

# Who is Unsubmissive France's "Comrade Policeman" Alexandre Langlois?

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30 August 2018

When a scandal erupted over the assault of peaceful protesters on May Day by a top French presidential aide, Alexandre Benalla, Unsubmissive France (LFI) leader Jean-Luc Mélenchon boasted of his ties to the right and to cops hostile to President Emmanuel Macron. "When it's a matter of protecting the state and defending Republican norms, we have the same position as the right, I'm not ashamed to say it," he declared.

These statements underscore the close ties between LFI, the nationalist and populist alliance led by Mélenchon, and the French security apparatus. The police and domestic intelligence agencies, traditional strongholds of the far right, are also a social base for the pseudo-left LFI party and provide counselors to LFI leaders. Mélenchon's blog highlights the role of officials like Alexandre Langlois, who helped Mélenchon elaborate his security policy in his 2017 presidential platform.

Langlois heads the Stalinist General Confederation of Labor's (CGT) police union and has worked for French domestic intelligence (RG, General Intelligence). He was the subject of a sympathetic article, "Our comrade policeman," in the Stalinist daily *L'Humanité*, who hailed Langlois as being in sync with protesters. The paper claims he defends the 1789 Declaration on the Rights of Man because he criticizes police manuals drawn up under social-democratic Interior Minister Manuel Valls in 2014, which replaced calls to defend the Republic with calls to defend "national interests."

Claiming that Langlois' presence means that a faction of the police fights for progress is a Stalinist lie. Under the state of emergency imposed by the Socialist Party (PS), the police had unchecked powers, suspending democratic rights and assaulting Muslim

families and opponents of PS labor reforms. And support for the right and particularly for neo-fascism is far more widespread in the police than the Platonic support of certain police union tops for the Rights of Man.

The fictitious character of LFI and Stalinist attempts to market Langlois as progressive emerges from an examination of his career record. He joined the border police in 2007, where his colleagues reportedly recommended that he obtain a trade union position to do more interesting work. He did this, joining the neo-fascist Alliance trade union and getting a job in domestic intelligence (RG). There, he was tasked with "conversing with trade unionists to ensure security during demonstrations."

In 2010, the RG infiltrated protests against pension cuts, clashing with police and breaking storefront windows in an attempt to turn public opinion against the protesters. The intelligence agencies were not, as the Stalinists sometimes claim, protecting the security of protesters. They were organizing anti-democratic provocations against protesters in order to artificially impose austerity measures rejected by the working class.

The union bureaucracies and their political allies, such as Mélenchon and the Stalinist French Communist Party (PCF), were well aware of these actions. When CGT leader Bernard Thibault issued a weak complaint, police trade unionist Mohamed Douane told him on France2 television: "These methods are known to all political and trade union leaders. Some feign ignorance and pretend to be offended, this is laughable and pitiful."

Langlois joined the CGT after having discussed security with CGT officials at protests and having reportedly read some Aristotle and Marx. An

intelligence agent who had read a bit of Marx while working in an agency that organized provocations against strikers, he was ideally prepared to play a leading role in the populist pseudo left around Mélenchon.

As the WSWS explained regarding the Benalla affair, Mélenchon represents the interests not of the working class, but of sections of the French bourgeoisie's political establishment and police machine that are fundamentally hostile to the workers. This is why in Greece, LFI's ally Syriza, which heads the country's government, is carrying out austerity and militarist policies. And Langlois' record underscores that as a trade unionist, he advances the demands not of the working class, but of sections of the security forces that assault working class protesters.

Interviewed about the Benalla Affair on the *Boulevard Voltaire* web site, Langlois attacked Macron for having lost the confidence of the cops: "This only confirms the total lack of confidence and the profound disdain that Mr Macron and his government show for the security forces. When we alert him about forgeries, complaints and embezzlement of funds on bonuses, he does nothing. When we ask him to meet with us in order to explain the problems of our profession, he prefers to meet Rihanna."

Langlois also complained that Macron has placed antiterrorism and his own personal protection under the control of the Elysée presidential palace and not the interior ministry. He said, "We really have the feeling we are being taken for idiots. The president of the Republic has a specialized group dedicated to presidential security. This GSPR is made up of policemen and gendarmes who are carefully selected and have very high level training and qualifications. It seems this is not good enough for Mr Macron, who prefers to be surrounded by private bodyguards."

The most elementary class consciousness dictates that workers need a policy of strict political independence from the representatives of the police-state apparatus, whether or not they posture as "populist" politicians in the style of Mélenchon and Langlois.



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