Beat: Politics

BIG CONTROVERSY IN FRANCE OVER ALLEGED SEXUAL HARRASSEMENT ON 2 WOMEN BY D. ABAD

MINISTER OF DISABILITY & AUTONOMY

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USPA NEWS - The new Minister of Solidarity, Autonomy and Disability, Damien Abad, is accused of rape by two women. His appointment caused a big controversy in France, asking for his resignation. He said Monday evening that he did not plan to resign. Damien Abad is disabled, and should benefit from the presumption of innocence. The new government spokesperson, Olivia Grégoire, who replaced Gabriel Attal, explained during her first press briefing after the 1st Council of Ministers (Monday, May 23, 2022) of the new government finally formed, for President Macron's second term. indicated that "The government is at the side of those who, following an attack or harassment, have the immense courage to speak out", in response to the accusations of rape relayed by the press of two women against Damien Abad . She also recalled the principle of "zero tolerance for sex offenders". Olivia Grégoire added that "The government is also at the side of all those, still too many, who have walled themselves or who have been walled in silence, it will continue tirelessly to encourage the release of women's speech and tirelessly encourage women who have suffered violence to come to justice", she continued.

DAMIEN ABAD ACCUSED OF RAPE, MINISTER OF DISABILITY, IS HIMSELF DISABLED

Damien Abad, barely appointed Minister for Disability, is himself a disabled person, should benefit from the benefit of innocence, given that he has not been convicted for the acts of which he is accused by the two women who accused him. accuse of rape. Two complaints have already been filed, but justice says it is analyzing a new report. As for Damien Abad, he announced not to resign "Should an innocent man resign? I don't think so". From the fifth constituency of Ain, where he is a candidate for the legislative elections, Damien Abad reacted on Monday May 23 to the accusations of rape which target him. "I dispute the accusations against me with the greatest firmness. All the sexual relations that I have had in my life have always been mutually consented", declared the new Minister of Solidarity, as he answered the journalists, in front of the town hall of Saint-Jean-le-Vieux (Ain, department whom he is elected)

TWO WOMEN WHO SAID THEY WERE RAPED BY DAMIEN ABAD WERE WITNESSING IN AN ARTICLE PUBLISHED BY MEDIAPART

Indeed, since he was appointed Minister of Solidarity, Autonomy and Disability, Damien Abad, has been reported by the observatory, following two testimonies from women accusing him of forced sexual intercourse, It all started with the publication, Saturday, May 21, of an article by Mediapart, relaying accusations of rape on two women in 2010 and 2011, by Damien Abad, which he denies "with the greatest force". According to Mediapart, Mr. Abad was the subject of a report for alleged acts of rape addressed to LREM (the party of Mr. Macron, editor's note), to LR and to the public prosecutor by the Observatory of sexist violence and Sexuality in Politics, an organization launched by feminist activists to identify and support the victims of these acts. The Paris prosecutor's office confirmed to AFP that it had received "on May 20 a report from the Observatory of sexist and sexual violence", which is "being analyzed". According to him, the two complaints of rape against M Abad, filed by the same complainant, were dismissed: the first in April 2012 "due to the complainant's failure to act", the second on December 5, 2017, "after a preliminary investigation, for lack of a sufficiently serious offense ".

DAMIEN ABAD'S CONTROVERSY HAS JEOPARDIZED QUESTIONS TO GOVERNMENT SPOKESPERSON ON OTHER TOPICS

She then sided with justice "Justice is the only one who must or can decide", continued Ms. Grégoire after the Council of Ministers, while the journalists' questions mainly concerned the controversy. by Damien Abad, thus jeopardizing all the other subjects, including the very important one of purchasing power. Indeed, the inflation rate in France continues to rise between 8 and 9% for essential foodstuffs and for which President Macron has announced a porcine law for purchasing power. The legislative elections scheduled for June 12 and 19, should elect the future 577 deputies of the National Assembly.

ACCORDING TO THE SPOKESPERSON OF THE GOVERNMENT THE MINISTERS NOT ELECTED TO THE DEPUTIES WILL LEAVE THE GOVERNMENT

Government spokesperson Olivia Grégoire also answered the question of the accumulation of mandates, and the status of the ministers who are present in parallel with the elections (14 ministers out of the 28 in the current total). She recalled President Macron's instruction, "Ministers who lose their election will have to leave the government"

MINISTER DAMIEN ABAD CONTESTS WITH THE GREATEST STRENGTH THE ACCUSATIONS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST HIM

The French Minister of Solidarity, Damien Abad, for his part, challenged on Sunday "with the greatest force" accusations of sexual violence against him, two days after his appointment in the new government. "I contest in the strongest possible terms these accusations of sexual violence. I contest having exercised any form of coercion whatsoever on any woman. Finally, I contest any abuse of power related to the functions I have held." Damien Abad, before being appointed Minister of Autonomy and Disability Solidarity was the President of the LR deputies (The Republicans) in the National Assembly. He was François Fillon's electoral campaign manager in 2017. He then left his LR party, recently, to join the party of President Macron (LREM, Renaissance), before being appointed minister of the new government, while maintaining his candidacy for deputy of Ain.

THE POLITICAL OPPOSITION DENOUNCES THE APPOINTMENT OF DAMIEN ABAD TO THE GOVERNMENT IN FULL CONTROVERSY

Since then, the controversy has begun with these testimonies relayed by interviews on TV, (TF1), and which swells in a loop on the breaking news channels, as well as the written press. Some associations fighting against violence against women have signed a petition, widely signed as well as demonstrations, asking for his resignation. The political opposition also spoke out strongly to denounce the appointment of Damien Abad who denounces his appointment to the government in the name of setting an example. Some opposition politicians are even asking for his resignation, like Sandrine Rousseau of EELV (Ecologists, Greens) asked the PM, Elisabeth Borne to "take responsibility". "The question is not his own resignation, but the fact that he is removed from his post on the precautionary principle", regretting that the reports sent to LREM (Renaissance) were not taken "enough to serious ".

Even, Christian Jacob, President of the LR Party (Republicans), criticized Damien Abad and his behavior "It is up to him in his soul and conscience to look in the mirror and know what he has to do", judged the deputy of Seine-et-Marne at the microphone of BFMTV about the former boss of the LR group in the National Assembly, appointed minister this Friday.

Marine Le Pen RN (Rassemblement National) also spoke out against the appointment of Damien Abad "The choice to appoint him" says a lot about the behavior of the president. He cannot resist a good blow to win the group president , to the point that even his profile did not prevent him from making this choice. For her part, Elisabeth Borne, the Prime Minister, claims not to have been aware before the revelations in the press. "I have no more elements than the fact that the case has been closed without further action," she said this weekend during a trip. "I can assure you that if there are new elements, if justice is again seized, we will draw all the consequences of this decision." The Prime Minister also warned; "I will be very clear: on all these subjects of harassment, sexual assault, there can be no impunity".

THE 12 MILLION PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES DESERVE TO HAVE A REAL MINISTER DEFENDING THEIR CAUSE AWAY FROM CONTROVERSIES In this context of strong controversy, what is regrettable is that the 12 million disabled people find themselves "orphans" of their barely appointed minister, presumed innocent but already sullied by this rumor of rape, and who will undoubtedly be prevented in his function. His predecessor, the Secretary of State for Disabilities, had a very mediocre record, during the five years she had held this position, without changing the painful daily life of people with disabilities, benefiting from a "fake inclusion" in France, by a high unemployment rate (double of the Valid people unemployed), obstacles to accessibility for wheelchairs and their mobility, access to culture, healthcare and visibility and suffering with discrimination (90% of the files at HALDE, The Defender of Rights).

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