

No to Macron and Le Pen! Mobilize the working class against fascism and war!

Parti de l'égalité socialiste (France)
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Rival demonstrations are being held on April 6 in France--against the neo-fascist danger and, at the instigation of the far right, against the court ruling banning neo-fascist Marine Le Pen's participation in the 2027 presidential elections.

Among workers and young people, regardless of which presidential candidate they voted for in 2022, there is a growing sense that democracy is in danger. The fascist danger does not come only from Le Pen. Her ally, fascist US President Donald Trump, has just unleashed a trade war against Europe and the world and is illegally cracking down on and deporting youth opposed to his policies. But Macron is no democratic alternative to Le Pen or Trump. He supports genocide in Gaza and wants to fund a remilitarization of Europe to wage high-intensity wars by plundering workers, as with his pension cuts.

The Socialist Equality Party (PES) therefore gives no support to the electoral ban on Le Pen. A ruling by the capitalist state apparatus against Le Pen on embezzlement charges will stop neither fascism nor imperialist war. By frustrating millions of workers who previously voted for Le Pen in presidential elections and were preparing to vote for her again, the courts are only reinforcing the neo-fascist narrative that she is a new Joan of Arc targeted by hypocritical leftist elites hostile to the people.

The force to be mobilized against fascism and war is the working class. A lasting movement must be built in workplaces and among young people, to mobilize workers in struggle against both Macron and Le Pen. It is the only way to unite workers across electoral divides, overcome the obstacles posed to the class

struggle by the union bureaucracy, and mobilize the full social force of the working class against fascism, war and capitalist oligarchy.

Le Pen heads the Rassemblement National (RN), a descendant of the Nazi collaborationists and the colonialist French Algeria movement, which indubitably poses fascist danger. The clearest indication of this comes, in fact, from outside France's borders.

Trump has just lent his support to Marine Le Pen, under a false pretense of “democracy”, on social media. Denouncing the “Witch Hunt” led by “European Leftists using Lawfare to silence Free Speech”, Trump said he did “appreciate how hard she worked for so many years.” About Le Pen, he added that “just before what would be a Big Victory, they get her on a minor charge.” He concluded by calling out, “Free Marine Le Pen.”

This call reveals the real attitude of the capitalist oligarchy to the RN. Trump is a shameless representative of that oligarchy: as he launches a trade war to plunder the international working class, he is conducting mass layoffs and illegal deportations in the United States, and calling to annex Canada, Greenland and Panama. Given the class interests he represents, he appreciates Le Pen, who seeks to divide workers along national lines and support police repression and militarism in France.

Applauding the judgment against Le Pen means leaving the fight against fascism and war to the judges and the state machine led by Macron. This is a political trap for the working class.

Macron is not a defender of democracy, but a hated president who rules against the people. He has brutally repressed strikes, notably against the 2023 pension cuts rejected by 91 percent of the French people, which he pushed through in order to finance escalating military

spending. Now he is calling for troops to be sent to Ukraine to risk war with Russia, in line with the EU's €800 billion rearmament plan for Europe.

Macron is no enemy of fascism or genocide. He has defended Israel's far-right regime, which is committing genocide in Gaza, and sent his supporters to join the RN in pro-Israel rallies. His government is packed with far-right figures, like former Interior Minister Gérard Darmanin. What separates him from Le Pen is not the question of democracy, but geostrategic differences over the orientation of French imperialism between Washington and the European Union.

To fight both Le Pen and Macron, workers will need to overcome the political obstacle posed by the union bureaucracies, which all negotiate with Macron. They simply stopped the struggle against pension cut in 2023 once it was adopted as law. By supporting the New Popular Front (NFP), which organized the withdrawal of its candidates in favor of Macron's candidates in the 2024 elections, they unmasked themselves as props of Macron.

Their leading representative is Jean-Luc Mélenchon, leader of the NFP and TV revolutionary. He now complains that he would have preferred that the people, not the courts, depose Le Pen. But how can the people depose reactionary politicians like Le Pen if the working class does not break through the political straitjacket that Mélenchon imposes on them?

What has Mélenchon done with his 8 million voters in the 2022 presidential election? He tacitly backed the union bureaucracies' cowardly role in calling off the pension struggle, and orchestrated NFP support for Macron's candidates in the 2024 elections and never launched a political appeal to mobilize his voters in struggle. His propaganda for a citizens' revolution conducted within the National Assembly cannot entirely hide his rejection of a socialist revolution by the working class.

How can workers overcome these political obstacles? The PES calls for building rank-and-file organizations, action committees in workplaces, among youth and working-class areas. The "yellow vests", who organized protests independently of the unions via social media, showed the potential for this. Workers need organizations of struggle capable of mobilizing the full power of the working class to break imperialism's push towards dictatorship and war.

The PES is stepping in to provide this movement with an internationalist perspective and program. As strikes and mass demonstrations rock Turkey, Serbia, Greece and Spain, workers and youth in the USA launched the first national mass protest against Trump. Internationally, as wars erupt and explosive social attacks flowing from the trade war loom, workers and youth are looking to fight back.

The working class is an international class, and its struggles must be unified internationally. If the ruling class is heading for dictatorship and war, the working class too must have a finished plan and political perspective: a struggle for power, to put an end to capitalism and build a socialist future based on equality, democratic rights and an end to imperialist wars.

This is the program of the PES, the French section of the International Committee of the Fourth International (ICFI), which publishes the *World Socialist Web Site*. The PES calls on workers and young people to support its work and help build this party, in order to build a revolutionary leadership in the working class allowing it to reorganize society on the basis of social need, not private profit.



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