The anti-strike union laws are important weapons in the bosses’ armoury. Business secretary Vince Cable has repeatedly made it clear that he wants to make the laws even tougher, in the light of co-ordinated strike action against the cuts. These laws are designed to make it easier to intimidate, prevent strikes and sack striking workers. They can also be used as a weapon by some reluctant trade union officials who are only too happy to drop out the prospect of organising official action until the mood for action has died down. ALEX GORDON, the president of the RMT and BILL ROBERTS of the Socialist Party, set out their case against the laws in a contribution to this week’s National Shop Stewards Network debate, explaining how they can be circumvented with effective, united organisations – especially with the help of the National Shop Stewards Network (NSSN).

The National Shop Stewards Network can perform a key role, encouraging exchange of information, and using successful strike action and continuing to build solidarity at workplaces, and with community anti-cuts organisations.

Liberalisation of the laws Bill Roberts

I January 2008 thousands of construction workers were walking off work in London in support of their colleagues at Visteon in the US, who were struggling against anti-union laws. In the ensuing dispute in Visteon and Vestas and the unreported, others, many unreported, it became clear that there is the sufficient confidence, determination and initiative, the laws can be rendered ineffective. 

Can workers conduct effective industrial action? Is it possible to have a mass strike? Can workers work towards a general strike? These are questions that have to be answered by any unionists in struggle, generalising lessons from current serious disputes in order to extend, build capacity and consolidate the movement.

The struggle against Heath’s Industrial Relations Act in the early 1980s showed that when the unions had the political and financial support of the working class, workers could be even more determined than effective. Workers can work towards a general strike. They can be even more determined than effective. Workers can work towards a general strike. They can be even more determined than effective. Workers can work towards a general strike. They can be even more determined than effective. Workers can work towards a general strike. They can be even more determined than effective. Workers can work towards a general strike. They can be even more determined than effective. Workers can work towards a general strike. They can be even more determined than effective. Workers can work towards a general strike. They can be even more determined than effective. Workers can work towards a general strike. They can be even more determined than effective. Workers can work towards a general strike. 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