

executives, journalists, lawyers and judges. Within the administration of Fiat alone, terrorists murdered three managers, while nineteen other mid-level administrators were assaulted or shot. As the decade drew to a close, the Red Brigades and Front Line, two of the most active groups in the city, became increasingly isolated at the same time that the national government finally launched a coordinated anti-terrorist offensive. Beginning in the winter of 1979-80 with the arrest of the leader of the Piedmontese brigade, Patrizio Peci, the police managed to capture a number of key figures in the local "armed party" of terrorism who cooperated in exposing the clandestine organizations in exchange for reduced prison sentences.

The war between the state and terrorist groups took place at a time of growing conflict between management and labor in the city's factories. Once again Turin became the focal point of a conflict that would have huge implications for the entire Italian labor movement. In the face of mounting economic losses and problems of absenteeism and sabotage on the assembly lines, the new Ceo of Fiat, Cesare Romiti, moved in the fall of 1979 to reassert managerial authority over factory discipline and employment. As a first step in this direction, the firm fired sixty-one "violent" workers at the Mirafiori plant in October. The following year Fiat escalated its offensive against the unions, when Romiti announced plans in early September 1980 to dismiss 14,000 workers immediately and place another 24,000 on fifteen month furlough due to falling car sales. Although the firm justified the actions as an economic necessity, labor activists featured prominently among the workers who were to be laid off or fired.

The union leaders reacted immediately by calling an open-ended strike and set up picket lines to block entry into the automotive factories. The work stoppage, which lasted thirty-five days, had a devastating impact on the city. In addition to paralyzing production at the automotive plants, the strike hurt a vast network of suppliers and merchants who depended upon Fiat for the bulk of their business. While the strike enjoyed the support of the most militant workers, the enthusiasm of the rank and file began to wane in the absence of any strike fund or pay checks. Fiat's management sharpened divisions within the workforce by promising to postpone temporarily the layoffs and to reduce the length of the furloughs. The decisive moment in the standoff came in the fourth week of the strike, when tens of thousands of Fiat managers, foremen and other mid-level staff, as well as a large number of ordinary workers, took to the streets of Turin, demanding an end to the strike and a return to work. After the march, growing divisions within