



Helicopters drop tear gas canisters from above. Genoa, Italy

Global Day of Action

July 20th 2001

July 20 – You Are G8, We Are 6 Billion, Genoa, Italy

In the final weeks leading up to the G8 meeting, a wave of industrial action sweeps Italy in anticipation of social

unrest to come. Hundreds of thousands of metalworkers around the country take to the streets while a strike by pilots, flight attendants, and air traffic controllers causes the cancellation of more than 200 flights. The protests' coordinator, the Genoa Social Forum, sends speakers to the rallies, asking the strikers to come to Genoa. The strikers spontaneously respond, "We're going to Genoa!" As the demonstrations commence and the tear gas flies,

thousands of pairs of underpants flutter in the breeze above the violent clashes. In protest against the G8, Genovese citizens defy a mayoral request to refrain from hanging "unsightly" laundry out to dry. The protests are the biggest to date, with 300,000 taking to the streets; they also are perhaps the most violent, ending with hundreds of people injured, and 23 year old Carlo Giuliani shot dead by conscripted police.



Hundreds of thousands converge on the G8 from the four corners of the world. Genoa

For over a month, and all around the world, Italian embassies and consulates are targeted in a variety of ways as the most tangible symbol of the murderous Italian state, and the focus of much rage and mourning. Memorials to Giuliani are constructed, red paint is splashed and red wine dumped, slogans are spray painted in Italian and local languages, paint bombs, rocks, and underpants are thrown at the windows, and

silent candlelight vigils are held.

In Athens, about 2,500 people march to the Italian embassy, smashing windows of a Benetton and the Ministry of Trade, and burning ten banks along the way. That night, many Italian cars are torched at Fiat and Alpha Romeo dealerships. Several more marches, arsons, and occupations follow.

In Vienna, as hundreds demonstrate at the consulate, a

group of people dressed as the Black Bloc run onto the lawn and strip off their clothes. Their naked bodies are painted with the numbers of people still imprisoned or missing in Genoa. Bodies are painted on the ground in Geneva in front of the consulate, McDonald's, and other corporations, while 900 protesters march in Bern, Switzerland, and several attack a police station with paint 'bombs'.



Police clear the streets in front of the convergence centre with tanks and gas. Genoa

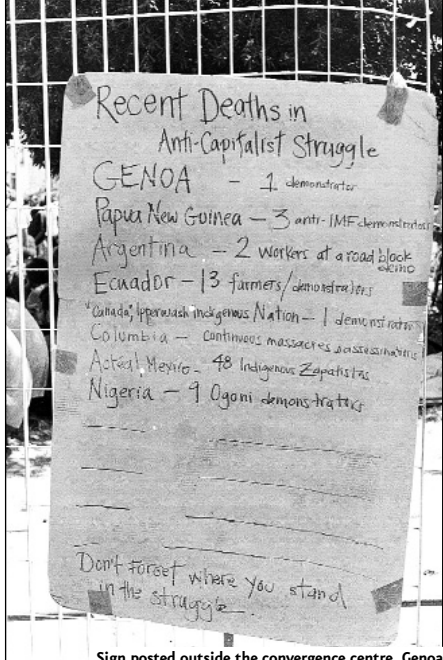
Meyer/Landance Fleur

In Warsaw, the square opposite the Italian embassy is renamed Carlo Giuliani square, and a grave and altar are established. In London, the Canadian embassy (located around the corner from the Italian embassy) is spray-painted with the words, "You are next!" in reference to the G8 meeting in 2002.

In Kiev, Ukraine, an altar is built and a silent street theatre re-enactment of Carlo's death takes place in

front of the embassy. Letters of solidarity pour into Italy from India's Narmada dam movement, the Zapatistas in Chiapas, indigenous movements in Bolivia, and many other people and places where the struggle for survival often precludes solidarity marches.

While 600 march in Helsinki, Finland, Stockholm, Sweden sees 800 people march, and the Italian tourist information centre is smashed up and spray-painted.



George Dames

Sign posted outside the convergence centre. Genoa

In Manchester, Britain, activists sneak into the Italian consulate, graffiti walls, and spray fire extinguishers into the computers. Then they set off the fire alarm, causing an evacuation of the entire building. Upon leaving the consulate, activists hear consulate staff members muttering, "This would not have happened if Mussolini was still in power."

In Berkeley, US, hundreds join in a demonstration



Anger erupts after the carabinieri kill Carlo Giuliani. Genoa

blocking rush hour traffic. Dressed in black as a sign of mourning, they link the brutality in Genoa to local issues of police violence. In Buenos Aires, hundreds march to an Italian bank and demand that those imprisoned in Genoa be released.

Representatives from the landless peasants' movement (MST) in Recife, Brazil speak about repression, and a samba band plays and people dance in front of the

Italian consulate. In São Paulo, hundreds blockade the entrance to the consulate trapping those inside for over three hours.

On the US West coast, members of the dockworkers' union successfully prevent an Italian ship from unloading its cargo in Portland, and in Oakland, the unloading is delayed by a day. The ship is operated by Italy's main shipping company, which is run by a major

financial backer of the Berlusconi government. Canada's Prime Minister announces that the G8 meeting scheduled in Ottawa the following year will instead convene in Kananaskis, a small and largely inaccessible resort town in the Canadian Rocky Mountains. This leaves one protester to wonder, "Where will they meet next, outer space?"