

# The Macron Affair, Et Al

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The Potemkin-like facade of positive trends in world economic conditions continues to be breached by real conditions of the masses finding ways to inform their rulers that it ain't so.

First of the major breaks was Brexit. PM Cameron relied on the usual scare tactics to obtain approval of continued EU membership. It must be stressed that this stuff almost always works, especially when the media is united in support of the issue. Cameron was forced to resign and was replaced by May.

Then came the American election. The American economy was said to have roundly turned the corner in its advancement towards full recovery. Hillary Clinton had a large negative rating, but consider her opposition. Donald Trump was a racist, sexist reactionary billionaire buffoon. How could she lose? That something was awry became known in the surprising support Clinton's self-styled socialist opponent was receiving. Sanders won the majority of the northern primaries except for a few where Independents weren't allowed to vote in Democratic primaries. All other victories were in the South -- states that would go Republican in the presidential election. Sanders had almost an equal number of primary ballots when he quit -- not counting the hundreds gifted to Clinton. Sanders established himself as a fraud by not sharing the stage with Clinton where he would have had a huge national audience to hear him state his case for major changes. That concession to Clinton may have done her more harm than good. Sanders sleazy move turned many of his supporters off the election process altogether. Not a few voted for Trump as an expression of disgust for the whole system.

The US has had its share of shallow and ignorant Presidents, but none had the national embarrassment quotient as high as does Trump. Blessed be the day that brought us a President who thinks it's OK to respond to the slights of a female news person by citing a supposedly sloppy face lift job. Trump's upcoming impeachment is now a common topic of mainstream journalism. Few have noted an alternative reality other than the 'normal human being' Pence being the reactionary replacement. No President has gone through the entire impeachment process and been forced from office. Can anyone be certain that Trump, under overwhelming opposition, will resign? What if he doesn't and goes through the impeachment and is either kept in office or forced out? He may well use the mainstream onslaught against him to chart a new populist course more on the

order of a Huey Long. In sum, an impeachment attempt may yield a crisis of world historic significance.

Another example of real conditions asserting itself was in the largely forgotten forced resignation of Italian PM Renzi. He is of the young Macron-like neoliberal political orientation. He setup a referendum in order to change the political structure in a way that would grant much more power to the central government. In that way he would be able to reconstruct the Italian mess, where nothing seems to get done, to one more in line with a well-run, good for business, European government. His ouster led to the dramatic rise of the anti-mainstream Five Star movement. It's orientation is more toward corruption rather than the nature of the capitalist system itself. But that may be enough to obtain power in the next national election.

Most recently we have the remarkable phenomenon of Emmanuel Macron coming out of nowhere to become President of France, and with the majority in parliament aligned to his made-on-the-fly party -- Republic on the Move. Macron is a former investment banker who briefly served in the Hollande administration and had never run for any office. These events alone represent a major breakdown in French political-economic conditions. Macron, unlike Trump, swept the entire electoral field, yet it must be noted he did so with a very small electorate turnout. Only 42% of the electorate participated in the parliamentary vote, meaning Macron's party obtained its domination with about 25% of the total possible vote. Macron is a standard neoliberal skewed toward social programs that make ordinary folks feel 'protected.' According to a survey by the Chatham House Royal Institute for international affairs, 70% of the elite (capitalists, retainers and acolytes) accept the EU as a good thing. Only 34% of the masses are in agreement. The nemesis for Macron is German insistence on keeping budget deficits within a 3% limit -- hence the cuts in social programs and millions of disgruntled French people. He will probably fail to get German acceptance of anything more than short-term excess deficits. And then -- who knows?

There was also an important election campaign running concurrently in the UK. PM May was so confident of her successes dealing with Brexit and planning for the separation, plus what seemed like the surprising strength of the economy after a brief slump immediately following the vote, that she called a snap election in order to obliterate the Labour Party and obtain a massive parliamentary majority. What she got instead was catastrophic -- she lost her slim majority and the LP picked up 30 seats. The popular vote for both the LP and CP was about 13 million each. To form a government she had to do a deal with the 10 right-wing protestant MPs from N. Ireland (the ten elected by a total of less than 300,000 votes while the Green and UKIP had more than a million combined votes and picked only 1

MP). Then she was further weakened by the Grenfell Towers fire that killed an estimated 80 poor working class people because they were housed in Conservative Party sanctioned fire trap.

On the agenda is the sorting out of events in the 'B' of the BRIC's nations. Brazil's specially selected by the ruling class President/Gangster Temer has been caught red-handed committing one of his many critical acts. Impeachment is being considered and Temer adamantly refuses to resign. Meanwhile Brazil's brief departure from its many years of depression has come and gone.

Worldwide the core decay of capitalism continues to eat away at what's left of its structure. Eventually its strength will depend on the political equivalent of the cheap cladding that encased Grenfell Towers – something better suited for destruction than protection.

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