

Join the International Students for Social Equality!

ISSE

18 September 2010

The following statement has been issued by the International Students for Social Equality, the student organization of the Socialist Equality Party, for the beginning of the fall semester in the US. The ISSE urges all students and young workers who agree with this program to join the ISSE and build a club at your school or campus.

As the new school semester begins in the United States, students and young people are confronted with the worst economic and social crisis since the Great Depression of the 1930s.

Everywhere, conditions of life are going backwards. The jobs crisis is dire, with an official unemployment rate of almost 10 percent, and youth unemployment is nearly 15 percent. Poverty is soaring, wages for young workers are abysmal, and students graduate from college, burdened with debt, only to find that there are no jobs to be had.

It is now universally acknowledged that young people today will be the first generation in recent US history to be worse off than their parents. Worldwide, youth are among the worst affected by the economic crisis. The number of unemployed young people has reached the highest level in history, with at least 81 million out of work.

No one in the political establishment has any program to address the mounting social crisis. Instead, after handing trillions to the banks, governments have turned to cutting essential programs on the grounds that there is “no money.”

High on the list of social services being cut is education. Throughout the US, primary schools are being shut down, tens of thousands of teachers laid off, and classes eliminated. Colleges and universities are cutting back on admissions and raising tuitions. These cuts have been combined with the destruction of health care programs,

cultural funding, and basic city services.

These basic needs and rights are under attack even as the rich increase their wealth. The United States is more unequal today than at any time since the 1929 stock market crash, and is growing more unequal every day. It is dominated by a handful of giant corporations that are allowed to loot the economy (the giant banks), kill their own employees (the Upper Big Branch mine disaster) and poison the environment (the BP oil spill)—all with near-total impunity.

The big banks emerged stronger than ever from the financial crisis of their own making; Wall Street executives made more money than ever last year, and will make even more this year. Meanwhile, employees are working harder than ever, and for less money.

The International Students for Social Equality insists that young people have certain basic rights—the right to a job at a decent wage; the right to a quality education that does not leave us in debt for the rest of our lives; the right not to be sent off to kill or be killed in wars; the right to a future, which is being taken away from us at every turn.

The fight for these rights, however, comes into direct conflict with a social system completely subordinate to the profit interests of the banks and corporations.

Many workers, and in particular young people, voted for Barack Obama with the hope that he would bring “change.” His first two years in office have only shown the futility of making any change within the capitalist system or by pressuring the two parties of big business. Barack Obama is guilty of the same crimes as George Bush: illegal war, assassination, domestic spying and attacks on democratic rights.

As the conditions of life get worse, Obama’s primary concern is to cut social spending, including from health care and Social Security. Under the slogan, “Race to the Top,” he is carrying out a more far-reaching attack on education and on teachers than Bush’s No Child Left

Behind, demanding that “underperforming schools” be shut down or transformed into charters. In speech after speech, he declares that young people are responsible for their own problems, that all they have to do is work harder—even as he rejects any programs to deal with soaring poverty or the jobs crisis.

The ISSE stands for a break with the Democratic and Republican parties. We oppose any illusion that these organizations can pursue policies favorable to workers. They are the greatest enemies of the working class; and any group that wants to “pressure” these parties only wants to politically disarm working people.

The basic interests of workers and young people can be achieved only through a radical transformation of social and economic life. Socialism means that the economy should be run democratically, the giant corporations placed under workers’ control, and directed toward the satisfaction of social need, not private profit.

The problems that confront students and young people cannot be solved simply on campuses. Joblessness, indebtedness, and the dismantling of social services—these are problems that affect the entire working class, and can only be solved with a struggle by all workers: young and older, white collar and blue collar, employed and unemployed.

The ISSE, the student organization of the Socialist Equality Party, seeks to build a movement of young people as part of an independent political mobilization of the entire working class, in every country of the world. The breakdown of capitalism is producing ever-greater social struggles. But it is necessary to fight to provide these struggles with a political leadership and a socialist perspective.

If you agree with this program, join the ISSE today by visiting <http://intsse.com/join>. If there is an ISSE group in your area, get involved. If not, help start one and build a meeting on your campus. Study the program of the Socialist Equality Party and make the choice to fight for socialism.



To contact the WWSW and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact