

Young people have the right to a job!

International Students for Social Equality
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This summer, as schools go on break, and millions of students graduate from high school and college, young people throughout the United States are confronted with a basic problem: there are no jobs.

The unemployment rate for young people is disastrous: 18.4 percent. Hundreds of people apply for any available position. College graduates send out applications every day to no avail, then end up settling for low-wage jobs at fast-food restaurants and stores, if they get jobs at all.

Meanwhile, schools are being closed, and colleges are restricting admissions. Every day, the opportunity for a decent education is being taken away from more young people. Hundreds of thousands of teachers and educational staff have been laid off—with hundreds of thousands more to come—swelling class sizes and forcing students out of school.

All this is happening amid increasingly desperate conditions for working-class families, mass unemployment, foreclosure, and poverty.

A generation is being prevented from making its mark upon the world. Instead of working, learning, and creating, young people are languishing in idleness and drudgery. Those lucky enough to finish college and find work must deal with the fact that they will never pay off their student loans, that they will be in debt for the rest of their lives—indentured servants to the banks.

US companies, meanwhile, have more money than ever. But after two years of record profits, they still refuse to hire. Instead, they are hoarding trillions of dollars in cash, or using the money to speculate, driving up food and fuel prices.

Three years ago, millions of young people supported and voted for Barack Obama. Since his election, however, Obama has done everything in his power to take away young people's futures. His administration gave trillions of dollars to the banks, but its loans to the auto companies were conditioned on workers accepting

poverty-level wages for new-hires and younger workers. This was done to drive down wages for the whole workforce.

The Obama administration has pursued a deliberate policy of high unemployment. Now the government is working with the Republicans to cut trillions in social spending at a time when millions of people are out of work, with full knowledge that this will make the jobs situation even worse.

The federal government has stood by as states, under both Democrats and Republicans, balance budgets by cutting billions in education and health care spending. All the social resources available to young people of a previous generation are being cut. Libraries are being shut down, as are recreations centers, pools, and summer programs.

To justify these measures, the politicians—Democrat and Republican alike—claim that the government is out of money. This is because the money that should have gone to pay for schools, colleges, and social programs was squandered on the bank bailout, an unending series of wars, and decades of tax cuts for the rich. The money to educate, train, and employ young people exists, but it is sitting idle in the pockets of the ruling class.

Why should society be this way? Why lay off teachers in the middle of a recession? Why close libraries when millions are out of work? This is all happening because the rich have dictatorial control over society. A tiny handful of Wall Street speculators and corporate executives decide every major policy. These people are waging an all-out war against the working class, and the futures of young workers are a casualty.

This state of affairs is the result of the capitalist system, in which the super-rich control the factories, offices, and stores, and do with them whatever they like; if they choose not to hire workers amid mass unemployment, the capitalist system says they have

every right to do this.

The International Students for Social Equality asserts that every young person has the right to a future, to education, and to an interesting and well-paying job. These rights, along with all the rights of the working class, are not compatible with the capitalist system.

The ISSE calls for a radical transformation of society to fulfill these social needs, not private profit. The immense wealth that has been amassed by the multi-millionaires—mostly through fraud and parasitism—must be taken out of their hands, and transferred to the public, to be run in the social interest. The large companies and banks should be run and controlled democratically, with the explicit goal of employing people and providing for the needs of humanity.

A socialist society would create a public works program on a scale never seen before. It would build hundreds of schools throughout the country, train and hire thousands of new teachers. It would build healthcare clinics, and libraries, and would reconstruct the country's decrepit transportation system. It would make sure that everyone had a job, that everyone had health care, and that everyone had education.

It is possible to create such a society, but it requires a fight. Young people in the United States should take a lesson from the struggles in Egypt, Greece, and Spain. In these countries, workers took to the streets to fight against a life of poverty and austerity. They demonstrated that in every country workers and youth face common problems and a common enemy: capitalism. However, these struggles have so far failed to halt the drive of the ruling class because they have not yet taken on an independent political form, in opposition to the pro-capitalist parties and the trade unions that support them.

The working class needs its own political party! This party should not seek to pressure the Democrats and Republicans, the bought-and-paid-for representatives of big business, but must struggle for power for itself, in order to break the dictatorship of the banks and implement a socialist program.

The young generation faces a choice: it can endure a lifetime of poverty and joblessness, or take up the fight to change society. The ISSE, the student and youth organization of the Socialist Equality Party, is building a leadership and organizing a struggle. We call on young people to join the ISSE, study its program and

history, and take up the fight for socialism!



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