

# **FROM ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TO THE UNIVERSITY LEVEL: ONLY WORKERS' ACTIONS CAN SAVE PUBLIC EDUCATION!**

**For control of our public universities by faculty, staff, and students; abolish the Board of Regents!  
For parent-teacher-staff control of public schools; down with school boards and state trustees!  
Stop the Democratic Party/CTA drive to privatize through charter schools!  
For mass actions by students, parents, teachers, and workers,  
up to a prolonged general strike, to defeat all attacks on public education and public workers!**

Richmond, California, located in the West Contra Costa Unified School District and sitting in the shadow of Chevron, is Ground Zero in the attack on public education. Chevron draws down \$14 billion in annual profits and enjoys tax breaks via Proposition 13 and the corporate tax deals cut in Sacramento to pass the budget this year. All the while, schools are bulldozed; teachers and staff are fired; classes are overcrowded; and public education in California has become the laughing stock of the educated world. Youth in this district are more likely to go to prison or war than to get a good education and a decent job. Even now few can afford the University of California. Yet they plan to increase fees to over \$10,000!

The swells and overstuffed suits on the Board of Regents, the school boards, the legislative and executive bodies (from the State Capitol to the White House), and their paymasters on Wall Street, led by JP Morgan Chase, Citibank, Goldman Sachs etc., blather endlessly about their commitment to cutting costs. Meanwhile, their wealth and profits soar, in contrast to homeless encampments which bloom outside our cities. **WHO WILL STAND UP TO THIS INJUSTICE? WHO WILL FIGHT FOR OUR KIDS EDUCATION?**

Despite the clamor of the media pundits, who last week celebrated a jump in the Dow, the current crisis shows no let up for the working class, the unemployed, or our students. CEOs and public administrators see only one way to balance their books, via wholesale attacks on the living standards of working people. One in seven people internationally live in poverty. 40 million in the US join the 2 billion worldwide surviving in poverty, alongside a billion who live on less than \$1.00 a day. We are now told to expect a jobless "recovery" while the economy shreds a quarter million jobs monthly, and the stock market skyrockets as profits return to the financial capitalists. **The bailout is working – but only for Wall Street – and at our expense!**

Goldman Sachs, JP Morgan Chase, and their ilk have hoarded billions to pay obscene bonuses to their best thieves this Christmas. The treacherous leaders in the union bureaucracies, the union supported politicians, and the reformists posing as socialists only give cover to these accepting furloughs, lower wages, cuts in pensions, and increased health care costs, and to stand by as immigrants

are scapegoated and deported. While Wall Street and the military receive billions of dollars from Washington, we are told: "Don't fight back; you can't win, because there is no money for education and social services."

Most of all, we are told: "This is simply a crisis of the financial sector, caused by foolish people who let themselves get talked into mortgages they couldn't afford." They don't want us to see the big picture. The truth is that the entire edifice of the capitalist economic system is rotten to the core. The present economic crisis is not a matter of bad mortgages transformed by Wall Street machinations into "toxic assets." Rather, it is a **classic crisis of overproduction**, caused by inter-imperialist rivalry lowering workers' standard of living in order to boost profits, until the workers can no longer afford to buy the goods they produce. This inherent structural weakness in capitalism means that **for the bosses and their profits to survive, Wall Street needs you to take the hit – you, your kids, your grandkids, and your descendants ad infinitum!**

Instead of explaining this truth, the fake socialists join the chorus of liberals and progressives who create the illusion that simply putting pressure on Obama will stop the cuts and save our education. One fake socialist group, the LIT-FI, creates and perpetuates illusions in capitalism's ability to deliver by calling for an elected Board of Regents instead of fighting for student/worker/teaching faculty control of the university system. Their faith in reform is made apparent in a banner headline in their press, [La VOZ de los Trabajadores](#), asking: "OBAMA ARE YOU LISTENING? WE'RE FIGHTING BACK!" As if, this "bought and paid for," pretty boy of Wall Street, whose job it is to impose the cuts, will turn his back on big capital and put the interests of the working class first.

What fake socialists, liberals, and progressives won't say is that for us to win quality education, affordable health care, jobs for all, a clean environment, and an end to war, **capitalism must die**. We must replace this entire system – the economic foundation, the political structures, and the armed power of the state – with workers' democratic self-management, all the way from the points of production and distribution to the highest levels of decision making and enforcement. **What we need is a Workers' Government run by workers' power.**

## **Rallies, teach-ins, forums, and one-day work stoppages alone will not end the attack on education.**

To win, we need **prolonged general strike action** across the state against the rule of the capitalists, in all the workplaces in both the public and private sectors, in the schools the universities and in the streets. We must fight for transitional demands that can break the grip of the capitalist media and world view on the masses of workers. Our program must include:

**1) No layoffs, furloughs, or speed-ups; no fee increases or cuts in programs or classes in the schools or in higher education; no cuts in social services and benefits for the poor, seniors, children, or the disabled.**

**2) Abolish the Regents!** *No to fake democratization of the Regents through general election! Down with the drive to privatize public education!* Only a university system democratically administered by teaching faculty, staff, students, and the working class community can provide education that serves the interest of the working class, not the corporate elite. **FOR STUDENT, FACULTY, STAFF, AND WORKERS' COMMUNITY CONTROL of the UC, Cal State, and Community College systems and all public schools!** **Down with the political appointees, elected officials, and state-imposed trustees who strangle our colleges and school districts!**

**3) FOR OPEN ADMISSIONS! FOR AN END TO FEES (NO TUITION)! STIPENDS BASED ON NEED!** From pre-school to graduate school, provide free, high quality education and enough classes for everyone. The existing system is not designed to educate the working class. From grade school through university, it tracks students by socioeconomic class, separating the privileged from those destined for low paying dead end jobs, the military, or prison. In a socialist economy the highest education achievable by an individual would be valued and promoted. But in this era of capitalist decay, higher education and socioeconomic advancement are no longer valued by the denizens of Wall Street and their corporate skills on the UC Board of Regents. **DOWN WITH ARNIE DUNCAN'S CHARTER SCHOOL DRIVE!**

**4) JOBS FOR ALL!** From an individual's entry into the working world until retirement, everyone must be guaranteed the opportunity to perform meaningful creative work that serves humanity and pays enough to support a family. **To end unemployment and the squeeze on workers' wages, we demand a sliding scale of wages and working hours: 30 hours' work for 40 hours' pay! Share available work! Reclaim advances in productivity from the expropriators!**

**5) When banks and corporations plead poverty in the face of workers' reasonable demands for jobs, fair pay, and full benefits, we must fight for the nationalization of failing enterprises under democratic workers' control, without compensation to the stockholders!**

**6) ABOLISH CALIFORNIA'S INDUSTRIAL PRISON SYSTEM!** The decline in spending on education since the passage of Proposition 13 is closely correlated with the rise of the prison population in California. Each prisoner is a consequence of this system's failures in education and employment! The **system** is the crime; the prisoners are only the symptom. Abolish the capitalist system and the symptom will disappear. Prisoners cost \$47,000 a year and incarcerated youth cost a quarter million dollars a year – while our public schools operate on \$7,000 per student!

**7) FOR UNIVERSAL HEALTH CARE** from cradle to grave. The only thing preventing universal, free, high quality health care is the profit system, which extracts profit from every illness or death. **For our families to have health care, the profit system must be driven out of medicine!**

**8) Stop the two-tier system of contracting out permanent positions.** Offer contract workers permanent union university employment, offer integration into CALPERS with credits for time served. **Organize the unorganized!**

**9) Drive Military & CIA/NSA recruiters out of the universities!** Down with all intellectual work that serves the exploitative and military ends of the imperialists. **Down with Lawrence Livermore**, home of US nuclear weapon research! Rather we need a university that teaches the critique of political economy and the theoretical contributions of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky—not the deceptive system of exploitation and wars! **Education withers during imperialist war drives! Defeat US, NATO and Allies in Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan!**

**10) For a fighting Workers' Party.** To achieve the above demands, workers and students must break with the Democratic and all capitalist parties (Greens, Republicans, American Independent, and Libertarian) and build a Workers' Party based in the trade unions, alongside unorganized workers, the unemployed, and their allies in the communities of color and the LGBT community. **Only a Fighting Workers' Party committed to defeating capitalism by revolutionary means and founding a workers' government can establish a rational socialist plan to win these demands.**

## **HUMANIST WORKERS FOR REVOLUTIONARY SOCIALISM**

*Working with the FLTI to refund the Fourth International*

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