

Latest News From France: Online Discussion on Sunday

March 22, 2019



The situation here may be reaching a showdown between the Macron government, which is now considering using the Army against the Yellow Vests, and the social movement, to whose demands the regime continues to turn a deaf ear.

In the last week, we have seen a nation-wide strike of High School and other students demanding immediate government intervention to stop the global warming that threatens their future lives. The government response: police brutality against teenagers.

On Saturday, there was a massive March for the Climate all over France, perhaps 150,000 demonstrators, which converged with the "19th Act" of the weekly Yellow Vest demonstrations, which have just celebrated their fourth monthly anniversary. Again, much police brutality, but only against the Yellow Vests, not the Climate people.

On Tuesday (Mar 19th) the CGT and a coalition of other unions sponsored a one-day nation-wide interprofessional strike, which the Yellow Vests supported and joined in the name of "convergence" and common goals: restore public services, retirement, social security, salaries, and a demand to be listened to.

Radio silence from Paris.

Simultaneously, the Macron government has hastily passed several new repressive laws making demonstrations all but illegal. Macron has fired the Police Prefect for being too soft on demonstrators (!) and for not using enough of the Flashballs that have already killed an old woman on her balcony and seriously injured (blinded) over a hundred demonstrators, thousands of whom have been arrested. These weapons, made in Switzerland and labeled as weapons of war there, have been proclaimed 'medium crowd control defense weapons' by France, despite the protests of Michelle Bachelet and the European and UN Human Rights groups.

The showdown is likely to happen tomorrow, Saturday, and frankly I have no idea what will happen if the government uses total military might to crush the still-popular Yellow Vests, who are unlikely to back down but may change their tactics.

On Sunday, at 16 hours GMT, the Future Historians International Study Group will hold an online discussion on the situation in France, with participants from California to Moscow, including three of us here in France. You are welcome to join us. If you are not a regular, you can register by sending an email to AnotherWorldNYC@gmail.com.

You will then receive an invitation to join a ZOOM conference call a few minutes before the broadcast time in your time zone. Please join us.