

a rouge forum broadside

No Workers' Blood For Oil!

School Workers Can Choose Neither Tyranny nor Terror

We Choose Social Justice

This war is not a war against terrorism, against Islam, or against Osama bin Laden. This is an international war of the rich on the poor, an oil war, a continuation of the perpetual war to meet the incessant demands of capital, a system that thrives on war, exploitation, massive worldwide unemployment, low wages, and the imperial theft of raw material. The Perpetual Oil War that is now promised to the world must be stopped by the mass actions of conscious citizens, students, workers, sailors, soldiers, much as the last major war was ended.

There is no such thing as the common interests of any people within any given nation. Patriotism and nationalism make no sense in a world that is, above all, split by rich and poor, not by recently drawn geographical borders. All of the top players calling for war are millionaires with ties to oil. George W. Bush, Dick Cheney, Osama bin Laden, are all oil millionaires. In the U.S., these are the same people who looted the entire budget of California, the world's sixth largest economy, and gave \$12 billion to the oil companies in 2001. The oil reserves in the Caspian Sea region, Saudi oil, potential natural gas pipelines, this is the basis of the war that is sending working class youths from all nations to their death, each flying a patriot's flag.

This is not a war about terror. The US is among the greatest purveyors of terror in the world, harboring fascist Cuban terrorists in Miami, using its intelligence agencies to target foreign leaders for assassination, like Patrice Lumumba, overthrowing popular elected governments, as in Chile, killing hundreds of thousands of working people, including US citizens, in the ruthless pursuit of world domination, as in Vietnam, Guatemala, El Salvador, and Grenada. The US created bin Laden, Saddam Hussein, the Shah of Iran and hence the Ayatollahs, the Saudi dictators, the Kuwaiti monarchy, and now the US seeks to pull together a counterfeit government for Afghanistan, made up of the heroin-dealing Northern Alliance and an 86 year old former King, retrieved from an Italian villa where he has lived for twenty years.

This is not God's war. It is an irrationalist's war. Despite George Bush's bizarre claims that the US has god on its side, only an evil god would be pleased with this war, which has every false leader invoking the name of god-with no evidence but the arrogant certainty of faith.

This war is also a racist war. Racist portrayals of Middle-eastern and Asian people in the media, for years, have resulted in a spike of hate crimes, dividing people who should be united in struggle against the supremacy of the rich. Racism is a tool of social control, divide and conquer. Only poor and working class people have an interest in seeing the end of racism.

Tyranny in the US must not stand. Greed and hysteria will not motivate people for long. In the aftermath of the vile terrorist attack of September 11, US society was motivated by the culture of greed (patriotic shopping, but the wealthy jumped from their stocks), plus jingoist hysteria. When one confronted the other, we witnessed brawls like the New York police fighting the New York firefighters. But through the period, the rich cynically sharpened their attacks on workers, stripping away rights of free speech, assembly, and protections from false arrest under the guise of the Patriotism Bill, looting the federal budget, using the deepened financial crisis to bail out companies like Ford, GM, the airlines, IBM, and oil companies like Enron, each of which took the money and laid off employees. The corporate state, the **tyranny of fascism** in development, is what we now witness in the U.S.

For Educators, Students, and all Workers
The Real Choice is Social Justice or Barbarism

Class war stands above the joint action of the Democrats and Republicans, all just representatives of slightly different interests of wealthy investors, like the faces on money. Just as George Bush's fake alliance of nations will unravel the second one power sees a chance to get closer to those oil fields, thus laying the grounds for WWII, so will the political opportunists bail out on one another the moment one sees a chance to move up. More importantly, US society is already being torn apart by the forces of class warfare, in this case the rich at war on the poor.

Working people in the US are targeted to bear the brunt of financial collapse. People of color, people with little capital or resources, will be hurt first and most. The last decade of NASDAQ prosperity has come to an end. The NASDAQ has collapsed and will not recover. The stock market is close behind, according to top bankers like bank leader Felix Rohatyn. The possibility of real financial collapse is, according to Treasury's Allen Greenspan, on the horizon.

It has been clear for five years that the US was preparing for war. The Rouge Forum News has documented the process in schools; deepening segregation, the regulation of knowledge via nationalist curricula standards and high-stakes tests, the seizure of entire school districts by corporate interests, as in Chicago, Detroit, and San Diego, vouchers and the rise of irrationalism in schools, the militarization of working class schools through ROTC programs and lying recruiters. The Rouge Forum led the fight against these developments all over the US.

In the midst of financial collapse and perpetual war, school workers in the US are pivotally positioned to fight for social justice, democracy and equality. This pursuit, once led by the industrial working class, must now be led by educators. Schools are the centerpieces of US life, replacing the factories of the earlier era. Just as industrial workers won, by direct action on the job and in their communities, key reforms like the right to join unions (Wagner Act), child labor laws, social security, and the eight hour day in the midst of the last depression, and through illegal strikes like the 1943 miners' strike of 1943, mid-war, so must school workers prepare to take action to protect reason against racism, to stand for rationality against madness, for social justice, equality and democracy to overcome the fascist tendencies on the horizon.

People are already fighting back. Well before the September 11 attack, school workers and students in Detroit, Oakland, L.A, Scarsdale, Ontario Canada, were boycotting tests, leading wildcat strikes against both their unions and their government bosses, identifying their common interests: "Books! Supplies! Lower Class Size!", in Detroit. "Schools Not Jails!" in Oakland.

There is no easy way out. No big union, no reform organization, is prepared to meet this crisis. In fact, the union movement in the US loves this war.

This is going to require a massive, one-to-one organizing, educating, agitating, effort. School workers are well positioned to do this work. Schools are the headquarters of most communities. The Rouge Forum is prepared to address this task.

The ideas that give life to this movement must be underpinned by an understanding that to overcome the crisis ahead, **the system of capital, the war of all on all, the system that thrives on greed and fear, must itself be transcended, overcome.** In the course of taking on this battle, we must build caring communities where people can unleash their creative capacities, so we can build a new society in the heart of the old. **The real choice is justice or barbarism.**

What you Do Counts!

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