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The foundation of the "Critical Left" inside
Rifondazione

The View from the Italian Left Press

- News from around the world -

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The national Assembly, held in Rome on 23rd-24th April, of the militants who came together, during the Sixth Congress of the Party of Communist Refounding (PRC), around Motion 4, entitled "Another Rifondazione is possible" provoked wide interest on the Italian Left and was commented on in the media.

We reprint here two articles that appeared in two left-wing daily newspapers, [Il Manifesto](#) [1] and [Liberazione](#) [2]. They complement the article by Salvatore Cannavo which we published in the April issue of IVP.

1) Rifondazione: the "Erre" regroupment becomes the "Critical Left", by Giu B., Il Manifesto.

A new component of the PRC has taken shape. On Saturday and Sunday (23rd-24th April 2005) there took place in Rome the meeting of the fourth motion presented during the recent congress in Venice: "Another Rifondazione is possible", which, signed by Gigi Malabarba and Salvatore Cannavo, obtained 6.5 per cent of the votes. A regroupment of which PRC leader Fausto Bertinotti hopes to be the interlocutor, because he is very interested by its presence within the secretariats of many federations in which his majority is insufficient to carry regional congresses. And he looks at it with even more interest because of its attitude of alliance-difference towards Prodi. "We must put forward more forcibly the demand for the calling of new elections", explains Cannavo on this point. "And the polemics over the consultations at the Quirinale (the debates at the top of the Union) have shown that the PRC should recover its autonomy in relation to the Union and to the moderate line the opposition is taking".

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

"Critical Left": that is the name chosen by the some two hundred militants of the new "programmatic regroupment" who were present, and who up to now, even in the geography of the congress, were identified by the name of their journal, "Erre".

"We want to build a regroupment that is both a means and a political project and not a faction or a navel-gazing "party within the party", explains Cannavo. "We want to introduce an innovation in the internal life of the PRC" (he remains deputy editor of *Liberazione*) "which must allow the cohabitation of different practices within it, including for those who are not members of Rifondazione but who are watching its experience with interest, as is shown by the initiative of Pietro Folena (the ex-spokesperson of the Democratic Left, who has recently abandoned it to join, as an independent, the Montecitorio group of the PRC).

The three main axes placed on the agenda of the meeting of the new regroupment were: the "convinced" commitment to the "yes" vote in the referendum against Law 40 on assisted procreation; the extension of the regional law on the social wage presented by Rifondazione in Lombardy; the organizing in Rome on June 2nd (Republic Day) of a "peace parade" to counter the traditional military parade.

Cannavo further insisted on "the desire to mobilize to bring down Berlusconi. Up to now there has been no clear commitment to this, either by the Union or by the PRC; but that must not serve to give Prodi a helping hand". The new internal regroupment within the PRC "therefore sets itself the aim of preparing a big social mobilization against this government and its economic policy", an initiative proposed at one point by the secretary general of the FIOM (Metalworkers' Federation of the CGIL, the main union confederation, of which the left has recently taken over the leadership), Gianni Rinaldini, but which "was greeted by the most total silence".

2) Birth of the Critical Left, a programmatic regroupment to kick out Berlusconi without playing into the hands of Prodi. By Beatrice Macchia, Liberazione.

“Today there was born here the political regroupment of the motion ‘Another Rifondazione is possible’, which has become the ‘Critical Left’ tendency and which wants to be an instrument in the service of the whole party”. That is how Gigi Malabarba, leader of the PRC group in the Senate, brought very calmly to a close the national assembly which had brought together, last Saturday and Sunday in Rome, more than 200 militants of the PRC (many of them young and involved in the social movements, the unions and the women's movement) who wanted to give continuity to the experience of the fourth motion of the congress.

The proposition, already formulated in the course of the morning in the introductory report of Salvatore Cannavo (deputy editor of Liberazione and member of the National Leadership of the PRC.), seemed self-evident to those who had taken part over the two days, in particular on the Saturday, where the meeting broke up into eight working groups, all well-attended, which produced an abundant series of proposals for action (from the commitment to the referendum on medically assisted procreation to the 15th May rally against the war and the campaign against insecurity of employment and for a social wage, proposing that the law drawn up by the PRC in Lombardy should serve as a model in all the regions where Rifondazione is now part of the Executive).

“We want to build a regroupment that is both a means and political project”, explained Cannavo in his introduction “and not a faction or a navel-gazing ‘party within the party’”. “We even want to introduce”, said Malabarba in conclusion, “an element of innovation in the internal life of the PRC, which must now allow the cohabitation of different projects and practices, even for those who are not yet members of Rifondazione, but who are following its experience attentively.

Moreover, the initiative of Pietro Folena is also moving in this direction”. So the new regroupment refuses an internal crystallisation and proposes “to examine the line of the congress when we find ourselves faced with choices, working to modify the present line of the party by building movements and by encouraging social conflict”.

As far as the present situation is concerned, the assembly reaffirmed its negative judgement on the way the centre-left as a whole has handled the situation created by the result of the (regional) elections, criticizing the failure to demand fresh (national) elections and the failure to show a real commitment to the struggle to overthrow the government. “In the course of the coming weeks and months, the overthrow of the Berlusconi government must be a central objective, without playing Prodi's game”, while as it is “we are focusing on regaining the autonomy of the PRC within the centre-left”, an autonomy that is quite formal, says Cannavo, “as shown by the polemics around the consultations at the Quirinale”.

Among the most urgent initiatives, there is the referendum against the law on medically assisted procreation, “a decisive test for the PRC and the centre-left”, underlined Nadia De Mond of the March of Women, but also the campaign against Law 30, the mobilization for the renewal of collective bargaining agreements, for the withdrawal of troops (June 2nd could become a day of struggle) against the Moratti law, to defend public property. “And it is time to prepare a big social demonstration against the government, a proposition that was made months ago by Gianni Rinaldini and which the entirely Left stifled by its complete silence”.

The assembly ended with the election, by a unanimous vote, of a national co-ordinating committee, and it appointed the members of the National Leadership (of the PRC), Salvatore Cannavo and Franco Turigliato, and of its National Executive, Gigi Malabarba and Flavia D'Angeli, to be its spokespersons.

[1] Il Manifesto is a daily launched in 1968 by members of the Italian Communist Party who had broken from it to the left, led by personalities such as Rossana Rossanda and Lucio Magri.

[2] Liberazione is the daily paper of the PRC.