

## ***TO ALL THE INHABITANTS OF VAL SUSA***

The struggle against the TAV in the Susa valley dates back to the early 1990s and has seen construction yards occupied on a great number of occasions by the local population. In 2005, for example, villages and towns of the region staged massive protests against the TAV in Val Susa and were brutally repressed by the government (at the time Berlusconi was in charge). Actions of sabotage and attack against the structures responsible for the project have also been numerous and constant throughout all these years.

Here is the text of a leaflet distributed in 2008, when Berlusconi became prime minister again as Prodi's centre-left government was defeated at the general election.

## ***TO ALL THE INHABITANTS OF VAL SUSA***

(Yesterday the politics, today the law, tomorrow the revolt)

'It is a protest of an organized minority, which made up false and non-existent ecological problems'. Through these scornful words pronounced on TV at the start of his electoral campaign in 2008, newly elected prime minister Silvio Berlusconi wrote off the opposition to the high speed railway project (TAV) of Val Susa. As the epoch of the carrot tactic has come to an end earlier than expected – along with that Prodi's government you massively voted and which just made fun of you with its 'round tables' - the days of the stick are about to come back. In the five years of government lying ahead of him, the new prime minister will inevitably tackle the Val Susa question head-on. No need to say how he'll do it. He who has already hurled his riot police against you and ordered the beating of your dignity in the night [in the 2005 protests], will only continue on the same path. You dared defy him, don't forget, you can expect no mercy. If we don't kneel to kiss the boss' hand, if you persevere in contrasting his will, you will face the army. You know this, don't you?

So, inhabitants of Val Susa, what are you going to do?

Yesterday you addressed the Palace of politics and presented your petitions to the government in the vain hope that you would be listened to, today you are addressing the Palace of justice. By making recourse to a sort of 'snail's strategy' carried out by buying plots of the land over which the railway project will be built, you are trying to impede the State plans aimed at the devastation of your valley. Clever tactic, which

demonstrates your tenacity and which will probably serve to gain time. But do you really believe that the Law will oppose the State that creates it in order to protect its interests? Do you really believe that a legal technicality can stop Berlusconi's shameless power (or that it would have stopped Veltroni's [a ministry in the Prodi government] hypocritical power)? If two years ago you were mistaken about a ministry's acquiescence, now you can't certainly be mistaken about a judge's benevolence.

Val Susa inhabitants, you know it. Bureaucratic manoeuvres won't save your valley, crossed out with a pen on the Progress' book. Only you can do it. If bureaucracy will make you save precious time, don't waste it. Use it to get ready to defend yourselves.

Start to get ready now, spiritually and practically, for the inevitable battle looming up between your anger and others' arrogance. Get ready to impede the invasion of your land by the occupation troops, which will be sent in against you. Get ready to mobilise the whole Val Susa so that it revolts against the invaders. Get ready to oppose State violence and the slander of its hired media.

In these years you have demonstrated with your actions that you are animated by pacific intentions, that you acted only out of love for your land. But when your land is invaded by those who want to flatten it out, drill it and devastate it, when it is wet with your blood spilled by Berlusconi's hangmen, what will you do then? Will you push your pacifism and love to the ultimate sacrifice? Will you meet your uniformed slaughterers with your hands on your head or on the trigger of your gun? Time is running out, and you will soon discover that hatred is just the other face of love.

***ARM YOURSELVES INHABITANTS OF VAL SUSA, ARM YOURSELVES! THE ENEMY IS AT YOUR DOOR.***