Amid French government crisis, neo-fascist RN bids for capitalist oligarchy's support

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With Prime Minister François Bayrou's government set to fall and France teetering on the verge of state bankruptcy, the neo-fascist National Rally (RN) is making a calculated bid for support from the French ruling class on a program of savage austerity against the working class. This is the content of the "Letter to France's CEOs" drafted this week by RN party president Jordan Bardella.

The deal Bardella proposes to French big business is straightforward. Calling for rapid snap elections as President Emmanuel Macron's popularity plummets to barely 15 percent, he proposes to come to power and carry out unprecedented cuts to social spending in order to resolve the debt crisis and massively boost French corporate profits. He pledges to cut €100 billion euros from the French budget, over double Bayrou's already massively unpopular €44 billion in cuts.

As America's far-right president sets up a billionaire's dictatorship in America, workers voting for the far right in France and across Europe must be warned: they are being played for fools.

Bardella is dispensing with RN leader Marine Le Pen's rhetoric on protecting native French people of modest means, and unabashedly advancing the RN as the best placed to boost corporate profits by eviscerating basic social programs. The cuts he is proposing, going far beyond those demanded by Bayrou, cannot be imposed by democratic means. Realizing his program would require setting up a fascistic police dictatorship to violently suppress social opposition.

Bardella denounces Macron and Bayrou, as "no government can win support if it deepens public debt and intensifies the trade deficit to levels unseen in over a half-century." While the RN "knows how political uncertainty undermines economic life," Bardella adds, it has "in good conscience" chosen to vote to bring down Bayrou. The RN, he explains, now believes it should rule France.

"Only a return to the ballot box will allow us to restore democratic clarity and give France a solid government again," Bardella writes. "The National Rally has this ambition. By its lucidity and the power of its propositions, it is the true guarantor of economic stability."

Economic stability, Bardella makes clear, signifies for him entrenching the diktat of the capitalist oligarchy over the workers. He pledges to cut "over 100 billion euros in bad spending" including social spending on non-French citizens, development aid for other countries, and spending on state employees at national and local levels. Beyond keeping French state contracts for firms located in France, he also pledges a 20 percent corporate tax cut to "realign France with its European partners."

Bardella concludes: "There will be neither national prosperity nor French power in the 21st century without entrepreneurs who innovate, produce, and create jobs." In short, the RN's goal of boosting the power of the French state is indissolubly linked to the massive enrichment of CEOs and the financial oligarchy at the expense of the workers.

While the RN's promises to attack social programs for foreign workers are utterly reactionary, they are also a political fraud aimed to conceal from native-born working class RN voters that they are voting for their own impoverishment. The French state does not spend €100 billion, that is, nearly a third of its revenues, on foreign workers. To reduce spending by that much, unprecedented cuts eviscerating pensions, health care, and school staffing levels would be required. These would devastate all workers in France, be they

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immigrants or native born.

It takes no great political insight to see that, amid a historic crisis of rule in France, the bourgeoisie is turning to the RN in order to continue ruling against the people. It has long backed Macron's policies of austerity and militarism, like his pension cuts and calls to send troops to Ukraine, though overwhelming majorities of the French people opposed them. It is considering turning to the RN because, amid Macron's crisis, it believes the RN may be better placed to build a strong police state to massively enrich the wealthy and suppress working class opposition.

Officials at the Movement of French Enterprises (Medef), France's main business federation, told Radio France they are enthusiastic about a neo-fascist government. Former Medef President Geoffroy Roux de Bézieux said: "The RN is aiming for the right things," while another Medef officials said: "The RN will impose order, and we really need that."

Discussing its interviews with Medef leaders, Radio France commented: "A few days before the September 10 protest, which threatens to block the country's economy, CEOs are all the more ready for this policy because they see it as a counterweight to the far left, whose economic program terrifies them. They see it as certain ruin. In business circles, the RN is being normalized."

The possibility that the bourgeoisie would install the RN in power amid the current, historic crisis of rule in France is very real. Currently, polls show the RN would take 31 percent of the vote in new legislative elections—the largest share of the vote of any party in the National Assembly. This comes after more than a decade over which the RN has been granted extensive access to the media, and the bourgeoisie has encouraged significant layers of workers to vote RN on fraudulent pretexts.

It has not won support thanks to the growth of a mass fascist movement like Hitler's Brown Shirts, but by exploiting mass disaffection and bitterness among workers with the reactionary policies of parties falsely marketed by capitalist media as "left." These voters were in their large majority not fascists, but instead moving to the left. Indeed, millions of them took part in protests against Macron's pension cuts in 2023, which were sold out by the union bureaucracies.

Workers cannot leave the struggle against the threat of far-right dictatorship to forces like the New Popular Front (NFP) led by Jean-Luc Mélenchon—which gathers his France Unbowed Party, the bourgeois Socialist Party (PS), the Stalinist French Communist Party (PCF), and the Greens.

While Mélenchon received 8 million votes in the last 2022 presidential election, concentrated among urban workers, he never called for the mass mobilization of his voters in a struggle against Macron's unpopular pension cuts, or the threat of neo-fascist dictatorship. Instead, he told BFM-TV interviewer Bruce Toussaint during the 2022 elections that he would be willing to serve as prime minister under a neo-fascist president, Marine Le Pen.

The continued sellouts of workers struggles by forces linked to the NFP, as well as their corrupt ties to the RN, have only served to consolidate the RN's support.

The alarm must be sounded. The vast opposition that exists against Macron's reactionary program must be mobilized also against Bardella and the RN. This requires the independent mobilization of the working class against Bayrou and Macron, preparing to bring down their government via a general strike, placing on the order of the day the expropriation of the capitalist oligarchy in order to solve the debt crisis and fund basic social needs.

It is only with a revolutionary policy that working class RN voters can be won back to the left and the struggle for socialism, and oppose the plans of the bourgeoisie and the far right for imperialist war, dictatorship and the immiseration of the population.

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