



*CHRONICLE OF THREE
YEARS OF STRUGGLE OF
THE SOCIALIST DEPUTIES*

BASIC INCOME-RUA, NON-RECOURSE, FIGHT
AGAINST POVERTY, MINIMUM
SOCIAL

BY GISÈLE BIÉMOURET, ON 05 . 02 . 2019
AND VALÉRIE RABAUULT, BORIS VALLAUD

CHRONICLE OF THREE YEARS OF STRUGGLE OF THE SOCIALIST DEPUTIES:

BASIC INCOME -RUA, NON-RECOURSE, POVERTY ALLEVIATION, MINIMUM SOCIAL BENEFITS

BY GISEÈLE BIEMOURET, ON 05 . 02 . 2019

Gisèle Biémouret intervenes in the debate on access to social rights Tuesday, February 5, 2019

Summary: Government questioning, in the context of the Yellow Vests and in the framework of the debate around access to social rights after a refusal to examine, by dogmatism, the bill proposed by the deputies of the Socialist & Related Group of territorial experimentation aiming to establish a basic income. This reform of the minimum social benefits into a single benefit is drastic. Under the pretext of simplifying existing benefits and fighting poverty, the government has chosen to make social assistance conditional on an activity. This approach is highly questionable. The stigmatizing discourse surrounding the conditionality of assistance would be tantamount to differentiating between the "good poor" who would work and the "bad poor" who would receive assistance. Gisèle BIEMOURET was able to remind the government of its desire not to rely on two and a half years of work on the basic income, involving 18 departments, citizens, researchers and parliamentarians.

Madam Minister, My dear colleagues,

Allow us to tell you that we are very surprised to see this debate on access to social rights on the agenda of our work when you refused it last week when we examined our proposal for a law on territorial experimentation aimed at introducing a basic income.

Not that we refuse it, but we could have saved time in a context of social crisis without precedent since 3 months.

For the bases of today's debate are very thin: an announcement in the fall of the creation of a universal activity income; the appointment a few days ago of a general rapporteur, an obsession with conditionality to an activity.

We initiated this project to effectively improve access to entitlements in the previous five years with three main objectives: to reform benefits, to simplify access (this is why we introduced the activity bonus), and also to better understand the phenomenon of non-use of entitlements.

Thus, in the report that I submitted with Jean-Louis Costes in 2016 within the framework of the CEC, we made some twenty recommendations, including greater stability of rights, improving the reception of individuals, and in particular making the departmental councils the sole leaders in the fight against non-recourse.

It is also with this will to fight against this non-recourse, that we defended the principle of a basic income and that by dogmatism, you chose to reject, showing us, especially in passing, that your majority is taking advantage of a culture of experimentation when it is not requested by the opposition.

You assume that your future universal activity income will be more effective in terms of results than 2 and a half years of work, involving 18 departments, citizens, researchers and parliamentarians.

Failing to see the reality of your redistributive scheme, this logic questions us.

On the pretext of simplifying existing aid and fighting poverty, you make social assistance conditional on an activity. This approach is highly questionable and we do not subscribe to it. It is not forward-looking but purely liberal in essence. The counterpart induces a lasting transformation of the logic of welfare by making it tougher.

However, one has to be so disconnected to imagine needing to encourage a person with RSA living on 550 euros per month to work. Or hypocritical when Pôle emploi only offers at best 400,000 jobs to the more than 5 million job seekers.

! And where do young people aged 18 to 24, the disabled and the elderly fit into your scheme?

This drastic reform of the social minima in a single benefit, we have the example of England, which is experimenting with it. The first results of the Universal Credit show very significant social costs that should alert us to the risks involved. Christophe Sirugue's 2016 report described the challenges and difficulties of an overly radical approach.

The study by France Stratégie, commissioned by your Government, confirms that the envisaged grouping of "solidarity benefits" into a single social allowance could make more "losers" than "winners" depending on the scenarios.

Moreover, this stigmatizing discourse on aid conditionality would be tantamount to differentiating between the "good poor" who would work and the "bad poor" who would be recipients of aid. These clichés represent a real risk for our national cohesion and are far from contributing to the appeasement that our country needs socially today.

This liberal copy-paste logic will not be acceptable when you refuse to consider the restoration of the FSI or a true redistribution of wealth.

In this context, you were imprudent to disregard our request for experimentation because you could have found there the possibility to confront your model. With your certainties, if you do not take into account the human beings behind the simplification of devices which are for them their only safety and survival net, then you are facing great difficulties.