

France - Macron Does Not Fulfill His Campaign Promises of “Government of People for the People”

Interview by Iran’s Fars News Agency (FNA) with Peter Koenig

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*Economist and Geopolitical Analyst, Peter Koenig, says that French President, **Emmanuel Macron**, is pursuing a policy against his pre-election promise, “en marche” movement.*

Commenting on Macron’s taxing policy, former World Bank Economist says “he transforms public wealth into private wealth and shifts it upwards” by “slashing taxes for the rich, and imposing new taxes on poor and middle-class citizens, reducing pensions, unemployment, health benefits, etc.”

Peter Koenig believes the move by the yellow vests is an “opportunity for change” which “can indeed be spread to other countries in Europe and the United States”.

Below is the full text of the interview.

Fars News Agency: The protesting Yellow Vests want Macron out of Elysee. How has Macron turned to a figure intensely disliked by so many of his own people?

Peter Koenig: The French were disgusted by President François Hollande, Emmanuel Macron’s Predecessor. Hollande was nominally a ‘socialist’, but he had no backbone, and sold France out to neoliberalism. Actually, Hollande was the epitome of the non-distinction of parties; i.e. no matter what the party color, the overarching ruling force throughout the western world had become ‘neoliberalism’ - in many cases bordering on neo-fascism. France was a case in point - and was well-prepared for what was to follow. Up came the new King Macron, who had no party, and still has no party, but a movement called, “en marche”, meaning more or less “let’s move forward”.

From 2014 to 2016, Macron was Minister of Economy and Finance, a period during which he prepared the very unpopular new “Labor Law”, under which eventually workers might lose most of their accumulated labor rights, could be hired and fired by industry without hardly any protection. The law was finally implemented during Macron’s first year in Office.

Previously, from 2008 - coincidentally the year when the man-made ‘financial crisis’ began - to 2012, Macron was a successful investment banker at Rothschild Bank, where he learned the ropes of international finance, debt restructuring and, in fact - debt-enslaving.

In hindsight, it is clear that he was prepared for the presidency by the Rothschild clan and the elite that is behind it. Campaigning from about mid-2016 to the 2017 elections, he was propped up by the banking funded media. He promised a new government of the people and for the people with his new Movement, “en marche”. With the help of ‘false flags’ - i.e.

the 14th July 2016 (French National Holiday) massacre in Nice, he promised more security, a permanent Emergency Law (akin to Martial Law), if he became President. After this and previous 'false flags' in Paris, people screamed for more security from terrorism, largely unaware that it was state terrorism – and with the help of internet / facebook / Cambridge Analytica propaganda campaign, Roi Macron was elected in the second round on 7 May 2017, with, according to the going 'democratic system', a decisive margin – but, in fact, with less than 25% of the eligible French electorate.

Soon after his election victory, he turned around, disregarded his pre-election promises – which is not unusual for politicians in general – but what distinguished Macron from others, he displayed an abject arrogance, almost an outright disrespect, or even disgust, for the common people whom he promised to govern for, started slashing taxes for the rich, and imposing new taxes on poor and middle class citizens, reducing pensions, unemployment and health benefits, and so on. Eventually the new so-called eco-gasoline tax was just about the legendary drop that brought the barrel to overflow, and Macron's popularity dropped to below 18%.

Macron eventually rescinded the new fuel tax, and other taxes, as well as increased the minimum wage by €100 per month – with an apologetic face which was clearly fake – a gesture "too little too late" on public television. Plus, in his televised speech, he did not mention with one word the new most unpopular Labor Law he put through Parliament, where his Movement has an absolute majority. Withdrawing that unpopular law, may have just given Macron the credit he missed and still misses. But his capitalist backers, would of course not allow such a profit-infringing concession. Today, the Yellow Vests and much of the French people want nothing less than Macron's resignation.

FNA: How do these unrests affect the economy?

PK: There are two sides of economics. The one for the protesters and the French people per se – is that they are unhappy with the continuous deterioration of the purchasing power of French wages and hard-earned social benefits. They require an outright reversal of the upward shift of capital from the working class to the elite – a trend that is clearly visible not only in France, but also in most other western countries, especially the US. – If the Yellow Vests succeed, that might mean an economic upheaval, perhaps an economic revolution that could spread to other countries in Europe, and possibly beyond.

I trust that the French Yellow Vests are well aware of this, and that their protests are calls for change way beyond the French borders. And in fact, it already shows, as protests have started – perhaps under other pretexts, in Hungary, Belgium, The Netherlands, Romania, etc.

In Germany, Chancellor Merkel's days are counted. Who and what will follow her? – There is a tremendous social discontent in Germany for reasons not much different from the ones in France – falling purchasing power, increasing poverty. A large proportion of the German population, mostly women, works part time, and many of them, especially single mothers, need at least two jobs to survive. They escape the unemployment statistics. The capital-controlled media will not report and inform the people of the truth. Lying has been their bread and butter. And this doesn't likely change, unless the system changes.

This might mean exit from the Euro and exit from the EU – i.e. FREXIT. The macro-economic benefit for the country would be tremendous. Of course, as with BREXIT, the tremendous

benefits for the people will not be reported either by the mainstream media, because it would be a slap in the face of unfettered neoliberal capitalism. To the contrary, people are intimidated with threats of a looming disaster, if their countries would break loose from the already defunct European Union. It would mean going back to the roots of economics, i.e. basically re-vamp the economy by local production for local markets with a local currency and a public banking system that works for the French people, for the French economy, and not for the shareholders in far-away countries, i.e. Wall Street and large European private banks.

People would be motivated to work for their country and their well-being, thereby boosting the local economy and local well-being. If Greece would have taken this step in 2008 to 2009, when the (man-made) crisis hit, with a GREXIT, so to speak, Greece would today be well recovering, would be a prosperous country, with a recovered social system – and most particularly without a strangulating debt.

On the other hand, if things stay the way they are now, with Macron's few half-hearted concessions, the cost to the French economy is estimated at about 8 to 10 billion euros. Who will pay for them? – This is the question. As long as Macron stays in power, nothing will significantly change for the rich, as he will not reverse the tax system. They put him in the Presidency so he transforms public wealth into private wealth and shifts it upwards.

This means, the funds have to be “found” (stolen) somewhere, like, for example, in the former French colonies which are still heavily under the yoke of the French Central Bank. They cannot control their own reserves, as their economies are hamstrung by the French economy – a little known fact.

In other words, if the situation stays as it is, no radical breakthrough by the Yellow Vests, the situation for the French economy may be worse – or rather, the official version will blame the protesters, while the extra money is most likely being squeezed from the poor, possibly in the former French colonies in one way or another.

FNA: How do you see the future? Can such crisis be spread to other countries in the European Union, or even the US? Will that leave any room for transatlantic relations?

PK: The future is unpredictable, indeed. A clear case of dynamics. How do the people, and how do politicians react – and how does this interaction between different interest groups affect the overall outcome?

You call it “crisis” – I call it an opportunity. Yes, the opportunity for change can indeed be spread to other countries in Europe – and why not to the United States. Some signs, as I mentioned before, are already on the horizon.

Of course, the controlling power, the neoliberal, “everything goes” capitalism will not just cave in. They have too much at stake. But there are also other forces playing along simultaneously. For example, Asia is becoming stronger by the day, with China's Xi Jinping's New Silk Road – or Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) well under way since 2013, and gradually engulfing and covering Eurasia and Europe with a new way of trade, transport, infrastructure build-up, and a new economic system. The global equation will be changed, and changed for the better of the people.

In this sense, Macron is just a little boy, a little king in a small country, as compared to a

large and long-term movement towards a more equal global, but multi-polar economy. If the Yellow Vests see beyond their own French interests, if they see the “Big Picture” of a new economy which is already shaping up in the East, they may be a valuable contributor and accelerator for change.

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