

Public meeting to be held in Paris

The lessons of the struggle against the First Job Contract

28 October 2006

The struggle against the First Job Contract (CPE) earlier this year brought into sharp relief the collision between the needs of young people and workers and the interests of the French ruling elite over the most fundamental of social questions: the right to a secure job.

The universal character of this attack on the rights of young workers makes clear that it was the product not of a single politician (French Prime Minister de Villepin), or even of the Gaullist government. It is the response of the ruling elites and all of the bourgeois parties, left as well as right, to a global crisis of the capitalist system—an economic system that they all defend.

The entire European and French capitalist class are seeking to make their economies globally competitive at the expense of the working class. Along with participation in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, the intervention of the French and other European forces in Lebanon is part of the militarisation of Europe in the context of growing economic and military competition between the great powers over oil, gas and the strategic resources of the planet.

This is why the struggle of students, youth and workers in France raises the need to build a new, revolutionary leadership—one that will fight for the unification of the working class across Europe and internationally on the basis of socialist policies and the struggle for the working class to take political power.

The precondition for a successful defence of the workers' and students' interests is the understanding that the old organisations—the trade unions, the Socialist Party, the Communist Party—cannot and will not conduct the necessary struggle against the capitalist system. They worked to betray the mass movement against the CPE—just as they did in the strike wave of 1995 and the protests against the Gaullist regime's

pension and education reforms in 2003.

None of these organisations even raised the demand for the bringing down of the government, either in 2003 or in 2006.

They were aided by the so-called “far left” organisations, the Ligue communiste révolutionnaire (LCR), Lutte ouvrière (LO) and the Parti des travailleurs (PT). Whatever the differences among themselves, a common denominator of these organizations is their prostration before the labour bureaucracies. They make no serious criticisms of the treacherous role of the unions or the official left parties.

Ségolène Royal, the likely Socialist Party presidential candidate, in line with the party's programme, vies with Interior Minister Nicolas Sarkozy, her likely Gaullist opponent in the 2007 presidential elections, in advancing repressive solutions to the crisis in the working class housing estates, the reduction in educational equality and anti-immigrant measures. A chain of political alliances links the entire French left to these politics, including the Communist Party (PCF), the LCR and LO.

We invite workers and youth to come to our meeting to discuss the perspectives for building in France the European section of the International Committee of the Fourth International

Public Meeting

Sunday, November 5, 3.00 p.m.

St. Hyppolite Church meeting room

27, Avenue de Choisy,

Paris 75013

Metro: Porte de Choisy

To contact the WSWs and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:



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