

<https://npa31.org/spip.php?article7604>



Tribute to Alain Krivine

“Keep the sense of commitment as a banner”

- Features - In Memoriam - Obituaries and appreciations - Tributes to Alain Krivine -

Publication date: Sunday 10 April 2022

Copyright © International Viewpoint - online socialist magazine - All rights reserved

I remember the first meeting where I came to listen to Alain. I must have been 15 years old, and my life turned upside down. The sincerity of his discourse, his ardour and his conclusion on “the revolution that sets right a system that has been turned upside down” had definitely won me over. I wanted to be part of that fight. He was dashing, refused to take himself seriously while defending ideas that were serious in more ways than one. His interests were based only on his convictions, and this was felt at first sight. The opposite of the careerist politician. And already, at the time, this authenticity was a real breath of fresh air.

Later, during all the years of our joint activism, I was able to lavishly appreciate his simplicity and commitment. “Whether there are ten people in a meeting or thousands, you have to go get them one by one,” he repeated to me. Alain had faith only in the virtue of militant activity, by which he measured the sacrifices of each and every one of us – except his own. Like many, I often had the opportunity to savour his taste for derision – that singular self-mockery that made him so accessible – as well as his legendary sense of humour which, without a doubt, was also accessible to all.

Throughout this time, especially during the 1990s, Alain saved the day more than once by allowing us to keep our heads above water thanks to his popularity and the social breadth of his intervention. His address book was used on many occasions to set up or amplify activist initiatives, from the campaign for the cancellation of the debt “Ça suffat comme cil” in 1989 to the mobilization of undocumented migrants in the Église Saint-Bernard in 1996, not to mention the requisitions of empty housing with the DAL alongside his ally, the surgeon Léon Schwartzberg. I also remember that Alain was one of the first on the central committee of the Ligue to foresee the 1995 general strike against the Juppé plan, suffering some amused remarks in the process. Yet it was he who was right.

In 1999, in the European Parliament where we formed a small team around Roseline Vachetta and Alain, I remember that he never noticed the guilty conscience clearly displayed in the eyes of some other former leaders of May 68 when we met them in the corridors. They had been comfortably elected for years after adopting a political trajectory very different from his own. He didn't care because he didn't indulge in that kind of judgment. A quality that he tried with others to instil in me as best he could.

There are a thousand and one shared memories and I know that Alain did not like to fall into the register of nostalgia either. I would just like to emphasize the immense strength he bequeathed to me during the presidential campaigns, to try to give me the confidence that I did not have, and by all the necessary means. Before and after each meeting and each broadcast. Without condescension, without paternalism. With unshakeable fidelity and extraordinary friendship.

Alain always insisted that the most beautiful way to celebrate the memory of the fallen is to perpetuate their struggle. So, I want to keep the sense of his commitment as a banner. A beautiful banner that I feel proud of, thanks to him. Together with a non-negotiable internationalism, rejecting any form of imperialism or national unity. Draped in an anti-fascism as visceral as it was thought out, the very thing that history once again demands of us. Red with a living, unitary and non-dogmatic Marxism. Crowned by his revolutionary obstinacy in wanting to build a better world.

You are quite right Alain: “There are even more reasons, today, to be in revolt and be a revolutionary than yesterday”. Only, without you, today will never be the same again. My thoughts to Michèle, Florence, Nathalie and Hubert.

21 March 2022

PS:

If you like this article or have found it useful, please consider donating towards the work of International Viewpoint. Simply follow this link: [Donate](#) then enter an amount of your choice. One-off donations are very welcome. But regular donations by standing order are also vital to our continuing functioning. See the last paragraph of [this article](#) for our bank account details and take out a standing order. Thanks.