Macron passes fascistic anti-immigration law in alliance with Le Pen

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French president Emmanuel Macron has allied himself with Marine Le Pen's far-right National Rally (RN) and the conservative Republicans (LR) to pass a fascistic immigration control bill.

While a minority of 69 MPs from the presidential party Renaissance (RE) voted against or abstained, the far-right and the conservatives voted unanimously in favour of the law, which was passed by the National Assembly on Tuesday evening with 349 votes in favour and 186 against.

The law is destroying basic democratic rights and reviving the repressive policies used by the collaborationist wartime Vichy regime against Jews that facilitated their deportation to concentration and extermination camps.

The bill passed despite widespread popular opposition to Macron's illegitimate policy. Several thousand people demonstrated in French cities, capping a year marked by national and international working-class struggles. In June, during the struggle against the pension reform, two-thirds of French people wanted to bring down Macron by blocking the economy. In July, following the police murder of 17-year-old teenager Nahel in Nanterre, mass protests broke out over several days. The genocide of Palestinians by the Zionist regime and its support by Macron has aroused widespread opposition from radicalized youth and workers all over France and worldwide.

Faced with an explosive political and social situation, Macron is seeking an alliance with the right and extreme right as a basis for his policies, resorting to authoritarian rule. The bill was initially rejected by a motion of the ecologists, supported by the Nupes Alliance of Jean-Luc Mélenchon and a fraction of the Macronists, rendering the original version null and void. Those rejecting it understood that this law would provoke widespread indignation. However, Macron allied himself with the LR and the RN, and the joint parity commission hardened the original bill to make sure the LR and RN would approve it.

The law prevents migrants from accessing social benefit for five years, instead of six months previously, and thus affirms the principle of “national preference”, a central demand of the far-right. It is intended to deter migrants from coming to France, facilitates their deportation and makes family reunification and naturalization more difficult.

A young person who was born in France and grew up there will no longer automatically receive French citizenship at the age of 18. Parliament is to set annual quotas for immigration. Foreign nationals residing in France can only apply for family reunification for their relatives if they can prove that they have been living in France for 24 months and that their financial situation is “stable and sufficient” and “regular”.

Dual nationals convicted of assaulting the police will lose their French citizenship and thus become deportable. Illegal residence in France will become a criminal offense. Foreign students who are not from the European Union will have to pay a deposit before enrolling, which they will only get back once they have left the country. And these are just some of the measures provided for by the law.

Macron went on television to legitimize this fascistic bill, asserting that the law would pass through the Constitutional Council, which is made up of officials from the same parties that voted for the text. Macron said that the bill “is the fruit of a compromise” and added cynically, “Fighting against the RN does not mean refusing to tackle the problems that feed it. There is an immigration problem in the country.” The bill, he said, “is the shield we were lacking.”

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Marine Le Pen celebrated the passing of the law as an "ideological victory": "I don't see how tomorrow the elected representatives of the majority and above all the President of the Republic, will be able to reproach us for defending the 'national preference', since they adopt the idea that it can be applied. They apply it in a minimal way, but in principle the concept is validated."

The alliance between Macron and the far-right unmasks the political fraud advanced by the pseudo-left in 2017 and 2022. In the second round of both presidential elections, they insisted that it was necessary to vote for Macron against Le Pen to stop the far-right and defend democratic rights and the rights of immigrants.

Only the Socialist Equality Party (PES), the French section of the ICFI, called for an active boycott of the second round to prepare for the fight against the future president. The PES warned that Macron's policies would be indistinguishable from Le Pen's and that he would pave her way to power. The passing of the anti-immigration bill demonstrates that it is now Le Pen who is determining the government's policy.

Macron's alliance with the far-right is no surprise. He cultivates neo-fascist forces in his government. It's no secret that the writings of Charles Maurras, the monarchist leader of Action Française who was at the root of Vichy politics, are studied. Interior Minister Gérald Darmanin was a member of Action Française in 2008. Former Macron government spokesman Benjamin Griveaux paraphrased Maurras in 2018. Macron himself saluted "the soldier Pétain."

Macron's anti-immigrant law revives the repressive policies of Philippe Pétain's collaborationist Vichy regime. In 1940, Pétain promulgated a law cancelling the naturalizations granted by his predecessor under the liberal Third Republic. Between 1940 and 1944, some 15,000 people, including many Jews, lost their nationality. This facilitated their deportation to concentration and extermination camps. Of the 75,721 Jews deported between 1942 and 1944, only 2,566 survived, around 3 percent.

Workers will oppose the implications of this fascistic law, but they can have no illusions in the bureaucratic apparatuses. In the framework of social dialogue, the trade unions are cogs in the wheel of corporate and state policy. General Confederation of Labour (CGT) Secretary Sophie Binet called for "civil disobedience." But during this year's fight against Macron's pension reform, the CGT and other unions channelled the enormous social discontent into a dead-end. Fearful of being overwhelmed by popular opposition, the unions turned to Prime Minister Elisabeth Borne to negotiate the imposition of the reform, leaving it to the police to put down the demonstrations.

During the Second World War the struggle against Nazism took on the character of a revolutionary insurrection by the international working class. Workers went on strike in factories in Italy, the Netherlands and France, and joined the resistance. The fight against the immigration law and Macron's authoritarian policies requires that workers revive their revolutionary traditions, based on a Trotskyist perspective, in an international struggle to seize power.

The only prospect for workers is revolutionary mobilization to topple Macron. To do this, workers must build the PES, the French section of the International Committee of the Fourth International.

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