



MACRON'S CRISIS IN FRANCE

IS A DANGER TO ALL OF EUROPE

BY

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Natalie Nougayrède has again brilliantly summed up the problem into a clearcut equation:

Extreme forces are rejoicing over president' Macrons predicament. Their ultimate goal is a political takeover of the continent.

For Europe's sake, Emmanuel Macron needs help – not our scorn or hatred. A young, reformist French president who promised a “European renaissance” finds himself struggling at the helm of a country that is fast becoming “the sick man of Europe” again.

If the “sad passions” that Macron has warned of many times take hold in France, an entire continent will be affected – not just one man's political career.

Extreme forces across Europe are busily rejoicing over Macron's gilets jaunes predicament. From Britain's hardline Brexiters (both left and right) to Italy's far-right strongman Matteo Salvini, not to mention Putin's propaganda outlets, the relish is unmistakable. Upheaval and chaos in liberal democracies is what they thrive on. The prize the extremists seek is a political takeover of Europe in next May's European parliament elections. Events in France are ominous, and their significance extends far beyond one country's borders.

Most of the protesters have genuine, if chaotically expressed, grievances. They consider themselves the “invisible” people treated with contempt by Parisian elites, and now they've made themselves very visible with their fluorescent vests. Public opinion is behind them.

Entire social groups feel pitted against one another: young versus old, unemployed versus employed, rural versus urban, unqualified versus educated.



Such divisions exist in many countries, but in France they take on an existential dimension because of the ideal of egalitarianism historically associated with the republic. Many French people feel reality doesn't reflect what they are entitled to have.

When Macron ran for office in 2017, he promised a "revolution" (it was even the title of his campaign book) to address a widespread need for domestic renewal and a rebooting of French prestige, not least on the European stage.

Now the president looks paralysed at home.

Macron will now provide new fodder for extremists and populists across the continent. The Le Pens, Orbáns and Salvini are waiting in the wings. If we don't find solutions, the EU election in France risks becoming a referendum against Macron.

There can be no European democratic project or social justice without a European democratic France.

Put bluntly: if nationalist populism, euro septicism ; radical sovereignism are part of the propbles, Eyes of Europe is part of the solution.

EUROPE IS IN A DEADLOCK

The May 2019 elections threaten to be a very difficult milestone for Europe to pass.

Euroscepticism and anti-politics are on the agenda. A spectre is haunting the West: a general and challenging diffidence of our elites and democratic representation. Nearly all European or national leaders are in the spotlights of an increasingly anti-establishment and abstention-trend.

The Zeitgeist is in contest, protest, controversy, dispute, even radical rebellion.

Communication has broken down across Europe between the rulers and the governed.

The system is crashing swiftly. Europe is on the verge of implosion.

Romania is preparing to preside over this drifting continent. The Commission and its President are about to take their leave. Juncker is going away in a state of general indifference.



The French-German engine has obviously failures and seems out of order.

Angela Merkel has lost the confidence of the Germans and the dashing Emmanuel Macron is the permanent target of the rebellious yellow vests.

They have become the visible part of an iceberg that threatens the ocean liner Europe. Aren't we experiencing a massive crisis of democracy?

Anti-system parties are obviously on the rise. There threatens to be a leadership race on anti-system forces in the next European Parliament. The issue at stake is the weight and influence that the far-right anti-system parties are determined to gain in the European institutions under the next legislature. The leader of the Italian five-star movement offers to make available to French yellow vests the computer system on which the 5 stars have built their system for consulting their members, which they present as a model of direct democracy of which they are the champions.

The objective of the M5S is to form a powerful group of far-right as well as far-left anti establishment sovereignists within the European Parliament with the French National Front, the Poles, the Hungarians, the Belgian Vlaams Belang and the Dutch Geert Wilders party.

And what do all these activists want? They all dream of some form of **direct democracy**.

EUROPES NEEDS A NEW AND AMBITIOUS SOCIAL CONTRACT

Amazingly, Macron is suddenly offering the angry French a "*great national debate*" in an open letter to the French Nation and republic.

Fair enough, this is a very valiant offer from the president. But it's probably too little, too late. The dialogue seems dramatically broken between the european citizens and their leaders, especially in France.

Macron wants to give the French the opportunity to air their numerous grievances. The President of the Republic is henceforth betting on dialogue "*to get out of the crisis and **transform anger into solutions***".

"A major national debate will take place until March 15. It won't be "an election neither a referendum"



*"Your proposals will make it possible to build **a new contract for the Nation**, to structure the action of the Government and Parliament, but also France's positions at European and international level. I will report directly to you within one month of the end of the debate." Almost everything will be on the table.*

At least we will show that we are a people who are not afraid to speak, to exchange, to debate.

The discussions will focus on four main themes: *taxation and public expenditure, the organisation of the State and public services, ecological transition, democracy and citizenship*. **Strangely enough, these are all patent Eyes of Europe issues !**

What is badly and urgently needed is a broad pan-European discussion in order to negotiate a new Social Contract throughout Europe . This discussion needs to focus on the values inherited from our European culture. It will therefore be both cultural and social for there is no social cohesion without a certain degree of equality, which implies tax harmonisation at European level.

The problem is that there is still no European society and no such thing as a European public opinion.

Eyes of Europe has repeatedly stressed this loud and clear over the last 20 years.

Eyes of Europe is a self-active platform for collective education that is determined :

1. To convey the cultural heritage of our old European civilisation to young Europeans with the use of audiovisual and digital means of our time.
2. To form the critical spirit of young Europeans and awaken their discernment.
3. To make the younger generations of X,Y,Z...open-minded european citizens, responsible critical and proud to be so.
4. To create as quickly as possible this European public opinion which is lacking today.



5. Eyes of Europe intends to encourage the creation of a European society, where national and regional educational networks have been concerned for decades and centuries with forging a total French, German and Italian national mentality.
6. Eyes of Europe wants to achieve its objectives by challenging young Europeans in real time and in English.
7. EOE wants to promote through dialogue in online and interactive learning where young people talk to young people and especially learn young people what they know and discover together through exchange and interaction on the web.
8. In this respect, Eyes of Europe is a key democratic agora where the word circulates freely.
9. In Sweden, but also in France and Flanders, teenagers have taken to the streets to defend the climate. Tomorrow they will be skipping classes to protest against inequalities, radical violence; for safe food, fair and equitable immigration, and for strict equality between men and women. This is a daring step towards EOE.
10. Eyes of Europe proposes nothing less than to introduce through education a form of direct democracy. Democracy can eventually be taught, but above all it is learned by practising it on a daily basis and from a very early age on

Populist nationalism is part of the problem; EoE wants to be part of the solution.

Nationalist populism stands for narrow-mindedness. Eyes of Europe is advocating breadth of mind. Europe is literally and etymologically the goddess with a wide view.

The Eyes of Europe - the wide-eyed- embrace a vast horizon

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