

MORE MADNESS OF MACRON: AN ENDLESS CRISIS

Another Season, Another French Prime Minister Blowing in the Wind.

Back when we last visited the Dysfunctional 5th Republic of France, The young and fairly talented Gabriel Attal was the Prime Minister of the country as it went into Macron's disastrous parliamentary elections. The elections went, well... disastrously. The final result yielded a parliament incapable of forming a durable French government. Everything a government does, passing laws, setting budgets, or even appointing ministers (who can actually stay in their posts) became impossible to count on in France.

Attal hung on as caretaker PM for a brief time after the election. He was followed by Michel Barnier, (of Brexit fame) François Bayrou, and Sébastien Lecornu. All started by trying to form a government, and all ended in either no confidence votes from the barely functional Parliament, or in the case of Lecornu, went the "You can't fire me, I quit" route. Lecornu had slowly and methodically tried to put together a government, but it's plain impossible. To be fair, Macron hasn't tried with anyone outside of his incredibly unpopular centrist clique. And really why should he? He's Macron, and the rest of us are wrong.

The Macronist Churn is speeding up. Prime

Minister Lecornu quit Monday morning, after his government collapsed. He had been appointed in early September. He had been in post for a few days. As his first real act as PM, he announced the new governmental cabinet on Sunday evening. He was a dead man walking by Monday morning. There is no Prime Minister of France.



It's a pretty swanky place to be dead.

As I am typing this, it's Thursday. Macron has promised to have another Prime Minister *in post* on Friday, which you may notice is tomorrow. He spent today attended the interment of Robert Badinter in the Pantheon, a pretty building in Paris where they put their fanciest dead people. Robert Badinter is remembered for getting rid of the guillotine.

Presumably Macron is working late right now?

No one knows what kind of government we might have next week, as Macron grinds through a stock of uninspiring French centrists like they're getting delivered from Central Casting.

Sometimes it feels like fashion. Macron has managed to have a new stylish prime minister for each season, each one either failing a vote of confidence in the divided parliament, or quitting before they got fired. Each one taking a poor doomed infantile iteration of French government with them. France can't change taxes, or write a new budget, or... plan for anything. It's just stuck in political stasis as one government after another is euthanized by the representatives of the French people.

No one us happy. But no one can do anything about it.

We managed a little over a year that way, but it looks like France might just be losing its goddamn mind again.

But let me catch you up: A fair bit has happened in French politics since last year's election.

The French Right

In particular, the National Rally (Rassemblement National) has been through a lot, or at least its leader has. Marine Le Pen has been the sorrowful, pitiful victim of getting caught with her hand in a dastardly EU cookie jar. She and her party innocently, with wide eyes and rosy cheeks, embezzled 474,000 Euros from the EU Parliament to pay National Rally expenses back home in France. Le Pen has been convicted, and is barred from running for office for five years, putting her eligibility past the next French presidential election. She has appealed, but the evidence against her is so glaring that it seems likely that she'll have to settle for sitting out a couple years of her sentence in comfortable home confinement. The rest is a suspended sentence.

It's good to to be the Queen. Despite her ineligibility the international press still keeps talking like she's a candidate for president in 2027. She's not, she's literally barred from running by the courts, *because she did crimes and got caught doing them*. I don't understand why the international press keeps not getting this.

Meanwhile...

The old cast from last year is coming back. Green politician Marine Tondelier is back, and she is worried that France might fall into fascism. Like much of Frances left, she looks tired. Her green jacket is darker and more understated these days. Macron's first PM

Édouard Philippe is also back in the media, but he's worried about the stock market. He's calling for his old boss to quit the presidency early to allow for new elections, but that's not going to happen. It's not Macron's style, he's more of a France-sacrifices-for-me type of guy. He's got two more years, and he's a real hit the farther he gets from Paris.

Macron is still mostly not on speaking terms with France. He *is* doing plenty of speaking! He just spends all his time on international issues, where he gets plenty of the love he clearly feels he deserves. He's doing fashionable presidential things like the recognition of Palestine, and talking about extending France's nuclear deterrent to the rest of Europe in response to the war in Ukraine. He criticized Trump over Trump's creepy Greenland lust. He's like a clean, smiling boy band member waving at fans... as soon as he gets out of France.

So we know he still knows how to talk, just not how to talk to the people he supposedly leads. He won't be giving up the presidency early, he has too many cool dates planned with other heads of state for that. The world still loves him.

But they don't know him like France does.

Though some of us foreigners do have an idea of what he's really like. Right now he has to stay here and appoint a Prime Minister, preferably with the political talent to create a government that can live long enough to pass a budget. Because, right now France has no budget. Did I forget to mention that?

France can carry over budget elements from the last time a budget was voted.. but there is no specific 2025 budget, much less anything planned for 2026, which is now less than 3 months away. France carries over the expired budget and tries to fit the current infrastructure into it. It is almost a mirror image of the American shut down. People and cities can do things, but the Federal equivalent can't make any decisions, or make

much happen at the national level. But the government employees, the air traffic controllers, they're still getting paid. (France would burn to the ground if they didn't. You don't FAF0 with French workers.)

Making Do, For Now

Most places in France are doing ok, they're creative and careful. My local city just upgraded the trams, repaired a bridge, and is installing bike shares. But everyone knows it can't go on like this. The budget is getting more out of date, new projects, even those announced by Macron himself, can't really get off the ground. Modern nations need governments to really function.

As things sit back in mean 'ol France, Lecornu is heading out. Many are calling for Macron to quit. The country still has no budget, no Prime Minister, and no government. France is slowly starting to succumb to political entropy, and people are beginning to suffer.

But that's not really Macron's problem, is it?

(I will be following this story, look for updates as France does more ridiculous things.)