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LCR calls for new anticapitalist party

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[<https://www.internationalviewpoint.org/IMG/jpg/LCRbannerfront2.jpg>]

After three months of rank and file debates and local conferences (in different towns and federations), the 313 delegates to the 17th LCR Congress met at La-Plaine-Saint-Denis for four days, from Thursday 24 to Sunday 27 January, in the presence of many guests.

The opening session of this 17th congress was devoted to presenting the LCR's evaluation of its activities and those of its national leadership since the previous congress (January 2006). This was an opportunity to focus on LCR's interventions in social mobilisations (struggle against CPE, defence of pension schemes, struggle against layoffs and for salaries, support for undocumented immigrants, anti-discrimination struggles, etc.) internationalist solidarity campaigns (Venezuela, Palestine), theoretical work by different sectors (women's secretariat, ecology commission in particular). And naturally, to look back on the presidential election campaign – and the parliamentary elections – and the many debates around the attempts to field “unitary candidates”.

Following this, the congress discussion on political theses was an opportunity for a large number of delegates to speak up about the main lines of the political situation: the reasons behind Sarkozy's victory, the political meaning of Sarkozysm, the institutional Left's political failure, trade union leaderships' policies, a balance-sheet of last November's strikes over special pension schemes and the state of resistance. But naturally, the political project of building a “new anticapitalist party” lay at the heart of this discussion. Within the LCR, there is a very broad agreement on the structural reasons behind the attempt to build a new political representation for the world of work, bringing together all those who have not given up on the struggle against the capitalist system. However, important divergences remain: on definitions, on the indispensable political boundaries, the means to achieve it, whether or not there are other political currents as potential project partners, how quickly to act on it, etc. The three draft theses put forth by the three current platforms (see the tribunes published in Rouge in December and January) reflect these divergences. The theses presented by platform A won 83.0 1% of delegate votes, platform B, 14.10% and platform C, 2.88%.

A third portion of the congress dealt with what one could call “practical tasks”: drafting an address from the LCR national congress for a new anticapitalist party (read here). This address was approved by 81.2% of the delegates (14.8% against; 4% abstaining). The discussion also included initiatives to be undertake as of now to go forward, as well as the ins and outs of the constituent process, which could conclude with the founding of a new party by late 2008 or early 2009. This would entail a congress beforehand to dissolve the LCR. Motions made include such aspects as setting up local committees, holding departmental and regional meetings, aiming for a national meeting in June for a progress report on the process. Alongside these proposals, LCR will organise three broadly open conferences on intervention in the world of work (public and private), youth, social housing estates and neighbourhoods.

The congress also adopted a few changes updating LCR statutes, a motion on our work towards social housing estates and poor neighbourhoods. As well as a series of motions reflecting LCR's commitments in the fields of ecology, defence of LGBT rights, against repression in Kanaky, against the layoffs decreed by the Mittal group on the Grandrange site and a message of solidarity with the Palestinian people's struggle. A motion, jointly presented by the LCR and JCR leaderships, was also adopted (63.23% for), 22.58 against; 8.39% abstaining and 5.80% not voting). It concretises the common commitment of all the young activists – whether they are active within JCR or the “youth”

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sections of LCR – in the political battle to win others over to the new party and build it as well as formulating proposals about the ways an autonomous youth section could take action within the new party.

The congress concluded by electing the new National Leadership. Each platform is represented on the leadership in proportion to congress votes (80 members for platform A, 14 for platform B and 3 for platform C) and parity is the rule (48 women, 49 men). The leadership met immediately to elect the organisation executive (political bureau) whose membership has been significantly renewed, and to set the date for its first meeting: 15 and 16 March.

Translation: Maria Gatti