

<https://www.internationalviewpoint.org/spip.php?article1497>



France

A new political factor emerges

- IV Online magazine - 2008 - IV402 - July 2008 -

Publication date: Saturday 5 July 2008

Copyright © International Viewpoint - online socialist magazine - All rights reserved

The meeting in Saint-Denis on 28 and 29th June confirms the emergence of a new national political force. The presence of almost 800 delegates representing hundreds of local committees testifies to the reality of the process which is going to lead us to the creation of a new anti-capitalist party.

[<https://www.internationalviewpoint.org/IMG/jpg/logonpa.jpg>]

Obviously the road is still long; there are still many who are sceptical and whom we will have to convince and bring along in the dynamic created. The discussions have only just begun, we now have to take on the heavy task of discussing the programme, of democratic functioning and defining the activity of the new party. But the most important fact was the seriousness of this varied assembly which - despite the different routes that had brought individuals or committees to this point - understood what was at stake and the responsibilities we now have. Because this national coordination meeting did not take place in an anodyne political situation but in one where the challenges that face us are very clear.

We are confronted from the government's side with a team that is determined to hit hard. It has decided, despite the discontent, despite the unpopularity of its policies to continue with its counter-reforms and even speed up the pace. Thus the list of law adopted or being adopted at this period provokes shivers and indicates a perspective of generalised social and democratic regression. We should make no mistake. If this pace continues, if this project is implemented then whatever the unpopularity of this project it will have reshaped French society and changed the relationship of forces in favour of the MEDEF [employers' organisation].

The creation of the NPA (new anti-capitalist party) thus takes place first and foremost in the context of the extreme urgency of fighting back against Sarkozy [French president] and Parisot [leader of the MEDEF]. Of the strikes and united-front mobilisations to defeat the government. If the NPA committees can help to initiate, give confidence, indicated the markers for the struggle, help to building the united-front structures, this new party will have shown its usefulness. We have to build a real opposition to the UMP (the rightwing governmental party), replace an inadequate left, incapable of really leading the opposition to the right's programme.

Because we have to learn the lessons of a year of collapse of most of the trade union leaderships and the SP faced with Sarkozy's attacks. Many, many people have the impression that they have been led from pillar to post during the series of one-day strikes earlier this year. On how many questions has the SP shown how incapable it is of leading the opposition? And the race for nomination as presidential candidate for the 2012 elections is just shows an indecent fight between personal ambitions. The SP has just set up a special group to monitor the npa and Besancenot. When will it set one up to mobilise against the right?

In the current context of multiple crises the most urgent is both the fightback and the collective definition of a social project which breaks with a system that is more and more intolerable for more and more people. The economic crisis is already upon us: the collapse of the stock markets, rise in energy price, drop of dollar, inflation and recession in a series of key countries. There are all the ingredients for a generalised capitalist crisis despite the reassuring and pacifying words of one of the pilots of the globalised economic world, Dominique Strauss-Kahn, director of the IMF.

The financial experts are not mistaken and governments and economic deciders are getting worried. The food crisis, the ecological crisis, the European crisis are other aspects of this crisis which show the dead end which the capitalist system leads us to. So many fundamental questions which feed the stubborn determination of contemporary anti-capitalism, of socialism for the 21st century. The institutional, governmental left has chosen to accompany the system, to fight about posts rather than the class struggle.

A new political factor emerges

Our own project turns its back on this management left which accompanies regression. Because this is the precondition for changing the relationship of forces on the left. The soft left has never proved its capacity to really defeat the right and change life for the better.

Many people are looking for an overall, resistant and anti-capitalist alternative. Former members of political parties, trade-unionists, youth and older people, ecologists, feminists, social activists, and of course thousands of women and men who have never before taken the step to join anything.

It is now, we think the moment to take sides, to join on of the hundreds of committees which exist in France, to forge hope through the number we are and the content of our discussions.

Nobody today, after seeing the number and diversity of people at the national meeting, can accuse the LCR of simply wanting to create a bigger and better LCR. But it must grow still further on the base of the policies decided in Saint-Denis. Because we need all the strength and energy possible to succeed in the major challenge that is the creation of a new party.