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France

The LCR-LO campaign

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The alliance adopted last autumn between our two organizations concerned the regional and European elections of 2004, where we put forward a series of concrete measures including: an emergency social programme based around mobilizations breaking with capitalist logic; increases in wages and social subsistence; a ban on layoffs; redistribution of wealth; lifting of banking, industrial or commercial secrets; defence of public services.

More than a million votes were won at the regional elections, or 4.5% of the total vote, as against 450,000 at the European elections (or 2.5% of the total). The lists of the Parti des travailleurs (PT, "Lambertiste") were presented only at the European elections and won 0.5% of the vote. Other small lists registered some fairly weak scores. A "Europalistine" list scored 1.8% in the constituency of Île-de-France (the Parisian region), and received significant support in popular neighbourhoods with large populations of immigrants or those of immigrant origin.

The contrast between the dynamic campaign of the LCR and LO and the electoral results was striking. Many enthusiastic meetings, often the biggest of the electoral campaign, initiatives aimed at enterprises, workplaces, sectors in struggle led by the spokespersons of the lists, a fairly consistent media presence for Olivier Besancenot (LCR) or Arlette Laguiller (LO), in particular during the regional elections. Many positive elements, then, at the end of the campaign which, despite the disappointment in relation to the scores, will leave traces. In identifying ourselves with questions like the ban on layoffs, the defence of public services or culture, we were able to intervene directly and make ourselves the voice of struggles that were going on, by workers at EDF, film and theatre technicians or the resistance at STM-Electronics against the closure of factories.

During the European campaign, the LCR developed demands emerging from the struggle for global justice around the slogan: "another Europe is possible" and pronounced itself against the European constitution, together with LO, and in favour of the democratic demand for a referendum so that the people can decide for themselves instead of the ruling elites.