

Partito della Rifondazione Comunista

V NATIONAL CONGRESS

Amendments to motions of the majority

PRC/V National Congress/Motions/ Amendments to motions of the majority

Partito della Rifondazione Comunista

V National Congress

Amendments to motions of the majority

***MOTION 14 (alternative) - IMPERIALIST GLOBALISATION,
THE STRUGGLE FOR PEACE AND DISSOLUTION OF NATO***

(in substitution of motions 14 and 15)

We are in favour of the dissolution of the NATO, an instrument of war and imperialist expansion, which enables the United States to condition the autonomy of Italy and Europe. We want all foreign military bases and all the nuclear arms dislocated on our territory removed from Italy. We are for the ratification of the Kyoto agreements on the environment, and support the ABM treaty of 1972 ruling out any possible "star wars" project; we advocate binding and verifiable treaties against the militarisation of space, forbidding new nuclear tests and banning all weapons of mass extinction, atomic, chemical and bacteriological, which threaten the very future of humankind. In the name of the "fight against international terrorism" the USA – in fact opposed to the disarmament treaties – is pursuing a policy of military global supremacy to secure hegemony for the 21st century. The theatres of war of the last decade (Iraq, at the heart of the Middle East; the Balkans and Afghanistan, at the heart of Eurasia) have involved regions possessing the largest reserves of energy on the planet (oil and natural gas) as well as the oil and gas pipelines used to transport them. Control over these regions ensures a position of predominance in the world economy.

In 1945 America accounted for 50% of the world economy (GNP), whereas today the figure is 25%, the same as the European Union, with Japan at 11%. According to the OECD, over the next 20 years the three largest entities in the capitalist world – and above all the USA – will see their quotas halved, to the benefit of the emerging regional powers (Brazil, Indonesia, Russia, China, India, Arab world ...). The prospect of a world that is increasingly multi-polar induces the hawks in the American administration to contrast the possible loss of economic primacy by achieving a crushing military superiority over the rest of the world, if necessary through warfare. It was above all the USA who wanted war in Iraq, Serbia and Afghanistan. When the other NATO members (and Japan) decided to make their military contribution, they wished to avoid being excluded from the carving up of zones of influence which every war involves. As was demonstrated by the contrasts surrounding the formation of a new government in Kabul, there is no "international coalition" based on long-term strategy linking the United States, Europe, Japan, Russia, China, India, Pakistan, and the Arab nations (too diversified in terms of social make up, political profile and geo-

strategic interests). Whereas there are interests of Realpolitik, based on reciprocal and occasional convenience, which are not served by a unified "world-wide directory".

There is no such thing as a global or world capitalism, compact and homogeneous: rather, there are plenty of contradictions between the leading national or regional capitalist and imperialist forces, and the respective national states or groups of states (European Union) that defend their interests in global competition. The headquarters of the 200 leading multinationals which condition the global economy and finance, with branches scattered in all continents, are concentrated in this or that national group and solidly allied with the political power of the host nation (as is the case for Fiat in Italy, Toyota in Japan, General Motors in the USA, Volkswagen in Germany). This also explains the competition between dollar, mark and yen; the marked contrasts which are continually dividing the WTO, resulting in the failure of the Seattle meeting and the crisis at the most recent appointment in Doha; the recurrent contrasts between USA and EU (and within the European Union) on military defence, Echelon, the political and institutional profile of the Union and its extension to the East, relations with Israel, the Arab world, the Balkans and South Africa, where over the last few years wars by proxy have caused three million casualties in Congo alone. The current recession makes competition for hegemony even more heated. Capitalist globalisation, imperialism and global competition are all aspects of one and the same phenomenon, rather than incompatible interpretative categories. There is a need to update our analysis of contemporary imperialism to take account of modification in the processes of accumulation. But this does not mean abandoning this interpretative category, which remains an essential part of the theoretical and political analysis of the communist and revolutionary forces of the whole world (from Cuba to the Farc in Colombia, the communists in South Africa, India and Palestine, who are up against the brutal reality of imperialism in their everyday existence). Capitalism at the time of Marx was also very different from what it is today, but we continue to define it as such because it still has the same "systemic" grounding, starting from the irreducible conflict between capital and labour.

Lenin identified the "five hallmarks" of imperialism: the concentration of production and capital in great monopolies, which today are enormous multinationals; the fusion of the capital of banks and industry - finance - and the formation of an oligarchy of the world of finance (whose current features, significantly accentuated, are well described in Motion 5); the increasing level of exportation of capital rather than goods; the emergence of international capitalist associations which divide up the world and the competition among the leading capitalist powers over the distribution of zones of influence, which today is quite blatant. The analysis of the most recent trends in contemporary imperialism is a crucial part of an open-minded research which is not bent on coming to swift and definitive conclusions.

The competition between capitalist countries - which does not always or necessarily produce world wars (particularly when, as at present, one country has an overwhelming military superiority) - has its venues for coordination and reaching agreements (IMF, World Bank, WTO, G7-G8), which exist to preserve the overall interests of the system and mediate its internal contrasts, seeking to prevent their calamitous degeneration. But these organisms are dominated by the world's leading capitalist states, not by a faceless "global capital". And when wars break out, they are waged by these same nations, acting alone or in coalition with the others. The point is that not all the states are equal: while the leading imperial powers, with the exception of the USA, are convinced that they can increase their political and military roles by participating in this global competition (also by controlling governments that are "friendly" or subsidiary), the great majority of the smaller nations are undergoing a profound crisis, involving a progressive reduction in their roles and effective sovereignty in a world that is increasingly dominated by imperialism.

The risk of global war in the 21st century (evoked also by the Pope), a possibility which is openly discussed by some of the more extreme hawks in the Bush administration, and of a spreading of the present war far beyond the frontiers of Afghanistan, renews the urgency of a new world-wide movement for peace, embracing political and social, union and religious forces, and peoples and governments from every continent. The driving force will be the new "no global" movement, which sees the anti-war struggle as the banner of its identity and unity and reinforces its links with the

workers' movement. It can integrate and unite the converging aspirations of the "Seattle people", Porto Alegre and the "people of Durban".

There is a primary objective for communists, together with the revolutionary, antagonist and anti-imperialist forces in the whole world, which – while respecting the diversity and autonomy of each individual – involves reinforcing the solidarity and common commitment, overcoming national idiosyncrasies and pretexts for division, to combat the serious threats to peace and the fundamental democratic liberties. We must be aware that the anti-war struggle involves the construction of the most comprehensive global movement possible, concentrating forces against the most aggressive sectors of imperialism, American above all, which are bent on the worst. The knowledge that, ostensibly in the fight against terrorism, America is setting up special tribunals, independent of the obligations of the Constitution, which are beginning to distinguish between the rights of American citizens and those of immigrants (particularly of ethnic groups), must make us focus on the perverse links between political authoritarianism, racism and the impulse to warfare, which this new phase in imperialist development can prefigure for the 21st century.

GRASSI, PEGOLO, BRACCI TORSI, CAPPELLONI, SACCHI, CASATI BRUNO, FAVARO, GHIGLIONE, GUAGLIARDI, MANGIANTI, SORINI, VALENTINI, ABBA', BANDINELLI, BELISARIO, BURGIO, CANCIANI, CANONICO, CAPACCI, CIMASCHI, COLOMBINI, CORRENTE, CRISTIANO, DE PAOLI, GAMBUTI, GIANNINI, GIAVAZZI, KIWAN, LEONI, LICHERI, LONGO, LUCINI, MACRI', MARCHIONI, MASELLA, MONTECCHIANI, MORO, MULAS, NOVARI, OKROGLIC, ORTU, PACE, PATELLI, PETRUCCI, PINTUS, PUCCI ALDO, RICCIONI, SCONCIAFORNI, SIMINI, SOBRINO, STERI, TEDDE, TORRESAN, VALLEISE, VERZEGNASSI.

MOTION 30 (alternative) – THE STRATEGIC FAILURE OF THE CENTRE LEFT AND DS

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. 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.

The decision to back Bush's global war is the most unmistakable and disturbing sign of this. The neo-Atlantic leanings that have been visible in the Ds for some time have now become a political orientation. In this worrying perspective, we must appraise with interest and attention the position of the left-wing of the Ds that emerged in the congress of Pesaro. Although it is within a reformist position, it has shown that it does not intend to confirm to a centrist outlook, but pursue a more

radical political stance than the predominant liberalism, and a serious interest in the platform of the antiglobal movement.

This is a signal that we must not overemphasise, but neither underestimate in our broader commitment to consolidate, in the political as well as the social sphere, every possible link which may contribute to developing the struggle against liberalism, war and the devastating effects of globalisation.

CONFALONIERI, FERRARI, BORDO, BOZZI, Giovanna CASATI, COLZANI, MARAGLINO, PRANDINI, SCIANCATI, BANDINELLI

MOTION 37 (alternative) – OUR PERSPECTIVE

The construction of an alternative left, as a strategic phase objective, is part and parcel of a change of government, the outcome of a political itinerary and the creation of a social grouping able to defeat the bloc of the right-wing forces.

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. 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.

CONFALONIERI, FERRARI, BORDO, BOZZI, Giovanna CASATI, MARAGLINO, COLZANI, SCIANCATI, BANDINELLI

MOTION 38 (alternative) – A NEW WORKING-CLASS AND WORKERS MOVEMENT

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 lower 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 all those who are victims of exploitation and alienation, divided and in contrast following the capitalist restructuring, into a new working-class movement, and thus reformulate a new concept of social bloc, able to bring together and address all the exploited and alienated workers, the lower middle classes, the poor and the emarginated. 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.

CONFALONIERI, FERRARI, BORDO, BOZZI, Giovanna CASATI, COLZANI, MARAGLINO, SCIANCATI, BANDINELLI

MOTION 39 (alternative) – THE GROWTH OF THE MOVEMENT

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.

CENTRALITY OF THE WORKING-CLASS MOVEMENT AND SOCIAL CONFLICT

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. No one can ignore the importance of the resurgence of this conflict after years of social peace, characterised by a stifling implementation of agreement seeking. This conflict involves 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.

On the general level, these dynamics show that in the current phase of capitalist globalisation the contradiction between capital and labour remains as valid as ever, and is indeed more potent, in all its objective and visible corrosiveness: from the large enterprises it extends to the smaller scale productive entities, affecting the fringes of labour that are made fragmentary, delocalised and precarious by new organisational models of production, paving the way for a process of recomposition based on common class interests. A diversity of subjects and situations of subordinate employment: here lies the main impulse for conflict. The complexity of social loyalties, unified by the common interest in overcoming the exploitation of which they are victim, does not disperse but on the contrary confirms the predominance of class-based contradictions. Thus the hypothesis that "post-Fordism" meant the disappearance of salaried employment and the very workplaces where this was enacted, dissolving into a thousand ephemeral rivulets, simply does not hold water. After all, there are still many large factories, in Italy as well, giving employment to hundreds and indeed thousands of workers.

In recognising the centrality of the working classes and the contradiction between capital and labour, we are not undervaluing the profound changes to have affected society, production processes and class make-up. A prime objective for the working-class movement and for communists remains the recomposition and organisation in terms of political subjectivity of the various aspects of the proletariat at work (from the classic wage earner to the figure that has replaced this, from the traditional employee to the autonomous worker directed by others, from casual work to areas of "a-typical" and unofficial work), since they are all subject to a common condition of inferiority.

The Party must commit itself to a strenuous defence of the issues brought up by the world of work. We must patiently renew the work begun at Treviso, updating the basic premises that guided the discussion in that conference, starting from the impelling necessity to enable workers to make themselves heard by means of a law that can sanction, once and for all, democratic criteria for representation in the workplace.

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 strike.

At the same time, we will only be able to turn the tide in the moderate left and the unions if this goes hand in hand with a powerful social mobilisation. For there is no doubt that the dialectic within the Ds and their crisis of consensus (involving millions of people, most of them workers) can evolve, rather than regress, only if society expresses a strong desire for change. By analogy, the growth of a left-wing in the union movement and class-based orientations in the Cgil, which had an important echo in their congress, along with the affirmation of class-based positions in the extra-confederate unions, need to be mirrored by the energy of a broad, articulated movement able to hold up the prospect of change.

GRASSI, PEGOLO, BRACCI TORSI, CAPPELLONI, SACCHI, CASATI BRUNO, FAVARO, GHIGLIONE, GUAGLIARDI, MANGIANTI, SORINI, VALENTINI, VACCARGIU, ABBA', BANDINELLI, BELISARIO, BURGIO, CANCIANI, CANONICO, CAPACCI, CIMASCHI, COLOMBINI, CORRENTE, CRISTIANO, DE PAOLI, GAMBUTI, GIANNINI, GIAVAZZI, KIWAN, LEONI, LICHERI, LUCINI, MACRI', MARCHIONI, MARCONI, MASELLA, MELIS, MONTECCHIANI, MORO, MULAS, NOVARI, OKROGLIC, ORTU, PACE, PATELLI, PETRUCCI, PINTUS, PUCCI ALDO, RICCONI, SCONCIAFORNI, SCREPANTI, SIMINI, SOBRINO, STERI, TEDDE, TORRESAN, VALLEISE, VERZEGNASSI.

MOTION 51 (alternative) - COMMUNISTS AND THEIR HISTORY

(in substitution of motions 51 and 52)

We cannot proceed to a definition of the communist identity without reflecting on the history of the working-class movement over the last 150 years. The congress motions of a party are not the most appropriate occasion for tracing even a summary evaluation of this experience, all the more so because we are still too close to the end of the Soviet Union and the other East European states, and "we still don't know what will be the long-term effect of those regimes" (Hobsbawm). Nonetheless, although in such questions historical interpretation is still far from coming up with definitive results, it is indispensable to identify the main criteria that must inspire our historical analysis.

There is no question of repudiating what in any case is our history, whether this is viewed as glorious or tragic. We must avoid simplifications that tend to glorify or liquidate, simply grotesque in relation to a subject that looms large in one period of world history and which saw – and to some extent still harbours – the aspiration to liberty of millions of human beings. We have no truck with those who evoke an apocalyptic 20th century which was the triumph of a destructive fury in which Nazism and communism get mixed up in a single wave of barbarianism.

We must have no hesitation about looking objectively at the darkest moments of our experience: the lack of comprehensive democracy, the excessive importance given to leaders, the deformation of bureaucracy which Lenin himself already denounced, the crimes that have stained the history of "real socialism". To those who goad us by alluding to the violence committed in the name of communism, we will not respond by minimising its scope or simply pointing to the whole-scale devastation and extermination produced by capitalism. We are aware of the burden of our past and we take responsibility for it, trying to learn from our mistakes.

At the same time we repeat that the action of the working-class movement and the victorious revolutions in the name of communism have liberated from servility great masses of people, giving an extraordinary impetus to the processes of liberation of the third world from colonialism and a

decisive support to the struggles of workers and antifascists in the capitalist West, obliging the ruling classes to make significant compromises with the working-class movement. For vast masses of proletarians the rise of the Soviet Union meant the end of servility and, for the first time, access to more civilised living conditions and high levels of education and social protection. We would also do well to remember that the defeat of the Axis powers in the Second World War could hardly have come about without the sacrifice of twenty million civilians and soldiers of the Red Army. The October of the Bolsheviks represented a watershed that showed the world the maturity of the working-class movement, able to affirm its own historical and political autonomy. But playing off the revolution against the political development that ensued – seeing in the societies that grew out of the October Revolution merely a denial of what the revolution stood for – would be just as abstract and ingenuous as a return to Marx which repudiates the theoretical research and political debate that grew out of his teachings.

Marx elaborated the fundamental categories of the critical analysis of capitalism and laid the foundations for a new revolutionary theory that enabled the proletariat to assert themselves as an autonomous political subject. But at the same time Marx insisted on the necessity of subjecting his theory to constant updating. With Lenin's analysis of colonialism and imperialism the revolutionary theory freed itself from its Eurocentric limitations, matching up to the global dimension of capitalist domination. Gramsci's thought, featuring an original reappraisal of Lenin's theoretical legacy, represents a further enrichment, both in terms of the concept of the communist party as an "intellectual collective", participating in the revolutionary process and the construction of the workers' state, and in relation to the topic of revolution in the West, envisaged – against the idea of politics as being inseparable from the social sphere – as the rooting of class consciousness in society and the progressive consolidation of its capacity for hegemonic direction.

It is not a question of constituting a corpus of dogma, but of valorising theoretical instruments in order to move on, focusing on those crucial issues of Marxist culture which have not yet been adequately investigated. In this respect the questions posed by the movements of feminists and environmentalists appear fundamental. On one hand we must rethink the structure of the processes of reproduction and the issues of subjectivity, affective experience and the commercialisation of human relations. On the other we are obliged to espouse the concept of "sustainable development", in which economic development and productive growth are not regarded as absolute values.

In a word, the experience of the communist movement cannot be seen as a heap of rubble. Humankind would today be in a much less advanced state if the socialist revolutions had not influenced vast areas of the world.

A great contribution to the struggle for the emancipation of the proletariat has come from whole generations of communists in Italy. The demise, in many respects bewildering, of the Italian Communist Party (Pci) obliges us to look for the roots of the mutation which over the last few decades decreed its decline and eventual dissolution. The causes for this mutation – which rule out any continuism – must be evaluated in all their scope in order to learn the hard lessons. But they do not cancel the historical merits of the Pci, just as they do not prevent us recognising the contribution made by thousands of communist and socialist militants, even outside the party ranks (for example in the movements of '68-69 and the new left), to the antifascist struggle, for democracy and against capitalist exploitation.

These comrades wrote some of the most intense chapters of the war in Spain and the Resistance and animated the struggle for liberation from Nazi-Fascism. The skills of political leadership of Togliatti and the guiding lights of the Resistance and the first phase of the Republic – and indeed the intuitions of Eugenio Curiel on the subject of "progressive democracy" and the commitment of the great Socialist leaders such as Lelio Basso and Rodolfo Morandi – counted for a lot in giving Italians an advanced constitutional charter. In this the framework of democratic liberties becomes an instrument of transformation of the existing society and a possible presage of the social and political conquests of the masses, and also a stimulus for a genuine equality among all citizens and their participation in the government of society and the economy. It is not possible to make sense

of the subsequent history of Italy without recognising these premises, on the strength of which Italy has become a laboratory for class conflict which is in many ways unique in Europe.

PESCE, GRASSI, PEGOLO, BRACCI TORSI, CAPPELLONI, SACCHI, CASATI BRUNO, CURZI, FAVARO, GHIGLIONE, GUAGLIARDI, MANGIANTI, SORINI, VALENTINI, ABBA', BANDINELLI, BELISARIO, BURGIO, CANCIANI, CANONICO, CAPACCI, CIMASCHI, COLOMBINI, CORRENTE, CRISTIANO, DE PAOLI, GAMBUTI, GIANNINI, GIAVAZZI, KIWAN, LEONI, LICHERI, LUCINI, MACRI', MARCHIONI, MASELLA, MORO, MULAS, NOVARI, OKROGLIC, ORTU, PACE, PATELLI, PETRUCCI, PINTUS, PUCCI ALDO, RICCIONI, SCONCIAFORNI, SIMINI, SOBRINO, STERI, TEDDE, TORRESAN, VALLEISE, VERZEGNASSI.

MOTION 56 (alternative) – STARTING FROM THE FOUNDATIONS: REINFORCING THE PARTY

Communists are called on to organise those social components who, due to their objective collocation in the capitalist production system and the various oppressive and alienating forms this takes, have the potential to constitute a project of society in alternative to capitalism: above all the working class, employees (including the "a-typical" forms of nominally autonomous work), casual workers and the unemployed, women's movements, pacifists and environmentalists.

Our party has set itself the long-term objective of organising a social and political bloc which represents the majority of the working and oppressed classes. To this end it is indispensable to persevere in building a communist party of the masses, rooted in the territory, present in places of work and study and in city districts. The whole history of Rifondazione comunista speaks of the importance of this task. Without an organised party covering the whole national territory and structured in regional committees, federations and circles (the vital centre of gravity of our organisation) we would not have come through the harsh trials that we have faced in our first ten years of existence. If repeated and ruinous schisms, caused by the majority of the parliamentary groups and large sectors of the central leadership, have failed to destroy us, this is due above all to the resilience of our grass-roots organisations, which must be fully recognised by the party at large.

The capillary extension of Rifondazione comunista over the territory and wherever there is social conflict is thus decisive if we want to reinforce our political project. This has to be underlined because in recent years there has been much talk, even among "left-wing" commentators, of the obsolescence and superfluity of political parties. Nothing could be further from the truth. The entire history of the working class movement, including the dissolution of the Pci, shows that the most important tools in its struggle are political and union organisation, without which its bargaining power amounts to zero. It is no coincidence that the ruling classes can count on powerful resources in every field, and in particular on parties which are robustly structured on the territory like Forza Italia and Alleanza nazionale. This does not encourage us to fall back on continuity or conservative concepts of organisation: on the contrary, the very necessity of reinforcing the party requires profound innovations and choices of self-reform, in the context of a political and theoretical reflection on what can and must – in the current historical context and the reality of a capitalist nation such as Italy – be the characteristics of a communist party with mass support and influence, but involving innovations with respect to even the most advanced experiences of the past.

The whole leadership must commit itself to tackling such essential problems as building up the party on the territory, collecting party dues (which, if correctly approached, is not in the least a bureaucratic ritual, but rather the opportunity for intense political and human interaction), self-financing, integration in the workplace and the training of cadres. The drop in membership, which has been a constant over the last four years, and the turnover, which remains extremely high, constitute a political factor of prime importance: at the root of such phenomena lies the chronic weakness of many circles, i.e. precisely those features which are fundamental for a party that wants to be strongly rooted in society. This is why the whole party calls on those in charge of the

circles to operate with the greatest attention and enterprise, and the priority of ensuring greater involvement of the grass-roots organisms in arriving at political decisions. All this will have to be discussed intensely, also in specific sessions of the national political committee and the Direction: our failure to do so in recent years shows that we seriously underestimated the problems. This tendency must be reversed, and to this end we must bring in some changes with respect to the current situation:

A) Since Rifondazione comunista sees the contradiction between capital and labour as crucial, an organised presence in places of production is strategically decisive and bound up with the very nature of the party, as well as the success of its political initiatives and struggle. We must not forget that the tendency of the Pci to embrace social-democracy, and its genetic mutation, were accompanied by the loss of a clear class connotation and the progressive disappearance of production workers from the party leadership. We have to create a specific sector charged with building up organised cells in workplaces, linked with the circles on the territory, provided with substantial human resources and materials, to foster the development of cadres who are a direct expression of the world of work.

B) While we must avoid an accumulation of political and institutional office and roles in leadership, a significant part of the central party apparatus and national leadership must be returned to the "coal-face" and the periphery; we must also rethink the location of the national departments, siting them in various cities and not exclusively in Rome. Similarly the Federations, starting from the territory and places of work and study, should decentralise their political activity, bringing together the territorial and workplace circles into coordinated zones on the basis of social projects. Such choices have powerful democratic implications, reinforcing the continuous link between the centre and the periphery, and the social integration of the party; reducing the red tape of the central party apparatus (and also cutting costs); transferring facilities and resources to the territory; reducing the risk – always present in the history of the working-class movement – of authoritarian coercion on the part of leadership and the formation of a privileged political and institutional élite separated from the bulk of the party, removing the opportunities for the sort of career making and personality cults all too prevalent today; contributing to selection of cadres which, as well as competence and intellectual ability, takes into account practical experience of struggle and organisation in the social arena. In this context we must foster the growth of our women companions by means of leadership roles at all levels, bearing in mind the numerous difficulties they face in the life of the party, and making every effort to put an end to the objective conditions of inequality.

C) We must continue the policy of acquiring local headquarters under party ownership undertaken in recent years, in order to provide headquarters at least for all our provincial federations. These venues will benefit – more than is currently possible – dialogue with other mass groupings, becoming centres of social and cultural aggregation.

D) The newspaper "Liberazione" has played, and continues to play, an irreplaceable role. After years of toil and difficult organisational innovations, thanks to the dedication of an authoritative editorial board of manifest professional prestige and the contribution of all its journalists and printers, it is now more or less breaking even. Now is the time to consolidate this achievement and improve on it. It is intolerable that the party leadership at all levels fails to work systematically to increase the circulation of the party newspaper. At the same time, "Liberazione" – with a collegiate political direction representing the whole party – must play a balanced role so that the party is correctly informed, free of any personal slant, of the ongoing debate in its leadership and to ensure free expression for the party's internal debate, avoiding unilateral representations or distortions which would hinder its full development. We could also do with fuller information on what communists and left-wing forces world-wide are doing and thinking: a "globalisation" of information and reflections on topics of common interest.

E) The Fairs of "Liberazione" – over 700 every year – are among the most important political dates in the party's calendar. During these Fairs we talk to millions of people, many of whom are not members and do not vote for us. Thus these are events which really cannot be left to their own devices any longer (for years there has been no one in charge of them at the national level): they must be able to communicate common messages, rationalise the use of the facilities we own, publicise and exploit the most significant results achieved by the party in both political and economic terms. Without, however, losing sight of the fact that self-financing is vital for the party's autonomy, ensuring we do not come to depend on public funding and our presence in the institutions.

F) There is a need to reinforce our educational work. This is not a question of bringing in courses of "indoctrination", but considering the cultural and political growth of cadres as a decisive factor in the ability of the circles to act politically with intelligence and be up to date. A knowledge, devoid of any dogmatism, of the works of the major leaders of the communist and socialist movement, a pondered reflection on the history of the working-class movement, besides a suitable preparation in the practice of politics in society and the institutions, can contribute to the critical formation of companions, without the sort of pragmatic and tub-thumping approaches which are still all too common. The cultural growth of militants – especially the younger generation – is a patrimony of primary importance for the party, without which there would be little point in investing in the future which is at the root of our common commitment. Moreover, raising the theoretical and political level of the whole party can contribute, more than any amount of exhortation, to reinforcing its internal democracy ("information is power"), and overcoming internal factions, often associated more with hidebound experiences and collocations than with the merits of current issues, which on the contrary require a dialectic that is free-flowing, not crystallised. Within the political and cultural process of refounding a communist approach, the question of the party's self-reform has become an impelling necessity. This problem is all the more urgent in view of the change in the political phase represented by the re-emergence of social conflict and the new tasks this brings with it. A keystone in our outlook is the construction of a mass communist party, with the ambition of refounding a communist philosophy and practice. This new Party should prefigure in its real, day-to-day existence that society of "free and equal individuals" we have in mind when we speak of communism. A Party which is able to formulate a theoretical and practical critique of the current state of things, a policy which is not separated from contents, a participation which does not rely on delegating, a genuine relationship with society able to engender movements and struggle for transformation, building powerful relations with and between all those who bear the brunt of modernisation and capitalist globalisation, working towards a broad and many faceted alternative left.

From the point of view of philosophy and practical organisation, our party has always suffered from serious structural limits, which were in fact comprehensively analysed during the conference at Chianciano. Above all it is up against an apparently insoluble contradiction due both to objective difficulties and to our inability over the last few years to create a true party of the masses: the contradiction consists on the one hand in the structure taken over from the tradition of the Pci, suited to a party which, among other things, can count on a large number of full-time staff, and on the other the reality of the political make-up of Rifondazione comunista, consisting overwhelmingly in voluntary work, mobile militants and pro tem collaboration. We have never succeeded, partly on account of the frenetic rhythm of a political practice that is becoming ever more "high speed" (and focused on a rapid succession of polling dates), in adapting this model to incorporate significant corrections or truly innovative forms: not even in order to move beyond the white- and male-dominated nature of the party.

Now, however, we must get down to a serious discussion. Over much of the national territory the Party is in serious difficulty: all too often tied down in its ability to project externally, to become socially rooted, to broaden its consensus; frequently shaken by divisions, lacerations and

personality cults; or again split up into compartments that fail to communicate with one another. Even the Party at the national and central level is not entirely free from these contradictions. In this context we must also facilitate the participation of the Party rank and file in the political decision making. A party which is more vivacious and participatory, able above all to extend its social relations, cannot rely on forms of leadership which in practice remain hidebound and hierarchical. The mere fact of a turn-over in membership which has become endemic, concerning tens of thousands of companions "lost" along the way, demands a reflection that is organic and not merely subsidiary. As does the singular contradiction between the healthy increase in the endorsement coming the way of the Party – in particular among the younger generation – and the drop in membership over the last few years.

Thus we are obliged, especially in this phase in which the signs of a social thaw have multiplied to the point of engendering the movement, to redefine our skills for organisation and conducting a unitary political direction at all levels (from the construction of social work to procuring members and distributing the party newspaper *Liberazione*) within an indispensable process of self-reform of the Party which can increase its powers of attraction and aggregation, starting from our local Circles which represent the fundamental springboard for our political initiatives.

GRASSI, PEGOLO, BRACCI TORSI, CAPPELLONI, SACCHI, CASATI BRUNO, FAVARO, GHIGLIONE, GUAGLIARDI, MANGIANTI, SORINI, VALENTINI, ABBA', BANDINELLI, BELISARIO, BURGIO, CANCIANI, CANONICO, CAPACCI, CIMASCHI, COLOMBINI, CORRENTE, CRISTIANO, DE PAOLI, GAMBUTI, GIANNINI, GIAVAZZI, KIWAN, LEONI, LICHERI, LONGO, LUCINI, MACRI', MARCHIONI, MARCONI, MASELLA, MELIS, MONTECCHIANI, MORO, MULAS, NOVARI, OKROGLIC, ORTU, PACE, PATELLI, PETRUCCI, PINTUS, PUCCI ALDO, RICCIONI, SAVELLI, SCONCIAFORNI, SIMINI, SOBRINO, STERI, TEDDE, TORRESAN, VALLEISE, VERZEGNASSI.