

# 12<sup>th</sup> March: a great day defending Italian State school

Saturday 27 March 2010, by [BERNOCCHI Piero](#) (Date first published: 13 March 2010).

A great fighting day the one on 12<sup>th</sup> March 2010 against the attempt to destroy Italian state school system. An exciting reawakening day of State school workers and students.

The national general strike achieved a participation beyond expectation: from data coming from main Italian cities, more than 50% of school workers were on strike, close to the 60% record reached on 17<sup>th</sup> February 2000 during the strike against a competitive examination ( Named "Concoursaccio") directed to increase salaries for very few teachers.

In Rome 50 thousand teachers, employees, students and common citizens marched with fighting angry and ferocious ironic spirit, against the school system destroyers. The point has been well underlined in several speeches, starting from the one addressed by Cobas national spokesman: Piero Bernocchi, in front of Italian Ministry of Education building.

The participation of school temporary workers from every Italian regions together with regular teachers and lots of students has been considerable. They blocked for many hours Italian Ministry of Education building.

During the protest march, strikers expressed strong indignation against Italian Government and " the "couple Tremonti-Gelmini" who are forcing, using lots of confusion and abuse, the Italian secondary school reform. Their attempt is carried out though it isn't law yet, without State Auditors' Department advice, without Italian President of Republic Napolitano's signature, although "The reform" isn't published yet in Official Gazette.

The demonstrators stressed that "The so-called Reform" isn't result of educational projects, on the contrary it's result of the fateful idea about state education as unprofitable investment. So that, " The reform" calls for brutal cuttings.

Many statements, slogans and placards have underlined that while are increasing regime bribery scandals, that reveals how many huge amount of economic resources are removed from welfare spending by powerful mafias, hangers-on, banks and various gangs, Mr. Tremonti and Mrs Gelmini pull down: schools, school courses and subjects, teaching hours and laboratories, in the name of "God national saving", walked over by spreading corruption. In meantime, "The couple" drive out pitilessly thousands of temporary teachers. The same teachers "squeezed" at low-cost until yesterday. (An Italian temporary teacher costs about 30% less then an ordinary one). The outcome is a further impoverishment of Italian school system already cut down by previous administrations.

A lot of citizens-parents present on 12<sup>th</sup> March 2010 protest march, reminded that in most of Italian schools, to make up for the lack of school facilities, they are required to pay continuous increasing fees. Head teachers don't take on temporary teachers when regular teachers are absent. Students are crammed into class-rooms without any legal and safety regulations. Private fee-paying courses are widespreading.

The final speeches, performed opposite Ministry of Education building, confirmed the commitment to strengthen the struggle in next days through: occupation of schools, temporary- workers pickets, refusal of complicity in the widespread system of illegality in Italian school, up to a “full of movement ” end of school year, through reutilization of strike during assignation of the term’s marks. This instrument of struggle was taken away from school workers by Governments and “Concerting Unions” by 146/90 law, well-known as “ Anti-Cobas and Anti-strike law”.

The modalities of strike during assignation of the term’s mark, will be decided in the next days after a wide discussion among Cobas , temporary workers movement and others forces intend to defend Italian state school and intended to win the political struggle for : the withdrawal of secondary school “reform”; against cutting down; Brunetta’s decree; Aprea’s bill; the hierarchization in schools; “the killing temporary workers” decree; for permanent employment of temporary workers; against the illegal payment of fees from families, for significant investments; for restoration to all workers of Right to call unions meetings, during working time.

**Piero Bernocchi**

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\* Piero Bernocchi is National spokesman of COBAS.