

MOTION 22 – THE MOVEMENT OF MOVEMENTS

The emergence of the Seattle people constitutes the most positive sign of our times: the first movement, following years of defeat, which provides a basis for a response from the left to the crisis of globalisation, puts forward a radical criticism of the predominant system, and affirms the possibility, here and now, of “another world”. This can be the starting-point for a new workers’ movement.

The emergence of the “Seattle people”, the “movement of movements”, constitutes the most positive sign of our times: the first movement, following years of defeat, which shows the possibility of a new workers’ movement. This movement – signs of which could be seen in the Zapatist experience and in the Women’s Congress held in Beijing in 1995 - puts forward a radical criticism of the predominant system of economic, social and political relations and affirms that “another world is possible”, providing a basis for a response “from the left” to capitalist globalisation and its crisis.

Following years in which the hegemony of the single thought inspired a vast ideological campaign to conceal the mechanisms of exploitation by presenting capitalist social relations as natural, objective and inalterable, the movement has succeeded in showing – at the level of the masses – that suffering, exploitation and loss of rights are not a natural process but the results of precise political choices taken on the basis of decisions by the non-democratic international organisms which guide the process of capitalist globalisation. The identification of the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the World Trade Organisation as the main collaborators of the great powers in the destruction of workers’ rights, of people and the environment, has revealed the common enemy and laid the foundations for a dialogue between all exploited peoples, with common actions of struggle. The attempt at world government by non-democratic organisms like the G8 has been delegitimised and demystified; the iniquitous nature of the neo-liberalist globalisation has been contested; the political choices which generate insecurity on a global level have been unmasked; a precise identity has been given to the enemy, preparing the way for unification of the conflicts produced by the various contradictions generated by globalisation. All this constitutes the historic significance of this movement, making it possible to work towards an alternative reality world-wide. Certainly the process has a long way to go, and is sustained by a different energy and degrees of awareness in the various countries, but the die has been cast.

MOTION 23 – CHARACTERISTICS OF THE MOVEMENT

The movement is a world-wide and potentially majority force. It contests the capitalist order but at the same time proposes new social and political relations (Porto Alegre). It poses the questions of democracy, participation and unity in radically new terms, as has been seen in the experience of the Social Forums. It does not merely attract the new generations but also significant components of the workers’ movement.

This kernel gives rise to the movement’s main characteristics:

- 1) It is world-wide; it grew out of specific contestations but immediately took shape at the global level, i.e. on a par with the development of capital.
- 2) It has the potential for being a majority force, for it tends to form a broad-based alliance for humankind which, starting from the planet’s excluded inhabitants (and posing the problem of land and the prime requisite of sufficient food as a universal right), can be the aggregating force for all the social groupings and currents of thought which are not resigned to a system of violence and commercialisation of human, social and state relations. In this fundamental respect the awareness of the crucial part played by contradictions in the processes of emancipation and human liberation is potentially present, albeit still not fully operative.
- 3) Starting from a radical challenge to the typical features of the current model of accumulation of capital, it expresses an anticapitalist message and calls into question the single thought. The

cultural categories in which the movement expresses its opposition to neo-liberalism are of course quite varied, and we encounter a great diversification and richness of languages and ideological and cultural references. Besides, after years of cultural sterility, dominated by the single thought and the failure of real socialisms, it is perfectly normal that criticism of capitalism should express itself with a large dose of empiricism, rather than being entirely systematised. The crisis of communism has also made possible the cultural marginalisation of a large part of the analytical instruments of Marxism and it is our job – in the perspective of a refounding of communism – to reconstruct analytical instruments that can be used at the level of the masses and place the criticism of political economy at the heart of the opposition to neo-liberalism and the market.

4) The movement has not restricted itself to opposition, for over the last few years it has come up with proposals for qualitative modification of current social dynamics. The Forum of Porto Alegre has represented a significant step forward and constructed a platform which not only highlights the problem of redistributing income and other cruxes of the dynamics of capitalism (questions related to the socialisation of intellectual property and such basic resources as water) but also constitutes the foundation for unifying the various social groupings involved in the movement (from questions of labour to land, environment, gender and consumption), demanding a revision of the conditions of production and social reproduction.

5) It has thrown new light on the question of democracy and participation, calling into question the classic forms of representation, which are increasingly invalidated by the pyramid of global power. It has focused on the issues of direct democracy, popular control from below, and the construction of public forums as both forms of participation and places for experimenting with alternative economic and social practices. This desire to wrest back the decision-making processes (with its criticism of conducting politics in a vacuum) and renew politics as personal commitment, pursuit of an objective, social control, self-management, is centred on matching actions to words and solving the traditional dichotomy between tactics and strategy, "politics in two stages". From this point of view the movement posits – without of course having entirely found an answer, even within itself – a radical reform of politics. The movement has inherited that slow build-up of reflections and experiences that have taken place over the last 20 years in the spheres of civil liberties, democratically structured social values, associations and voluntary work.

6) It has expressed – especially in the Genova Social Forum - a significant ability to construct new forms of coalition between different realities, setting up a "pact" among equals involving more than 1000 associations, parties and unions which has generated the manifestations we have seen, coping successfully with the differences both in politics and praxis present in their midst.

7) It was also at Genova that one of the fundamental characteristics of the movement came to the fore: the coalition that formed in Seattle. The participation in the movement of significant components of the organised labour movement, starting from the FIOM and the range of self-organised and extra-confederate unions, was in fact a salient feature of the gathering in Genova. This achievement, which must spur us to invest heavily in political and organisational terms, must not however induce us to believe that all our problems have been solved. The strategic crisis of the confederate union activity, tied up in agreement seeking and unable really to open itself to the organisation of unprotected workers, the persistent force of the ideology of firms as the only form of organising production, and also the occupational blackmail represented by the crisis of globalisation, demonstrate that alongside clear signals of a "thaw", there remains the problem of a broad-based renewal of social conflict in the world of work and a closer adherence of this to the antiglobal movement.

MOTION 24 - THE MOVEMENT UNDER FIRE

After September 11th, the task confronting the movement has become more arduous. The war is among other things an expression of "authoritarian normalisation", while rejection of war, whether or not as an ethical stance, is an antidote to the crisis of politics.

The terrorist attack and state of war have made the situation more difficult for the development of the movement. The extraordinary success of the Perugia-Assisi march and the manifestation of November 10th have shown that the movement is thriving. But we must not ignore the fact that war tends to constrict the movement's spheres of influence and reduce it to a minority by militarising information and sterilising critical consciences. In the global era war, far from being incidental, is above all a smoke-screen obscuring the real problems underlying the insecurity and precariousness of the human community. The identification of terrorism as an enemy alien to the neo-liberalist system fulfils this function of deviation and concentrates the apprehension, exasperation or quite simply the resignation of public opinion on a tangible entity. The political exploitation of the risk of terrorism stirs up demands for security, and to meet them people are ready to forego democracy and freedom of movement and information.

This is why, following September 11th, everything has become more difficult for the movement. The incessant campaign against pacifism, presented as faint-hearted or at best as an ethical stance inimical to the sphere of politics, and the crude insistence with which the movement opposing war is immediately dismissed as anti-American, show that the establishment has sensed this difficulty. Already at Genova, with the chilling resort to police repression, it was clear that the attitude of the paladins of neo-liberalist globalisation was changing, tending to criminalise dissent. The opportunity of the war reinforces this tendency for the simple reason that every defection or doubt in the global war-mongering front contributes to showing up all the spuriousness of an adventure - the war against Afghanistan – which as well as being inherently wrong is also quite ineffective with respect to its declared objective of combating terrorism.

Thus the movement is confronted with the problem of its expansion in a context in which the organisms which manage political, economic and military power on the global scale have opted for the state of war as the "normal" condition for seeking a way out of the crisis of globalisation. In this context our adversaries do not even consider giving a positive response to the issues raised by the movement and the attempt to expel the movement from politics and reduce it to impotence by treating it as a problem of public order or an ethical/moral pipe dream becomes relentless. This makes it all the more far-sighted on the part of the movement to propose a political line guided by ethical choices: far from being tainted by fundamentalism, such a line is in fact the antidote to fundamentalism, for it is based on respect for the individual.

MOTION 25 – THE CASE OF ITALY

Following the defeat of the 1980s, there is no longer an "Italian anomaly". Here too the crisis has precipitated in social, political and cultural terms.

If, for most of the 1960s and 70s, one could justly speak of an "Italian anomaly", referring to a marked political and social autonomy with respect to the norm in Europe, in the next two decades Italy fell prey to a deep and complex crisis. The defeat of the workers' movement and the left in the 1980s (embodied in the portentous symbol of the 35 days at the Fiat works) was followed by the collapse of the political - and institutional - system of the First Republic, which swept away all the mass parties that had had such a profound effect on the history of the Republic. In this phase the revision of production mechanisms has been guided more by the desire to regain complete control over the workforce than by any serious attempt at strengthening national interests in the international division of labour. The front of the working class has been splintered, losing its political and social protagonism, both for subjective reasons and on account of structural processes such as the growth of an endemic mass unemployment, the persistence in a new form of the age-old "southern question" and the wave of new immigration. While the condition of young people becomes ever more precarious and the educational system, at higher levels, tends to be increasingly inadequate, no answer has been found to the main issues of "modernisation". Italy, in spite of being one of the most highly developed powers in the world, is in fact a nation in crisis. There are at least three aspects to this crisis: social, political and cultural.

MOTION 26 – THE SOCIAL QUESTION

Over the last ten years, salaries and wages have lost 5% of their value, Southern Italy has been seen to suffer from endemic mass unemployment and new employment has tended to be precarious. Our nation has become poorer and more unstable, with a more uncertain outlook, while the institutions have responded in a regressive, “security conscious” fashion.

In 21st century Italy the “social question” bears the following features: a marked impoverishment of jobs in full-time regular employment (in ten years, salaries and wages have lost on average 5% of their purchasing value); a low rate of employment (among the lowest in the European Union); high unemployment, concentrated in the South and among the young; an acceleration in the tendency for working conditions to be precarious (a clear majority of new jobs have “atypical” contracts, and in any case are for a defined period). Taken together, these data reveal a poorer and more discriminatory

society, fragmented and afflicted by processes of disintegration. To express this tendency in a formula, it is a society in which a vast majority of the up-and-coming generation are well aware that they will be worse off than their parents were. In short: the real common denominator of the nation today is a lack of security in social terms and for its future, due above all to the progressive loss of the rights, guarantees and certainties which characterised the 1990s.

This is a general condition which sets Italy alongside the other countries of advanced capitalism in which neo-liberalist policies predominate. However, both the production system and social security in Italy have always had severe structural limitations in comparison to the rest of Europe, and this has contributed greatly to the widespread malaise, social disharmony and instability. From the early nineties onwards, with the July agreements, inauguration of agreement seeking, abolition of the sliding scale, the social truce and moderation in pay claims, so-called “governments of technicians”, effective suppression of genuine redistribution, not to mention policies favouring development and occupation, the situation has come to lack any “safety net”, with ever fewer compensation mechanisms. In reality, the family has become once again the only significant compensation mechanism: especially in the South, the extended family takes the place of the welfare state, “absorbing” the young unemployed and offering a potent combination of services, economic and affective guarantees and stability. A large part of the country’s regression is due to precisely this peculiar process, which tends to drive women back into their “natural” domestic role, and underlies the ideological attack on women’s liberation.

The social crisis also involves the progressive destructuring of the educational and cultural system, as these sectors become increasingly subordinate to private and market conditions. The knowledge and critical appraisal available to new generations are being constantly downgraded and in general the social desire for education and culture is being frustrated.

The environmental crisis is another indication of the deviated modernity that has taken root in our country, to the detriment of the grafting of nature and culture from which there would have been everything to gain. The neo-liberalist choices of the governments of the last decades have exacerbated the situation, renewing the “joint venture” of labour exploitation, uncontrolled building development, large-scale public works and private interests. As the social state is dismantled, there is a growing tendency in Italy, on the American model, to give an organic, regressive and repressive response to the phenomena of exclusion, poverty and social malaise. Step by step we find ourselves subject to a security-conscious mindset which in institutional terms evokes the “penal state” of the US. This involves not merely the expansion of penal and detention policies, but also redefining the role of the state vis à vis society. Justice is becoming increasingly class-prejudiced; punishment mere vendetta rather than reinsertion in society; imprisonment a metaphor for a society which resorts to segregation, authoritarianism and prohibitionism to deal with the spread of poverty and exclusion. Immigrants, drug addicts and in general all those who are “marginalised” are increasingly confronted with the stark measures of “zero tolerance” and “law and order” campaigns which, far from preventing crime, make an instrumental use of it to organise populist and demagogical campaigns. Security is no longer seen as a social asset for the community in the pursuit of collective and democratic well-being but is erected as a barrier against poverty, itself looked on as proof of failure and an intrinsic threat to security. These policies are

the material and cultural background to phenomena of progressive involution and autonomy of the individual organisms of the state.

MOTION 27 – THE POLITICAL CRISIS

The spearhead of the counter-reformation of these years has been the introduction of the majority (first past the post) electoral system, which has exacerbated the crisis of politics and imposed a bipolarism of alternation, accompanied by growing bipartisan tendencies.

The most significant transformations in recent years have affected the institutions of the republic. In particular following “Tangentopoli” there has been an obsession with “reforming” the political system, electoral mechanism and structure of the state. In less than ten years this process has largely run out of steam, losing its impetus and above all the active consensus of the masses, as we have seen in the most recent referendums. Nonetheless the main political parties have joined forces to guarantee the majority system, introduce counter-reforms (to all intents and purposes) such as the direct election of the premier, and proceed with the federalist carving up of the country, which is already proving a tool in the hands of those bent on dismantling the Welfare State.

Bipolarism has caused a serious involution of politics, in the strict sense of the term, with the well-documented phenomena of the end of mass parties, a drastic reduction in participation, and growing personality cults in the political arena (affecting all institutional levels, from parliament to city hall and local authorities). This degeneration is not rooted in the corridors of power but at the heart of the real processes of the capitalist revolution of these years, which has eroded the residual margins of political autonomy and its historical function of mediating between social interests and consensus-building: the case of the entrepreneur Berlusconi who “condescends to enter politics”, taking direct responsibility for his own interests and those of his associates by becoming head of the government, is indeed emblematic. And no less significant is the tendency of the Confederation of Italian Industry (Confindustria) to claim a role in governing the country, as well as in producing ideology and “social blueprints”. In this context, the frailty of the bipolar political model is being shored up by increasing resort to associative and bipartisan deals, regarding such fundamental issues as war, international politics and economic policy. This naturally constitutes another factor in the crisis of credibility, undermining politics and its democratic practice.

However, the current state of things does not represent a stable way forward for the nation. Not only have the powers that be failed to achieve one of their prime objectives – the expulsion from elected assemblies of the opposition forces – but they have also failed to bring into being solid and homogeneous coalitions. Above all there is no sign of a widespread hegemony. The social reawakening of this last year with the emergence of the movements has formulated a demand for democracy in stark contrast with all attempts at bipolar “normalisation”.

MOTION 28 - THE CULTURAL CRISIS

The single thought has produced its own brand of intellectuals, who have occupied the cultural industry, media and TV. But it is also producing a series of antibodies in an intellectual critique deriving from the malaise of the masses, which is rediscovering the subversive political identity that goes with its social collocation.

We are once again up against the “question of the intellectuals” , involving the role of culture and its institutions, the definition of the system of knowledge and the new centrality of information. It is the current structural mutations, rather than changes in identity, which appear striking: in recent years the capitalist revolution has invaded and tended to occupy all the spheres of cultural production. We mean the cultural industry, where the commercialisation of everything that is art and entertainment (“show business”) is accelerating sharply, even with overtly symbolic aspects such as novels featuring publicity in their own pages. This is not limited to the explosion of global communications – ranging from the TV to the web – which has its effect on the formation of

common values, language, relationships, life styles and cultural intake in the broad sense. We are referring to the modification of the role of the intellectual within the communications society: on one hand the process of mass output which has destroyed the classic function of mediation of consensus carried out by the “producers of ideas” and/or custodians of knowledge; on the other capital’s direct assumption of the resources of knowledge and science, which tends to reduce every “intellectual” to a mere operator at the service of capitalism. This tendency has long been recognised under the term “single thought”, grounded in a materialistic fundamentalism rather than a latter-day “betrayal of the clerks”.

This is the background to the incessant campaign of revisionism based on the re-legitimisation of the fascist experience and consequent cancellation of antifascism and the Constitution itself, born out of the resistance as the basis for civil coexistence in our country. This marks the demise of the classic intellectual, including the left-wing variety, perennially suspended between apocalypse and integration. In their place we find a new brand of intellectual. On the right these are quite simply establishment executives, distributed in all the nerve centres of the system: media and TV, science, technology, show business, sport. They are the paladins of the dominant ideology, coherently “naturalistic” and disguised in neutral objectivity: the key message, constantly reiterated in a range of manifestations, is that only one world is possible, the one we have. This message is strikingly potent when it is conveyed not by a much feted author but by the anchorperson. On the left a symmetrical and converse process is affecting a growing number of intellectuals. The cracks in the neo-liberalist hegemony can be seen in the growth of a new critique of the masses which, unlike in the past, is internal (not external or superimposed) to the individual’s role, job and sense of cultural vocation. This is the collocation for a group such as teachers, on the warpath not only, and indeed not chiefly, on account of their miserable salaries but through their desire to reactivate the specific function of a lay, pluralistic schooling for all. But also such professional figures as doctors, lawyers, biologists, architects and researchers, a qualified workforce possessing specialised knowledge which is rediscovering the intrinsically political nature of their vocations – and sometimes, indeed, its force as an alternative. Among the Seattle people – ranging from the “Médécins sans frontières” to the lawyers of the Genova Social Forum and the scientists who reject genetic manipulation – this component emerged, not surprisingly, as a fundamental constituent.

MOTION 29 – THE UNIONS

Ten years on, the policy of agreement seeking is subject to a full-scale assault by the right and by the new extremism of Confindustria. The unions, and the Cgil in particular, are obliged to undertake a radical strategic rethink involving the topics of refounding a class-based union movement and a democratic labour representation. Yet the leaders are oscillating between their inability to proceed to a critical revision and the lure of politicking.

The policy of agreement seeking – which culminated in the pact agreed in 1992-93 but had been widely practised in the preceding years – has itself constituted one of the most significant “reforms” of the political system. It has enabled successive governments during the most turbulent phase of the “Italian transition” to take advantage of a lengthy social truce. At the same time the crisis of the confederated union movement was mitigated by legitimisation from above: the price to pay, above all by the Cgil, was the institutionalisation of the unions, which steadily eroded their social, class and bargaining platform, impoverished their democratic constitution and drastically reduced their claim to being representative. Today agreement seeking is called into question, in what appear to be irreversible terms, by the right and the hyper-liberalist stance of Confindustria, who in practice want “the whole hog”: total control over the workforce, an end to national contracts and freedom to sack. In this perspective the confederate unions are allowed a purely marginal or complementary role, which seems to be the fate overtaking Cisl and Uil. Thus within the Cgil the strategic rethink is a necessity. To be truly effective it cannot shirk a truthful appraisal of the decade of agreement seeking: ten years in which all jobs of full-time regular employment have lost out in bargaining power, rights, salaries, wages, safeguards and

dignity. This is why we are convinced it is time to pursue a new, democratic and class-based unionism, with at its heart contents, platforms and social and bargaining initiatives that match up to current requisites, and the recomposition of the working class – and its out of work component – at present sadly dispersed and fragmentary. The left wing of the Cgil has begun a process of mobilisation and confrontation in preparation for this new strategy. It is a crucial battle for the future of the Cgil that is already bearing fruit. The Fiom is likewise moving in this direction, and the Cgil cannot prevaricate, either by advocating choices belonging to the past or by taking refuge in politicking, which risks seriously compromising the autonomy of the unions and their strategic value. The crux of the matter is to refound a class-based union movement, and this involves the various realities of extra-confederate grassroots unionism. In some sectors (schools, transport) this has achieved excellent results in terms of representation, although it suffers from fragmentation. For the next few years the goal remains to reconstruct a unitarian, democratic and class-based confederate union able to match up to the new requisites deriving from the fragmentation of employment and unemployment and the recomposition of class identity which, in both the more traditional sectors and in services and the public sector, has been broken down by liberalist policies and the two-pronged attack of liberalisation and privatisation. Our rallying cry must once again be: “workers of all the world unite!”.

This is why it is important for the leftwing of the union movement, wherever it is collocated, to concentrate on unitary initiatives, reconstituting grassroots activity, and formulate a new platform and model for union activity, both national and supranational, able to match up to globalisation and the comprehensive development of the movement and the alternative left. These unitary initiatives must break away from the logic of the “apparatus”, the prevalence of tactical skirmishes within the various bureaucracies and the privileges of office in small or large hierarchies including the confederate organisation, shifting the focus to conflict, recomposition of class awareness, construction of the movement, experiments with new forms of democratic unity based on the grassroots and on European and international networks of workers. First of all this involves creating the conditions for a general mobilisation to retrieve the effective right to strike, seriously compromised in the services and precarious employment sectors. Secondly setting up freely elected local union branches and instituting mechanisms by which workers can intervene on the platforms of demands. In this sense there can be no place for party members in right-wing unions such as Ugl because this is irreconcilable with the general objectives indicated. In order to refound a class-based union, the local union branches have to be legitimised and recognised, for they have a crucial role to play which can be furthered by approving a law on representation which reflects the true wishes of workers, eliminating the current privileges.

However, as was spelt out at the workers’ conference in Treviso, the level of union activity currently appears insufficient to achieve the recomposition of the fragmented workforce. The problem is to reconstruct new rights to contrast the white paper presented by the Minister Maroni and the federalist legislation concerning labour. This requires legislative initiatives because deregulation has been largely introduced through Italian and European laws and norms. They are also necessary to support and integrate the socialisation and politicisation of the conflict because what is needed in the labour arena is an initiative that is not just union-based but directly political, based on the issues of war and the environment and the urgency of transformation. The question of gender must permeate the labour arena. We must once more foment a social and political conflict between workers and bosses, distinguishing working conditions from the model of an all-inclusive society. The party must be the place for discussing, elaborating and orienting all the communists active in the world of work.

MOTION 30 – THE STRATEGIC FAILURE OF THE CENTRE LEFT AND DS

(approved by the National Political Committee)

The electoral defeat of May 2001, at the expense of the Ulivo, has shown up the impossibility of a (world-wide) attempt at “tempered neo-liberalist reformism”. In this context the crisis of the Ds is emblematic: at the recent congress in Pesaro, they fell back once again on a nominally

social-democrat approach, which was in reality centrist and neo-liberal, arousing a significant internal opposition.

The electoral defeat of the centre left, in the spring of 2001, was above all a rejection. By this we mean that it was not due to a growth in consensus for the centre right, but to failure to recuperate a sizeable part of its own electorate, disappointed by the Ulivo's five years in office. This critical reverse was not only a national phenomenon: the centre left "world-wide", from Clinton to Blair, failed in its chief objective of introducing a liberalist neo-reformism, albeit gradual and tempered. In Italy, this failure came to mean economic, social and institutional policies which differed from those of the centre right merely in quantitative terms: in particular, the logic of privatisation, liberalisation, the progressive running down of the redistributive role of the State, and subordination to the leading economic powers were the order of the day. The Ulivo was seen as an alternative to the centre right only on the terrain of certain values of civilisation, without this leading to any particularly significant political initiatives. In this context, the crisis of the Ds is emblematic: far from being resolved at the recent congress in Pesaro, it was actually exacerbated. As with the union movement, it is not a question of temporary difficulties, but of a fundamental disorientation. In the internal debate that preceded the congress, the "correntone" which opposed the majority led by D'Alema and Fassino did not come up with either a strategic hypothesis or an alternative political platform. And on Bush's global war, while the neo-Atlantic leanings of the new leadership emerged with reinforced ideological determination, there was no sign of a true political or ideal struggle. Nonetheless the various components of the leftwing of the Ds, as well as the green movement, can become interlocutors when they turn their backs on neo-liberal positions and join the struggle against liberalism and war. More generally, the leadership of the moderate left appears to be unable not only to escape from the straitjacket of the centre left alliance to undertake a critical review of its liberal and liberalist perspectives, but in effect imprisoned by its continuous obsession with the centre and a neo-centrist repositioning for the Ulivo. The crisis of identity and physiognomy which has been tormenting the Ds for more than a decade – since the policy shift of Bolognina and the dissolution of the Pci – is leading almost univocally towards liberalism and centrism.

MOTION 31 - THE RIGHT IN POWER

The centre right in power has initiated a new and dangerous phase which requires a determined social and political opposition, to avoid it taking on the all-pervasive permanence of a regime.

The replacement of the Ulivo by the centre right has ushered in a new and dangerous political phase in Italy. However, the victory of the right-wing parties on 13th May 2001 does not in itself signal the beginning of a long-term cycle or an out-and-out regime. First of all, because it was more a defeat for the Ulivo than a victory for the Polo; and secondly because the political and electoral success of the centre right is not reflected in a corresponding social bloc which can claim to be in the majority. The unification achieved by the Casa delle libertà to fight the elections has not brought into being a unitary political force on the right: under the leadership of Silvio Berlusconi, there were and still are at least two distinct "right wings". These two persuasions coexist within one political force, at times in an efficient amalgam, but at other times in a cocktail of contradictions. Sharing a common neo-liberalist perspective, one is internationalist, American and middle class, while the other is localist, national and populist. This explains the uncertainty which characterised their first months in power: whether to undertake a violent assault on the historic identity of the left, launching an all-out attack on the whole system of rights and social guarantees, or to proceed more gradually, with a progressive erosion of the conquests (and safeguards) of the world of work. After an initial phase of prudence, we are witnessing an increasing tendency towards destructuring the social state, the safeguards of workers and negotiating mechanisms, as is seen by the determination to modify article 18 of the workers' statute and the norms concerning the labour market, and indeed in the decree imposing health cuts.

At the same time clear threats are being sent out to the more disparate social groups such as poor pensioners and the "VAT registered workers", and instances of extremism are cropping up in the "assault on civilisation", where the centre right believes it has already secured consensus, as has happened with the law on immigration and is likely to happen, sooner or later, for law 180 and law 194. Furthermore we must point out how the abandonment of agreement seeking in relations with the unions is proceeding hand in hand with a marked tendency to reach agreements with the regional administrations in dealings between state and regions.

In general, although the context involves internal contradictions of the middle class and a strong dose of reactionary empiricism and attention for Berlusconi's own personal interests, the government is nonetheless aiming at welding together a reactionary social majority, united by material interests and the issue of security. The systematic attack on magistrates, the call for impunity for the governing classes and magnates and the reaffirmation of firm territorial control by organised crime are all aspects – which do not coincide but are not without points of contact – characterising this process. Our objective now must be to prevent, by means of strenuous social and political opposition, the onset of a long cycle of right-wing dominion or the installation of a full-blown regime. It is only the renewal of social conflict and protagonism which can prevent this reactionary scheme from taking hold.

MOTION 32 - THE CATHOLIC QUESTION

The pontificate of Wojtyla has had a dual nature: on one hand the anti-modern crusade against women's lib and for the restoration of obscurantist values, and on the other repeated pleas for a "moralist and interclassist anticapitalism" and pacifism. The catholic world, taken as a whole, continues to harbour contradictions and significant experiences.

In a context in which the Church as reformed by the Vatican Council is coming increasingly under attack, the pontificate of John Paul II marks a phase of open and explicit assault on modernity: one only has to think of the crusades against abortion, women's rights and freedom of sexual orientation, as well as the obsessive and aggressive campaign in favour of public funding for private schools. From the cultural point of view, these choices are evidently perfectly coherent with the well established theological restoration. Whereas in terms of politics and the balance of power, there can be no mistaking the collocation of the majority of the church hierarchy alongside the centre right. However, the role of the Church and of Wojtyla cannot be simply reduced to this overt identification with the right, for two reasons. First because the catholic world is still rich in manifestations and internal contradictions – as has been seen, for example, in the rise of the anti-globalisation movement – and secondly because the Pope's own anti-modern culture expresses a radical criticism of the wholesale commercialisation of human relations. He preaches a sort of moralist and interclassist anticapitalism, taking a significant stance on war and exploitation.

The cultural outlook of the Vatican is not the only indicator of the complex reality of the catholic church. It is evident that the world of catholics, in spite of the repeated attempts at normalisation and indeed explicit forms of repression enacted by the institution, has by no means ceased to manifest contradictions and experiences which feed into the movements of social criticism, solidarity and liberation, making important contributions which can amount to a conscious anticapitalist stance and be in the front line of constructing an alternative culture. We believe it is vital to dialogue with all these contributions and experiences in order to further the alternative project, whose profoundly secular nature is based not on any form of atheism but in insisting – here and now – on the importance of individual liberties and social transformation.

MOTION 33 – ASSOCIATIONISM AND COOPERATION

For over 20 years now the world of voluntary work and associations has made great strides. The "Third Sector" does not refer to a homogeneous entity but a terrain of initiatives embracing a diversity of political tendencies. The cooperative movement itself is ripe for being refounded.

A new phase began in the venerable history of associationism, the cooperatives and voluntary work at the beginning of the 1980s. This galaxy of experiences commonly known as the third sector entered a period of development in both quantitative and qualitative terms which continued into the mid-nineties. During this period, characterised by the defeat of workers and subsequent disillusion with politics, for many people, and above all the young, membership of organisations of voluntary work and associations represented an alternative to simply withdrawing from all social activity. Through the third sector hundreds of thousands of people began to practise new modes of participating in collective life, based on doing things together here and now, which the classic channels of political activity, being in crisis, could not offer. This process of social auto-organisation on the territory gave rise to important experiences such as the street units, family houses, social cooperatives for the handicapped, advice bureaux for combating old and new forms of exclusion and affirming rights, and popular sports initiatives in the interests of social aggregation on the territory.

The restructuring of the Welfare State that took hold during the nineties, with its emphasis on privatisation, extending subsidies and creating a market for services, had a profound effect on this world. The agreement seeking practices of the Forum of the third sector began to coexist with the conflict practised by social auto-organisation. A profit-making ethic based on exploitation of the workforce has come in alongside the experiments of labour liberation and true volunteer activity. To give just one example, the reactionary practices of the Compagnia delle Opere are coexisting with the emancipated modalities introduced by the gruppo Abele.

In this context we have also witnessed the crisis of the cooperative movement, which has partly lost its original characteristics, becoming subordinate to the capitalist style organisations. Cooperation is on the receiving end from the right-wing onslaught, intent on introducing in this sector too comprehensive privatisation of the great public asset constituted by the cooperative movement. The only way out of this crisis is to reaffirm and reactivate the values at the root of the cooperative experience, starting from non-subordinate forms of labour, centrality and mutual aid, in the defence of consumers and producers, above all those from the South, and safeguarding the environment and the food chain.

The world of the so-called third sector is not homogeneous, harbouring various social, cultural and political tendencies. We should favour – with a view to the growth of the movement – the development of practices and experiences which lie outside the logic of the market and can integrate and broaden, rather than substitute, welfare. We must fight, on both the social and institutional fronts (starting from the local authorities), transfers of public services and works to associations and cooperatives which are implemented merely to cut the costs of labour. We must draw a clear distinction between work and voluntary activity, safeguarding the rights of workers. And we must foster protagonism, participation and grassroots social control to combat all neo-associative tendencies.

MOTION 34 – NECESSARY INNOVATION

In a period of such radical change, innovation is a vital necessity, above all for a force like the PRC, which seeks to radically refound political practice, based on the priority of contents, relations with the movements, and the growth of the social organisms, rather than the traditional centrality of alliances and institutional roles. In this sense, the break with the Prodi government was one stage in this refoundation.

If the analyses undertaken so far are plausible, we find ourselves in a cycle which is so new and complex that it calls for something more than the traditional approaches and theoretical expertise accumulated up until now. Innovation is a prime necessity, both in method and contents. Yet in contrast with the “new look” ventures that have come and gone in the last few years, we are convinced that innovation must have a rigorously anticapitalist and class-based inspiration. And at the same time it must verify, without preconceived limitations, all political hypotheses and general paradigms. In practice, innovating means turning your back on any attitude of defence and

resistance, values which are still essential but insufficient in themselves to enhance the development of an alternative force.

After all, Rifondazione comunista has passed the milestone of ten years of political activity largely because it has refused to be the custodian of a past, however glorious, and chosen to be a force in constant innovative tension, albeit with stringent limits and only partial results. This tension has manifested itself in two closely related spheres: on one hand the primacy of contents over positioning; on the other, a political activity that has constantly put the accent on the "social question". In a very specific sense, the battle of the Party over the last ten years has been an active contribution to the vitality of politics, combating the growing divide between the "abstract citizen" and real men and women. This has meant adopting objectives normally attributed to union activity which, in their interaction with gender contradictions, environmentalism and pacifism, take on an over-riding social and political, not to say civilising, function: particularly significant in this respect have been the battles for the reduction of the working week, salaries, pensions and the "social salary". On the political and institutional terrain this refusal to separate the "social question" from the "issue of democracy" gave rise to the first conflict with the moderate left when in 1995 Rifondazione comunista refused its support to the Dini government. This is also the reason behind the most crucial choice of this period: the break in 1998 with the Prodi government and our opposition to the subsequent governments of the centre left led by D'Alema and Amato. This was not the consequence of an inveterate (or never resolved) propensity to shun our political/institutional "responsibilities", nor simply the result of a political and moral coherence. Rather it was one stage in our progress towards the refoundation of communism. It was a clean break with the received wisdom of the left, according to which a compromise, however unsatisfactory, is always preferable to a breakdown, unless this leads on to a "more advanced" political equilibrium. It was a response, if only in outline, to the need to reconstruct a political praxis in harmony with social entities and requisites, made urgent by the current processes of globalisation, omnivorous expansion of the economy, and the drastic reduction in the real power of national governments. In this respect, innovation can and must act on the conception (and practice) which has profoundly influenced the left in Italy, to such an extent that it became hegemonic among the leadership of the Pci, Psi and part of the "new left" during the 1970s: institutional policy as the privileged and over-riding sphere of politics itself, the constituent moment of the identity of social entities and the subordinate classes, and "hallmark" of the very function of the Party.

No one is calling into question the necessity or usefulness of the democratic struggle within the institutions, elected assemblies and in general in the sphere of representation. Nor are we talking about cultivating abstract and misguided extra-parliamentary tendencies. We are interested in redirecting the thrust of politics, away from the level of the state, the institutions and the organisations and towards social forces, the movement and mass struggles, to match the changes in society, the new requisites of the masses; and also away from the canons we have inherited, without denying their importance, as for instance in the case of Togliatti.

In many phases of Italian history, whether remote or very recent, the institutional initiative has maintained a positive link with social processes, obtaining some significant results, changing the balance of power and achieving some measure of social and cultural recomposition. But now this organic link has been broken, as has the automatic correlation between subordinate social position and a left-wing orientation, just as there is no longer a linear trend of progress, emancipation and broadening of awareness. Today the practitioners of politics merely dance attendance on the power holders and economic interests, or are caught up in auto-referential mediation: politics too is reinforcing its oligarchic and separatist tendencies, and can no longer be reformed from the inside. Far from being a risk for individuals, standardisation is a strong tendency in current reality. This reveals the need for a strategic battle in the long term. A process of refounding politics, able to meet the requirements of a new generation, must take on board the crux of social transformation, traditionally the preserve of more remote spheres such as culture or, in other respects, partial social practices. Thus on one hand the revolutionary transformation appears to be

the only truly credible response that politics has to offer, able to go to the root of the contradictions of capital in its neo-liberalist phase, but also able to set the concrete demands of social and class-based antagonism in a perspective of liberty and liberation. On the other hand, a communist policy which seeks to be more than just an extreme reflection of the institutional hierarchy must be determined by the social interests or causes which it aims to represent. Thus the representation of the conflict in the institutions cannot have its be all and end all in traditional activity and the praxis of "mediation": there needs to be a decisive change of course so that the institutional aspect of our activity becomes an integral part of the social struggles and the movement. In a context of innovation, our well-rooted institutional presence can become the protagonist of the urge for transformation, in the context of the struggle against capitalist globalisation, interacting with the movement also in local questions, whether in the proposal for "participatory budgeting" or in the ability to renew, with resort to "civil disobedience", the struggle against the privatisation of services and rights, and for a clean, healthy environment. Such an institutional praxis, defining agreements and intransigence, pacts and conflicts, compromises and clashes, would adopt a non-linear perspective which embraces the movements, workers, and the furthering of social struggle.

MOTION 35 – A NEW EUROPEAN POLITICAL SUBJECT

The objective is ambitious, but necessary: to construct a new political subject able to unite, on the basis of the opposition to globalisation and war, the forces of an alternative and antagonistic left.

Our political proposal has a European context and dimension, by which we mean a territorial and social collocation which is open to the world at large. This is the new dimension of political activity in the modern world and the era of globalisation. The European sphere is the most suitable, as the first experiences have demonstrated, for unifying the various social figures, both traditional and new, which make up the category of people subjected to exploitation and alienation, and hence is the best sphere for constructing a new workers' movement. It is not simply necessary to see ourselves as a European political force, to conceive our political initiative in a supranational framework, and establish contacts and collaborations with other forces, as we have done with success in recent years, and will continue to do, avoiding ideological divide lines in our international relations. We must also set ourselves the ambitious but inevitable objective of constructing a new European political subject. Of course we do not have in mind either a new International, or an organisation bringing together all the existing forces, or indeed a unification on ideological lines. Instead we intend to pursue – in the wake of the positive initiatives of recent months set up by our European left-green-nordic group GUE – a complex but resolute process to unite, on the basis of opposition to neo-liberalist globalisation and war, the left-wing forces which recognise themselves as communist, antagonistic and alternative on the European scene in a common process of research, elaboration and promotion of political, institutional (with the end of the current legislature in mind) and social initiatives, in harmony with the growth of an antiglobal, pacifist and environmentalist movement uniting workers, those in casual employment, the unemployed, young people, women and intellectuals, through the length and breadth of the continent. Besides, this orientation is made necessary by the common difficulties facing our political groupings in all the respective countries.

MOTION 36 - OUR POLITICAL PROPOSAL

In Italy, we propose constituting an alternative left, able to invert the tendency of the last 20 years and become a protagonist in the public arena. To achieve this the growth of the movement will be decisive, to break down the barriers which separate the political debate from the concrete condition of social groupings. This process needs new inputs, from both below and above.

In Italy we propose constituting an alternative left, able to invert the tendency of the last 20 years and become a protagonist in the public arena. To achieve this the growth and broadening of the movement will be decisive, together with the social recomposition of the various figures, divided and set at odds by the capitalist restructuring, in employment and unemployed, the young, women and all who are oppressed and marginalised by the liberalist, non-democratic system. This process must become the dynamo for a new rapport with social figures and sectors of society which recognise the lack of any long-term prospects for the current modernisation and thus adopt a stance of interrogation and research.

Furthermore, on one hand the crisis of politics and, within this, the crisis of the leftwing, and on the other the manifestation in society of new demands and needs for culture, politics and life style which cannot be integrated into the existing status quo, outline a new political reality able both to attract those disenchanted with the crisis and to organise the latter into a participatory political project. Thus the constitution of an alternative left is our strategic objective for the current phase. Naturally this objective has been a tenet of our policy for years, but it takes centre stage thanks to the experience of the movement, which enables us to take a significant step forward. The possibility of combining the construction of an alternative left with the development of the movement is the political novelty which our analysis of the current phase has come up with. It is a crucial opportunity to break down the barriers separating the political debate, including its most radical expressions, from the concrete social condition. The construction of an alternative left becomes the creation of a sphere of political groupings, associations, groups, networks and forces which are directly active in the social sphere.

On the basis of the way in which it is constructed, the alternative left will have an answer to the crisis of politics. In the same way, its original organisation of the political groupings will be able to hold together the multiplicity of component experiences and political cultures in a unitary political project. The PRC is ready to act as one of the protagonists of this process of construction of an alternative left in Italy, which will thus incorporate it and go far beyond the scope of our party, to aggregate all those who oppose war and neo-liberalist policies and believe in "another possible world". It is essential to set up experiences and initiatives, at the local level too, working in this direction; the alternative left must be created from above and below.

MOTION 37 – ARTICULATION OF OUR POLITICAL PROPOSAL

(approved by the National Political Committee)

Today the hypothesis of constructing a pluralist left - an extended force field, including sectors of the moderate left - has become more arduous. Yet the alternative of sectarianism and politics for its own sake is a certain loser: between these two extremes, we must give free rein to our proposal, contents, and ability to dialogue with all those who represent alternative standpoints.

In this context the prospect of a pluralist left, meaning the activation of a wider sphere than the one so far referred to, involving significant sectors of the moderate, reformist left, although of course this is an obligatory step in constructing an alternative for government, is made more difficult by the decisions adopted by the majority of the DS and the Ulivo to approve the war and direct entrance into the conflict by our country, accompanied by a growing insensibility towards social issues and the subordination of culture and politics to the paradigms of liberalism. Nonetheless the consequences of the deepening of the economic crisis and prolonging of the war, with the more costly involvement of our country, can further magnify the divergences which are already manifest within the moderate left and above all bring about a crisis of consensus. At the same time the outcome of these processes depends on our political ability to consolidate a platform of opposition to the right-wing government, on the growth of the movement, on the evolution of the moderate left's relations, on one hand, with society as a whole and the union movement in particular, and on the other with the power bloc which is currently supporting the right and which makes no secret of its ambition to incorporate this force, as its subordinate, within the comprehensive government of society. For all these reasons we must be able to articulate our

political proposal and find the forms to carry it to society and the movements, which we recognise as strategic and decisive. This is where we must focus our efforts to achieve a pluralist way out, starting from below, of the crisis of the left. At the same time we must put our proposal into practice in the institutions and the system of political relations at all levels.

Thus we must be able to conduct territorial questions ourselves, on the basis of an articulation of objectives that no platform, however perfect, can provide for: in fact the platform will be continually extended and improved by these local experiences. We must conceive and enact our presence in local authorities as the formulation of elements going against the national political scenario – as concerns modalities of government and political relations and alliances; as a way of concretely furthering the objectives based on the identification of popular requisites; to maintain an ongoing and productive dialogue between the movements and organs of local government; to foster new experiences which make it possible to put into practice a cross between direct and delegated democracy, initiating from below a process of re-democratisation of our society on new foundations. In this context the innovation of the “participatory budget” pioneered by the municipality of Porto Alegre is a precious and emblematic experience which we must seek to generalise and apply to our conditions.

MOTION 38 – A NEW WORKERS MOVEMENT (approved by the National Political Committee)

The contradiction between capital and labour is becoming increasingly acute and generalised, while the categories of workers are being broken up into ever more discrete segments. The over-riding problem today is the social and political recomposition of the social figures that are oppressed and fragmented by global capitalism. This is indeed a novel task.

From the social standpoint our activity must involve primarily all the social groupings who fall victim to a state of exploitation and alienation. As we have seen, the restorative capitalist revolution that has taken place over recent years has brought about an upheaval in the morphology of the subject classes and in particular a process of extension and fragmentation of all the various facets of subordinate labour. On one hand, the social groupings have lost their definite outlines – viz. the multiplication and pulverisation of contractual positions – while on the other there is a direct absorption in the process of capital valorisation of groupings, or activities performed by individuals, which were once attributed to the sphere of the reproduction of the workforce, i.e. outside productive work in the strict sense of the term. These are not entirely new phenomena, just as there is nothing ground-breaking in the debate over the boundaries separating productive from non-productive labour, material and intellectual, but there is no doubt that these phenomena are much more widespread today than in the past. Work, which from the point of view of capital has always been considered abstract, is now coming more and more to take on that nature.

Alongside the enormous increase in casual work, there is a rise in mass unemployment, which has more than doubled since the 1970s. We can recognise a crisis in the extension of salaried labour, in the sense that many activities are in effect at the direct service of capital – meaning that, far from coming to an end, work is actually becoming more prevalent – even though they do not receive economic and social recognition as such. This phenomenon carries within it a potentially revolutionary force, because it points to the fundamental impossibility of ever totally subjugating human work to capital. The contradiction between capital and labour is becoming increasingly acute and generalised in society, but the figures this concerns in the sphere of labour are multiple and discrete. Consequently the identification of social referents in constructing an alternative cannot be entrusted to the paradigms of the past, nor can the social front of the alternative be represented as a mere reworking of the classic concepts of social bloc, according to which the revolutionary class *par excellence*, representing the human dynamo of the production process, had to be flanked by upper classes or classes which had lost their centrality following the achievement of industrial capitalism. The key problem today is to recompose the front of subjects which are victims of exploitation and alienation, divided and in contrast following the capitalist restructuring,

in a new workers' movement. The recent experiences of struggle in which the steelworkers have demonstrated alongside the no-global movement, united in part by being of the same generation, show that this objective is not only necessary but feasible.

More prominence can be secured by the social figures which occupy the key positions in the production of surplus value within the process of accumulation of capital, but their identification is still to be ascertained, and cannot be taken as a starting-point. To identify the social referents of our political action, we must undertake some research: only thus will we be able to know the conditions and requisites of these social figures and establish a dynamic rapport with them which will itself constitute a political, and not merely fact-finding, activity.

MOTION 39 – THE GROWTH OF THE MOVEMENT (approved by the National Political Committee)

For the PRC, our commitment to promote the “movement of movements” concerns various aspects: its extension, its unity, its anchoring in the citizens' Social Forums. The spread of the social conflict and the construction of strong links between the “traditional” workers' movement and the no global movement is the true strategic challenge facing us.

The appearance on the world scenario of the “Seattle people” did not catch Rifondazione comunista unprepared, on account both of the analytical approach adopted by the party some time ago (on the capitalist revolution, new processes of globalisation, and the signs of crisis of these processes) and of its ability to be, with its specific identity, an integral part of the movement, rejecting any inveterate temptation to remain an external conscience. Thanks also to the political activity of the Young Communists, the role of the PRC within the Genova Social Forum has been evident and important, precisely because it was not determined by claims to hegemony. In this phase, in which the movement has given various demonstrations of its strength and stamina, and at the same time is undergoing a radical debate on its prospects and organisational structures, we feel it is appropriate to spell out our strategy. In reconfirming our decision to act from within the movement, our organisational, political and cultural contribution to its growth, we believe that the priorities for this phase are the following:

1. THE GROWTH OF THE MOVEMENT, in the sense of its potential to persist, develop and be efficacious, irrespective of the time scale imposed by the adversary, is the chief objective. Here there can be no question of a political outcome of the movement distinct from its growth and development, for mass movements do not necessarily follow a linear trend, nor are they bound to “match up to” institutional requisites: in a word, they give full rein to their sovereign rights in choosing autonomously the rhythm and progress of their engagement.
2. THE UNITY OF THE MOVEMENT, with so many different components, drawing on a variety of inspiration and offering a wide range of options, is a valuable asset to be safeguarded in real, political terms, without any trace of mere political advantage. This is no simple matter, and must go beyond a purely subjective or voluntaristic approach: the tendencies for the single components to divide up, or indeed to disintegrate and/or assert their autonomy, are strong, and based on the pluralism that is at the root of the “no global” movement. The construction – by means of consensus and without forcing the pace – of a high profile programme, together with a profound respect for the differences present in the movement, the ability to set tangible goals, and the continuous broadening of the movement beyond its current fringes, is the task that we propose both to ourselves and to the parties to the protest.
3. THE CONSTRUCTION OF SOCIAL FORUMS in towns or districts is an indispensable step forward, not least to achieve growth. They must be developed and strengthened not as so many inter-groups but as genuine venues for aggregation and proposals, able to involve groupings and individuals who have up until now been excluded – or have excluded themselves – from politics. Here there is scope for fostering unification between different social figures – workers and young people, above all, and then between those who have guarantees and those who do not, workers

and students, “natives” and migrants – which the movement cannot afford to do without. It is in fact a level of unity, direct dialogue, and inter-reacting which can only come about within the groupings and needs, but also has to be linked to actual events, such as local or territorial disputes, leading up to a generalised and well-coordinated level of conflict.

4. EXTENSION OF CIVIL AND SOCIAL DISOBEDIENCE. We are not speaking merely of a methodology, but of contents: the ability to transfer and re-elaborate the violation of the zones indicated as off limits during the summit meetings of heads of state into a discussion of the infinite “no go areas” which make up our daily life and civic existence. The ability to deploy tactics of civil disobedience, from the “anti-strikes” of the unemployed to the social valorisation of derelict urban sites and tax boycotts directed at military expenditure, is one of the tests of the social and territorial solidity of the movement and of its progress. The “exercise of objectives” must be removed from the aesthetic dimension of a “symbolic gesture” and reinstated in collective practice as a mode of struggle which unites protest and self-management.

5. NONVIOLENCE, a non-destructive mode of struggle, together with disobedience towards unjust laws, is the methodology which both responds best to the deepest convictions of the movement and is most incisive in combating a power which is overtly repressive and which aims to transform the social question into a matter of law and order. It should not be seen as the contrary of conflict, or indeed of force, but as a different, more lofty, management of conflict itself: for in order to be incisive, this requires an organisation which is more robust, not less, and more thorough. It is an integrative part of that reform of politics - which regards parties as well as movements - which involves the rejection of any militarisation of actions and assumes coherence between ends and means as a characterising trait. In this sense, in the era of neo-liberalist globalisation, the practice of disobedience and non-violence is, in reality, obedience to the truly radical values of democracy and fraternity: in short, of humanity.

6. UNIFICATION OF MOVEMENTS. The renewal of working class conflict (and more generally of initiatives on the part of workers) stands, together with the rise of the pacifist and no global movement, as the most significant new aspect of the current phase. Proof of this lies in the strike and large-scale demonstrations of the steel workers on 6th July and 16th November, strikes in schools and by civil servants, the compact walk out with parades at the Fiat works and more generally the mobilisation which is taking place in defence of article 18 of the Workers’ Statute, against the destructuring of the rules of the labour market and the social state, with an oppressive recourse to agreement seeking.

This conflict is involving not only realities in which the level of antagonism had dwindled, but also a young generation of workers who are entering the political arena for the first time, with significant segments of casual employment willing to protest even though they are particularly liable to retaliation on account of increasingly fragmented conditions of employment. Finally it is clear that this conflict goes beyond the immediate working conditions and has a more general significance.

But this is not all. The renewal of class conflict in our country creates the premises for constructing a truly comprehensive social movement. From this point of view, a fundamental objective is to weld together the world of work with the no global movement. Since Genova this conjunction has taken place, although still only on and off, with the decisive contribution of the Fiom as well as the extra-confederate union movement. There can be no doubt, however, that in seeking to construct a social movement able to champion a platform of opposition, much still remains to be done; not only because the world of work still has to be more extensively involved, but because there is a need for unifying programme proposals, and this unification must find full expression in struggle and common mobilisation.

Support must be given, from both within and outside the institutions, to disputes defending jobs currently under attack; our proposals for the periodical and automatic adjustment of wages, salaries and pensions in terms of real inflation levels; the harmonisation of “typical” and “atypical” work profiles, demanding new “rigours” in employment relationships and the extension of the

rights guaranteed by the Workers' Statute to casual workers and firms employing less than 15 people; insistence on the achievement of hard and fast normative and contractual levels, raising the profile of union representation in every work place, investing human resources in this sphere. In this perspective, the forceful reproposal of the question of salaries and reduction of the working week without a drop in salary will in themselves constitute a terrain of unification.

The commitment for the growth of the workers' movement, the realisation of a more extensive social movement, and convergence into a common social platform constitute fundamental initiatives for the party. Without this horizon its role as a political subject would be inadequate in view of the complexity of this phase. Besides, it is only in this perspective that we can seriously conceive of offering an opposition to the government of the right. For the nature of the attack being deployed by the government, affecting essential elements of social existence, with assaults on the social state and workers' rights, requires a mass response which must become generalised and long-lasting, involving a general mobilisation.

MOTION 40 - THE FUNDAMENTAL PROGRAMME FOR THE ALTERNATIVE LEFT

There has to be a project for social transformation, based on key ideas and programme objectives able to become "flags planted in people's heads". No single force could elaborate such a project acting alone.

In the process of refounding communism, constructing an alternative left, and also in the contribution we can and must make to the extension of the movements, the definition of a fundamental programme for an antagonistic left is of crucial importance. There are three main factors in this: the great innovations introduced into the economic and social spheres by the capitalist revolution and the inauguration of a second phase in the process of globalisation; the collapse and failure of the experiences in the countries which practised real socialism and the consequent crisis of projects for the transformation of the societies known so far; the development of a world-wide antagonistic movement.

These factors taken together require a redefinition of a communist project, as well as an effort on the part of the alternative left to come up with a new a fundamental programme of transformation with the same ability to innovate and inspire as past programmes of the communist movement which, to use Engels's expression, were "flags planted in people's heads". This is a long-term objective, which cannot be achieved by a single force, nor indeed at the drawing board. It needs continuous dialogues with the movements, political and social protest groups, and the multiplicity of anticapitalist forces willing to engage on this terrain of research, in an international dimension that starts from Europe. Thus it is an orientation which coincides with a large part of the project of Rifondazione Comunista itself, and which we intend to pursue not on our own, but engaging others in reflections on certain essential topics.

MOTION 41 – THE ESSENTIAL FEATURES OF PROGRAMME RESEARCH

The forms of property, but also and above all the new alienation of labour. A radical criticism of the productivism and "developmentism" which have characterised the working-class movement. The acquisition of the contradiction of gender. The definitive rejection of the primacy of economics.

We are referring above all to a conception of the revolution in production rationale which not only reformulates the question of property, which has undergone substantial modifications following capitalist restructuring, but above all the critique and modification of the actual labour processes in every aspect of society; opposition to the social hierarchy which perpetuates itself in the various production processes; and the new forms of alienation. This means pursuing the critique of the productivist and developmentist concepts which have nonetheless underlain a large part of the history and experiences of the working-class movement, turning the defence and valorisation of the environment into an inalienable and constituent value of the culture of transformation, and

hence a sense of ceiling, in ecological, but also social and relational terms. It means a radical rethink of the link between production and reproduction. Thus, even for immediate actions, it involves going beyond economicist thinking, and of a primarily redistributive conception of resources, and facing up to the question of what should be produced and for whom, as well as how; thereby laying the foundations for unity between the traditional social figures and those created by the process of capitalist restructuring.

We are referring to the importance of putting fully rounded individuals, with a social and sexual collocation, and their rights in the complete life span, at the centre of a process of transformation. This means pursuing the critique of social organisations based on a patriarchy and family loyalties, in whatever specific form or origin, in order to implement gender-based democracy in every aspect of social life. It means reconsidering the dialectic between community and individual, state and citizen, without alienating anybody's rights. It means going well beyond the forms of social or socialist state known up until now, by identifying and finding an answer to the problems of social, sex specific individuals, involving their participation and protagonism.

We have to reconsider the very idea of power and hence of democracy, viewing the former as neither the starting-point nor the culmination of a revolution in social and production mechanisms, but as an important stage in the democratisation of daily life which involves identifying the forms of power and extending to all self-management, control and participation. It means repositing – in the light of the defeats suffered in organising the worker-class movement, but also on the basis of recent experiences that have been positive, albeit limited – the topic of direct democracy, associated more and more closely with the forms of delegated democracy, and hence overcoming the contradiction between the theory of the extinction of the state and a practice that reinforced the state in all its worst aspects. It means arriving at a more complex idea of democracy, based on gender as its constituent element and cultural plurality as its cardinal value. It means creating a community: fleshing out the forms of democracy with social ties between diverse entities. Thus it also means seeing political action as a constant effort to link means with ends, not only in the sense of denying that the latter can justify the former, but that, to be credible and induce consensus and participation, the means must contain within themselves the embryo of the ends that they purport to achieve. To end this exemplification, we are referring to a concept of peace based on the idea of a universal community transcending borders, cultures, genders and material conditions.

MOTION 42 – THE PLATFORM OF OPPOSITION TO THE RIGHT

Our electoral programme defines our “proposals for legislation” for an incisive battle against the right-wing forces, which of course has to be updated and complemented as necessary.

There must be a precise connection between defining a fundamental long-term programme and the political and social initiatives to be undertaken today for an effective opposition to the government of the right, as well as working towards an alternative and pluralist left and contributing to the growth of the movements. This connection must concern both the identification of objectives and the modalities for pursuing them, as well as the concrete occasions for struggle. In this sense we confirm the validity and topicality of the programme we presented prior to the elections of 13th May 2001 – designed to span the term of the present government – which was discussed and approved with the contribution of figures and forces from outside the Party. Naturally the important events that have occurred since the elections, the decisions of the government and the reflections these have provoked in the movement and the alternative left oblige us to update, complement and highlight elements of that programme. The right-wing forces did not win the elections on the basis of a cohesive, fully formed social bloc, but there can be no doubt that they are now intent on creating one, making full use of the benefits of office. Our goal is to achieve a platform of opposition to this government which becomes a focus of elaboration and encounter for the social and political movements and organisations, undermining the

consensus for the right, which is strong but by no means invincible. This will require reversing the tendency to compliant subordination of the centre-left and moderate left in favour of the primacy of competition.