

they threw up barricades and engaged in running battles with the police that continued into the night.

Developments in the “hot autumn” of 1969, however, soon exposed the limits of this revolutionary student-worker alliance. A new and more aggressive coalition of the major labor federations reasserted union authority both on the plant floor and in negotiations with management. By the end of the year, the mainstream labor leaders had won a national contract that contained important material conquests for the workers from equal wage hikes and the forty-hour week to increased vacation time and the right to assemble in the factories. Of course, the revolutionary groups denounced the contract as a sell out, but their view did not appear to be shared by the majority of workers, who supported their union representatives. Although strikes and other disruptions of work remained prominent features of industrial life in Turin and other northern cities throughout the next decade, their achievements fell far short of the revolutionary hopes and expectations of the radical student-worker alliance. The principal political groups of the new left also remained active after 1969, but in the changing economic environment of the 1970s, their casual attitude toward violence and their extremist rhetoric only contributed to an upsurge in terrorism and sectarian conflict.

#### 6. *After the Economic Miracle: Turin since 1970.*

The Golden Age of unparalleled economic growth and expansion that had begun in the 1950s came to an abrupt halt in the early 1970s. A severe slump between 1973 and 1975 provoked a significant drop in industrial production and international trade, signaling the end of the long boom. The global economy did not collapse, but subsequent growth took place at a decidedly slower pace than during the years of the miracle. As a late arrival to the ranks of the major industrial nations, Italy was especially vulnerable to the new energy, financial, and market conditions that confronted the western world. The decision of the Opec states to raise the price of crude oil drastically in the fall of 1973, in particular, exposed the country's over-reliance on “black gold” to meet its energy needs. To make matters worse, Italy's labor movement, one of the strongest in Europe, limited the ability of companies to reduce their costs by cutting wages, while venture capitalists reacted to unrest in the factories by withholding new investments in industry and by transferring their wealth out of the country. Italy experienced the highest rate