

Build a mass movement of workers and youth to demand Macron's removal!

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As millions of workers in France prepare to march tomorrow in another national trade union protest against President Emmanuel Macron's pension cuts, it is ever more evident that Macron is setting out to establish a dictatorship and that he must be brought down. This can only be accomplished, however, by building a mass movement from below, among workers and youth, to demand his removal and prepare a general strike against his government.

He imposed his cuts without a parliamentary vote, using the exorbitant emergency powers of the presidency under the French Fifth Republic, despite mass strikes and the opposition of three-quarters of the French people. He argued that adopting the cuts was critical to maintaining France's credibility on international financial markets. Now, French officials are declaring that this method can be used to impose other laws, such as further social cuts or increases in military spending for war with Russia, during the rest of Macron's term.

Labor Minister Olivier Dussopt asserted on Friday that he "may have to use again Article 49-3," the provision of the French constitution allowing Macron to ram through laws without a vote. "I hope as little as possible," he added. This anti-democratic provision, he said, could be "almost systematically used, given how impassioned public debate is in France."

The French Fifth Republic is being exposed as a dictatorship of the banks, arbitrarily slashing living standards and fundamental social and democratic rights of working people. Its only response to popular opposition, strikes and mass protests is to deploy hordes of riot police to assault protesters and strikers if they take any action to oppose Macron.

The vast network of police prefects and agencies that report to Macron and the Interior Ministry thrust aside

last week's statement from the Council of Europe criticizing the "excessive use of force" by French police. It gave another bloody demonstration of its powers on Saturday, assaulting farmers' protests against an irrigation project in Sainte-Soline in western France.

An assault group of 3,000 heavily armed cops faced off against 30,000 protesters around the infrastructure of the irrigation project. The cops repeatedly charged protesters and fired a total of 4,000 stun grenades. At least 200 people were wounded, including 30 seriously. Four—a protester aged 30 who is in a coma from a skull injury, another protester aged 27, a young woman aged 19 with a serious facial injury, and one riot policeman—are in critical condition.

The Macron presidency, the nerve center of financial and police-state conspiracies against the people, must be brought down. This can only be done, however, by mobilizing masses of rank-and-file workers and youth in a campaign for the removal of Macron, the abolition of the draconian powers of the French presidency, and the preparation of a general strike against Macron.

Workers and youth cannot leave the task of organizing the struggle to bring down Macron to the union bureaucracies and to their pseudo-left allies, such as Jean-Luc Mélenchon's Unsubmissive France (LFI) party. They are giving no perspective whatsoever to the movement, beyond being assaulted by the cops each time workers go out on strikes and protests.

If Macron acts so provocatively, relying on naked repression to impose his cuts, it is no doubt that he has received private assurances from Mélenchon and the union bureaucrats that they will make no effort to mobilize opposition against him.

Indeed, in February, Minister of Labour Olivier Dussopt publicly boasted that his ministry and the

government are holding “public” as well as “more informal” talks with the unions. French Democratic Labor Confederation (CFDT) and General Confederation of Labor (CGT) officials confirmed Dussopt’s assertion, with CGT boss Philippe Martinez referring to “courtesy calls” from the government. The bureaucracies respond by isolating striking refinery and garbage workers whose pickets are attacked by the cops.

Mélenchon—who received nearly 8 million votes in the 2022 presidential elections, concentrated in the working class districts of France’s major cities—has made no appeal to mobilize his voters to bring down Macron. It is evident that this is because he is a political colleague, not an opponent, of Macron. In fact, he declared last year that he would be happy to serve as prime minister under either Macron or the neo-fascist Marine Le Pen if the latter won the presidency.

The struggle to bring down Macron cannot be organized through Mélenchon and the union bosses, but only independently of and in opposition to them.

In every workplace and school, resolutions must be passed demanding the bringing down of Macron. This requires convening general assemblies of workers and youth in their workplaces and schools to debate and adopt these resolutions, as well as the formation of workplace committees to share and publicize these resolutions and thus unite the working class against Macron. This independent mobilization of the working class, making workers aware of their militancy and collective strength, would create conditions for a general strike to bring down Macron.

A general strike to blockade the economy and bring down Macron’s illegitimate presidency, polls show, is desired by two-thirds of the French people. This struggle inevitably raises the question of what will replace him.

No confidence can be given to institutions that proved their complicity in Macron’s attempt to impose a dictatorship of the banks over the people. Not only the police-state machine, but also the legislature, which failed to censure Macron for trying to impose his law without a vote, are exposed as servants of the financial oligarchy.

The *Parti de l’égalité socialiste* advocates the building of a political movement to transfer power to workplace committees, drawn from the rank and file

and democratically answerable to it, built in the course of the struggle against Macron. Such bodies could also draw support from the great upsurge of the class struggle that is now underway across Europe and internationally. This would lay the basis for a truly democratic regime, representing the majority of society that works for a living, and for implementing socialist policies based on social need, not private profit.



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