

# Affirmative Action Backfires on French President

by Nidra Poller



## The Benalla scandal

French president Emmanuel Macron and his supporters breathed a sigh of relief as the “Benalla scandal” that had dominated the news stream since mid-July took a dip into the August doldrums. Mass media switched to summertime mode –heatwaves, sandy beaches, and the occasional thunderstorm with flash floods. But Emmanuel Macron’s glowing façade has flipped, revealing the underside of his invincible rise to power on the wings of an *ex nihilo* creation, La République en Marche (LREM), and the promise of a bright new world.

Alexandre Benalla, a 26 year-old bodyguard and Socialist party apparatchik who had accompanied Macron during the presidential

campaign, was brought into the heart of the presidential palace where he was apparently granted exceptional power and privilege. Benalla's fall from grace was precipitated by an article in the newspaper of reference, *Le Monde*: The "policeman" filmed as he beat a defenseless man that was down is in fact Alexandre Benalla the bearded strongman who had become the president's shadow. The video of "police brutality" on May Day at the trendy Place de la Contrescarpe, a short hop from the Pantheon, had been circulating on social media. A militant of Mélenchon's France Insoumise party had captured the incident on the margins of a spectacularly violent "celebration" where a contingent of more than a thousand black blocs joined by far left radicals had wreaked havoc.

Yes, but the man that was roughed up was not a fire-breathing anarchist. The roughneck who manhandled him was not a policeman. The incident occurred on May 1st. And it took six weeks before his identity was revealed to the public... by the press.

According to reliable sources

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