The Breakdown of Capitalism and the Fight for Socialism in the United States Program of the Socialist Equality Party

Part three

The decay of the schools, combined with the social crisis, has led to a surge of high school dropouts. The inevitable result is a decline in educational achievements.

73. The catastrophe facing the public schools is the product of three decades of attacks and budget-cutting, as well as the privatization of school services, the draining of public resources into for-profit schools, and the proliferation of “performance-based” testing. These have been combined with an assault on the separation of church and state through the introduction of religious indoctrination into the schools in place of the teaching of evolution, cosmology and other sciences.

Obama’s “Race to the Top” program has deepened the right-wing policies promoted by the bipartisan “No Child Left Behind Act,” signed into law by Bush. Districts are pushed to compete for meager funds by expanding charter schools, firing teachers at “underperforming schools” or shutting these schools down altogether.

74. While education in the US has always been plagued by inequalities, the expansion of American democracy was accompanied by increasing access to education — including the introduction of public education following the American Revolution, the expansion of public high school education spearheaded by reformer Horace Mann, public high school education spearheaded by reformer Horace Mann, and the extension of education to African American families, led by reformer Horace Mann, the extension of education to African Americans after the Civil War, and the establishment of a public school system. These earlier reforms are now being reversed. It is precisely the elitist aspect of public education that makes it the target of the right-wing politicians and the corporate interests they represent.

75. At the college and university level, young workers are increasingly priced out of access to education, or forced to take on tens of thousands of dollars in loans to pay outrageous tuition costs. Students graduating with a bachelor’s degree from public four-year institutions owe on average $20,000 in debt, even as they face an increasingly bleak employment outlook. Total college student loan debt is approaching $1 trillion, and exceeds total credit card debt. This debt should be abolished.

76. All discussion of equality in a society where access to education is largely determined by income is a fraud. A public works program must include a plan to hire tens of thousands of teachers and staff at quality wages and benefits, reduce class sizes, order schools and build new ones, and equip all schools with the most up-to-date books and learning technology. Higher education, including continuing education for adult workers, is a necessity for modern society and must be guaranteed to all free of charge.

The right to a healthy and safe environment

77. The health and well-being of humanity depends on a healthy environment. However, addressing environmental degradation is impossible in a society in which every decision is dictated by the pursuit of profit.

78. The oil spill disaster in the Gulf of Mexico has destroyed the economic and environmental basis of the entire region. It is a graphic expression of the deadly consequences of deregulation, corporate cost-cutting, and the reckless pursuit of profit by giant corporations. In the face of the greatest environmental catastrophe in US history, the Obama administration has left everything in the hands of BP unconditionally, defended the profit interests of the company, and held no one accountable. The immediate victims of the disaster — workers and small business owners in the Gulf region — will receive grossly inadequate compensation for the devastation of their livelihoods.

79. Among the many environmental disasters confronting mankind — including pollution of cities and waterways, the devastation of rainforests and coastal regions and the destruction of biological diversity — perhaps the most dangerous is global warming, which threatens to disrupt the world’s climate, destroying agriculture and pushing millions into famine. Corporate interests and their political representatives from both parties are using the catastrophe as an excuse to slash social programs, gut education, and gut the environmental movement.

80. An emergency response to the environmental catastrophe must begin with the expropriation of the global economy giant under the democratic control and the creation of new schools for small depositors, placed under the control of committees of workers and students.

81. Capitalists do not believe that they can do this. Expropriation means that they lose their power and the redistribution of wealth and power will be utopian to believe that they can do this. Expropriation means that they lose their power and the redistribution of wealth and power will be utopian to believe that they can do this. Expropriation means that they lose their power and the redistribution of wealth and power will be utopian to believe that they can do this. Expropriation means that they lose their power and the redistribution of wealth and power will be utopian to believe that they can do this. Expropriation means that they lose their power and the redistribution of wealth and power will be utopian to believe that they can do this. Expropriation means that they lose their power and the redistribution of wealth and power will be utopian to believe that they can do this.