



The News

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by Emma Phillips

The Social Affairs commission is due to meet on Monday to look into the government's plans for pension reform. The committee will have its work cut out as 7,000 amendments have already been tabled by officials from the Assemblée Nationale. Even if some of these are deemed inadmissible, the sheer number of amendments will make examining the entire text a very difficult exercise ahead of it being brought to the Assemblée Nationale on 6 February.

In the meantime, protests against the reform show no sign of letting up. Several hundred people took part in torchlit marches against the pension reform last night in several cities including Dijon, Nîmes, Brest and Avignon. In Paris, nearly a thousand people gathered to march.

The Parti Socialiste conference will be getting underway in Marseille today, a week after Olivier Faure was re-elected as head of the party. The result is still contested by his main opponent, Nicolas Mayer Rossignol, who is complaining of fraud.

In the United States, president Joe Biden is calling for calm in the face of protests after the death of Tire Nichols in early January. The 29-year-old black man was stopped by police on January 7th for what seemed to be a routine traffic stop. However, he was violently beaten by officers who were also black and died three days later of his injuries. The five police officers were fired on January 20 and yesterday were charged with murder. Yesterday, Joe Biden called for "peaceful demonstrations", stressing that anger was understandable but that violence is never acceptable.

To rugby now, and more than 51% of the country's clubs are snubbing Bernard Laporte. They reject the appointment of one of Patrick Buisson's relatives to replace him as president of the French Rugby Federation after he stepped down. The FFR steering committee is meeting this morning with the Minister of Sports Amélie Oudéa-Castéra. One solution could be another election.

And finally to handball, the French team is playing tonight for a place in the final of the men's world championships. Les Bleus may have not dropped a single match this tournament, but tonight they meet their nemesis, Sweden, the team who knocked them

out of the European championships in Hungary a year ago. Tonight's quarter final starts at 9pm.