

THEY SAY CUT BACK...

militarization=war = Regulated curricula=high stakes exams =racism =nationalism =privatization=merit pay



WE SAY FIGHT BACK!



OCTOBER 7, 2010

Strike the Schools and join a Freedom school
to learn why things are as they are



Call for Nationwide School Strike and Day of Action: October 7th, 2010

The education agenda is a war agenda. It is a class war agenda, and an empire's war agenda.

To upend this reality we need to build on the strike action of March 4, 2010.

The promise of perpetual war is as real as the world-wide attacks of the rich on the poor.

In that context, elites use governments, and their schools, as their executive committees, public relations wings, and armed weapons.

The US is losing two wars. The bank bailouts add to financial crises. Elites now want to force poor and working people to pay their bill—and to delude us into thinking we are in the same boat with them. We are not.

Schools are now the centripetal organizing point of N. American life: targets.

What is the U.S. Education Project? The spear-point is the Race to the Top (RaTT) meaning:

- Regimented national curricula promoting nationalism, ending free inquiry;
- Racist, anti-working class high stakes exams promoting individualism in an already segregated school system;
- Merit pay, wage and benefit cuts, layoffs, and attacks on tenure with full time positions becoming temp jobs—school workers are among the last people in the US with benefits, fairly predictable jobs, and pay—an injury to other workers now becomes an injury to all;
- Dramatic fee and tuition hikes, driving students out of school or into perpetual debt based, mainly, on inherited wealth--building segregation;
- Militarization in poor and working class districts and “national service” created to syphon off resistance in middle class and upper class districts.
- Routinization of college and university curricula and methods as the disciplines are aligned with the k-12 world, a result already largely in place;
- Limited forms of charters and privatization led by the likes of Gate and Broad but the fundamental effort, not-public but tax funded mis-education, will persist in the main.
- Tamping down student hopes, abolishing the vision and abilities it takes to win and run a just, equitable, society.

The RaTT is the No Child Left Behind Act in hyper-speed.

The education agenda hides its own violence: if students do not come to school, they get arrested. If teachers, who must enter a ruthless job market, competing with other school workers for jobs that should be plentiful, do not toe the line, they are disciplined and fired. The real background emotion of schooling is fear, hardly a pedagogical tool, but a whip.

The education agenda is a fully bi-partisan effort, backed forcefully by Obama and Education Secretary Arne Duncan, personifications of a government that looks like a corporate state.

The education union leadership, which spent millions electing Obama, remains fully in the RaTT camp, betraying the rank and file, selling concession contracts, as they take bribes of, for example, \$686,949 paid to National Education Association past president Reg Weaver in 2008. That helps explain their backing the dual war agendas and promoting “labor peace”. Union tops reject the reason most people believe they join unions: the contradictory interests of employers and employees.

The core issue of our time is the potential of mass class conscious resistance organized by people prepared to take risks to defeat grotesque social/economic inequalities, militarism, and devastation of the environment that is capital's legacy.

On March 4th, students and school workers around the US, led by California, took direct action. They shut down the schools and, in some cases, opened freedom schools where people could gain and test ideas about why things are as they are.

The degree of future cuts will be fixed by the degree of resistance. In Puerto Rico, a resounding strike won nearly every student demand. That battle went on for weeks.

These actions will be duplicated, and sharpened, on October 7th, 2010. Join us. Shut them down in order set up Freedom Schools to teach why things are as they are and to transform education, rescuing education from the ruling classes.

Reach out to the military, vital to ending the wars.

We will follow the actions of October 7th with a mobilizing conference on October 23 and 24. You are welcome to join us.....and Good luck to us, every one.