

If we want to defend our interests we must start at workplaces

We face the biggest attack from 1989. It started by “anti-crisis” measures by companies in 2008/2009 it went on by successful government crusade against wages in public sector last year and it culminates this year’s reforms whose majority were de facto approved.

Effects of government offensive will be long-term and will affect workers on two levels. Firstly they are going to brutally lower our living standard (rise in price through raising of VAT etc). But the thing is not only finance. Work based on contract for a unlimited period of time will be still more available, only precarious working conditions will wait for more and more of us (work through agencies, work for a limited period of time etc.) These measures had and have clear political aim: to strengthen power of companies and make difficult as much as possible for proletarians the way towards collective defence of their interests. To put it in other words: to deflect the balance of forces between workers and capital for the benefit of capital in the long term.

Demonstrations are not enough. And let’s not rely on unions

Today when we have come to demonstrate the majority of reforms is approved (or it is almost certain that will be). We should not to lie to ourselves – the government succeeded in everything what it aimed for. It is true: demonstrations which we used to join from last September, brought many people on streets, they encouraged but they at the same time created dangerous illusion that they can change something in themselves. They could not. And they can’t even now.

Let’s admit it: government was not terrified at least because of those demonstrations. Filled squares can’t damage economy – and precisely economic losses caused by our rejection of work are only one argument which capital and state can understand.

Unions could not hope that they could mobilize workplaces (even if this would cross minds of union bosses). Oh my god, how unions could have such ambitions? Unions for whole long years did together with bosses everything possible to keep workplaces in passive obedience. Did they somehow utilize period prior 2008 when companies lacked labour force and when employees could by means of strikes gain not only better money but, first of all, collective experience of their own force and self-confidence (something which we need so much now)? No, unions did not strife after that. Even last December unions before the strike in public sector appeal to their members... not to agitate for the strike on their workplaces, not to fetcjh employers!

But no more word about unions. There is no reason to be exasperated about the role of unions. Unions will always see companies and state above all social partners with who it is necessary to look social peace – and they see in mobilized workers above all threat for their own status.

In the first place it was us who failed. We can not expect any different from unions but we can do better.

Hard but only effective way: self-organization and politicization on workplaces

What next? Leftist civil society proposes – let’s enforce referendum and after let’s abolish reforms via this way. (And many others already started to prepare pre-election leaflet: “Vote Social Democrats/”Communists”, government of the left will set right everything!”

After the illusion that one can conquer anything just on squares it is just another dead end, another way how to flatter oneself that we can avoid the most decisive battlefield: workplaces, places where we produce profit for companies or state and where ensure motion of the whole society.

Let’s not to do the same mistake twice.

Our current helplessness face to face government and companies results from our up tp now weakness at workplaces – and only from workplaces our potential strange can come from.

Difficult, long way? Definitely. But only one which can be effective one. After all, only one movement which despite all its mistakes (contradictory relation towards the rest of workers) and, it is true, thanks to its specificities, gained something last year, it was the doctors' movement. Why? First of all thanks to the fact that it menaced the operation at workplaces.

Exactly in workplaces it is necessary to begin. To listen speeches at demonstrations and take leaflets it is not enough. It is necessary to talk to fellow workers, interlink with those who "want to do something", not to resign beforehand, to look for opportunities around which it is possible to form with all carefulness and vigour collective defiance.

It will be needed:

In better scenario we can try to take at least a part of what the state withdraw from us from pockets of companies, in worst one the collective struggle will be needed if companies will start second round of "against crisis" measures.

In all cases our self-organization in workplaces will have sense only if it is based on independent politics which will (in contrast to unions) assert: what we have in common with companies and state it is just antagonistic interests. It is not our job to care about the fact if our demands suit to needs and mood of firms or national economy (they really don't care about our needs). Above all we have to look after the fact if our demands correspond with our needs and our strength – and after the question how to enlarge it and how to be as united as possible. Let's push forward only our own, class "egoistic" interests. (State and companies do the same, do they?)

There is too much at stakes... and neither unions nor civil society nor politicians nor companies can't represent our interests. As workers we can rely only on our own power which must have roots in workplaces and on autonomous anti-parliamentary worker's politics which can spring just from workplaces: from factories, warehouses, hospitals and offices.

Demonstrations? Not enough. Referendum? Elections? Dead end. We have to begin on workplaces, out potential strength is there.

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