The far left

Introduction

- What is the far left?
- Sometimes is called the extreme left
- Think of the Communist Party
- But also Trotskyists, Maoists and even Anarchists
- Parties to the left of the Communist Party
- When the Communist Party was very big, it was receiving around 20% of vote
- Declared itself radical and anti-Capitalist
- Very much part of the party system
- 1944 – 1947: part of government
- 1981 – 1984: part of government again
- In the earlier period, governed reasonably happily with the others
- Become a bit more complicated with the Front de gauche since 2012

What is the far left?

- Some people would certainly include the Communist Party
- Historically, it is part of left governmental parties
- The period of the 1930s when it supported the Front Populaire
- 1970s: Programme commun
- What we really mean are groups to the left of the Communist Party
- “Les groupes obscures”
- France has a revolutionary tradition
- This has encouraged certain groups of people to want to be in a revolutionary party
- 1920/1921: The Socialists split and Communist Party was formed
- It seemed the Communists were becoming increasingly reformist
- Reformism became a dirty word to use against the Communists
- However, they did not call themselves this
- They continued to call themselves revolutionaries
- Revolution of emancipation is in the French tradition
- Largely because of 1789 Revolution
- But also because of the Enlightenment to some extent
- In the 19th century, there have been many divisions within the Left
- Reformists, Socialists
- There have been successful Internationals
- The third International was set up by Lenin and the Bolsheviks in 1921
- 1938: Trotsky set up the fourth International
- This wasn’t recognised as an International at all by Moscow’s Communist Party
- These Internationals were part of the splitting
- Third International was a split from the Socialists
- Fourth International was a split from Moscow
- There are divisions on the right