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Obituary

# Daniel Noverraz, known as Léonce Aguirre (1949-2011)

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**Daniel Noverraz, known as Léonce Aguirre, died suddenly on September 29, 2011. Initially close to the Communist Party, he joined the Fourth International in 1968 in Lausanne, after May 1968 in France and the impact of the role played then by the French section and the Jeunesse communiste révolutionnaire. In 1969 he participated in the foundation of the Ligue marxiste révolutionnaire (LMR), Swiss section of the Fourth International.**

Charles-André Udry, a historic leader of the LMR and the Fourth International, wrote in a message after the death of Aguirre: "Then, pseudonyms were de rigueur. His was "Stanislas". But everyone called him "Nono". A diminutive which stemmed from his family name, but fitted in with his generosity.... The rebellious character was something he had in full. And perhaps this was at the origin of his adopted name of "Aguirre". He was involved in all the militant activities: the regular distribution of "La Brèche" leaflets at the workplaces; mobilisations in support of the struggle of the Vietnamese people against the US military intervention; those of youth for free access to the cinemas; the organisation of the "La Brèche" student circles; demonstrations at the Polish embassy in Berne in December 1970, during the workers' revolts in Gdansk; solidarity with the workers at LIP in 1973.

"His activist élan rested on a set of convictions consolidated by a real sense of social injustice and by the desire to understand the socio-economic and political reality in which he acted. Like other activists from Francophone Switzerland, he "emigrated" politically to France and joined the Ligue communiste révolutionnaire (LCR), French section of the Fourth International."

At the beginning of the 1980s he became a member of the LCR's central committee, and became a full timer, leading the minority "ARA" current, with reservations notably in relation to the majority projects of left recomposition with those such as Pierre Juquin who had broken with the PCF. He also challenged the analysis of the Soviet Union and the countries of Eastern Europe as "deformed degenerate workers' states", questioning the "tragic necessity" of the policy of the Bolsheviks during the Russian revolution and dwelling in particular on the tragedy of Kronstadt. He also considered the question of ecology as fundamental.

Favourable to the construction of class struggle trade unions, in 1988 he supported the creation of SUD PTT and the CRC Santé sociaux, which subsequently led to the creation of the Solidaires union, when the LCR majority, attached to the idea of trade union unity, hesitated.

In the early 1990s he was one of the founder of the "Révolution!" tendency, defending the construction of a revolutionary party against what he believed to be the drift of the LCR leadership, in the context of the policy of recomposition and construction of an alternative, and defended notably the alliance with Lutte ouvrière.

After the renewal of workers' mobilisations marked by the strikes of November and December 1995 Aguirre participated in the establishment of a new majority inside the LCR, which led to the promotion of common lists with Lutte ouvrière for the European elections of 1999, gaining the 5 % necessary to have deputies (3 LO and 2 LCR) in the European Parliament.

After the appearance of the global justice movement Aguirre took a full role, identifying a basic factor for political renewal and hoping that new forms of international organisation could emerge. During the World and European Social Forums (Florence, Paris, London, Athens), he tried to press this perspective with comrades from other sections of the Fourth International.

## **Daniel Noverraz, known as Léonce Aguirre (1949-2011)**

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The unitary campaign against the European Treaty in 2005 in France and its success convinced him that it was possible to build a lasting anti-neoliberal unity. He then took part in the fight for a unitary candidacy at the 2007 French presidential elections. He supported the creation of the Nouveau parti anticapitaliste, seeking to enlarge it to include both libertarian currents and organisations and radical reformist currents, but finding it not broad enough. While complaining frequently about the minority culture which he considered as the "Trotskyist tradition" he was nevertheless involved in building a "unitary" minority within the NPA in France.

Yet beyond agreements or divergences, discussions with Aguirre were always marked by his respect for and recognition of others, and by his desire to go beyond tensions so as to build together the political tool that the workers need.