Stop the CFA betrayal of the California State University strike! Vote NO on the sellout TA! For rank-and-file control of the struggle!

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The Rank-and-File Committee of SDSU Academic Workers and the World Socialist Web Site *will be holding an emergency online meeting this Thursday, January 25, at 7:00 p.m. Pacific Time to discuss the way forward against the sellout tentative agreement by the California Faculty Association (CFA). Details and registration can be found here. We urge all academic workers and their supporters to attend this vital meeting.*

The antidemocratic decision by the California Faculty Association to call off a weeklong strike by 29,000 striking faculty, lecturers, counselors and coaches across the California State University (CSU) system and announce a sellout tentative agreement points to the need for the rank and file to take control of their own struggle.

The initial "highlights" in the tentative agreement reveal significant concessions. The CFA has dropped its initial demand for a 12 percent across-the-board wage increase to a mere 5 percent in the tentative agreement, the same amount CSU had initially offered, with future 5 percent raises "contingent on the state not reducing base funding to the CSU."

The increase in the base salary of $3,000 will not be enough to raise the living standards of lecturers who live paycheck to paycheck. The CFA is claiming that the base salary for Range A employees, including both the 5 percent and $3,000 increase, will raise the annual wage from $54,360 to $60,078. This totals $476.50 a month before taxes. It is not possible to live on this in California, nor does it make up or keep up with inflation and costs of living. Furthermore, demands for more mental health counselors are markedly absent from these highlights.

Anger is boiling over across the campuses. This is shown in social media posts denouncing the CFA's actions, in the classrooms forced to quickly resume Tuesday and in email threads which correctly denounce the move as a sellout.

The WSWS welcomes and encourages this opposition. But the next stage in this fight is for workers to take control out of the hands of the corrupt sellout artists in the CFA bureaucracy by building their own independent organizations which they democratically control.

Rank-and-file strike committees must be built by educators at every campus. The first order of business will be a major campaign to ensure that the workforce votes down the contract by the widest possible margin, while preparing for a resumption of the strike, together with teach-ins and other coordinated actions. The basic principle of the committees must be that the will of the rank and file takes absolute priority over everything else.

It is significant that the union has not even called any informational sessions on the tentative agreement nor announced when the vote will be, much less released the full text of the proposed contract. It would be the gravest mistake for the vote to be left in the hands of the CFA. There must be rank-and-file oversight over the ballot itself to prevent any tampering.

CSU faculty and lecturers are part of a wider rebellion of workers across industries against the trade union apparatus, including against continuous betrayals of campus strikes. The six-week strike in 2022 of University of California academic workers ended in a sellout contract, in which the United Auto Workers dropped the central demands of strikers for cost-of-

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living adjustments (COLA) and $54,000 base pay. Instead, the UAW accepted $34,000 poverty salaries, prompting a wave of fury and fight against the UAW's betrayal. Similarly, last October's struggle by CSU academic workers was betrayed by the UAW.

The bureaucracy, distant from and hostile to the workers they claim to represent, is dependent on its close ties to the state and the Democratic Party. The state of California is run by the Democratic Party, which has spearheaded the privatization and charterization of K-12 schools, attacking the very right to a public education. Abusive practices, growth of class sizes, crumbling infrastructure and lack of health and safety protections—especially in light of a lethal and debilitating pandemic—has resulted in a widespread exodus of educators.

This phenomenon is mirrored in the university systems, where education is provided mainly by a casual workforce of adjuncts and lecturers living paycheck to paycheck. The vast majority of teaching is performed by part-time workers at the CSU and UC systems, with tenure nearly unattainable for most. Universities are being transformed into a new segment of the gig economy.

Meanwhile, a jobs bloodbath is underway across the whole economy, including dockworkers, United Postal Service workers and auto workers.

The question is not the desire to fight but that workers must have control over their own fight. As long as the initiative is in the hands of the union apparatus and not the rank and file, the only possible outcome is a sellout.

The struggle against the bureaucracy's betrayals is bound up with the fight against capitalist exploitation as a whole. The CSU administration parrots the ruling class's mantra that there is "no money" for high quality university education. Yet, the horrific images from Gaza, Yemen and other regions of the world where the US military apparatus is wreaking havoc in pursuit of its imperialist ambitions show that this money is being squandered on criminal wars. The aim of these wars is the enrichment of a small oligarchy no matter the human cost, and they are being funded by gutting the living standards of workers all over the world.

If you agree with this, contact the Rank-and-File Committee of SDSU Academic Workers by filling out the form below. We encourage you to attend our online public meeting Thursday night at 7:00 p.m. Pacific Time, "Stop the CFA betrayal of the strike! Vote NO on the sellout TA! Organize rank-and-file control and expand the struggle! Billions for public education, not for war and genocide!" To register, click here.

To contact the WSWS and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

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