

International Communist Current

28 March strike: Why are we not united?

Thousands of teachers are striking in London on 28 March against the governments pension 'reforms'

But is it just teachers who have a reason to protest?

No. It's the whole public sector. All pensions are under attack, and the latest budget, with its 'granny tax', has made it worse. Last November the civil servants, local government employees and others were out alongside those who work in education. Why have the unions decided not to bring them out today?

It's the whole private sector, where growing numbers of workers can't look forward to any kind of pension at all.

Is it just pensions?

No. More and more workers face long term pay freezes, worsening conditions at work – if they have a job at all. Over 20 percent of young people between 16 and 25 are out of work.

Is it just London?

No. These conditions are faced by workers up and down the country

Is it just Britain?

No. the brutal austerity measures being imposed on the working class and the entire population in Greece, Portugal and Spain, where wages and pensions are already being directly cut and hundreds of thousands of jobs wiped out, are what lie in store for all us, because the crisis of this system is world wide and terminal

Why then are we being divided, if we all face the same attack, and need to fight back together?

There are many reasons. The widespread feeling that there is no alternative, the hope

that it will all go away, the lack of confidence about taking things into our own hands.

But this lack of perspective and lack of confidence means that those who falsely claim to represent our interests – above all our 'official' trade union representatives – can keep us divided into countless little sectors, trades, and categories, call us out on separate days, cancel strikes when the courts give the order, and imprison us in trade union legislation which makes us fight with one hand tied behind our backs.

Despite all this, can we unite?

Yes, if we cut across professional and trade union divisions and come together in assemblies open to all workers.

If we ignore laws about ballots and use these assemblies to make actual decisions about how to struggle.

If we ignore trade union laws about 'secondary picketing' and use massive delegations to call on other workers to join our struggle.

If we open out to casual workers, students, the unemployed, pensioners.

If we use demonstrations, occupations and street meetings not to listen passively to speeches by the experts but to exchange experiences of struggle and discuss how to go forward.

If we rediscover our identity as a class – a class which everywhere, in all countries, has the same interests and the same goal: the replacement of this rotten system with a real human community.

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