“Yellow Vests” Protest Against Rising Prices and Raising the Retirement a Age in France

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On Saturday, January 7th, thousands of people in a number of French cities took to the streets to protest against inflation and raising the minimum retirement age. In total, about 5,000 people took part in the protests, of which 2,000 were demonstrators in Paris.

Among the protesters, the “yellow vests” have reappeared on the streets, having largely disappeared from the political scene after large-scale protests against Macron in 2018 and 2019.

“We went out today for all the French people who are starving to death because of the high prices of consumer goods. They can no longer afford groceries,” explained Jamal Buaban, a member of the yellow vest movement.

In addition to rising food prices, "yellow vests" and other protest processes against the impending pension reform. Under the new bill, the high retirement age in France will be raised from 62 to 64 for both male and female employees.

The government justified the reform by claiming that life expectancy in France had increased since the old retirement age was set. It also explained the need for reform in order to avoid losses in the finances of the pension system.

Trade unionists joined the yellow vest protests. In particular, the French Democratic Confederation of Labor (CFDT) is threatening a new wave of strikes if the French limit the existence of the retirement age.

“If the retirement age is increased to 64 or 65 years, we will do as we planned – we will resist this reform, calling on workers to mobilize,” said Laurent Berger, head of the CFDT.

Despite the scope of anti-government sentiment in France, there is no specific political program among the protesters that could replace the policies of the current French government. Recall that the “yellow vests” position themselves as an “apolitical” movement that unites all dissatisfied citizens, from right-wing nationalists to anarchists and socialists.

However, a broad coalition of all political directions is not capable of achieving significant changes in the political and economic system of any country. In order to fundamentally change the situation of the working people for the better, it is necessary to work out a clear and consistent political program in the interests of the working class and wage an uncompromising class struggle. Only the Communist Party, armed with the theory of Marxism-Leninism and in continuous contact with the working masses, is capable of accomplishing this task.

Sources:

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