

Greeting Message to the WIN Meeting of January 6 and 7, 2018

Dear comrades,

With these few words, we bring you our greetings from France and regret not having the means to be among you this weekend.

We would like to point out that the continuation of our participation in the WIN, which allows the discussion between socialist militants in the perspective of building a new Workers' International, remains despite the failure of MILITANT (France).

This failure is partly a reflection of the situation in France at the end of the mandate of François Hollande (2012-2017) which resulted in the election of Macron, the MEDEF candidate, by elimination of all candidates on the left the evening of the first round of the presidential election.

Hollande's mandate was the occasion of a permanent and methodical betrayal for five years of the interests and hopes of left-wing voters, workers and youth.

All the presidents or prime ministers from the PS since 1981 had failed by their faithful management of French capitalism, while leaving the memory of the few measures in favor of the workers (Mitterrand and the retirement at 60, the 39 hours weekly, the fifth week paid holidays, Jospin and the 35 hours).

Hollande has contributed to the systematic destruction of the labor code by means of 3 successive laws: the Rebsamen law, the Macron 1 law and finally the El Khomri law in 2016. Needless to say, nothing has been done to prevent lay-offs and create jobs to meet the needs of 3 million unemployed people and reduce job insecurity (part-time jobs, fixed-term contracts, short contracts) for another three million workers.

This last law was the occasion of a social movement from March to July that saw hundreds of thousands of strikers or demonstrators, during 14 days of action called by the central unions, including the CGT and FO, during four months.

In spite of the intensity of the mobilizations, the orientation of the trade union leaders opposed the centralization and the generalization of the action so as to lead to a general strike defeating the government and asking the question of its overthrow.

Police repression of demonstrations and pickets has reached a level never seen under a "left" government in France since 1981.

All this culminated in the moral and political defeat of all the candidates or aspiring candidates from the government : Hollande gave up showing up, Valls was defeated at the PS primary and all those who had a connection with Hollande's management too. Defending the interests of the bosses does not help to win an election!

So why and how did Macron win this election?

Answer: because the social rejection of the Hollande government has not found a political outlet on the left, because of the orientation of the left of the PS, that of Mélenchon, the PCF game that did not want to oppose frontally and firmly to the politics of Hollande, the failure of the Left Front benched from 2014, the incapacity of the far left despite its activist potential to play a useful role for the mass of workers.

The depth of the social crisis was illustrated by the way Fillon was defeated in the first round, when he thought he could run a campaign with a Thatcher program and win by relying on the rejection of the left.

And we had a second round Macron / Le Pen. In retrospect, even though the debate over which vote to cast in the second round (abstention, Macron vote against Le Pen) was important, the main thing was that the left was eliminated in the first round and that, institutional logic of the fifth republic helping, the winner would win the parliamentary wager for what could be described as the third and fourth rounds of the election.

Thus, Macron, a candidate selected by the most concentrated sectors of French capitalism, was able to win without even having a necessary party to the political needs of any president-Bonaparte of the Fifth Republic.

This bet won by Macron was only possible because millions of voters on the left have withdrawn into abstention, and the left has not been able to present a united ticket Mélenchon-Hamon in the first round, only perspective able to win this election, or at least to be present in the second round.

We will not dwell on the case of Hamon and the PS, but rather emphasize the role of the orientation chosen by Mélenchon, that of left-wing populism.

From the observation of the failure of the Left Front in 2014, Mélenchon turned his back on the PCF, which was quartered permanently until the end of the five-year period between reaching out to the PS or at least to his left wing, and run after Mélenchon.

The latter opted for a line purporting to replace the 5th Gaullo-Bonapartist Republic by a sixth parliamentary republic, this one arising from a constituent assembly not coming from a revolutionary wave establishing such a Constituent Assembly but from the goodwill of a "Good president": Mélenchon himself!

And to clear the way for such an ultimate president of the 5th, it was necessary to end the parties and substitute a people gathered around its savior, "build a people"!

Thus, Mélenchon put on hold his party, the Left Party, which he had founded when he left the PS in 2009. And launched a movement whose own is not to have structures, in which votes and debates are proscribed. or very much framed in advance.

A populist ideology has been put forward systematically in place of the current ideology of the traditional left: the tricolor flag instead of the red flag in the demonstrations and meetings, the Marseillaise instead of the International.

Basically, Mélenchon's project is based on promoting the place and interests of French imperialism in the world, especially in the Franco-German face to face, relying if necessary on Russia (resurrection of the old Franco-Russian alliance, that of 1905, 1935, 1945 ...), by supporting the French military presence in the Sahel under the pretext of fighting against Daesch.

Melenchon supported the intervention of Sarkozy in Libya, that of Holland in the Sahel, and supported Bashar El Assad against the Syrian democratic revolution.

In Latin America, Mélenchon supported Chavez and now Maduro by making believe that the so-called Bolivarian way was that of the workers' socialism, whereas this regime is based on the enrichment of the boli-bourgeoisie installed in the exploitation of the oil revenue.

Mélenchon supported Russia against Ukraine and introduced Ukrainians as potential nazis because they want their country to escape the tutelage of Moscow.

The social movement of spring 2016 against the El Khomri law was a (bad) surprise for Mélenchon who had conceived his electoral campaign as starting independently of any social evolution in the country.

From his political matrix formed at the PS, Mélenchon kept the reformist cult of respect for institutions and the electoral calendar. So no general strike overthrowing a government or chasing a regime! No, not that!

Also, Mélenchon's campaign was carried out in parallel with the social movement: the militants of France Insoumise and Mélenchon greeted the demonstrators from the borders of the Parisian trade union processions but for all that, they did not become the natural or implicit outlet.

Since then, Mélenchon has gone further, claiming to impose on trade unions a mobilization agenda or a definition of their orientation. Now that Macron is elected, it takes, according to his political vision, to wait five years, and start again in 2022. And be the loyal opposition of His Majesty Macron!

We doubt that Mélenchon's orientation to the destruction of the old parties of the labor movement can go far, but on the other hand it produces damage by locking in sectarian stupidity, in the anti-intellectual nullity, in the useless arrogance of the thousands of activists. whose causes deserve better advice and guidance taking up the best traditions of the labor movement.

It can even be argued that this anti-democratic culture, opposed to the debates, steeped in arrogance and sectarian bounded, devoted to worship of the Chief, can unfortunately feed the paths of passage to fascism.

No, Melenchon and the IF do not embody a variety of left-wing reformism, but a regression of a current of the labor movement towards a political form moving away from the traditions of the left and careless of the needs of the workers because it is oriented towards first to the satisfaction of the Chief's plans.

By refusing to structure a party, based on democratic debates and deliberations, preparing joint action with the other leftist forces against the government and the bosses, Mélenchon has already begun the elements of crisis in its movement.

Thus, on the issue of immigration and refugees, he develops a discourse tending towards the right and the extreme right than towards the necessary solidarity with those fleeing wars and dictatorships, who seek to escape misery and hunger.

A crisis began with the sensibility incarnated by the MP Danièle Obono, who has rather confused positions on secularism but whose treatment should be able to be approached in a party practicing the debate and the free discussion respectful of the positions of the ones and the others.

Instead of confronting the events in a rational and therefore democratic way, the Bonapartist flight ahead can only lead to the failure of this political project.

This political context explains the differences that have arisen since 2016 among Militant members and leads to a separate existence of two distinct streams.

For our part, since May 2015, we have launched a blog and a newsletter to express our positions and propose elements for action. It is in the light of these publications that all can judge our action oriented towards the heart of the real labor movement in France.

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