

Behind plans for social-democratic government under Macron, French ruling elite plots dictatorship

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Maneuvers to install a government under French President Emmanuel Macron, of ministers from the New Popular Front (NFP) led by Jean-Luc Mélenchon are at an advanced stage. After the fall of Prime Minister Sébastien Lecornu, the bourgeois Socialist Party (PS), a leading party in the NFP, is working frantically to form a government.

They are laying a political trap for the working class. A PS-led government under Macron would not be socialist or left-wing, but a capitalist government abetting Macron's rule against the people. Amid France's historic debt crisis and the NATO-Russia war in Ukraine, its agenda of imperialist war, austerity and police-state rule would inevitably disappoint those workers who placed their trust in the NFP.

As Macron falls to 15 percent in the polls, and calls circulate on social media to "block everything" and bring down Macron with a general strike, the NFP is not mobilizing the workers, but trying to strangle the class struggle. Responsibility lies with the bankrupt role of Mélenchon and his populist France Unbowed (LFI) party. By forming the NFP with the PS and its Stalinist and Green allies, after they collapsed in the 2022 presidential elections, he resuscitated reactionary tools of French imperialism.

Today, the formation of a PS-led government under Macron would allow the neo-fascist National Rally (RN) to pose as the sole genuine opposition to Macron. It would vastly strengthen conspiracies in the French bourgeoisie to bring the RN to power and impose a far-right dictatorship.

Last night, PS First Secretary Olivier Faure, Stalinist French Communist Party (PCF) General Secretary Fabien Roussel and Green party leader Marine Tondelier issued a formal offer to build a coalition government. In a joint

statement to AFP, they proposed a "cohabitation"—that is, building a governmental cabinet of ministers drawn from their parties, as opposed to Macron's party.

Addressing Macron, their statement declared: "Either you persist in isolation and self-denial, and you take responsibility before history for considerably aggravating the fracture between the people and its institutions. Or you listen to the country... and you open a new stage: cohabitation." This signified, they said, "the naming of a left-wing, ecologist prime minister and government that will allow for the construction of a majority in the National Assembly."

Pointing to the fall of five prime ministers in the last two years in France, they pledged a "left-wing and ecological government [with] a draft budget of fiscal and social justice."

This talk of "social justice" is a fraud. The PS is a discredited capitalist party with a 45-year record of austerity, war, police-state repression, and deals with far-right forces. The first president to formally invite neo-fascist party leaders to the Elysée presidential palace, François Hollande, was a PS member, whose austerity policies Macron helped devise as economy minister. While the PS is now pledging to consider taxing the rich and repealing Macron's pension cuts, it would rapidly abandon this if financial markets began speculating against French sovereign debt.

Yesterday, outgoing French Economy Minister Roland Lescure, a former PS official, pledged the incoming government would respect EU austerity criteria. "A majority of parliamentarians in France want stability," he said, adding: "[W]e need a budget for 2026, and this is very important: a budget that respects our promises to our European friends. So that is what will happen."

While building an NFP-Macron government would

repudiate Mélenchon's calls to impeach Macron and hold snap presidential elections, LFI is signaling it is not totally hostile to such plans. On Wednesday, LFI national coordinator Manuel Bompard and parliamentary leader Mathilde Panot issued a joint statement with the Green leader, Tondelier. As the Greens worked with the PS to prop up Macron, Bompard and Panot pledged to work on building a government together with them.

"The hour is grave: our common responsibility is to act together to bring a new political program into power, end Macronism and defeat the far right," they wrote.

This is a fraud. As capitalist media falsely promote LFI as the "radical left," an NFP alliance with Macron would not defeat but strengthen the far right. It would seem to legitimize RN denunciations of left-wing or socialist politics as complicit in Macron's rule against the people.

RN party leader Marine Le Pen has responded to talk of a PS-led Macron government by pledging to vote censure motions against the government until it falls. On X, she mocked plans for a PS-led government with the Greens, the right-wing The Republicans (LR), and the PCF: "If I understand correctly, Emmanuel Macron is preparing to entrust the prime ministership to a party that won 1.75 percent of the vote in the presidential elections. It would build a government with representatives of those who got 4.63 percent, 4.78 percent, reinforced maybe by those who got 2.28 percent."

The RN is accelerating plans to form a government in alliance with factions of LR and Macron's supporters. Last year, Lecornu and another former prime minister of Macron, Edouard Philippe, discussed forming an RN-led government. Now, bolstered by poll results showing Le Pen coming in first in future presidential elections with 34 percent of the vote, the RN is bidding for support in the ruling class on an ultra-right program.

After Bardella issued an open letter to France's CEOs calling for €100 billion in social cuts to address the deficit and the debt crisis, he is calling for a "Union of the Right" in future elections.

"There are right-wing patriots with whom we are destined to work," he said on the far-right *CNews* TV station. Denouncing LR member Bruno Retailleau's role as Macron's interior minister and appealing to opposition to Retailleau inside LR, he said: "We may not be in agreement on anything. You sometimes have a different sensibility from my own ... But in the interest of France, we must walk the same path together."

An RN-LR government backed by factions of pro-Macron parties would be a fascistic dictatorship ruling

against the people. However, this cannot be opposed by backing Macron's discredited police-state regime. The entire capitalist establishment—driven by the unsustainable €3.4 trillion sovereign debt, contracted over decades of wars and bank bailouts—is set on a course of war, impoverishment of the people, and dictatorship.

There is no mechanism for the working class to resolve this crisis within the existing political system. Mélenchon's policy of alliance with the PS and the PCF and union bureaucracies, it is ever clearer, has not worked to represent the French people in the National Assembly but to let the capitalist oligarchy keep using the Assembly as an arena for conspiracies against democracy.

The decisive issue, as the *Parti de l'égalité socialiste* has stressed, is mobilizing opposition among rank-and-file workers to capitalist dictatorship and preparing a general strike to bring down Macron, independently of the NFP and allied bureaucracies. This is the only way to prepare the expropriation of the capitalist oligarchy and stop its anti-democratic conspiracies, as the PES explained in its statement, "Build rank-and-file committees to wage the struggle against Macron and war!":

The defense of the fundamental social and democratic rights of the working class requires a mass mobilization of the rank and file, fighting for the self-organization of the working class and the preparation of a general strike to bring down Macron. This is inseparable from the construction of a political movement in the working class, in France and across Europe, for workers' power and a socialist revolution.

The PES calls for the transfer of power in all factories and workplaces from the union bureaucracies to the rank and file. To wage this struggle, workers need rank-and-file organizations to overcome the opposition of union bureaucracies whose "social dialog" ties workers to the diktat of the capitalist state.



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