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France

Mass Mobilisation against Sarkozy

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The strikes and demonstrations against Nicolas Sarkozy's attempted neoliberal reforms have been massive. We publish here an initial report by the LCR. More detailed material will be published soon.

The 20 November public sector demonstrations in facts and figures

700 000 demonstrators in 148 demonstrations across France of which: 70 000 in Paris, 8 500 in Orleans, 5 000 in Brest, 3 000 in Quimper, 8 000 in Tours, 10 000 in Toulon and Saint-Etienne, 15 000 in Grenoble, 15 000 in Lyon, 60 000 in Marseilles, 30 000 in Nantes and Bordeaux, 35 000 in Toulouse, 25 000 in Rennes, 4 000 in Strasbourg, 19 000 in Lille, 20 000 in Caen, 18 000 in Rouen, 15 000 in Le Havre, 30 000 in Nantes, 5 000 in Saint-Nazaire, 15 000 in Grenoble, 1 500 in Réunion, 10 000 in Pau...

[<https://www.internationalviewpoint.org/IMG/jpg/FrancestrikeSol.jpg>]

Strikes at Yoplait.

The employees of the three production sites of Yoplait France, in Le Mans (Sarthe), Monéteau (Yonne) and Vienne (Iseère), struck massively, following the call of the CGT, to demand the reopening of the 2007 wage negotiations 2007 and a rise in their purchasing power.

UNEF [the main student union] estimates at 40 000 the number of students and high-school pupils who demonstrated.

Approximately 40 000 university and high-school students demonstrated, on the one hand, in support of the public sector workers, while on the other demanding the abrogation of the Péresse law on the universities, according to , which said it was "satisfied" with such a mobilization. The universities, in particular in Lille, Nantes, Rennes and Lyon, were particularly mobilized, notes the union.

Booed, Francois Chèrèque takes to his heels and leaves the demonstration

The calls for the end of the transport strike launched on several occasions by the leader of the CFDT, Francois Chèrèque, were not forgotten by the demonstrators. The general secretary was booed by a group of about twenty militants, some wearing CGT stickers saying "Chèrèque is with the bosses! ", " Sarkozy-Chèrèque, on the same side!" "Chèrèque, stop stabbing us in the back !", they shouted, while Mr. Chèrèque ran away from the demonstration, protected by his escort.

Strike strongly supported in the national education system, according to the trade unions.

Nearly six out of ten teachers in colleges and the high schools in strike on the day of the mobilization of the public sector. "We have an overall rate of 58 per cent of strikers in the colleges and high schools. The mobilization is particularly strong in the colleges, with rates of 60 per cent and peaks of 80 per cent ", declared a spokesperson of the SNES [the main secondary school teachers' union]. These figures were assembled by the trade union from a sample of 200 "test-establishments". The FSU [the main federation of teachers' union] indicates that an average of

65 per cent of primary school teachers and 58 per cent of teachers in colleges and high schools were on strike.

Besancenot: "There is something of the smell of 1995"

PARIS, Nov. 20, 2007 (AFP) - Olivier Besancenot, spokesperson of the LCR, estimated that the strikes and the demonstrations of public sector and rail workers on Tuesday have "something of the odour of 1995" and should not stop "as long as the government does not give anything". "The mobilization this Tuesday is even stronger than on October 18" at the time of the last big day of mobilization, Mr. Besancenot, who demonstrated in Paris with his post office worker colleagues, told AFP. In addition, he stressed, "the railway workers are standing firm, in spite of the attempts at diversion and division by the government".

"There is something of the odour of 1995, there is something which is mounting", said the Trotskyist leader, in an allusion to the retreat of the government faced with the mobilization of the railway workers in December 1995. "As long as the government does not give anything, I do not see why it would stop", added Mr. Besancenot. "There are people who are outraged by the policy of the government, there are people who are resisting and who do not want to submit", according to him. "On Wednesday morning, there will be general assemblies at the post office to see how we can continue the movement ", affirmed the young postal worker.

Two thousand people attended the LCR rally in the Mutualite hall in central Paris on 23 November.