

The tasks for anarchist communists in 2008

67th Council of Delegates of the FdCA – Final Document

Federazione dei Comunisti Anarchici

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2007 ended with a definite worsening of the international proletariat's conditions and the Italian workers are no exception to this. The prospects for the future are also gloomy.

The creeping financial crisis sparked off by the mortgages market together with the rise in the costs of raw materials are directly affecting the living conditions of the weakest social classes, who now find themselves without safeguards and protection as a result of poor social and economic policies for wage support and purchasing power.

Italy's 2008 Budget, in fact, gives priority to sorting out the country's public finances, reducing the tax load on businesses, and increasing military and security spending.

The (exclusively European) obsession with rising inflation and the desire to respect debt limits have stopped Italy from turning its two-year period of growth into an opportunity to alleviate conditions for the country's workers through measures designed to support demand (see the miserable conditions of public service labour contracts and the pressure on wages) and public services (more cuts in what welfare there remains). It was instead thought preferable to use the extra cash coming from the unplanned tax bonanza (the *tesoretto*, or "little treasure") to reduce the deficit, support the competitiveness of Italian companies by means of tax bonuses and increase Italy's funding for military missions abroad, military bases in Italy and increased security measures.

The needs of Italian capitalism and the needs of the State are thereby imposed on the whole country, dictating the order of things and priorities through economic and social policy decisions without any real opposition and through aggressive use of the media. Last but not least, the spectacle of parliamentary cretinism, where the political caste with their wholly individual interests sneer at the real problems of the workers, who continue to be conned by the political world.

This, then, is the current situation, albeit succinctly described. However, it is possible to make out certain areas of particular importance, both for the action of anarchist communists and for the nuclei of grassroots opposition that are tentatively making an appearance.

Wages and contracts

The privatization of public services, which forces cheap, but minimal, universal services on us and makes us pay more for decent services, and the transfer of pensions to financial funds, which forces us to play the stock market and perhaps speculate on the backs of other workers to protect our pensions, are already some of the structural aspects of the real reduction of direct wages and the disappearance of deferred and indirect wages.

The reduced purchasing power of wages seems to worry certain figures, people of whom one would least expect it (i.e. the Governor of the Bank of Italy, who is in reality worried about the increasing indebtedness of Italian families, the leaders of the industrialists' federation, Confindustria, and the commercial enterprises' federation, Confcommercio, worried about the drop in consumption, and the political parties, worried about the drop in... votes). But this reduction is above all closely linked to the distorted (and extorted) relationship between pay and flexibility/precarity, that now undermines all labour contracts and the whole system of labour contracts itself.

The pipedream of wage increases by means of so-called "de-taxation" by the State is merely yet another element of weakening the contractual process, of thinning out conflict and of unravelling the already unfavourable strength ratios for workers.

The defence and increase of pay, the defence of national labour contracts in order to protect wages and working hours, the legitimacy of union representation in the workplace and its right to organize work and workplace safety, these are battles that by now require all categories to mobilize together in an expression of class solidarity, both locally and nationally, and a commitment by grassroots union structures to reform organization and struggle from below, to push back the repressive wave that is hitting those workers and union delegates who dare to organize dissent. Also increasingly necessary in order to put a halt to the arrogance of the bosses is a European industrial union that can start the process of creating class unity.

The struggle for wages is a struggle for economic autonomy and for independence in our lives.

The struggle for shorter working hours is a struggle for our freedom to control our time.

The struggle for workplace safety is a struggle for our health, for our lives. These things are priceless!

Control over the community

Civil society, towns and cities, neighbourhoods, schools and factories have all become a part of the security business, where people are hunted down to be pointed out as an enemy of the established power, an enemy of the established order, an enemy of the Pope, an enemy of exploitation, an enemy of discrimination, an enemy of pollution, an enemy of militarism, an enemy of neo-fascism...

What is at stake is control over the community, not only on the level of policing and repression, but also on the level of ethnic segregation, the imposition of fundamentalist ideologies (neo-fascism, clericalism, militarism), looking for ways to make money out of the community and the landscape (the environment, transport corridors, energy, de-industrialization, housing, etc.) without the bother of dissenters causing trouble.

Migrants; racism

Immigrant workers are the first to pay the price. Each new security scare, be it anti-Albanian, anti-Arab, anti-Romanian, anti-Roma, or anti-anything else, simply serves to erect barriers to separate everyone into their own little communities, under threat of expulsion or incarceration in the new, improved “comfortable” detention centres run privately by Catholic charities or “leftist” cooperatives. In this way, we can avoid contamination, interculturalism, maybe even unity of interests. But it is these barriers that we need to demolish and replace with cosmopolitan grassroots bodies made up of Italians and Italy’s new citizens, so that together we can struggle against discrimination, for equal citizenship for all. And we must remember at all times that not only do we have to deal with surreptitious forms of institutional repression, but also with the racism that is today embodied in the neo-fascist organizations that plague our communities thanks to a bit of good luck on their part but also some popular consensus. It is therefore essential that we develop mass anti-fascist networks that can unite the cultural battle with ensuring that the memory of the Resistance stays alive, and keep our communities free from fascism.

Secularism

Woe betide those who criticize the Vatican and its monarch! Woe betide those who question the clerics and the fundamentalism that insinuate themselves under the guise of secularism (as in the case of the recent document by the *Partito Democratico*)! Recognition of a public function for the Roman Catholic religion (or any religion) could only lead to serious consequences for the freedom of women and the freedom of culture, science and education. The anti-clericalist battle needs a new boost and new mobilizations of secularists and free-thinkers of all kinds.

The environment, transport corridors, speculation, military bases and the right to housing

A good example of what happens when the landscape and communities are sold off to business is provided by the rubbish emergency in the Campania region (coming soon to a region near you), as are other examples of speculation in ex-industrial areas, factory closures, the reduction in council-owned or affordable housing, the construction of transport corridors (rail and road), the arbitrary and authoritarian choice of sites for military bases and barracks (Vicenza and elsewhere), and energy production plants. The alternative to allowing local institutions to make decisions over the heads of the communities is to form mass committees and adopt forms of struggle locally that steer clear of political and business infiltration so to be stronger, more consistent and more effective as far as the proletariat's interests are concerned. In the meantime, the popular mobilizations rejecting new military bases and protesting against existing bases need the maximum support, both at national and international level.

From resistance to the libertarian alternative

The unprecedented, virulent attack and invasion of our communities and our lives on the part of capitalism in its desperation to make more and more profit, faithfully served by the State and its apparatus for government and repression, makes a solid, collective strategy increasingly urgent on all levels — local, national and international. We must not allow ourselves to fall under the spell of the electoral sirens, nor be hoodwinked into thinking that the problems of Italian bosses are our problems. We must work towards creating the greatest possible unity against exploitation, discrimination and repression, so that we can promote new faith in the benefits of the libertarian alternative, with no State and no bosses.

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