

OBITUARY

## Claude Jacquin (Gabriel) — an internationalist commitment to the end

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Claude Jacquin. Many of us had known him for a long time under his pen name, Claude Gabriel. Jacquin was born in May 21, 1947, he died on the night of April 16 to 17, 2016. He had been suffering for a decade suffering from cancer which proved incurable. This sometimes reduced him to silence, but as soon as possible, he took up his activity again, continuing to facilitate militant links between South Africa and France, analysing the news, waging an unremitting battle for the radical left to take on board these realities. Never did his illness force him to surrender, before the very end.

A member of the Revolutionary Communist League (LCR) in France, he was a member of the of the Fourth International leadership in the 1980s-90s. He is fixed in our memories above all for the links he forged in sub-Saharan Africa and the launch of the publication in *Afrique en Lutte*. He, however, during this period, also followed the youth organisations and the activities of the FI sections in Western Europe - and contributed to the educational sessions organized in the Amsterdam Institute (IIRE), where activists from various continents gathered for three-month long sessions.

Boasting a versatile experience, Claude is one of our members of our generation who have maintained their initial commitments while seeking constantly to rethink the changing conditions for action. Without losing sight of Africa, he “refocused” on France and Europe through integrating the Apex-ISAST Group, “*at the service of elected officials, business committees and health, safety and working conditions committees (CHSCT)*” His professional activity allowed him to gain in-depth knowledge of the evolution of our societies, and particularly the industrial fabric in the era of globalization. Claude’s constant preoccupation was to share this knowledge, especially with radical currents involved in the trade union field, discussing slogans and prospects; he unfortunately received fewer responses to his proposals to debate these issues than they merited.

Claude participated in the founding of the NPA, then left with the Anti-capitalist Left (Gauche Anti-capitaliste) when it joined the Left Front. Always a “Fourth Internationalist” he was a member of Ensemble!, the “third component” of the Front de Gauche.

In recent years in particular, Claude, without wanting to impose himself, sought to help — through discussions but also by creating moments for the coming together of different movements and people. We had over the years rather lost sight of each other - when we met up again, it was from the outset as friends.

Claude made many and very close friends, as evidenced by the first messages from South Africa, shortly after his death. Mercia recalled that she first waited at Cape Town airport for him 34 years ago. She feels “*devastated*” by the news of his death, as he was not only close to the family (including the dog Sandy), but “*deeply marked*” her “*consciousness and political activism.*” For Brian, Mercia’s companion, Claude was “*the greatest political influence in [his] life.*” “*He has given so much without expecting anything for himself. He just wanted to help.*”

In one day already, expressions of solidarity and sadness came from South Africa, Senegal, India, Poland, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Switzerland, Belgium ... Claude was an internationalist. The tribute to him and his commitment can only be international.

With a thought for his companion, Sylvie, who accompanied him during his illness.

**Pierre Rousset**

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**P.S.**

\* Translation IVP. <http://www.internationalviewpoint.org/>