Beat: Politics

QUENTIN'S LYNCHING RECLASSIFIED AS INTENTIONAL HOMICIDE WITH EXTREME VIOLENCE

PROSECUTOR TARGETS A COORDINATED ANTIFA

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USPA NEWS - The Lyon public prosecutor held a press briefing today, 16 February, following the death of Quentin, lynched by hooded individuals from the Antifa movement, who left him in a state of brain death after he was taken to hospital in Lyon. The young 23 year old mathematics student Quentin died from his injuries and, for this reason, the public prosecutor of Lyon, Thierry Dran, gave a press conference today, 16 February 2026, at 4 p.m. At the end of the press conference, the prosecutor announced the legal classification of the facts and stated that an investigation was being opened for "intentional homicide". The public prosecutor of Lyon also set out in detail the very serious results of the autopsy.
Following the death of Quentin D., the Lyon prosecutor's office had initially indicated that it was widening its investigation to cover "aggravated fatal blows" before the intervention of the prosecutor, who brought the detailed elements of this tragedy and of this savagely deadly assault on Quentin D. This is an editorial, not on the ground reporting. It is based on our own analysis and supplemented by information from official sources and major French news outlets.

INTENTIONAL HOMICIDE, JEUNE GARDE AND LFI: QUENTIN'S LYNCHING MIGHT BE A FRENCH CHARLIE KIRK MARTYR
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The 23 year old student died after being struck by "at least six individuals", who are in the process of being identified, with no arrests having yet taken place.

AT LEAST FIVE SUSPECTS IDENTIFIED
According to our information, at least five people suspected of taking part in the lynching of Quentin D. on Thursday in Lyon have been identified. Several suspects were the subject of an S file because of their previous membership of the far left antifascist movement "La Jeune Garde".
"NO ARRESTS" FOR THE MOMENT
The police have heard "more than fifteen witnesses" and are analysing videos of the attack and, "at the time I am speaking to you, there have been no arrests" after the death of Quentin D., stressed Thierry Dran, the public prosecutor of the Republic in Lyon. "We are in a phase of identification," he added.

"WE APPROVE THEIR RESISTANCE AND THEIR ORGANISATION"
"We approve of their resistance and their organisation," declared Jean Luc Melenchon, leader of the far left party La France insoumise (LFI).
INVESTIGATION OPENED FOR "INTENTIONAL HOMICIDE"
The Lyon public prosecutor indicates that the autopsy "made it possible to determine that Quentin D. essentially had head injuries". Thierry Dran adds that the activist was the victim of a "major cranial trauma associated with a fracture of the right temporal bone", which was fatal in the short term.
"A criminal investigation for intentional homicide, aggravated violence and criminal conspiracy with a view to committing an offence has been opened," he specifies. "At this stage, the investigation is seeking to identify all the direct perpetrators of the criminal acts on the basis not of rumours but of elements gathered during the investigations," he added.

QUENTIN D. "STRUCK BY SIX INDIVIDUALS"

Prosecutor Thierry Dran describes how the events unfolded after the death of Quentin D., who was violently assaulted on Thursday in Lyon: “A small group of seven young women was organising a demonstration in connection with a conference by Rima Hassan, a Member of the European Parliament (MEP) supported by La France insoumise. Very quickly, several people intervened to try to tear away their banner. Around 6 p.m., the men responsible for accompanying them were attacked by a group of around twenty individuals,” he said. “These three young men were thrown to the ground and then struck by several masked and hooded individuals, at least six in the case of Quentin D.,” he continued.

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RACIST GRAFFITI AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TOURS

Celtic crosses sprayed next to the name Quentin were found on Monday morning on the walls of the University of Tours, the university’s management announced, condemning “racist graffiti” in a tense context.

The University of Tours denounced “the presence of a very large number of racist tags, mainly Celtic crosses, on the walls of the Tanneurs campus, in a particularly sensitive national context”.

POLITICAL REACTIONS

JEUNE GARDE ANTIFASCIST DENIES ANY RESPONSIBILITY

In the wake of the president of the Republic, the entire political class on Saturday 14 February condemned the “outburst” of violence that led to the death of Quentin, the 23 year old student, and called for justice. In the dock, La France insoumise (LFI), the far left party led by Jean Luc Melenchon, defended itself against any involvement.

The president of the Republic, Emmanuel Macron, posted on his X account shortly after the announcement of the death of the student Quentin. “In Lyon, Quentin was the victim of an unprecedented outburst of violence. He lost his life at only 23. To his family and loved ones, I extend my thoughts and the support of the Nation. In the Republic, no cause, no ideology will ever justify killing,” he reacted. “Pursuing, bringing to justice and convicting the perpetrators of this atrocity is essential. The hatred that kills has no place here. I call for calm, restraint and respect,” the president continued.

Founded in Lyon in 2018 and dissolved in June, the antifascist group La Jeune Garde is today singled out by the Interior Minister, Laurent Nuñez, for its possible involvement in the fatal assault on Thursday in Lyon on Quentin D., a nationalist activist. According to the Nemesis collective, a conservative feminist group close to the far right, Quentin was part of the security team responsible for protecting its activists who were demonstrating against a conference by LFI MEP Rima Hassan on Thursday evening. He is said to have been assaulted by antifascist militants, some of them from La Jeune Garde, the collective founded by Raphaël Arnault, now an LFI Member of Parliament.

Marine Le Pen, leader of the far right party Rassemblement national, also said she wanted the courts to punish “with the greatest severity” the “barbarians responsible for this lynching”, without naming a culprit.

The public prosecutor, for his part, sidestepped the question repeatedly put by journalists about the involvement of the parliamentary assistant of Raphael Arnault, LFI MP (La France insoumise, far left party of Jean Luc Melenchon) and co founder of the La Jeune Garde Antifa group. The prosecutor did not answer this question, judging it “too political” and leaving it instead to his Interior Minister Laurent Nuñez, who had already taken the lead by qualifying the tragedy as follows: “There was undoubtedly a clash that ended in a lynching, with individuals delivering blows whose mortal nature they cannot have failed to imagine.”

The Interior Minister, Laurent Nunez, former Paris police prefect, was the clearest. He began by offering “his full condolences to the family”, without directly condemning the LFI party and in particular La Jeune Garde before the prosecutor had established anything, in view of the videos circulating on social networks that shocked France. “Only the prosecutor will confirm,” he insisted when asked what led him to suggest that there might be “elements from La Jeune Garde” involved. He went on to say that La Jeune Garde is “for the time being dissolved”, but did not rule out the involvement of former militants: “It could be the participation of former members of La Jeune Garde, who can meet frequently; that is what the testimonies I have received suggest, but the prosecutor will confirm, we will see,” he explained, recalling that in Lyon, “La Jeune Garde was well established.”

Asked about the possible presence, on the night of the events, of the parliamentary assistant to LFI MP Raphael Arnault, co founder of this collective, Laurent Nunez refused to cross the line into accusation: “No, only the prosecutor can do that.” But he did concede that “many militants from the opposing party say so” and that “there are testimonies to that effect”, once again referring to the prosecutor’s next statements.

By contrast, the prosecutor confirmed that the hooded young men who laid into Quentin with their kicks acted “with the intention to kill”, after cross checking video footage with various testimonies from journalists present at the scene and from other victims of the lynching.

From that moment on, the tragic and brutal death of Quentin takes on a particularly and precisely political turn, because it occurred on the margins of the conference by MEP Rima Hassan, member of the far left party LFI, and despite the denials of Jean Luc Melenchon, leader of LFI, who showed very little compassion for the victim Quentin and argued that it was not possible to accuse LFI, denying any responsibility of his party. He is not the only one to deny the responsibility of his political party in the lynching by La Jeune Garde; other accusations were rejected by other LFI MPs, such as Eric Coquerel, LFI Member of Parliament, who repeated that LFI condemned “all political violence” and maintained that the militants responsible for Rima Hassan’s security “were in no way involved in what happened”. He pointed to a “Lyon context” marked, according to him, by the violence of “far right groupuscules”.

In a statement on Sunday, La Jeune Garde denied any responsibility for the “tragic events” that occurred in Lyon, saying it had “suspended all its activities” since its dissolution. The leader of the far left party La France insoumise (LFI), Jean Luc Mélenchon, to whom the young members of La Jeune Garde who lynched Quentin are politically close, explained that his party had “deliberately moved closer” to La Jeune Garde a few years ago. “We did not hide it; we admired these young people,” said the three time presidential candidate, before adding: “We still have great affection for them. And I say this also for other antifa movements. Even if we do not agree. Even if you regularly call us soft social democrats!”

On that same day, nine people were arrested in connection with the Quentin Deranque case. Among them, at least six had been members of the antifa organisation, including Jacques Elie Favrot, parliamentary assistant to LFI MP Raphael Arnault, who has begun a procedure with the National Assembly to part ways with him. Furthermore, the Interior Minister at the time, Bruno Retailleau, ordered the dissolution of La Jeune Garde in the Council of Ministers in June 2025, although this dissolution is not yet final, pending a decision by the Conseil d’État, in a context of criticism over the group’s violent actions.

QUENTIN DERENQUE DESCRIBED AS A YOUNG PRACTISING CATHOLIC AND A PROPONENT OF “PEACEFUL MILITANCY” ACCORDING TO HIS CLOSE CIRCLE

Quentin Deranque, who died after the violent assault in Lyon, was a 23 year old mathematics student, a “cheerful” young man recently converted to the Catholic faith, close to nationalist circles and advocating, according to his family’s lawyer, a form of “peaceful militancy”.

The student attended Saint Georges parish in Lyon’s 5th arrondissement, near Quai Fulchiron on the banks of the Saône, the same quay where he was taken in charge by emergency services on Thursday late afternoon in a critical condition. According to testimony collected from the young man’s flatmate, Quentin was “calm and quiet”.

YAEL BRAUN PIVET, PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, SUSPENDS RAPHAËL ARNAULT’S PARLIAMENTARY ASSISTANT

Numerous tags have been sprayed against the far right and against Quentin in the streets of Lyon. Clean up operations were launched as early as Monday morning “to quickly erase these inscriptions”, the authorities said in a statement, adding that a criminal complaint had been filed.

On the parliamentary front, Yael Braun Pivet, president of the National Assembly, quickly suspended access to the Palais Bourbon for Raphael Arnault’s assistant, pending the police and judicial investigation.

Meanwhile, LFI MP Raphaël Arnault said on Saturday that he felt “horror and disgust” after the announcement of the death of the 23 year old student, and said on X that he wanted “the whole truth to be made known”.

These elements have been widely reported and detailed by major French news channels and newspapers such as TF1 Info, LCI, BFMTV and Le Figaro.

This second episode shows how a local street lynching has now become a criminal case for intentional homicide and a fully fledged political affair, with far left and far right factions accusing each other and both claiming to speak in the name of “justice”. If the outrage

on the nationalist right around Quentin Deranque, a young Catholic already presented by some as a “martyr” of a right wing nationalist cause, in echoes of the way Charlie Kirk has been honoured by parts of the US conservative movement, were to spill over into the streets, France could slide into a low intensity guerrilla between extremist fringes on both sides, each calling for revenge in the name of their dead.
As more official information and judicial decisions are released, our newsroom will continue to follow the next chapters of this case through our correspondent in Lyon, offering careful, fact based political analysis in the months leading up to the March 2026 municipal elections and the April 2027 presidential race.

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