

VareseNews

Students, unemployed people, entrepreneurs and retirees : "Rising up is a duty"

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Giacomo, a craftsman from Brunello, has shut his firm to take part in the demonstration. Romeo, a retiree, wanted to accompany his granddaughter and has been standing still here in the cold since 9 a.m. . Sabrina, a graduate masseuse, cannot help fidgeting instead, and is working hard to hand out leaflets, take photos and urge lorry drivers to slow down the traffic in order to make the demonstration more visible.

There are about forty of them, but the number is rising from hour to hour: these are the participants in the sole demonstration in Varese included in the protest "L'Italia si ferma", which has been authorized by the police. **From 9 a.m. this morning to Thursday, 12 December,** demonstrators are staying "round the clock" at the roundabout on the **Ponte di Vedano**, to protest and make citizens aware of the reasons behind such an unusual demonstration, in which only three-coloured flags, and not flags of trade unions or associations, are seen.

Today, 9 December, about two hundred people have passed here, canvassing on the bridge to Vedano and on the main connecting roads of the area.

The picket will last up until 9 p.m. and will go on the next morning. Carabinieri and police officers are on site to monitor the protest. Traffic has flowed slowly all day. There are other demonstration in the northern area of the Province of Milan.

In Rho, a group of citizens has marched together with police officers, who had taken off their helmets, and on the square in Legnano about fifty people have gathered to demonstrate in a spontaneous, unorganised way.

"We don't want to block traffic, as someone has said. We're here to leaflet and point out the reasons behind our protest," explains Cristiano Pala (in the photo on the right),

representative of the picket and spokesperson for the demonstrators in Varese, "this is a respectful, legitimate protest against those who've led us to starvation and have destroyed the identity of our country and the future of entire generations, as we explain on our leaflet. There are no political parties, trade unions nor organised groups here – there are only normal people who're rising up against this devastating situation."

It has been written that influences by the extreme right wing might lay behind the so-called "movimento dei forconi (pitchforks movement, Ed.)". Is there such a danger in Varese? "Surely not!" replies Mr Pala, "That's ridiculous. Such things are spread on purpose over the Internet to discredit this demonstration, and this movement: it frightens those people."

And any reference to right or left parties is rejected by everyone here – which means by about fifty workmen, unemployed people, entrepreneurs and students.

"I'm here even if I've an open-ended contract because by now we've only to work and hold our tongue, we have no rights" says **Daniela, 32-year-old, worker**. "I've been unemployed for four years, I'm 48-year-old and if it wasn't for my wife I would be on the streets" **explains Claudio**, Daniela's husband.

Also **Giuseppe is 48, he is an artisan**, with a bar-bakery that works, "but to date I work to pay taxes, I'm not able to get by because I can't pay everything they ask me. How do they think we can go on this way?" he says.

Many young people decide to be here; there is **Stefano, 31-year-old, he's doing a BA in Cultural Heritage**, but he already decided that he will go away from Italy: "I'm getting ready to go in Austria, because there's no future here. I'm 31 and I believed that in a country as Italy the choice of studying Cultural Heritage could give me some chances, but I realised that it's not true. I'm here because I decided to go away but it doesn't mean that I don't care."

Carlo, 28-year-old, does not have a job and he says that he wants to fight in order to see re-established to Italian citizens the freedom and the dignity that were erased in this last 40 years. "We're desperate, but I don't feel powerless, because I still believe that if this struggle will see lots of citizens unified we'll be able to free ourselves of those that brought us to this state of affairs".

Among the participants the most embittered is **Romeo, 65-year-old**, in the end he is 'lucky' because is in retirement and money at the end of the month until now is a certainty. "Someone told me that I can not care, but there is my thirty-year-old grandson in the leaflet there and how can you not care when you see these people with no future? I'm here because I believe that the ones who rule until now should go away, because they destroyed our country."

Meanwhile the traffic is becoming slower and slower, the auto carriers accept gladly the call to slow down the circulation and fill the air with a concert of horns which 'warm' the demonstrators, while several drivers stop to ask for information and someone promises that tomorrow will come here to protest too.

Redazione VareseNews
redazione@varesenews.it