously give weapons to the Syrian revolutionaries."

Besancenot dismissed concerns from within the imperialist foreign policy establishment that arming the Syrian opposition meant arming Al Qaeda-linked jihadists. "Those who say we should above all not give weapons because they will end up with the jihadists, they should know this has already happened," Besancenot said in September 2013.

By legitimizing the agenda of the PS government and of French imperialism, the NPA justifies draconian attacks against democratic rights on the cynical pretext they are needed to stop the rise of forces that the French government and the NPA itself supported. The NPA thus helps to promote the law-and-order hysteria whipped up by the state and the media.

The NPA's only criticism is that there should be better propaganda for French imperialism's foreign policy, so that it would be accepted by youth and immigrants.

Asking "How to be efficient against terrorism," it replies: "Invest in people on the ground, not on imprisonment ... Youth must find good reasons to live in France—this means real equality in access to education, culture, to sports, this means the end of police harassment, and above all the possibility of imagining a future for oneself here!"

What a cynical fraud! By blocking any struggle for such legitimate demands, the NPA has made a considerable contribution towards turning the most disoriented European youth towards terrorist groups. It not only called for a vote for the pro-austerity PS candidate François Hollande in the 2012 presidential elections, but it was at the forefront of the media campaign to palm off imperialist wars for regime change in Libya and Syria as "revolutions." All of this

has only aided Al Qaeda and similar forces to recruit in Europe.

Now that French imperialism is turning against the jihadists in Iraq and is using them as a pretext for military intervention, the NPA's political line faithfully follows it, turning about again to counsel the state on how to suppress opposition and promote its unpopular foreign policy.

This underscores the hostility of the affluent middle class elements in the pseudo-left to the antiwar sentiments of workers around the world. Their perspective is: support to imperialist war abroad and, at home, to the political and military establishment's "war on terror."



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