

# LFI's response to new French government exposes its bankruptcy

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24 January 2024

The middle class La France Insoumise party's (LFI) response to the appointment of former Socialist Party (PS) member Gabriel Attal as Prime Minister under Emmanuel Macron is an admission of political bankruptcy.

Faced with NATO-Russia war and explosive class tensions, Macron aims to divert social anger along racial lines with a far-right anti-immigrant law. He has entrusted Attal with implementing a fascistic program of imperialist war abroad and class war at home. This signals a mortal crisis of capitalism; the working class cannot respond by lining up behind impotent, reactionary parliamentarians, but by mobilizing all its forces in a struggle to bring down Macron and allied NATO imperialist governments.

But LFI tries to tie workers to parliamentarism amid global war and the rise of the far-right. It refuses to call on the 8 million voters who supported LFI candidate Jean-Luc Mélenchon in the 2022 elections to fight, entrusting workers struggles to union bureaucracies that negotiate with Macron. They work in continuity of the Union of the Left—the alliance between the big-business PS and the Stalinist French Communist Party (PCF) bureaucracy that developed after the May 1968 general strike, and from which Macron and Attal ultimately emerged, decades later. In short, LFI politically strangles the workers, setting out to block a revolutionary struggle.

After the resignation of ex-Prime Minister Elisabeth Borne that led to Attal's appointment, LFI's parliamentary group president Mathilde Panot tweeted: "Borne resigned, leaving behind ... a democracy badly damaged. No matter who the monarch [Macron] replaces her with, we demand a vote of no confidence in Parliament! It is this vote that organizes political life in the country and in the Assembly between the majority that supports the government and the opposition. Without this vote of no confidence, we will file a motion of censure."

LFI deputy François Ruffin reacted to Attal's rise to power by calling to maintain LFI's alliance with the PS,

the Stalinist PCF and the Greens (EELV) the New Popular Social and Ecological Union (NUPES). He stated, "The alliance of the right is sealed. In front, the Union of the Left, quickly!"

The comment of LFI national coordinator Manuel Bompard was perhaps most remarkable. Addressing the shift to the far-right of the Macron regime, he said that Attal "had never been of the left even though he was a member of the Socialist Party. Unfortunately, the Socialist Party has spawned a number of horrors ... Gabriel Attal, and indeed Emmanuel Macron is part of it."

This cynical critique of the PS raises vast historical and political questions, as not only Attal and Macron emerged from the PS, but also Mélenchon and most of the rest of the LFI leadership.

Faced with horror, war, and fascistic social reaction, the task of workers is not to make deals with the PS that spawns horrors. It is necessary to build an independent movement among rank-and-file workers to politically smash the obstacle posed to revolutionary struggle by Stalinist and social-democratic bureaucracies. As when Trotsky founded the Fourth International in 1938, a year before World War II began, the construction of a revolutionary vanguard is the urgent task posed to workers internationally to avert catastrophe.

LFI, on the other hand, adapts to what it admits is "horror" via the national parliamentary framework. After Mélenchon received nearly 8 million votes in the first round of the 2022 presidential election from youth and workers, coming first in 11 of France's 16 cities, he pursued a deeply cynical policy. He proposed to become Prime Minister under Macron or even Le Pen to lead their policy. Then he formed the NUPES alliance with the PCF and the PS, which, as Bompard admits, "has spawned a number of horrors."

Hostile to a revolutionary struggle for worker power and socialism, LFI wants to block any initiative to organize

workers independently of the trade union bureaucracies that negotiate with Macron, and, instead, force workers to limit themselves to what bourgeois parliamentarians will decide to do.

This underscores the decisive importance of the struggle of the *Parti de l'égalité socialiste* (PES), the French section of the International Committee of the Fourth International (ICFI), against the counter-revolutionary tendencies that descend from the International Communist Organisation (OCI), of which Mélenchon is a former member.

Only the PES continues the Trotskyist opposition to Stalinist and social-democratic apparatuses, based on which the ICFI was founded in the 1953 split with the pro-Stalinist tendency that had emerged in the Fourth International under the leadership of Michel Pablo and Ernest Mandel. Between 1953 and 1971, the OCI had been the French section of the ICFI. However, it split from the ICFI in 1971 to participate in building the bourgeois PS and support the PS-PCF Union of the Left.

Before the 1971 split, the OCI had been strongly influenced by centrist pressure emphasizing organizational gains, particularly in union work, at the expense of the fight against revisionism and the ICFI's clarification of key political and historical issues. The OCI launched work with Workers' Voice (today Lutte Ouvrière, LO) during the French-Algerian War and agreed to LO's argument that the Fourth International had been destroyed.

In 1971, after the May 1968 general strike, the OCI rejected Trotskyism to ally with social-democratic and Stalinist bureaucracies and help build the PS. OCI members subsequently held leadership positions in the PS when it led the French capitalist state, including Lionel Jospin who would become prime minister from 1997 to 2002.

Mélenchon first joined the OCI at the time of its split with the ICFI, then joined the PS in 1976, becoming a capitalist senator and minister. Under the presidency of François Mitterrand, who had been a Nazi-collaborationist during WWII, the PS implemented an austerity plan against the working class in 1982 and participated, a few months before the Stalinist regime's dissolution of the USSR in 1991, in the Gulf War against Iraq.

Since 1991, attacks on the working class and democratic rights, as well as military interventions, have multiplied under the PS governments of Jospin and then François Hollande, and now ex-PS members Macron and Attal. The hostility towards socialism and the fascistic

sympathies of the leading forces within the PS are well known. While imposing a state of emergency in 2015, then-President and PS leader François Hollande tried to inscribe in the constitution the revocation of nationality, a criminal principle used to justify deportation and extermination of Jews in France during the Holocaust.

The Third World War getting underway, the genocide in Gaza, and the official promotion of far-right forces around the world demonstrates the historical bankruptcy of capitalism. Mélenchon, who left the PS in 2009 to launch what would become LFI, leads not a revolutionary but a middle class, pro-bureaucratic movement blocking working class opposition to austerity and war. Despite Macron's far-right evolution, LFI only proposes to workers to remain within a bourgeois parliamentary framework backing unions' "social dialogue" with Macron, and thus the existing order.

The PES advances the ICFI's revolutionary perspective and opposes the unions and political parties that subordinate workers to moribund capitalism. It calls to build rank-and-file organizations in workplaces, and to prepare the working class internationally for a struggle for power. Faced with the rise of world war and the extreme right, but also the political obstacle posed by pseudo-left middle class groups like LFI, it continues the struggle of the Fourth International since its founding, for working class resistance to fascism to become a struggle for power and for socialist revolution. It calls on workers and youth who agree with its perspective to support and join it.



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