

# 30,000 antiwar protesters take to Paris streets

**Our reporter**  
**1 April 2003**

Over 30,000 people took to the streets of Paris again this past Saturday to demonstrate against the Bush administration's invasion of Iraq. The demonstrators converged on the Place de la Concorde, where the revolutionary guillotines once stood, forming the starting point of the march.

There was a very large force of the paramilitary CRS stationed at the back end of the cortege, as both the American Embassy and the American Consulate are within a hundred yards of the square. There was no sign, however, of any incident.

The main delegations in the demonstration were the French Communist Party, desperately trying to dredge up some support for its flagging fortunes, Alain Krivin's Ligue Communiste Revolutionnaire and Arlette Laguillier's Lutte Ouvriere.

In recent Paris protests, there have been repeated incidents involving more backward elements. This week two people were thrown to the ground and kicked by about 20 youth when they protested against a section of the demonstration carrying portraits of Saddam Hussein. The two were not seriously injured.

The previous week four young Jewish militants who had been demonstrating against the war were attacked in a side street as they left the demonstration. This week the volunteer security services were reinforced, but still failed to stop this latest incident.

The WSWS interviewed two students present at the demonstration: Rime, 20 years old, and her friend Hafed, aged 19.

Rime: "We try to go to all the demonstrations against the war. Obviously we can't go to them all as we have our courses to follow, but this is the fourth demonstration we have participated in. Just because the war's started and Bush didn't listen to anyone, including all the citizens who demonstrated, doesn't mean that we should keep quiet. People must see that there are a lot of us against this war. It can't go on like

it is; we have to find ways of putting pressure on them.

"Bush has now understood that there will be a real resistance and that the Iraqi people, even though they are not as well armed, are going to fight until the very end. I think that he will drop more and more bombs on Baghdad and there will be an enormous amount of damage done. Before he sends the soldiers in he will first try to wipe out all resistance. It's very worrying."

Hafed: "Bush started this war because he wants the Iraqis' petrol."

Rime: "This invasion is just the beginning. He's going to attack other countries to develop his power in the Middle East. I recently saw a documentary about the first Gulf war, which showed that they could have gotten rid of Saddam if they had wanted, but they decided to turn back. This gave them the pretext to keep up the pressure on Iraq and the region and the excuse to be able to return."

Hafed: "I think Europe needs to be united to be able to do anything against the war. The English and the Spanish governments are pro-American. Now all we can do is demonstrate."

Rime: "Or we can organize a boycott, we can boycott the economy."

Hafed: "All those who oppose the war should be united internationally. We shouldn't be divided."



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