

France Votes, Amidst a State of Emergency

By [Stephen Lendman](#)

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A state of emergency exists, declared by outgoing President Hollande in November 2015 after the Paris Charlie Hebdo/kosher market false flag attacks.

At the time, Hollande called what happened “an act of war,” suspending constitutional rule, followed by lawmakers enacting France’s version of America’s Patriot Act.

He and parliamentarians exploited the incidents to crack down hard on civil liberties, human rights, and other democratic principles.

Fear-mongering propaganda persists, convincing people to believe sacrificing fundamental freedoms protects their security.

On election day, France resembles an armed camp, following the violent Champs Elysees incident by an alleged ISIS sympathizer, creating unwarranted hysteria.

Over 50,000 soldiers and police are deployed at polling stations and elsewhere in Paris and other cities.

The election is too close to call – four leading candidates vying to be two finalists, facing off against each other in May 7 runoff voting:

- Prime Minister Francois Fillon;
- former economy, industry and digital affairs minister Emmanuel Macron;
- Left Party’s Jean-Luc Melenchon; and
- National Front leader Marine Le Pen.

On June 11 and 18, National Assembly elections will be held. On April 24 – 26, the Constitutional Council will verify first round presidential results, the same procedure following the May 7 runoff.

France’s new president is expected to be inaugurated on May 14, possibly sooner. Fillon and Macron represent dirty business as usual.

Melenchon’s campaign featured anti-capitalist rhetoric. His popularity surged in its closing days. He favors taxing the rich, renegotiating international trade deals and France’s EU role, ending nuclear power, treating refugees humanely, and more greatly empowering parliament.

He rejects succumbing to fear and panic, saying

“(o)ur duty as citizens is to stay away from the polemics our enemies are dreaming of, and, on the opposite, to stay together.”

In March, Le Pen announced her “[144 presidential commitments](#),” including:

Banking and monetary system

- Scrap the 1973 law that secures independence of the Bank of France
- Restore a national currency to face “unfair competition”
- Allow the Bank of France to directly fund the Treasury
- Restore “monetary, legislative, territorial and economic sovereignty”
- Cut interest rates on loans and banking overdrafts for companies and households
- Scrap EU regulation that freezes or bans the withdrawal of deposits (life insurance and savings) in case of a financial crisis or bank run

Europe

- Organize a referendum on France’s European Union membership
- Pull out of the Schengen accord that guarantees freedom of movement
- Recreate a 6,000-strong border-control police unit
- Ban posted workers from EU countries to work in France
- Replace EU’s agricultural pact with a French agricultural deal

Trade

- Promote “smart protectionism”
- Ban foreign companies with optimization tax-scheme from having access to public markets
- Support French companies in face of “unfair international competition”
- Ban imports of all type of goods that don’t respect French norms
- Create a “patriotic economy” by rescinding EU laws that ban national preference for public orders
- Ban foreign investors from strategic and “important” French industries
- Create a sovereign fund to protect French companies from “vulture” funds and takeovers
- “Refuse trade agreements” such as CETA, TAFTA, accords with Australia and New Zealand

Industry

- Cut regulated natural gas and electricity prices by 5 percent “immediately”
- Maintain state control on EDF, start a major multibillion euros re-fit plan of the country’s nuclear plants, keep Fessenheim nuclear plant open
- Ban shale-gas exploration “until environment, security and health conditions are satisfactory”
- Set a moratorium on windmills for power generation
- Ban genetically modified organisms
- Plan to re-industrialize the country with state backing

- Keep innovation in France by banning a company that received state subsidies or tax cuts from being acquired by a foreign investor
- Support small and mid size companies by alleviating administrative rules, taxes and labor regulations

Taxes

- Create an additional tax on foreign workers “to promote priority to French nationals”
- Maintain the ISF wealth tax
- Lower income taxes for the three lowest income brackets
- Create a tax on companies doing business in France but evading the tax system on profits

Immigration, Foreigners, National Identity

- Cut legal immigration to 10,000 a year
- Ban “automatic naturalization” for spouses
- Automatic deportation of any foreign criminal offender
- Scratch the right of birthplace
- Make citizenship a “privilege” and insure a “national priority” for French citizens in the constitution
- Put French flags on all public buildings
- “Defend the French language” by restricting the use of foreign languages in schools and by reserving half the teaching time in primary schools to French language
- Make uniforms mandatory in schools

Security

- Pull out of NATO military command
- Increase defense spending to 3 percent of GDP by 2022
- Hire 15,000 police and security forces
- Build a new aircraft carrier (to be named Richelieu)
- Plan to disarm “5,000 gang leaders” in French suburbs
- Rebuild a local intelligence service
- Scratch state family subsidies if underage child is found guilty of repeated offenses
- Creation of a sentence of life without parole
- Creation of 40,000 new prison cells

Terrorism

- Ban all radical Islam groups
- Close all extremists mosques

Labor Laws and Retirement

- National plan for equal pay for women
- Lower retirement age to 60 with 40 years of contributions for a full pension

- Scrap the latest labor regulation (Loi El Khomri)
- Maintain 35-hour workweek
- Increase public workers' wages

Liberties

- National data protection plan: personal data storage and servers must be in France
- Ban surrogacy and restrict medically supported procreation to people with sterility problems
- Scrap the 2014 law allowing same-sex marriage and replace it with civil union (without retroactivity)
- Put the state on the supervisory board of the television and radio regulator

Electoral System

- Change the voting system to proportional for every election (legislative, senatorial, presidential)
- Cut the number of lawmakers at the National Assembly to 300 from 577 and Senate to 200 from 348
- Cut local administration and shrink the levels of local types of governments by half
- Make citizen-initiated referendums easier to organize

Le Pen will likely advance to second round voting, a long shot at best to become France's next president.

How would she govern if elected? Politicians nearly always say one thing and do another.

Trump straightaway reneged on key campaign pledges – especially on interventionism, NATO, replacing Obamacare with something better, letting Goldman Sachs run economic policy, putting generals in charge of geopolitical policies, and promising to represent ordinary Americans.

If elected, will Le Pen go the same way? Will she continue dirty business as usual, abandon notions of pulling out of the EU and NATO, and forget about restoring French sovereignty?

Will she continue establishment policies overall? Like America, France's deep state intends doing whatever it takes to retain its power and privilege.

Stephen Lendman lives in Chicago. He can be reached at lendmanstephen@sbcglobal.net.

His new book as editor and contributor is titled "Flashpoint in Ukraine: How the US Drive for Hegemony Risks WW III."

<http://www.claritypress.com/LendmanIII.html>

Visit his blog site at sjlendman.blogspot.com.

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About the author:

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<http://www.claritypress.com/LendmanIII.html> Visit his blog site at sjlendman.blogspot.com. Listen to cutting-edge discussions with distinguished guests on the Progressive Radio News Hour on the Progressive Radio Network. It airs three times weekly: live on Sundays at 1PM Central time plus two prerecorded archived programs.

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