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# 'Diffuse Political Illegality' (The Extension of Terror In Italy)

By Agnese Trocchi

Agnese Trocchi of Candida TV analyses the recently released Italian parliamentary report on 'Internal and International Terrorism', which links groups of the social movement such as the Disobedienti to terrorism, and argues that the fate of political activism in Italy hangs in the balance.

This week, in anticipation of imminent conflict in Iraq, the Italian Minister of Internal Affairs Giuseppe Pisanu has decided that the moment is right to deal a blow against voices in disagreement with the war.

pisanu

In a document entitled 'Internal and International Terrorism', presented to the Italian Parliament's Commission of Defence and Constitutional Affairs on the 27th of January 2003, Pisanu outlines some disturbing new strategies intended to counter the perceived danger of terrorism from internal and external quarters. He points to the threat of what he calls 'international Islamic terrorism', and highlights the relationship between this 'terrorism' and the so-called 'subversive groups of the extreme left' in Italy - for example, certain insurrectionary anarchist groups and the Red Brigade, which purportedly murdered politician Marco Biagi last year. Such groups, Pisanu argues, are part of a 'diffuse political illegality' - and amongst them, he says, the 'Disobedienti movement' is particularly culpable.

biagi

The Disobedienti began as the 'White Overalls' (Tutte Bianche), driven by the aim of resistance to the forces of neo-liberalism, transforming itself some months before the days of Genoa 2001 in order to become a wider movement able to involve more people. Much of their inspiration is drawn from the Zapatistas ([www.ezln.org](http://www.ezln.org)). The practice of the Disobedienti during demonstrations is distinctive: to simulate the war scenario by dressing as warriors but with harmless weapons made of soft materials.

white overalls

In his report, the Minister ignores this history of non-violence amongst the Disobedienti, speaking of them amongst other 'individuals and organized groups' that have 'been choosing violence, even if of a minor sort, as a method of political struggle'. Pisanu lists a series of actions led by the Disobedienti as an example of such 'diffuse political illegality', a 'transversal phenomenon' which, he writes, 'could prepare the way for more dangerous forms of violence.' The minister dedicates an entire chapter of his report to this strange phenomenon, even placing it alongside terrorism as the principal object of parliament's attention.

Amongst the list of examples of diffuse political illegality in which the Disobedienti are implicated, the minister cites:

- the action against the racist laws and the 'dismantling' of detention centre for immigrants in Via Mattei, in Bologna, which took place the 25th of January 2002,

- the action against war and the symbolic occupation of the 'Honorarium Consulate' of Great Britain in Venice. Pisanu says that this action was organized by the social centre 'Rivolta' in Marghera and 'Pedro -Radio Sherwood' in Padova.

Pisanu openly articulates a 'relationship' between this area of 'diffuse political illegality' and 'subversive terrorism' - as happened in the past, he argues, 'when the most extreme elements of Autonomia Operaio created the phenomenon known as "diffuse terrorism", in a dialectical relation to the "selective terrorism" of the Red Brigades.'

All of which, Pisanu says, means that 'it's necessary to be alert.'

### **The Social Movements Answer**

'We will be alert,' answer the people of Radio Sherwood in a press release, 'because it's clear that we are the target of the same criminals who managed the public order in Genova 2001 and who were responsible of the massacre at the Diaz School and of the killing of Carlo Giuliani.'

The document of the minister Pisanu, the Disobedienti say, is 'a criminalization of everyone who has shared and supported the actions of the Disobedienti until now', a clear aim to outlaw the practice of social dissent, not least as a provision against the massive demonstrations against the war that will take place in Italy on the 15th of Feb.

The minister also adds to the area of 'diffuse political illegality' the racist actions of neo-nazist and neo-fascist groups such as Forza Nuova, demonstrating once again the attempt to bunch together groups with completely different roots, visions and practices. The Minister demands that the Italian Judicial Authority practice a 'uniform application of the laws' to punish all these groups' 'illegalities' in the same way. Historically, judges have been a sticking point for executive power, exercising significant latitude in the interpretation of different cases of government repression. In calling for an end to that latitude, Pisanu has effectively turned a significant part of the battle for civil rights in Italy into a contest between political and judicial power.

The Pisanu document, 'Internal and International Terrorism', is available in Italian at <http://www.interno.it/news/pages/2003/200301/news00017985.htm> .

The Disobedienti's answer to Pisanu is available in Italian at <http://www.sherwood.it/portal/article.php?sid=1031>. It is translated for Mute by Matthew Hyland at <http://daisy.metamute.com/~simon/disobedienti.rtf>

The Radio Sherwood answer to the Pisanu reporty is available in Italian at <http://www.sherwood.it/portal/article.php?sid=4316>. It is translated for Mute by Matthew Hyland at <http://daisy.metamute.com/~simon/radiosherwood.rtf>