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Youth Camp

Drawing the lessons

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This year the international camp for revolutionary youth organized for the past 18 years at the initiative of the Fourth International in Europe will take place in Italy, near Rome, from Sunday July 22 to Saturday July 28, 2001. This will be an opportunity for hundreds of militant youth to draw the lessons of the mobilizations against capitalist globalisation - following the big mobilization of July 21 against the G-8 summit in Genoa - and to debate what "other world is possible" as an alternative to the barbarism of senile capitalism. Livio Maitan, a long-time leader of the Fourth International and its Italian section, will open the camp alongside young comrades from Italy on the evening of Sunday, July 21. A week of debates, education and fÃates will end with a big meeting on Saturday July 28.

IV spoke to Cinzia Arrucca, one of the organizers of the camp.

The G8 summit will be one of the next central meetings of the movement against capitalist globalisation. What kind of mobilization do you expect?

The demonstration at Genoa represents a very important event for the anti-globalisation movement: above all after the strong support for the demonstration against the OECD in Naples in March, it is possible to work for an enlargement of the mobilization towards broader sectors of youth and the labour movement around this meeting. Between now and July we have absolutely to seize the challenge to make Genoa a mass event, by getting the social sectors with which we work every day involved in the preparation of and participation in the demonstrations: in particular people in precarious work, high school and college students, the unemployed.

The youth camp in solidarity with the Fourth International will begin in Italy the day after the big demo. How do you see the link between the two events?

The camp this year will not be an event separated from the other discussions or international mobilizations against capitalist globalisation: because the central theme of the programme of the camp is precisely that of anti-globalisation struggles. The fact that the Camp is held just after the demonstrations in Genoa will give us the possibility of spending a week with a part of this radicalised youth which will have participated in the demonstrations in Genoa, to make a balance sheet of the mobilizations but above all to reflect the political and social strengthening of the movement in each country.

How do youth in Italy fit into the anti-globalisation mobilizations?

The anti-globalisation mobilization in Italy is strongly characterized by the participation of youth: on the themes of globalisation, of environmental disasters, of the insecurity and increasing dismantling of social rights and democratic life through neo-liberal policies.

We see in Italy a new radicalisation and politicisation of a significant layer of youth. The organisations who work in the preparation and coordination of the struggles are many and various: the Young Communists from the PRC, the Social Centres, the Ya Basta association, student collectives and rank and file associations. Certainly, there is the crucial problem of how to organize the struggle against global capital daily at a local level, in the schools, the faculties or workplaces and how to relate each particular and local struggle with the more general anti-globalisation movement.

Drawing the lessons

You are a member of Giovani Comunisti, the youth organisation of the Party of Communist Refoundation and of the association Bandiera Rossa, linked to the Fourth International. What is the activity of the GC and Bandiera Rossa?

The GC currently represents in Italy the sole political youth organisation linked to a communist party, with a national credibility and capable of representing a left alternative to neo-liberal policies; from its birth the GC has had a strong intervention, above all in the universities and high schools. After Seattle the GC was actively engaged in the promotion and reinforcement of the anti-globalisation mobilization in Italy, by participating in and organizing the presence of Italian youth in diverse international demonstrations. Inside the GC, while building it loyally, we want to advance a revolutionary viewpoint, that alongside the necessity of the global resistance to neo-liberalism, there is the necessity of a struggle against capitalism as such, for a radically different society and an alternative to capitalism.

The camp is held in Italy but is international and self-managed. How is the concrete preparation organised?

The themes, the times of discussion, the political and leisure activities of the camp are not defined by the Italians alone: the programme of the camp is the result of a discussion and collective choices between the different youth groups linked to the Fourth International. Each country has the responsibility of organizing with the others the discussions in the forums, commissions or meetings; the camp is then not only an occasion for political discussion, but also for the exchange and coordination of experiences, relaxation and "work" in common, given that it is an initiative self-managed by youth, from the discussions, to the fÃ¢tes, to the cleaning of showers...