

## MOTION 25 – INTERVENTION IN THE ANTI-GLOBALISATION MOVEMENT IN ITALY

The anti-globalisation movement in Italy has attained a true mass dimension and holds significant anticapitalist potential. But its convergence with the working-class struggle is crucial if its demands are to be met. We must work so that the working class adopts the demands of the anti-globalisation movement within a class-based programme. We must work so that the anti-globalisation movement opens up to the working-class movement in the context of the central conflict between capital and work. This is today an impelling necessity in the battle for a communist hegemony in the recomposition of an anticapitalist social bloc. But it requires a battle within the movement against the prevalent positions in its current leadership.

The anti-globalisation movement now plays a very important part in the Italian scenario. More than in other European countries, it has really embraced the masses, in particular the young, as shown by the huge demonstration in Genoa; it has involved real sectors of the vanguard of the working-class and its union representatives and it has exercised a notable political impact on the whole national situation. More in general, it has generated widespread popular sympathy, an indirect effect of the crisis of liberalism's hegemony in wide sectors of the masses. Therefore, the movement reveals a precious potential for further expansion that the events of war have not prejudiced.

But it is this reality and potential that underline the unresolved problems in the movement's political direction. The disproportion between the general lack of political awareness in the movement and the public level of conflict with the state apparatus and the government, documented by the events in Genoa, the disparity between the fundamental anti-liberalist critical impulse and the level of conflict imposed by the aggravating of the imperialist war in Afghanistan all represent an objectively dangerous compromise, in part inevitably due to the inexperience of the young generation and in part magnified by the pacifist-reformist mind-set of the majority of the movement's leaders.

Our party, thanks to its general presence in the movement, can and must work to supersede this contradiction, in the interest of the movement and its basic tenets. We must not see our role as purely institutional representation of the movement's demands nor as the mediator between the movement and the institutions; still less as a mere glue for the unity of the movement in the sense of a political-diplomatic bloc made up of the associations its leadership represents. It must combine a loyal action for the daily construction of the mass anti-globalisation movement with an open battle for the political line of the movement itself. This battle must be aimed at developing the political awareness of the movement on anticapitalist and anti-imperialist terrain (see motions...), its autonomy and counter-position to the centre-right and centre-left and its convergence with the working-class struggle for an alternative social bloc, an open fight for an alternative hegemony.

Intervention in the movements implies first of all clear responsibility for proposals concerning the forms for the struggle and the organisation of the movement. In this context, we must oppose all positions that in practice propose a sort of cloistered withdrawal or a retreat in the level of mobilisation, that have emerged cyclically (for example, following Genoa, before the Naples demonstration against NATO, or in

relation to the demonstration in Rome on 10 November). On the contrary, peaceful mass demonstrations must be made the crux of the struggle, necessary for aggregation, political impact and the visibility and polarisation of the movement's motivations. In this framework, the problem of self-defence from any type of aggression during the demonstrations must be seriously discussed in order to protect the peaceful, mass character of the demonstrations themselves (viz. internal organisation for public order). Furthermore, the question of the national democratic organisation of the movement must be discussed – as it has expanded so greatly, it can no longer be based only on a pact of the different associations, but it must now involve the activists democratically, who are at the moment without any decision-making power, in defining the movement's options and its representatives at all levels: otherwise, there would be a crisis of democracy, shirking of choices and lack of representation in decisions.

On a political level, its unity with the working class struggle, in open opposition to the bosses and the Berlusconi government, must be developed. This is not a question of simply representing our class "sensibility" within the colourful mosaic of the movement. This means fighting to win the majority of the movement over to a class perspective as the condition for achieving its demands and as the grounds for enhancing its potential impact.

In the present framework, the anti-globalisation movement, already benefiting from much sympathy and support from vast sectors of society, could really be transformed into the detonator for a social explosion, but only on condition that a new direction and a new proposal emerge from the movement. Contact with the workers cannot merely be reduced to the sum of good relations with the union representatives, nor as pressure on Cofferati or merely registering FIOM support for the GSF (however important that may be). But it can and must become a public proposal for common action, based on a platform of simple, unified proposals, that can establish a common terrain with the social demands of the wider masses and so, in its unity, can challenge the trade unions, making them aware of their responsibilities. In this sense, the proposal for a general dispute for workers and the unemployed must be openly adopted not only among the workers but also in the anti-globalisation movement in order to indicate a possible common terrain for a unitary, concentrated fight. The very prospect of a general strike against the bosses and the government would be an extraordinary occasion for the invaluable convergence between workers and the young in the dynamics of a rupture with the bourgeoisie.

The struggle for class-based hegemony in the antiglobalisation movement implies constant political action for its autonomy from the bourgeois centre-left in order to become an alternative. The DS apparatus and the forces of the Ulivo are trying to condition the movement from the outside in the attempt to reduce it to a subordinate factor in a future liberal alternation. What happened during the Perugia-Assisi march, through the platform of the so-called Peace Table, can be clearly positioned in this basic strategy, that has found an outlet and interlocutors among the movement's leaders or a weak, defensive reaction. The PRC can and must oppose all DS or centre-left intervention in the movement with all its force. It can do so only by reconsidering deeply its current and future position. This does not mean allowing the liberals in the centre-left to contaminate the movement in the logic of a plural left. This means developing a policy of autonomy and breaking with the centre-left and DS apparatus in the movement. This does not mean papering over the contradictions between the

movement and the Ulivo, or theorising a policy of non-interference (as during the Perugia march): on the contrary, it means analysing them. We must combine the greatest possible openness towards the workers and the young, outside any minority view or mind-set, with the constant explanation that the differences between the movement's demands and the liberal tenets of bourgeois society and its barbarism are irreconcilable. In this picture, the vote of the DS apparatus and the Ulivo in support of the imperialist war against the Afghan people must be publicly held up as the unequivocal, final proof of this. More in general, the fight for an anticapitalist and anti-imperialist hegemony in the anti-globalisation movement represents the central terrain for the defence and development of its autonomy.

## MOTION 26 – EDUCATION

Education is a key element in the assault of the ruling-classes. But it is also a strategic area for the recomposition of an alternative social bloc.

The Berlusconi government is trying to achieve a quantum leap in reactionary policies against state education. In this case too they have inherited the policies originally developed by the centre-left government (such as the D'Alema government's policy on education parity between state and private schools), extending and radicalising them against all those who work in education and students, and against the social interests of the lower classes. State education has been assaulted, first of all, by the new cuts in the Budget, directly shunted to investment in war (5 thousand billion lire); by the programmed reduction in spending on school personnel over the next five years, linked to a net reduction in employment in this sector; by the extension of the "financial autonomy" linked to the cuts in public funding; and by the programmed reduction of high-school education from five to four years, combined with creating parity between job training, grammar schools and professional institutes in the interests of business. At the same time, the right-wing government has become the direct representative of private schools' interests, in full harmony with the Vatican, as the articulation of its own social bloc. The policy of school vouchers now tends to be generalised at local level thanks to regional governments. Regional federalism, in a full-scale assault on the State's exclusive competence on educational matters, is now trying to break in by "privatising" state schools and the complementary policy of favouring private, business and religious schools.

This assault on state education, combined with a similar policy for university education, is destined, however, to meet with growing social resistance. Education is the terrain on which the liberalist policies, even in their general upward trend, have had the most difficulty in obtaining majority social consensus. Today, in the new phase opened up by the more general crisis in liberalist policies, education can be confirmed as one of the possible vital areas for resistance and counter-attack. The renewal of the teachers' struggle in recent years (after a long period of stasis after 87-88) reveals the counter-tendency now in progress, even more significant considering the splintering in the trade union movement. At the same time, the emergence of a new generation in the conflict has been reflected in the renewal of student movements and especially the maturing of clear politicisation within these movements. The frequent intertwining of student movements and the anti-globalisation movement has been an indication of this.

Even more than before, communists must consider education a priority for the recomposition of an alternative, anticapitalist bloc. Therefore, our party must not limit its action to supporting the development of these movements against reactionary education policies, however invaluable and necessary. It must combine its participation in the active construction of the movement with the adoption of proposals for the recomposition of a unitary fight and the development of a future perspective.

First of all, a unitary platform of mobilisation must be drawn up to encourage the recomposition of teachers and students in this struggle, linking the immediate demands to a more complex alternative class-based programme. Demands for salary increases in the education sector, a cut in the maximum number of students per class

and classes per teachers, the modernisation of school-buildings and the extension of state education (starting from nursery education) and its service in relation to the adult population, immigrants and the old must all be linked to the primary objectives of abolishing all forms of direct or indirect funding (even at local level, whether centre-left or centre-right) for private and religious schools, in the perspective of re-affirming all education as “state and free” and the demand for the progressive taxation of the great patrimonies, incomes and profits as the source for education funding. So the fight against the dismantling of the collegial organisms – promoted by the Berlusconi government – must be developed, not in the name of a conservative, defensive logic, but in the name of a proposal for the social control of public education based on the participation of teachers, students and all the school population as an alternative to the control of businesses and their interests.

At the same time, communists must put forward a proposal for the unification of the current student movements in a democratic self-organising structure. The atomising of the movement and jobs, without a unified platform or a democratic framework to ensure a true representation of the different positions and proposals, would only lead to defeat. What is more, it would smooth the way, as experience has shown, for the leaders of the Uds and the regression of the movement. Instead, we should learn from the French students, and propose that each school assembly in the occupied schools elect democratically its delegates, who would be constantly replaceable, and that the co-ordinating groups of delegates at the various levels, up to national level, form the democratic structure for the definition of the movement’s demands. Only in this way could the weight of the different positions, organisations and areas be measured by their effective level of democratic representation. Only in this way could a national dispute be developed between the movement and the government. Only in this way could the forms of the struggle and their continuity be finalised for clear, representative, verifiable objectives.

## MOTION 27 – THE SOUTHERN QUESTION

The masses in the South of Italy are a crucial strategic ally of the working class in its anticapitalist perspective and a determining force in this perspective. The Southern question is once again the crux of national life and one of the terrains where social and democratic questions meet.

The history of the eighties has already confirmed the continuity of the social and economic marginalisation of the South within the international and national division of work. The change in the nineties and the inauguration of the II Republic has precipitated the situation in the South: the cut in welfare spending, the liberalist design of federalism and the spreading flexibility in employment (viz. the emblematic area contracts in Manfredonia, Crotona and Castellamare) must be set in a social context that has already been lacerated by a notable de-industrialisation and the further growth in mass unemployment, in particular youth unemployment. The entry into Europe with Maastricht has consolidated and accentuated these basic trends, confirming yet again that the growing marginality of the southern economy, far from being the expression of backwardness and “delay”, is the consequence of a real integration in the modern capitalist market and a laboratory for experimenting with advanced forms of exploitation.

Moreover, the further decline of the South has produced a polarisation of wealth and internal class conflict. On the one hand, there is an emerging Southern bourgeoisie linked to construction, service industries and tourism, the amoral protagonist of rash speculation in the abandoned industrial areas, multiplying capital through income mechanisms. On the other hand, there is the heavy fall in the industrial working class that has gone hand in hand with a wider impoverishment marked by the growing weight of unemployment, casual seasonal employment, the degrading of state employment and the exploitation of female labour.

In this picture, organised crime finds its natural outlet in society. It is woven intrinsically with the Southern bourgeoisie in a complex relationship: on the one hand, it exercises a widespread protection racket, substituting to a great extent state taxes and thereby in contradiction with the general interests of the national bourgeoisie, while on the other it guarantees social protection and bank loans (even using State funds). In addition, organised crime acts as a job centre for unemployed youth and so, paradoxically, as a social shock absorber, especially in a phase when the bourgeois State, historically a tax-collector and policeman, now denies even welfare assistance. In this picture, no court sentence, legal initiative or solemn proclamation of the fight against the Mafia can uproot organised crime from society, objectively incorporated in the governing social bloc.

The new right-wing government has become a factor in the worsening of the Southern condition. The policies of a savage flexibility in employment and the assault on social conquests fall more heavily on the material conditions of wide sectors of young people and women in the South. At the same time, a new bout of much-vaunted government investment in “great public works” aims to reinforce the speculative business bloc with the open involvement of criminal capital, damaging the environment and employment itself (viz. the bridge over the Straits of Messina).

The platform for the general dispute of workers and the unemployed therefore has a

crucial significance for the masses in the South. The demands for a guaranteed wage for the unemployed and young people looking for their first job, the transformation of temporary contracts into permanent ones, the abolition of the “Treu Package” of reforms and the laws on employment flexibility must be taken on board more than ever as the common terrain for the unification of the alternative social bloc in the South and as an arena for the recomposition of a class hegemony. In this sense, they must be directed to a more general anticapitalist programme based on a vast plan for the re-birth and general development of the South and the need for a radical fight to support it by all the working-class movement, in open rupture with the agreement-seeking policies adopted by the unions until now.

We must organise fight committees that involve wherever possible workers, the unemployed, casual labour, migrants and students to support employment strategies that run counter to the current dominant trends, including also the objective of nationalising industries that lay off, evade taxes and welfare contributions, and exploit low-paid workers (with inadequate safety measures, low salaries, scarce specialisation and part-time work etc). We must demand the elimination of bourgeois class privilege as the social policy for the South. The abolition of bank, commercial and financial secrecy is the only condition for the fight against tax elusion and evasion. The imposition of a tax on ordinary and extraordinary patrimonies, a strongly progressive taxation on profit and high incomes and the abolition of public funding for private businesses - true State assistance that takes tens of thousands of billions from the public Treasury - are all essential.

In conclusion, the historic bloc of the working classes and the Southern masses, based on the workers and the unemployed, must oppose the ruling historic bloc of the Northern bourgeoisie and the Southern bourgeoisie, including its criminal part on the basis of an anticapitalist programme. And this class bloc is the only way to transform the southern question into a decisive lever for an anticapitalist alternative.

## MOTION 28 – FOR A MASS WOMEN’S MOVEMENT

The PRC can and must work for the development of a mass women’s movement on the terrain of the recomposition of the anticapitalist, class opposition.

In the seventies, the rise of the Italian working class opened up the way for the development of the women’s movement. And, in turn, the women’s struggle erupted dramatically on the stage of political debate, and Italian culture and society, spreading among the masses and obtaining important results, even if limited, from the point of view of custom and law (see maternity laws, L. 194/78).

In the eighties, the reverses of the working-class movement have dragged with them a more general involution of democratic sensibility and mass consciousness and so a reverse of the women’s movement. But above all, in this context, cultural theories developed in the women’s movement that became progressively detached from social and class tenets, denying the capital/work contradiction and taking on an intellectual, elitist character. The idealist theories now present in a significant part of feminist thought – that lead female oppression back to a biological root and a symbolic masculine code – came to light in that social, cultural climate.

Today the renewal in the working-class movement, the crisis in the hegemony of liberalist policies and the emergence of a new generation have created new space for the possible re-launching of a mass women’s movement able to involve the most oppressed and exploited sectors of the female population. And more than ever the PRC must work in this direction and reject the elitist expressions of feminist thought.

The social policies of the centre-left government have assailed the material living conditions of millions of women (Law 40/98 Prodi government, Bassanini Law in ’97 in support of subsidiarity, regrettably supported by PRC votes). Today, the Berlusconi government on the one hand gives force to the arrogance of the worst Catholic fundamentalism (viz. the attack on Law 194) and on the other grafts the re-launching of the “centrality of the family” onto a further dismantling of the welfare State. Through fiscal deductions and laughable child benefits the family, that is the mother, is spurred on to take on those tasks of care and nurture that were part of the Welfare State. The privatisation of health-care and nurseries is going in the same direction. Women are forced to suffer two-fold the burden of care for those at risk in this society (the old, the terminally ill, HIV sufferers, the disabled). And in the meantime they are the first victims of the attack on jobs (sackings) and the squeeze on salaries. The oppression of millions of women on many fronts has increasingly a recognisable, unequivocal social content.

A class action intended to regroup the greatest mass opposition, starting from women, must be constructed on this terrain. The fight against privatisation and against the assault on the welfare state; the fight for workers’ rights and a guaranteed salary for the unemployed; the fight for the right to a guaranteed, free public health service; the fight for nurseries and against the closure of family planning clinics can involve the most oppressed sectors of the female population in the front line. But it is essential that the working-class movement takes all this on board as the terrain for hegemony and recomposition. And the PRC must represent these demands in the working-class movement (against any attempt at agreement-seeking) and as the arena for the development of a mass women’s movement.



PRC has the task of monitoring all women's struggles, taking root in them, and working to extend and unify them. But it must build a real connection between immediate objectives and the anticapitalist perspective, in a transitional logic. And therefore all women's struggles can only lead to the more general process of emancipation of the working class for an alternative society and alternative power.

## MOTION 29 – INTERVENTION ON IMMIGRATION

The phenomenon of immigration – one of the most blatant examples of the inequality and imbalance resulting from capitalistic development – is used by the ruling class to divide and weaken the working class. The task of the communists in the fight for immigrants' social and political rights and against xenophobia and racism is an integral part of the fight to recompose the unity of class and the construction of an alternative social bloc.

Migration is one of the clearest effects of the contradictions of capitalistic development and today of war and environmental catastrophes. Italy has experienced for some time the growing presence of workers coming from East Europe and the Third World that the ruling class aims to use as a low-paid workforce with few demands. The closure of the frontiers, programmed flows and police controls are the salient points of immigration policies adopted in the last decade and shared by both centre-left and centre-right, differentiated only by their choice of words.

Far from controlling the phenomenon, this repressive policy exasperates the already difficult living conditions of migrants, creates the so-called clandestine immigrants, contributes to the distorted perception of immigration as a criminal phenomenon and fosters xenophobia and racist prejudice. Moreover, the condition of being clandestine, the blackmail of expulsion and the threat of xenophobia make immigrants ready to accept any job on any condition, thereby making them a factor in the weakening and division of the working class. Faced with the novelty of immigration, the response of the working-class movements has been subordinate to the dominant political tendencies, limited at best to generic humanitarian acts. Even the PRC, in the context of its support for the Prodi government, bears responsibility for the Turco-Napolitano law that made our country conform with the restrictive legislation of Schengen and introduced concentration camps and deportation for “irregular” immigrants.

Communists must be aware that migratory phenomena are a challenge for the recomposition of the unity of the working class and the construction of an alternative social bloc. The PRC must be the “tribune of the people”, in defence of immigrant workers, according to Leninist directives, giving a voice to those that have no voice because they are the most oppressed. On the one hand, we must work for unity between foreign and Italian workers; on the other, we must fight resolutely against xenophobia and racism to construct mass, unitary response to xenophobic aggression.

First of all, we must demand the respect for refugee rights, the closure of the so-called temporary camps, the regularisation of all the immigrants present on the national territory, the abolition of the police procedures for residency and work permits, and the putting into effect of concrete socio-cultural and material measures for their entry and integration. But our final objective must be the abolition of all restrictions on entry and full political, social and citizenship rights for all those who come to our country seeking better living conditions. At the same time, we must act so that foreign workers can escape from illegal employment, low salaries and exploitation, working for their unionisation and full integration in the working-class movement and its organisations.

In this general context, priority must be given to the greatest possible mobilisation against the Bossi-Fini law and the further reactionary hardening that this represents

(annulment of the right to refugee status, introduction of clandestine immigration as a criminal offence, condemnation of migrant workers to a life-long flexibility subordinate to business interests). All this requires, more than before, the direct adoption of the defence of foreign workers' rights by all the working-class movement as an integral part of their platform against the government in order to repudiate it.

