

The State and Bosses only understand one Language...¹

Strike, Blockage, Sabotage

Since several days many initiatives flourish everywhere: blockages of “lycées”², railway stations, refineries, motorways; occupation of public buildings, workplaces, shopping malls; targeted power cuts; ransacking of election committee rooms and town halls...

In each city these actions are intensifying the balance of forces and showing that numerous are those who are not satisfied anymore with shapes of actions and mottos imposed by the union leadership. In the region of Paris, within the blockages of high schools and railway stations, within the strikes in primary schools, within the workers’ pickets before factories, there are inter-professional assemblies and collectives of struggles trying to break isolation and categories separations. Their starting point is self-organization to answer to the necessity to appropriate our struggles without the mediation of those who pretend to speak on behalf of the workers. We are numerous who don’t get organized according to the usual shapes of the strike on a workplace and nevertheless who want to contribute to the **general movement of blockage of the economy**. Because this movement is also an opportunity to go beyond the sole issue of retirement, to ask the question of work, to develop and to put together a criticism of the exploitation.

From these questioning, we decided this Saturday to occupy the Bastille Opera. It was about disrupting a performance live broadcasted on the radio, to be trouble-makers in a place where cultural commodity is circulating and to organize an assembly in there. All together we were thus more than one thousand on Nation Square around the banners “*bosses only understand one language: strike, blockage, sabotage*” and “*against exploitation, let’s block the economy*”, and also with the desire to overcome the closely delimited framework of the union demo. We went back from beginning to end of the procession³ to the place of the action, and to finally initiate a free demonstration, although surrounded by a large contingent of police. Very quickly, more than one hundred plain-clothes cops, helped by the union team of stewards⁴, divided the procession in two, preventing a certain number of people to join us. With eggs and firecrackers we have as much as possible taken the pigs away from our demo and ultimately we left some traces on our way. Let’s recall in passing to those who don’t find anything better to do than to speculate about infiltrated policemen from pictures stolen by journo-cops⁵ that it’s out of the question to lament over two shop windows of banks whose attack only constitutes a mild answer to the Capital’s violence.

Once we reached the end point at Bastille, only about fifty people finally entered in the opera, because of police pressure and confusion, while the others

¹ [All the notes are translator’s notes] Originally published in French: [L’état et les patrons ne comprennent qu’un seul langage...](#), on Monday October 18th 2010, translated by [Prolétaires Internationalistes](#).

² High schools.

³ Literally in French: “Nous avons remonté la fin du cortège à contresens”.

⁴ Literally in French: “le service d’ordre des syndicats”.

⁵ French play on words: “journalflics” is a combination of “journalist” and “flics” = “cops”.

chose to disperse. Cops who had deployed on the square succeeded in arresting about forty people who have been kept in police custody in several police stations. Monday evening, most of them have been released, but at least 5 others aren't and will come up before the judge this Tuesday and would be prosecuted for *forming an armed crowd* and *damages caused as an organized group*.

As ever, the power chooses to repress fast and strong, hoping to accentuate or to create separations (between reasonable unionists and “hardliners”⁶, between “lycéens”⁷ and “casseurs”⁸...) and to break everything that participates in making emerge a real balance of forces against the state and bosses. The police draw their “flashball” and “tonfas” against “lycéens” a little too much vigorous. Workers of refineries are assaulted by cops but they also are directly threatened by prosecution and requisitioning by the “préfet”⁹. The combative demonstrators who will decide to not disperse peacefully could end up in prison, as it happened in Saint-Nazaire. Since the beginning of the movement more than 1,000 people have already been arrested...

The increasing number of initiatives escaping the usual gravediggers of the struggles is a clear refutation to all those who would like to isolate some black sheep and prevent the protest to call into question what is daily accepted, beyond the fact to know how many years we have to pay our contributions. These actions allow us to foresee the possibility of a movement where corporatist struggles are overcome, where bureaucrats get out of their depth, where the struggle is not limited to defend alleged social benefits.

**THERE IS MUCH MORE TO TAKE THAN WHAT THEY WANT US TO BELIEVE!
GIVE UP THE PROSECUTION. FREEDOM FOR ALL...**

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Meeting point: Inter-professional assembly on Wednesday 20th at 8 p.m. at the CICP (21ter Voltaire Street, Paris 11th)

⁶ Literally in French: “jusqu’au-boutistes”.

⁷ High school students.

⁸ Literally “breakers”, it’s a word invented by the bourgeoisie (government, media...) for “rioters”.

⁹ In France, a “préfet” is a high-ranking civil servant who represents the state at the level of the “department” or the “region”.