

The Comrade Cappelloni Guido

Thursday 1 March 2007, by [CAMPETTI Loris](#) (Date first published: 24 February 2007).

Franco Turigliatto has now (March 1, 2007) been expelled from the PRC (Rifondazione Comunista) for his stand against the war at the Italian Senate. Loris Campetti, the author of the article posted above, was a member of Il Manifesto and was himself expelled from the Communist Party in 1970. He wrote this article for *Il Manifesto*, 37 years later...

"Come forward", he told me in a cold but respectful tone. And he didn't add "idiot" (*Vieni avanti cretino* was a famous Italian comedy). It was a time when dissent was not allowed, but there were still good manners. I came forward, to a very large room on some floor of the mythical PCI building in Botteghe Oscure. That comrade told me in a grave tone that I had "*objectively put myself outside the party*". I disagreed. In that gray day of winter 1970 I was still convinced that "*those of il manifesto*" were totally right save for one thing: they should not have let themselves be expelled, they should have remained inside to carry out the political struggle. I tried, for another year, until the truth (which, of course, was deposited at Botteghe Oscure) slapped me in the face: "*You might be a comrade in good faith - the comrade told me paternalistically - but you have to acknowledge you don't belong to the PCI, but to il manifesto*". And he added "*Good luck*". The comrades that were expelled a year before were right. And the Botteghe oscure cadre was also right, speaking as he was not in a personal capacity but on behalf of the Central Commission of Control.

Those were the days of "democratic centralism". Yesterday, speaking on the phone with that reprobate Franco Turigliatto, which I confess to having known for a long time, I discovered that he too was summoned by a comrade that leads the College of Guarantees (*mutatis mutandis*) of Rifondazione Comunista, charged with explaining to the one who buried the democratic hopes of the people of the left that his behaviour rendered him "incompatible with the party". To cut a long story short, Franco Turigliatto has "objectively put himself outside of the party".

The tale could end here - a simple analogy. However, it just so happens that the comrade who brought clarity to my mind (and hygiene to the Party) 37 years ago was called Guido Cappelloni. And it just so happens that the comrade who summoned Turigliatto is also called Guido Cappelloni. It's clear, this can only be a peculiar case of homonymy. The Cappelloni with whom I dealt was born in Macerata, like me but long before, in '25, he could have been my dad. He'd joined the PCI in '44 and already had a glorious history behind him of leadership of popular protests, from those against the attempted murder of Togliatti to the peasant struggles in the Marche, to the red biennium of '68-'69. Then the career in the Party, in that fraction of the Party whose leading lights were the comrades Pietro Secchia and Armando Cossutta.

The Guido Cappelloni that summoned - not to Botteghe Oscure, but to via del Policlinico - Franco Turigliatto was instead born in Macerata in '25, joined the PCI in '44, and "in the period between '48 and '69 supported many popular struggles...". Yes, it really is him. Still him. A life as a guardian of orthodoxy, in the name of "democratic centralism". 37 years have passed, perhaps in vain. I think comrade Cappelloni is a fine person, the problem is not him. I don't know why but all of a sudden I recall an old book of Arthur Koestler: "*Darkness at Noon*", written in the wake of the Stalinist purges.

P.S.

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