

Macron officials hold secret talks with neo-fascists amid French government crisis

Alex Lantier
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On Wednesday, the ex-Maoist French daily *Libération* revealed that top officials of President Emmanuel Macron's government have held repeated secret talks with the leadership of the far-right National Rally (RN), Marine Le Pen and Jordan Bardella. These meetings took place in the private residence of Thierry Solère, a lobbyist linked to France's two largest banks, BNP Paribas and Société Générale.

This revelation comes amid an unprecedented political crisis in France after the inconclusive snap elections Macron called Sunday. Jean-Luc Mélenchon's New Popular Front (NFP) came in first, in front of Macron's Ensemble coalition, which suffered a devastating defeat, and the RN, which had been expected to carry the election after Macron called it on June 9 but fell into third place in the National Assembly. So far, no one has been able to form a government.

The Macron-RN talks reported in *Libération* show that the election, and Macron's entire presidency, have been conducted on fraudulent grounds. Macron is not carrying out a determined struggle against the neo-fascists, who are not determined defenders of French little people against the arrogant banker Macron. Ensemble and the RN are political representatives of the same ruling class, whose agents like Solère invite them for cordial conversations in luxury settings.

This also exposes the bankruptcy of Mélenchon's NFP and its perspective of fighting the far right via an electoral alliance with Ensemble. Macron has rejected, to date, Mélenchon's entreaties to let the NFP try to form a government. More broadly, it is evident that, as during its collaboration with the Nazi occupation of France in World War II, the bourgeoisie supports police state rule and has ever more overt sympathies with far-right forces.

Libération revealed how leading figures in the Macron government, including a sitting defense minister and a former prime minister, met Le Pen and Bardella at

Solère's house on Aumale Street in central Paris. Its article, titled "The Secret Dinners of Macron's People with the RN," reported:

Thus, in recent months, according to our sources, the two main leaders of the National Rally, Marine Le Pen and Jordan Bardella, were repeatedly invited to Aumale Street. They did not come at the same time, but they were sometimes in the presence of leading members of the presidential camp, like ex-Prime Minister Edouard Philippe and current Defense Minister Sébastien Lecornu, both very close to Solère. The normalization of the RN also needs such secret meetings to proceed.

One such meeting, involving Bardella, took place on June 12, three days after Macron announced the snap elections in reaction to the neo-fascist surge in the European elections. The RN was at that time widely expected to carry the elections, even possibly winning an outright majority in the Assembly that would have allowed it to form the first far-right government in France since Philippe Pétain's Nazi-collaborationist Vichy regime collapsed in 1944.

Libération cites as its sources anonymous residents of Aumale Street and the neighborhood who were surprised, and sometimes woken in the middle of the night, by large numbers of official vehicles and bodyguards in the politicians' security detachments. They reported seeing Le Pen, Bardella, Philippe, Lecornu and Interior Minister Gérald Darmanin leaving these meetings at Solère's residence.

Confronted with the story, Solère and Lecornu initially gave *Libération* identically-worded denials: "Who is

telling you these lies?” *Libération* concluded that the denials were likely lies rehearsed in advance. In its article, it asked: “Was this a subject directly linked to a request by the head of state [Macron], that therefore had to remain secret, as befits a lobbyist [Solère] who describes his work as the ‘president’s agenda.’”

When BFM-TV asked Le Pen, about the reports however, she bluntly confirmed that she had met Philippe: “You know, I meet all sorts of people, and it’s totally normal.”

It appears Edouard Philippe concluded that a strategy of lying denials was untenable. Invited on TF1 news to discuss the problem of the “ungovernability” of France, he told news anchor Gilles Bouleau he had indeed met Marine Le Pen at Solère’s apartment: “Yes, it’s true. We had dinner together because we don’t know each other well. We had dinner, and we discovered during the dinner, which was cordial, that we have very profound differences on a very many topics.”

When Bouleau asked Philippe whether it was really necessary to have a cordial dinner with Le Pen to decide whether he has differences with a neo-fascist, Philippe could only reply: “I love, love, love meeting people.” Philippe changed the subject, and Bouleau, aware of what questions he could and could not ask, brought the interview to a close.

Yesterday, Macron issued a statement to the French people on X/Twitter that he would “leave a little bit of time” to the different political factions in the National Assembly to decide what coalitions are the best for France. But behind closed doors, all factions of the capitalist establishment—openly fascist or supposedly “democratic”—are conspiring behind the backs of the workers. Once some deal is reached, and Macron names a prime minister to try to form a government, this decision will clearly be the product of extensive discussion with the RN.

Whatever government these forces put together, whether or not it includes a few figures tied to Mélenchon, will be a dictatorship ruling against the people. It will bear not only the stamp of the banks, who demanded Macron impose his pension cuts last year in the face of overwhelming popular opposition and mass strikes. It also will pursue NATO military escalation against Russia which is opposed by nearly 90 percent of the population across Western Europe and the United States.

The NFP, it must be stressed, does not oppose imperialist war or police state rule. Its own program

includes a call to dispatch French troops to Ukraine for war with Russia, and to develop France’s military police and intelligence agencies. As Mélenchon continues to appeal to Macron to name him prime minister, and makes no attempt to mobilize the millions of workers and youth who voted for him in struggle, he is simply providing cover for the fascistic maneuvers of the ruling class.

The role of Solère in the Macron government-RN talks underscores in particular the decisive role of the most powerful sections of the capitalist aristocracy in placing both Macron and the neo-fascists at the centre of official French politics.

Solère is also a member of the influential *Le Siècle* (“The Century”) discussion club, which gathers top figures from French finance, business, politics and media. It includes executives from BNP Paribas and Société Générale banks, mega-billionaire Bernard Arnault’s daughter Delphine, and billionaire arms magnate Serge Dassault. Political figures, beyond Solère, include Macron and former PS Prime Minister Lionel Jospin. Among *Le Siècle*’s many media personalities one has *Libération*’s former CEO Serge July and current editor Laurent Joffrin.

Solère introduced to Macron many of the right-wing figures who would become top ministers of his government. This so-called “Bellota Bellota gang,” named after a Paris restaurant where they met to eat Spanish ham, included Edouard Philippe, Sébastien Lecornu and Gérald Darmanin. While Solère for a time grew more distant from Macron, he told *Libération* last year: “I link the President to figures as different as Marine Le Pen and [former Socialist Party (PS) presidential candidate] Arnaud Montebourg.”

These events underscore how, in the 21st century as in the 20th century, the only viable perspective for a struggle against the far right and war is the fight for socialism against capitalism, led by the working class.



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