



A PRITI BIG MESS: MACRON'S MIGRANT MALARKY

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It is election season in Europe and the big fish political heavyweight of the continent has its biggest contest coming up. France, traditionally the leader of whichever variable geometric coalition of European capitals has come together to get things done, is up for grabs. Le Palais de l'Élysée, France's White House, appoints the powerful Prime Minister who heads the government, while le Président can fan out into the international community, with his all-powerful pen-and-phone decree setup Générale De Gaulle left as a centralized power broker to rival Sun King Louis XIV (L'État, c'était lui – maintenant c'est Macron).

Whether it is your yearly Climate conference, the Davos WEF hobnobbery, UNGA week in NYC or whichever EU traveling circus in between—France's presidency is set up to maintain the V^{ème} République's status as a diplomatic superpower. Possessed of a nuclear force de frappe numbering in the hundreds (with a fully operational nuclear triad spread out over its considerable overseas possessions) to say nothing of the enviably integrated European Space program—Paris is the unquestioned military heavyweight on the continent, moving on the say-so of the office that also includes a ceremonial role as co-prince of Andorra.

No wonder Emmanuel Macron wants to keep the seat for another 5 years. And yet, where he easily strolled into the job last time—cannibalizing the traditional centre-right and centre-left—it turned out stabbing his mentor François Hollande in the back was a good move: The anointed successor of Macron's predecessor didn't even break double digits. A second round against Marine Le-Pen had him a shoo-in for victory.

Having naturally moved rightwards from the Socialist party government Macron had been Finance minister for, he seems intent on repeating David Cameron's 2015 trick of securing a majority by uniting the right of France's political spectrum. Such a feat would be admirable and necessitate some manner of negotiation with Éric Zemmour, who may well find himself in the one position that prevents any such deal: Second-round opponent. Le-Pen and Valérie Pécresse, the freshly-minted nominee for the centre-right Républicains will be splitting the right with them in fully four directions, and that's without counting other patriotic, sovereigntist rightist forces of Gaullist persuasion, of which there are a couple more.

Cameron's pledge to host a referendum on EU membership if given a majority in Westminster was an admirable way to grasp a nettle, though much less courage was on hand when faced with the prospect

of having to keep the promise. Macron's record and governing agenda is handicapped on this count: as a central force of globalism, he will struggle to move the soul of the people Cameron called "fruitcakes and loonies"—a basket of European deplorables who might have been in the market for a French version of Cameroonian "eurorealism."

An unlikely ally in his quest for a muscular, nationalist political profile is a cabinet minister across the channel: the Right Honourable Priti Patel, Her Majesty's Home Secretary. No less an authority on the matter, as the President of Belarus recently pinpointed France's export of irregular migrants in the UK's direction as a geopolitical stab against the international order. Such behaviour is uncharacteristic of the sort of country that aspires to diplomatic leadership and is therefore suspect to having ulterior motives. Where the winter months usually evince a reduction in sea-based migrant flows due to increased danger, there doesn't seem to have been any let-up in human trafficking from the Calais side of the English Channel this year. Despite pro-forma protestations from French officials ("become less attractive economically" is not a solution) the only explanation seems to be Macron's preening for political gain.

Why Priti Patel would lend Dover's white sandy beaches to such domestic subterfuge is anyone's guess. Her rhetoric has never disappointed the hardline immigration restrictionists on either side of the pond, although Nigel Farage has taken the trouble to keep the spotlight on her lack of bite to back up her bark. The results so far are an abuse of Britain's search-and-rescue civilian distress relief corps, a volunteer-based NGO which is stretched thin enough as to miss the 27 recently-departed migrants who paid the cost of Emmanuel Macron's political needs.

Candidates like Zémmour should take the chance to defeat a common globalist talking point—that nationalists are incapable of international cooperation. The globalist failure on borders and irregular migrants is one of the most glaring examples of their incapacity for good government, and the correct solution remains to send lawbreakers to their country of origin or a country willing to accept the responsibility for doing so.

Say a prayer for the English Channel. The source of Britain's world-famous fish-and-chips is rapidly becoming a staging ground for information operations of political nature. It'll be left to the people to figure out the mess.

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[Featured image](#): "Migrants," by Laurence Blanchard, painted in 2020.

