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Italy

An anti-capitalist left, incompatible with war and neoliberalism

- Debate - Building new parties of the left -

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I must acknowledge that I feel a certain emotion in introducing the debates of this assembly, which, de facto, represents the first national congress of Sinistra critica (Critical Left) [1]. We have come a long way together, since we presented the motion [2] to the congress of the Party of Communist Refoundation (PRC).

[<https://www.internationalviewpoint.org/IMG/jpg/SC2.jpg>]

We have built a collective, a reciprocal confidence, and common reflexes. And we have also produced political facts - I think especially of June 9 [3] against Bush. We have built a collective practice of democracy and reciprocal listening.

Ten months have passed since Franco Turigliatto was expelled from the PRC. It was a great founding event that brought many of us together. During these months we have discussed how to maintain our project, how to connect the different tempos of each, how to transform anger or disappointment into a proposition which is appropriate for all and to all. And we are here. We have decided to convene a conference, with delegates, and not a meeting, for which there would have also been time. But during these three days we will privilege reflection and political work.

Because we are founding a project in a very difficult context. We do not look behind and we take up the challenge, but we should not tell ourselves stories and let us not hide the difficulty of the enterprise.

End of a cycle

The current phase unfolds under the sign of the closure of the political cycle. Of a short political cycle, that of the Prodi government, but above all of a long political cycle, which emerged from the preceding Italian crisis in 1991-1992. It was the end of an Italian bipolarity incapable of realising its priority: guaranteeing a governability so as to be able to manage the social conflict and allow Italy to compete globally in the midst of a crisis of consensus which endangered the whole of the system. Contrary to the lamentations of Montezemolo [4], according to which the country has not been governed for at least twelve years, it should be stressed that Italy was since then governed while following a descending line of neoliberalism, administered in variable doses according to who was in government. But wages, social rights, access to health or wellbeing all followed a downward curve, at the behest of a foundering Stock Exchange, whereas precariousness grew uninterruptedly. And that has continued under the mixture of neoliberalism and authoritarianism, characterizing both the first and the second Berlusconi government, but also the first and the second Prodi government.

What do they tell us, the fatalities at work, as in Turin? What do they tell us, the millions in precarious work? And these Rumanian workers who line up on the roads at the end of the day so as to be able to work, if only for a few hours? What else, if not the degradation of working conditions while profits grow?

During these fifteen years Italy sought to adapt to the international competition, increasingly explicit and pitiless, based on trade wars and wars full stop. It has tried to preserve its shares of power and to get specific "bases". For example by sending soldiers - now a steady ten thousand - to the various theatres of crisis, to count in the diplomatic game. Therefore Italy withdrew its soldiers from Iraq, in order to move them to Lebanon, something which carries more weight politically, and it is as for this reason it does not intend to withdraw them from Afghanistan, which the Left knew perfectly when signing the agreements!

But the majoritarian bipolarity, which was used to carry out this international insertion, is no longer enough more. Because in spite of economic and military “successes” it was not able to preserve consensus. Social conflict increased during the years of the Berlusconi government and it was not diluted during the years of the centre-left, while disillusionment was multiplied.

Italian society, the modern proletariat, are still more divided and fragmented, atomized and demoralized. Precariousness is at the centre of this condition and it is increasingly visible.

And if the bourgeoisie has increased its profits and its political strength, it is not at its best: it is experiencing a phase of uncertainty, sees some of its sectors impoverished and is frightened by an ever worsening world scenario.

It needs a stable and at the same time less rigid, more malleable system. The ideal from its point of view would be a Grand Coalition, as in Germany. This will be probably be the obligatory path, but such a grand coalition, which constitutes a response during a time of increased difficulties, is already in crisis in Germany, with an SPD pressed on its left and a CDU which aspires to regain for itself alone the centre of the political scene. Even there, the formula does not guarantee social consensus, because society is much more intolerant and foreign to the political framework that what one imagines.

Neoliberalism wants to develop instruments enabling it to impose its choices. It is not by chance that it greeted with much enthusiasm the birth of the Democratic Party (PD), the new party of the European-oriented Italian bourgeoisie [5]. It wants to develop this initiative because its recipes do not function anymore and do not convince any more. There is a crisis of consensus.

That they are not unable any more to convince was something we saw in recent years through the great international mobilization which stressed the theme of opposition to neoliberalism - often with a “latent anti-capitalism” (I promise that this will be the only positive quotation from Bertinotti!) - which founded the bases of an anti-systemic movement. And if today the dynamics seem to regress - even if in their international dimension things are much more mobile - it seems to us that this criticism opened rifts from which a positive energy still flows.

What about anti-politics?

A part of this criticism has even nourished the so-called anti-politics, which is a major element of Italian reality, not only a worrying signal, but a real social phenomenon that nobody wants seriously to analyze, in the hope – which is an illusion - that electoral reform will make the anomalies disappear and will restore normality. However a profound analysis is necessary and the phenomenon requires a serious attitude.

We do not propose to espouse the theses of Grillo [6], a masterpiece of disinterest and reactionary spirit, but if by anti-political we understand the rejection of the politics of the apparatuses and of class divisions, the rejection of these new notables who always offer the same neoliberal soup, then as we are against such a politics, we are ready to take up a bit of this anti-politics ourselves. A bit; i.e. the part which corresponds to a criticism of politics, a class criticism of indirect democracy and a radical opposition to the mechanisms of privatization of the economy and the politics which go with it.

The rebuilding of an anti-capitalist force, precisely “anti”, will necessarily pass by the recuperation of these bodies, also through the forms of rebellion and upheaval of the “politically correct”: a force which will be really outside of the two poles, outside of the compatibilities and outside of the mechanisms and rituals of the politics of the palace!

The new movement

To build it, it is necessary to rely on the movement, the movements and the conflicts.

It is clear that the global justice movement is no longer that which organised the demonstration in Genoa [in July 2001] - the moment of its birth. Many fights and many conflicts persist, but they are today much more localised and also much more diffuse. They have a radical dynamic and very high potential for participation. It is enough to look at Vicenza or Val di Susa [7]. It is there that an active response to the crisis of politics resides.

It is axiomatic that we do not leave these realities isolated, just as it is important that they do not turn in on themselves.

An ever present objective always current is to reinforce links and stable relations, at least at the level of the communication, to strengthen the "pacts", so that they really play the part of subject and are not reduced solely to the political groups. The latter should not however be demonised insofar as they help to carry out tasks (but not when they aim only at their own development or if they try to institutionalize the movement).

The movement must preserve its autonomy like a relic. And, obviously, develop its radicalism and rank and file unity, by realising that today the first is the condition of the second and not the opposite. The opposite of this is the will to impose unity from above, founded on the institutional policy of the left which tries to build an impossible bridge between the "struggle" and the "government".

Hence the centrality of the movements.

The diary is already fixed:

* Vicenza and the war: All to Vicenza on December 15, but also the day of mobilization of the pact against the war on January 26;

* precariousness: October 20 [8] showed the possibility for mobilization. The million "no" votes in the referendum [on precarious work] did not affect Parliament but should not be dispersed. Let's not make the error made at the time of article 18 [9]. Let's support the referendum for the abolition of article 30, reinforce the pact, and determine new timescales. New feminism and civic rights, on the basis of the beautiful success of November 24 [10] and the engagement of women who showed a radicalism and a determination worthy of other times.

* Common welfare and the battle for an ecologist defence of the land;

* The struggles of immigrants and antiracism. What has happened on security represents a watershed and the low point of the left. Because the silence of this evening, when the murder of Tor di Quinto occurred, and the fact that the government convened the extraordinary Council of Ministers, weighed more than the vote of Parliament. It was the absence of an opposed, alternative, viewpoint which should be the principal task of a force of left.

Such are our priorities today. The agenda of the movement is the agenda of the Critical Left.

The left and the movement

Now we see the left of the government attempting its recuperation. After more than one year of silence it is now concerned about Vicenza. It launches appeals, wants to rebuild bonds, raises questions and writes letters.

We think, of course, that if the movement faces difficulties, it is not simply because of the governmental choices of the political and institutional left. There are other weaknesses - the limits of organization, the weight of defeats, the insufficient interaction with the world of work, and many others. But I invite you to reflect on an international analogy.

In three central countries of the international movement - in Brazil, in Italy and France – which guided the dynamic of Porto Alegre, the left have imposed governmental choices. Either by winning the elections, as in Brazil or in Italy, or by being candidates to govern with social democracy, as in France. And the movement divided. And it was stopped. What happened in Italy seems to us to provide an important explanation: while going into government the left has deconstructed the movement and deluded it with the perspective “of struggle and governance”. Widespread illusions and we can see the debris which they have produced under our feet. It will not be easy to find the path again.

The assessment of the government

Even if the Prodi government should last a little longer, its bankruptcy should be denounced. Because this bankruptcy is that of the left, starting with that of the Party of Communist Refoundation.

We speak here of a government which has increased military expenditure exponentially without taking account of any of the demands of the movements, which offered billions to the companies, which actively worked for a capitalist-financial reorganization “à€” from Intesa San Paolo to Telecom, from the operations around Alitalia to those concerning Italy’s place of Italy as the strong country of the European Union. A government which can be hand in hand with Zapatero and Sarkozy at the same time, because on social policies Zapatero and Sarkozy do not say very different things.

It is a government proud to have offered crumbs of charity to the weakest: a bonus for the sick and ridiculous increases in the lowest pensions.

A government which has rested, from the beginning, on the dialogue between the trade unions and the companies without which it would not have been able to survive one day. A class government, yes, but of the opposing class!

And above all, it is a government which succeeded in integrating law 30 [\[11\]](#) by worsening it through a decree on security, going further than Bossi-Fini!

It is for all these reasons that we are in the opposition: we were opposed on the war, then on the Document on economic and financial programming 2007-2011, then on the most unacceptable laws.

Today the opposition of the Critical Left is quite visible with the refusal to vote confidence on the antisocial laws in the Chamber and the security decree in the Senate. We took the time necessary to check what the government does and we are already in the opposition!

It is necessary to keep in mind that the left, initially Rifondazione, covered everything: the war, anti-social laws, security, military expenditure, G8 (Zanotelli), tax kickbacks, the limitation of the PACS.

Currently the attack on Prodi aims at making forget all this. And it serves to cover the last, biggest and most perverse trap, the kiss of death. To support the new recomposition and thus the birth of the rainbow Left, Rifondazione becomes the equilibrium on the axis going from Veltroni to Berlusconi. The two-party majoritarian system, i.e. a coming democratic restriction, a limitation of pluralism, an ultimate attempt to obtain consensus while cheating on the electoral results, with electoral qualification thresholds worthy of Putin and with abolition, as of right, of parties and political culture, profits from a red assistance.

Even the traditional defence of pluralism and fundamental democracy is likely to be thus sacrificed on the altar of the convenience of the apparatus, indeed straightforwardly personal conveniences. It is necessary to be quite clear: they have kept us chained to the fear of the "monster" Berlusconi and today they set him up as brilliant reorganizer of Italian politics by contemplating the hypothesis of an axis with him and his alter ego.

The paradox is that if we want to preserve the contents of democracy, the current electoral law is the best of all this hurly-burly. And thus if our vote were to be decisive, I would propose to prevent any worsening of the "Porcellum" [\[12\]](#)

End of Rifondazione

That also testifies to the end of the cycle of Communist Refoundation. We have said it for some months. As of tomorrow, that will be visible with the new logo when the symbol of the PRC is no longer present on the electoral posters and, in fact, that will amount to the disappearance of the political subject which we have built under the name of Rifondazione. And it will be done without the activists having any say!

The new logo, which has only existed for a few days, is moreover known and speaks volumes: it shows a subject diluted in the rainbow, entirely blurred and losing its historical references. As Franco Piperno said in an interview with "Liberazione", "the new symbol translates the need for indeterminacy". You can ask each of the other founding secretaries of the new subject who they are and what they want. You will have not only four different answers but moreover these answers will shine in their indeterminacy and generality. Even the "strong" reformist option - like nationalisation - is not vigorously advanced.

Of course, all this can be attractive, do not underestimate it, it can attract consensuses. Because in the phase of stagnation and demoralization the call to unity exerts an unquestionable charm. But in this process the project of the recomposition of a class left is lost and one only aims at occupying electorally the space left by the DS while not forgetting the need to remain in the slipstream of the Democratic Party from the point of view of government. This is the real identity.

For our part we do not fetishise symbols. Symbols represent a content and indicate a political project. Why does each turn to moderation lead to the removal of the hammer and sickle?

We are not nostalgic and we are not intoxicated with red flags. But when we see them thrown in the dustbin, we feel a desire to preserve them. And this is because they represent one of our symbols, this link to the best in the history of the workers' movement, which we do not intend to throw off.

Facing its bankruptcy, the PRC changes its field of play. This bankruptcy is measured mathematically. Rifondazione worked actively and in a convinced way - do you remember the climate of the congress? - for the government with the objective of beating the right, opening this government to the movements, changing the country thanks to a Great

Reform permitted by a “good bourgeoisie” which, in Bertinotti’s view, was present. Now the right is stronger than ever in the real country, the movements are all against the government and do not hesitate to oppose it the change obviously failed and the bourgeoisie is just good enough to put up with Marchionne [13] a time bomb under the employment contract of metalworkers and to build, with Padoa Schioppa [14], a neoliberal-influenced policy from which only the contractors will profit.

They speak about the bankruptcy of Prodi to hide their own bankruptcy. Because if the left is at its year zero, who takes responsibility for that? Perhaps if we have lost the ten years of communist refoundation we owe it to those who allied twice with Prodi, with their impromptu and bold zigzags!

So if today we decide to put an end to a political course, we do it partly to shelter ourselves from these nauseating pirouettes!

The lost opportunity

All this makes us think of a lost opportunity. Because if the PRC is lost - and it surely is! - it is not because it suddenly became governmentalist but because it decided, at a certain moment in its complex and contradictory history to favour the reformist and compromise-oriented tradition which comes from the roots of the Italian Communist Party, this party of struggle and government which actually put the struggle aside and sought, without succeeding in its case, to follow the path of government. The entry into government is actually the result of a defeat which prevented the realization of the goals for which Rifondazione was founded: an attempt to rebuild a dimension and a class instrument capable of opposing the capitalist stabilization underway. This vocation was assumed over some ten or twelve years, during the period when the PRC remained outside the poles outwards and preserved from normalization. The access to government - highlighted by the choice to assume the role of presidency of the Chamber - put an end to this anomaly: Rifondazione closed any attempt to build a politico-social body which rebuilt the anti-capitalist identity. The PRC thus became a “missed refoundation” that cannot be rebuilt through any change of direction.

Therefore we speak about the end of a cycle and a concluded experience. Even a possible return to opposition will not be able to restart the machine which we had known, moreover during a rather short time and whose services were not completely satisfactory. Politics is not like a film, which one can stop at a certain point, rewind and restart. You cannot go back to the origins.

The social democrat matrix

The rainbow left is the natural product of this essence retained through the events of recent years: a moderated reformism, of a social democrat matrix, with a governmental vocation. Only this reformism arises at the moment when the room for reformist manoeuvre is tiny, even exhausted. It is enough to look at the social questions: great proclamations, militant gymnastics and finally nothing. Nothing was obtained and it was a disaster, as shown by the disappointment of October 20.

Obviously, the reduction of the room for manoeuvre is not only an objective factor, it is also the product of the subjective factor, the behaviour of social-liberalism and institutional trade unionism which play an active part in the process of demoralization and decomposition. The CGIL [15] provided an active and criminal contribution in this phase: it consciously led millions of workers to accept a mediation which worsens their living conditions and even

ended up being opposed to some parliamentary improvements. An unprecedented indecency.

An alternative identity

Here, we want to set out again on the basis of anti-capitalism as much with regard to the program as to short-term ideas. We remain anchored on the left, a left which wants to break with capitalism, to overthrow it and build a “new order”. We remain in favour of a revolutionary hypothesis which rests on the participation and the self-organization of the masses, a hypothesis of public and social ownership, of collective production and democratic self-management as advanced form of social relations. Utopia? Well, Utopia is a great force which moves colossi and we remain very attached to Utopia.

Therefore we “praise opposition”. Because we assert our unavailability to govern capitalism. Because the class left must accumulate forces, build forms of social self-management, modify in a Draconian way the institutions, which were conceived to play the part of the watchdog of the system, and build its strength and its capacity within society and in the socio-economic structure. It is only at this time that it will be able to raise the question of government.

Current proposals

We have already had the experience of government and we are already in the opposition.

Rifondazione would like to repeat this experience to mask the centrality of the electoral law. We will not take part in a game which only serves to waste time, to give birth to the rainbow left and to mask the true confrontation which relates to the electoral law.

The postponement of the congress [\[16\]](#) represents the epilogue of this desire to save time. It is a true sequestration of democracy. There is no doubt: all will be decided beforehand and the congress will have to ratify these decisions. A sad epilogue.

This is why we declare that our experiment in the PRC is over and we are building a new project. We do not talk of a split because we are talking about a bitter observation of divergent courses: there is a majority which wants to gather the reformist left and there is us, and not only those of us here, who want to build a class left, anti-capitalist, unavailable for government.

The birth of the rainbow left, one and a half years after the appearance of this disastrous government, which showed the true face of this left - and finally the decision to put off the congress until everything is carried out, makes us say “we are getting out here”. We are not following you, we are defending ourselves and - we hope - we offer a political hypothesis to those which would like to continue the work undertaken in 1991 and re-orientated in 2001.

The Critical Left is transforming itself into a political movement and continues its autonomous project. In the coming days we will resign from the PRC and the few institutional elected officials who refer to us will set up groups of the Critical Left, starting in the Chamber of Deputies. A history ends, which causes us much grief, because we know to recognize defeat. And the bankruptcy of Rifondazione is a defeat; there should be no doubts about it.

But another history starts and of that we are proud.

We will announce our choice at the National Political Council of the PRC next Sunday in an open letter and we will make in the same way at the local level. We will organize provincial meetings to explain to those who are members of the PRC what we think and what we want to build.

Very quickly we will build territorial and thematic circles of the Critical Left, thus opening a membership and fundraising campaign.

An anti-capitalist component

We are not transforming ourselves into, nor do we desire to self-proclaim, a small party. We build as of today the Critical Left as a movement, the Movement for an Anti-capitalist Left. We want to thus start a dynamic of movement and an overall politics. A dynamic aimed at expressing a rebellion which, in the absence of adequate means, will have to take unforeseen and sometimes dangerous roads.

To do that, we want to open ourselves, and thus to propose with the greatest number a phase of Constituent of the anti-capitalist left.

If the conditions could be created, if others move into action or will be available to begin at the level of the political project, we think that it will be possible to build a Coalition of the class left which can play a part in society and on the Italian political landscape.

Three conditions must be met if we want to create and advance this proposal:

1. The link with the movement. We do not propose that the movement or the sectors of the movement are transformed into a party or a political subject. We think that there are specific fields, different vocations and particular roles. But the bond with the movement, of which we feel ourselves an active part, is important. And it is essential to not repeat the errors and the disasters of Rifondazione, either with regard to the confusion of roles, or with regard to its claim to represent the movement within the institutions. All in all, we need a level relationship, but with clear roles and responsibilities.
2. Anti-capitalism as fundamental choice, i.e. an adhesion to a coherent class vision, which excludes governmental alliances and compromises with social-liberalism and which has a non-governmentalist vocation.
3. The rejection of the centrality of the institutions in future political work. It is necessary to revolutionize this aspect of politics. It is necessary to put an end to exclusive prerogatives, with moral and material corruption, privileges and institutional obsessions. For that it is necessary to reduce in a Draconian way allowances – a genuine trap which pushes members of parliament to remain there all their life, to guarantee the rotation of responsibilities and a direct relationship with society, all in all, another idea of politics.

Obviously, we do not want to exclude electoral participation. On the contrary, we will discuss the already acquired experiences and we want to test ourselves on this ground while employing, obviously, the hammer and sickle.

But we do not intend to carry on in the old way, avoiding the decisive or founding tests. This must be excluded and we must prevent it from returning through the window.

The political organization necessary

The decision not to proclaim a party but to open a constituent phase, to open the door to other sectors which can be mobilized, does not at all mean that we lean towards a minimalist conception of organization.

The Critical Left needs to be built and organized. And all our energies must be used for that, as of now and quickly. That means the construction of regional coordinations, through regional meetings which we must hold within the next year, and the organization of a broad political campaign that we subject to discussion.

We need a campaign on the social and political elements of our program, above all on the social questions, the difficulty of getting by to the end of the month, on the social rights which are denied to us, so that by Spring we will have a new rendezvous, of a mass character this time, organized directly by the Critical Left!

Of course we do not renounce proclaiming our ideas, including in the area of the identity to which we hold even if we do not intend to proclaim ourselves as nor be called Trotskyists, for the simple reason that we amount to much more than that.

Because we recognize ourselves in the Commune of Paris and 1917 in Russia, in the Spanish and Hungarian revolutions of 1936 and 1956, in May 1968 and the 1970s, in the combative capacity of the workers, in imagination to power, in the class struggle and workers' councils, in radical feminism, in student occupations and in the critique of political economy.

We want to be the movement which abolishes the state of things, in the manner of Che Guevara and Rosa Luxemburg, Lenin and Trotsky, Malcolm X and South American indigenous Marxism: a red thread of research and an ever-present political practice at the service of the actuality of the social and political revolution to transform reality.

If we must thus synthesize our identity, we do not have a category more precise than that of the revolution. Yes, the revolution!

We believe in the revolution because without it reforms are not possible. In a revolution which will open the way with the eruption of repressed creativity and subjectivity - often repressed by the alchemy of the politics of classes and apparatuses - and which will make it possible to realise a radical, absolute democracy, a qualitative leap compared to the farce of democracy that we experience now. A revolution as possibility.

And again a revolution as a single solution faced with barbarism and with the catastrophe which threatens us, a revolution as necessity.

In the programmatic manifesto we have broadly developed on the scenarios of war and environmental disaster which threaten. The catastrophe is there and we do not know at what time it will occur. The revolution is thus one of the instruments to dam it up, to stop it. It is a beautiful image which comes from a Marxist thinker who remains still too little explored, Walter Benjamin, who wrote: "Perhaps revolutions are the recourse against that which slows down the emergence of the art of humankind" to prevent the eternal return of catastrophe.

All this seems to be apart from the market of politics and often leads us to feel very alone. In this political scenario, we choose to swim against the tide, we advance in the "obstinate but contrary" direction to quote De André, but actually, believe me, if we are alone, we are not isolated, because in the struggles, in the social uprisings, in the concrete actuality of the movement we feel at ease.

The mixture of the critical Left

But identity is not only a symbolic recovery or an abstract program; it is also material identity, the flesh and the bones of us all.

The Critical Left was the vote by Franco [17], the single institutional opposition from the left, maintained under difficult conditions which honour him and us. It is also the generosity of the elected comrades who offered their small political “career” for the joint project while jumping without a parachute of any kind.

It is, finally, the political instrument of which I would like to quote three protagonists who testify to our plurality and our potential:

1. These worker comrades, for example those at Mirafiori, but not only them, who continue to reject the prospect of defeat and say they are ready to start again;
2. Students and so many young people, who constitute the heart of this project and without which there would not have been a Critical Left;
3. The comrades who contribute to the building of a new feminist movement, with the radicalism that we have seen

The Critical Left is this mixture. And I think that it is an adequate mixture to face our tests. It will be hard, we should not kid ourselves. But it is not by chance that it is this cry of battle, this experience which has reconstituted a dynamic of the movement, like No Tav [18] which celebrates today the anniversary of the taking of Venaus. Like also No Dal Molin [19], we do not look towards the past. We have got this far, we can still go further, and that is worth the trouble.

[1] The congress was held in December 2007.

[2] The Critical Left was constituted as a tendency within the Party of Communist Refoundation (PRC, also called Rifondazione) by presenting a motion at the party congress of March 2005

[3] The reference is to the demonstration against President Bush’s visit to Italy on June 9, 2007

[4] Luca di Montezemolo, president of the employers’ federation Confindustria

[5] The Democratic Party (Partito democratico, PD) was founded on October 14, 2007 by the fusion of the centre-left and centre parties, in particular the Left Democrats, (DS) descended from the old Communist Party)

[6] Beppe Grillo is an Italian comedian

[7] A mass movement, No Dal Molin, is opposed to the expansion of the US military base at Vicenza and in the Val di Susa in the Alps there is a mobilization of the majority of the population against the construction of high speed railway line (the movement No Tav).

[8] A big demonstration against precariousness was held on October 20, 2007

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[9] Article 18 of the Labour Statute concerning the reemployment of workers who have been unfairly dismissed, was altered by the Berlusconi government

[10] A demonstration against the violence against women attracted tens of thousands of women on November 24, 2007 in Rome

[11] A repressive security measure passed by Berlusconi

[12] The electoral threshold of 2% introduced under Berlusconi

[13] 13. Sergio Marchionne is currently the managing director of the FIAT group

[14] Tommaso Padoa Schioppa has been Minister for the Economy in the Prodi government since May 17, 2006.

[15] 15. The major Italian trade union confederation

[16] The congress of the PRC, which was to take place in December 2007, was deferred for one year by the leadership of the party which did not want to face any discussion on its rainbow project.

[17] Allusion to Franco Turigliatto who voted against the Prodi government in the Senate in 2007 in the vote on the military budget for Afghanistan.

[18] No Tav is the name of the popular movement opposed to the construction of a high speed railway line through the valleys of the Alps

[19] No Dal Molin is the movement opposed to the expansion of the US military base at Vicenza.