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LIONEL JOSPIN

Lionel Jospin was born on 12 July 1937 in Meudon (Hauts de Seine). The second child in a family of four, he spent his whole childhood in the Paris region, apart from a period during the occupation, and frequent holidays in the department of Tarn-et-Garonne, from where his mother originated. First a teacher of French and then director of a special Ministry of Education school for adolescents with problems, his father was an activist in the SFIO (*Section française de l'internationale ouvrière*). He was a candidate in the parliamentary elections in l'Indre in the Popular Front period and, after the war, the Federal Secretary of the SFIO in Seine-et-Marne where the family lived. Lionel Jospin's mother, after being a midwife, became a nurse and school social worker.

EDUCATION

After his secondary education in Sèvres, Paris, Meaux and then back in Paris, Lionel Jospin did a year of *Lettres supérieures* before entering the Paris *Institut d'études politiques* in 1956. Awarded a scholarship, he lived at that time at the Antony *cité universitaire* (student hall of residence). It was during these years that he began to be actively involved in politics. Throughout this period, Lionel Jospin spent his summers working as an assistant in children's summer camps (*colonies de vacances*). He worked particularly with adolescents with problems. A good basketball player, he also devoted a considerable part of his time to playing this sport at competitive (university and other) level.

After obtaining a post as a supervisor at ENSEP, Lionel Jospin left the Antony *Cité universitaire* and prepared the competitive entrance examination for ENA, for which he was accepted in November 1961. Immediately afterwards he began his national service in the Tank Corps in Germany (Trier) where he underwent basic training, was then posted to the Saumur reserve officers' school and finally returned to Germany as a second lieutenant just as the Evian agreement ended the Algerian conflict. In July 1963, he began his studies at ENA which he completed in June 1965. From his two years at ENA, he prefers especially to remember his period of work experience in the coal-mining industry of the Nord and Pas-de-Calais.

CAREER

Upon leaving ENA, Lionel Jospin joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as *Secrétaire des Affaires étrangères*. Appointed to the Economic Affairs Directorate, he was particularly involved with the major conferences on economic affairs. In 1969, M. Jospin decided to give up the civil service and diplomatic career opening before him. This decision was prompted not only by the desire to remain loyal to his left-wing ideals, but also by the May 1968 events which made him feel that history was passing him by. In October 1970, he was seconded from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Paris XI University, first of all as senior lecturer and then professor, teaching economics and directing a business department at the Paris-Sceaux University of Technology. He taught there for eleven years until June 1981, when he was elected to the National Assembly. When he ceased to be a minister in April 1992, Lionel Jospin returned, in accordance with the regulations, to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs where he has, since 10 May 1993 been a minister plenipotentiary attached to the central administration, without having been assigned a position.

POLITICAL ACTIVITIES

Lionel Jospin's political involvement began in 1956 with his opposition to the Algerian war. He was active at the time in student union activities, in the *Union nationale des Etudiants de France* (UNEF). In 1958, having been appalled by the crushing of the Budapest uprising by the Soviet Union and somewhat unconvinced by the policy of the SFIO, he became a member of the *Union de la gauche socialiste* (UGS) which became a founding part of the *Parti socialiste unifié* (PSU) which he joined in 1960. After a time away from active politics due to his periods in the army and as a student at ENA and five years at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Lionel Jospin's active political involvement resumed in 1971 with the foundation of the Epinay Party, which he joined through Pierre Joxe. His membership of the Epinay Party was motivated by the steps then under way to bring Socialists together and achieve unity on the left. As a rank-and-file activist in the fifteenth *arrondissement* of Paris, he joined the Group of Experts set up under the First Secretary, François Mitterrand, where he dealt with East/West relations. In June 1973, at the Grenoble Congress, he became a member of the Executive Bureau of the Socialist Party and became National Secretary with responsibility for training. In 1975, Lionel Jospin became National Secretary for third world affairs and then in 1979, at the Metz Congress, National Secretary for International Relations, with responsibility for Coordination. In François Mitterrand's absence, he chaired the National Secretariat and Executive Bureau. From 1975 onwards, he was also responsible for monitoring the sensitive issue of relations between the Socialist Party and the Communist Party. His role alongside François Mitterrand was thus decisive in the conduct of the strategy which led to the 1981 victory.

On 24 January 1981, at the Créteil Extraordinary Congress, which selected François Mitterrand as the Socialist Party's presidential candidate, Lionel Jospin was unanimously elected by the Steering Committee as First Secretary of the party, which he remained until 12 May 1988, when he was appointed *Ministre d'Etat*, Minister of National Education, Youth and Sport.

Profoundly affected by the role he could not avoid playing in the difficult debates at the Rennes Congress (1990), even though he did not want divisions, he gradually distanced himself from the internal life of the Socialist Party, characterized by internal quarrels and practices of which he disapproved. On 3 April 1993, Lionel Jospin resigned from the Socialist Party's Steering Committee and Executive Bureau. He returned to the leadership at the Bourget Congress when he agreed to play a full part in the Conference for Social Change (*Assises de la Transformation sociale*) launched by Michel Rocard, at which figures from all shades of left-wing opinion and ecologists were able to have year-long discussions on the fundamental problems affecting the country. At the Liévin Congress (1994), he decided to issue under his own name a paper addressed to activists in which he analyzed the Left's years in government and put forward specific proposals for reform in order to outline a way forward.

On 4 January 1995, he formally announced to the Socialist Party's National Bureau his decision to put himself forward for selection as the party's candidate in the presidential election. On 5 February 1995, having obtained 65% of the votes of Socialist Party members, he was selected by the Socialist Party Extraordinary Congress as the party's presidential candidate.

ELECTED POSTS

At the 1977 municipal elections, Lionel Jospin became a Paris councillor for the eighteenth *arrondissement* where he was re-elected in March 1983. Elected a National Assembly deputy in the same *arrondissement* in 1981, he headed the Socialist list in the European elections and was elected a Member of the European Parliament on 17 June

1984. In the parliamentary elections of March 1986, at the head of the Paris Socialist-MRG (*Mouvement des radicaux de gauche*) list he was elected with seven other Socialist deputies - as many as the RPR. On 28 September 1986, he stood in a difficult National Assembly by-election in Haute-Garonne, at the request of the local party federation and was elected with three other deputies. He therefore chose to give up his seats as a Paris National Assembly Deputy and councillor. Elected a member of the Haute-Garonne General Council in 1988 in a by-election, re-elected in April 1992 and elected to the Regional Council, he was defeated in the 1993 parliamentary elections in Haute-Garonne. He is also Chairman of the *Institution inter-départementale d'Aménagement hydraulique de la Montagne Noire* (1994) and the Haute-Garonne Economic Development Committee.

MINISTERIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

From 12 May 1988 to 2 April 1992, Lionel Jospin was *Ministre d'Etat*, Minister for National Education. His four years at the head of this ministry saw education made a priority and an ambitious policy of reforms: the *Université 2000* plan, decentralization with increased powers for school councils, a reform of teacher-training, revival of the ZEP policy (*Zones d'éducation prioritaire*), an improvement in the terms and conditions of teachers, preparatory consultations and a start on implementing a reform of the *lycées*, curriculum reform, reforms of nursery and primary schools with the establishment of *cycles d'apprentissage*, introduction to foreign languages at primary level and establishment of the rights of *lycée* pupils, etc..

FAMILY CIRCUMSTANCES

Lionel Jospin has three children from two marriages.

His wife, Sylviane Agacinski, is an *agrégée* in philosophy who lectures at the *Institut des Hautes Etudes en Sciences sociales*. She has published several books.

Source: M. Lionel Jospin's campaign committee (February 1995)

