

Update

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Asserting the Rights of Youth

Today the youth in all 50 states are required to take "high-stakes" standardized tests.

The policy of requiring that public schools administer standardized tests is one of the means used by the capitalist politicians in the Democratic and Republican parties for depriving the daughters and sons of the workers of their right to education.

Repeated studies have proven that such tests not only fail to measure a students' achievement but that they discriminate against the workers and oppressed minorities.

By using such tests to deny promotion and graduation, the government is denying students the right to pursue their education and putting a blight on their future.

By slashing funds or closing down schools which perform poorly on such tests, the government is again undermining the schools in working class and poor neighborhoods.

For years working class and minority youth as well as students enrolled in vocational and special-education programs have been discriminated against by being crowded into inferior, underfunded schools with underfunded programs. Today these conditions have become more widespread. As a result of being denied their right to a modern education, these students invariably are at greater risk of failing standardized tests and being deprived of a high school diploma and

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U.S. Imperialism Continues Its Occupation of Afghanistan

Tens of thousands of U.S.-NATO troops continue to occupy Afghanistan and impose the colonial rule of U.S. imperialism on the people.

U.S. commanders order airstrikes which target civilian populations.

Afghan patriots resisting the occupation continue to come under attack.

The U.S. military admits to holding 1,700 prisoners at detention camps. In violation of international laws such as the Geneva conventions, these prisoners have been denied POW status. The U.S. military has repeatedly been exposed for torture at Parwan Detention Facility.

U.S. imperialism is working on imposing a new, unequal treaty on Afghani-

stan which is designed to ensure that the military and economy are controlled by the U.S. government.

New government or military appointees must pledge allegiance to U.S. imperialism.

The Obama administration admits that it plans to maintain the occupation for "a long time."

All these facts expose again the aggressive, colonial character of U.S. imperialism's occupation.

The invasion of Afghanistan was launched using the pretext of "fighting terrorism." But the reality of the occupation shows that U.S. imperialism is

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U.S. Imperialism, GET OUT OF IRAQ!

The U.S. has been at war with Iraq for **24 straight years.**

Given the green light by President Barack Obama, the puppet Maliki government is once again pursuing a program of "all out war." Since early January large-scale military offensives have been concentrated against newly liberated zones in Anbar Province.

Next month Iraq will hold elections and already the U.S. is pretending that they will be "democratic elections" even while the puppet Maliki government is killing and repressing the opposition.

Who cannot see the real fraud behind all the capitalist propaganda concerning the so-called "Democratic" face of

the U.S. government?

The truth is that while John Kerry, Joe Biden and Barack Obama talk endlessly about "human rights" and "freedom," the U.S. is drowning in a river of blood.

Long before "Operation Iraqi Freedom" ended on August 21, 2010, U.S. political "advisers" have been setting up Western-style political institutions and other civic organizations. And of course, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank (WB), the World Trade Organization (WTO), etc. have been used to make sure that the economy of Iraq remains under the

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For Your Information: U.S. Operates With Hired Guns in Iraq

The use of private military contractors is an important part of the strategy of U.S. imperialism in its attempts to subjugate Iraq while wearing the mask of “liberator” and “protector.”

Private military contractors are not even governed in words by the same regulations that formally apply to the U.S. military, which makes them prac-

tically immune from prosecution in Iraq. This in turn allows them even more agility in their use of brutal tactics with less fear of recourse.

Furthermore, the use of contractors provides more space for U.S. imperialism’s high command to hide its hand when an atrocity is exposed.

In addition, the use of private mili-

tary contractors allows for ambiguity about how many troops really are occupying the country. Officials claim not to know how many hired guns are in Iraq, although former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates once admitted to an estimated 25,000 private security contractors and others have spoken of substantially higher numbers.

The Need for Analysis

Most people know that workers’ strike struggles, the struggles of the youth to assert their rights, the struggles against privatization, the struggles for relief for the poverty stricken and unemployed, the struggles against attacks on the rights of immigrants, etc, are most often ignored or distorted by the monopoly-controlled media. This is part of a conscious strategy to create an atmosphere of passivity and resignation amongst people. By maintaining a blockade of silence and disinformation about the struggles of people, the monopoly-controlled media tries to create the idea that things “can’t change” because “no one cares.” This is a “Big Lie.”

It is the ideology of the capitalist class.

It is the ideology which pretends that the only human relations which exist – the only social system possible – is one based on the exploiting relations of the capitalist-imperialist system. It is the ideology which seeks to blockade the struggles of the people and slander all the forces fighting for progress. In short, a real war of terrorism is waged against the consciousness of the people with the aim of getting the people to forget even their own experience and the realities of the on-going class struggle, to drown out the people’s aspirations to

build a better society. Only ideas which perpetuate the status quo are to be remembered; the experience and ideas of the masses of people, which continually lead to the conclusion that the present social conditions must be changed are obliterated.

The solution is to take part in developing the independent politics of the working class. This is the politics which starts from the experiences and interests of the people themselves. This is the politics which arises from the aim of the workers to emancipate themselves and shows what must be done to win emancipation. This is the political program of economic rights, democratic renewal, a democratic foreign policy and socialism.

To guide the working class and popular struggles and merge them into a common front, to make our movement pro-active and find permanent solutions to the problems confronting us, requires that, in the course of fighting for change, that we continually politicize ourselves and our movement. The need is for the activists to develop discussion amongst themselves and the broadest sections of people. The need is for the activists to create an atmosphere in which people can get information and zero in on the root problems. The need is for the activists to

create new space in which people can put forward their own aims and agenda. It means building up the independent political movement of the working class and people.

As obvious as this need is, there are very entrenched political forces, ideological reflexes and habits which are fighting tooth and nail to prevent such political discussion from developing.

Bill Foster, a leading member of the Workers Party, summarized experience of this kind in the summer of 2002 and wrote the following:

Believe it or not, I have been to several anti-war meetings in which an exchange like the following took place:

New Activist: “I want to become more active but I need to know more; we need more information and discussion in these meetings.”

Anti-War “Leader:” “No, we can’t have any political discussion here.”

Instead of clarifying things so as to release people’s initiative, an offhand atmosphere is created in which politics is “taken for granted.” The conscious participation of people is suppressed and replaced by a superficial and false sense of security and unity.

Yet more. As the activists assert

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Afghanistan

strengthening its colonial rule in Afghanistan.

The invasion and occupation of Afghanistan shows again that U.S. imperialism is bent on turning the clock back to the days of gunboat diplomacy and old-style colonialism. In the world today, the real terrorist is U.S. imperialism.

It is U.S. imperialism which has returned to the openly colonial and racist doctrine of the "white man's" burden, insisting that some nations, some cultures, some religions, some peoples, are too weak, too uncivilized, too backward to be "allowed" the right to self-determination and self-governance and need to be administered and "mentored" by the "morally superior" U.S. imperialists.

It is U.S. imperialism which is going around the world boasting about the death and destruction its military imposed on Afghanistan and telling others they will suffer the same "fate" if they refuse to bend to the dictates of U.S. imperialism.

It is U.S. imperialism which not only threatens but has used nuclear weapons and other instruments of

mass destruction to terrorize nations and to impose its dictate.

It is U.S. imperialism which has organized mercenary armies and paramilitary death squads in Colombia, in Guatemala, in Indonesia, in Nicaragua, in Iraq to carry out wanton terror and destruction. It is U.S. imperialism, which in South Korea, in Israel, in Haiti, in Iraq and elsewhere, financed and organized the most fascist regimes and instructed them in terrorizing the peoples of their country.

It is the C.I.A. which carried out and continues to carry out covert operations, including assassinations, biological warfare and destabilization campaigns against Cuba, Chile, Iran, Syria, etc.

The U.S. capitalist class, which lives not only by the exploitation of the U.S. working class, but also by the subjugation and super-exploitation of nations throughout the world, is beset by crisis. In this situation, it is desperately shifting the burden onto the peoples, preparing new Vietnam-type wars of aggression in order to "protect" its empire.

The U.S. working class and people must step up the struggle against U.S. imperialist intervention and aggression.

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We must demand an immediate end to the occupation of Afghanistan. We must build up the organized force of the working class and people which fights against every aggressive step taken by the capitalist government.

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themselves they find that the discussion is continually being diverted into mindless talk about some bureaucratic details. This mindlessness is often justified in the name of "taking action."

But just what kind of actions can be planned or taken if the people are not conscious of their political objectives and the political balance of forces. The fact is that every day, new activists find themselves "burnt out" precisely because their profound anti-war sentiments have not been consolidated and turned into mature conviction through serious investigation and analysis.

In my experience the political forces that work to prevent serious discussion are the very same forces that organize "actions" designed to keep people under the political tutelage of the Democratic Party and to actually infiltrate chauvinism into the anti-war movement. In fact, this is the method behind the madness of "no political discussion." Opportunism seeks to hide its loyalty to capitalist politics by preventing people from taking a conscious attitude toward their own actions and own movement.

Of course, the entire attempt to separate discussion and analysis from action is a fraud.

Thinking is a basic human activity – in fact, one of the activities which empower human beings to know the laws of motion of the objective world and to change it. In particular, in re-

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Rights of Youth

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the chance to continue their schooling.

In many schools the curriculum has been cut back to the point where students are not even taught such basic skills as reading and writing much less other elements of a modern education.

So too, the majority of youth are denied access to recreational and cultural activities and millions of youth can only "look forward" to a life of low-wage, dead end jobs.

And, of course, the youth are given absolutely no role in determining their future or the direction of the coun-

try, but rather find themselves pushed aside and marginalized at every turn.

This situation must be changed!

As a starting point, the youth, side by side with the workers and people, must assert themselves and their rights – their right to a modern education, their right to recreation and culture, their right to seek the truth, their right to participate in the political affairs of society and shape their social environment, their right to economic security and to a future.

Assisting the youth to assert themselves and take part in the struggle for progress is the responsibility of all of us.

U.S. Prepares Sanctions on Venezuela

“The full U.S. Congress has spoken loudly and clearly that we stand with the Venezuelan people as they exercise their fundamental rights, and we condemn the [President Nicolas] Maduro regime’s deadly wave of repression. Now it’s time for actions that name, shame and punish the Maduro regime’s murderers and thugs who are responsible for the crackdown against innocent Venezuelans.”

This statement came from Republican Senator Marco Rubio on March 12 shortly after the Democrats and Republicans in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee unanimously

passed a resolution “outlining the framework for legislative action on Venezuela.” The next day Democratic congressman and chairman of the committee, Robert Menendez, introduced a bill which begins as follows:

(1) The Central Bank of Venezuela and the National Statistical Institute of Venezuela have stated that the inflation rate in Venezuela was 56.30 percent in 2013, the highest level of inflation in the Western Hemisphere and the third highest level of inflation in the world behind South Sudan and Syria.

(2) The Central Bank of Venezuela and the Government of Venezuela have

imposed a series of currency controls that have exacerbated economic problems and, according to the World Economic Forum, have become the most problematic factor for doing business in Venezuela.

(3) The Central Bank of Venezuela and the National Statistical Institute of Venezuela have declared that the scarcity index of Venezuela reached 28 percent in December 2013, which signifies that one in 4 basic goods is unavailable at any given time.

According to this logic, “human rights” mean the “right” of U.S. imperialism to make demands on behalf of its financial and industrial monopolies.

Iraq

thumb of the international capitalist monopolies and bankers – that the contracts are signed with the “right” people and the wealth of the country turned over to imperialism.

The latest military offensives in Iraq again expose the lie of formal Iraqi political independence. While the Obama administration found it useful to attempt this fiction, the reality is that not only the economic lifeline of Iraq remains in the hands of foreign capitalists, but also the political, military, cultural and other aspects of the life of the people.

Under the neo-colonial system, U.S. imperialism carries out its exploitation of the peoples through an alliance with the internal capitalist and landlord classes. Representatives of the local exploiters are sent to Washington for political and military training and returned to their “native” land to rule on behalf of U.S. multinational corporations.

Such regimes rely on U.S. military aid and training to maintain their countries as “safe havens” for U.S. corporate investments.

Today in Israel (maintained as the 51st state of the U.S.), the Korean pen-

insula, Colombia, Iraq and elsewhere, the U.S. maintains puppet regimes. Just as in the past U.S. imperialism spawned and propped up such regimes as apartheid South Africa, the Shah of Iran, the dictatorships of Batista, Pinochet, Marcos, etc.

But precisely because they are fighting for freedom and independence – and this cause is stronger than the greatest military power in the world which fights only for colonialism and domination – the liberation movement of the Iraqi people continues to surge forward. The whole world knows that the inevitable outcome will be the defeat of imperialism.

The American people must continue to speak out in support of the right and the struggles of the peoples to live free of imperialist intervention and domination.

Strengthening the emerging anti-war movement means that the workers and activists must politicize themselves so as to strengthen their political independence and opposition to the capitalist parties of war and imperialism and to extend the anti-war movement to ever-wider sections of the people.

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gard to political life, it is precisely by depoliticizing people that the capitalist class excludes the majority from participating in the affairs of society. Capitalist politics tries to turn people into passive consumers or followers who may “vote” every 4 years or maybe “let off steam” in an anti-war protest while the real political decision-making remains the monopoly of the capitalist politicians.

It is precisely by having political discussion that we take the initiative into our hands. The activity of political discussion is an essential action which helps inform our entire political life by making it conscious.

Isn’t this the decisive human factor which is missing from current American political life?

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