

IYSSE campaigns for rally against war

Detroit students speak out against Syria war drive

A WSWS reporting team
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On Wednesday, the International Youth and Students for Social Equality (IYSSE) campaigned at Detroit's Wayne State University to promote a demonstration against war that is being planned for Monday, September 9 (information below).

Many students expressed incredulity at the Obama administration's claims of chemical weapons use by the Assad regime, and were overwhelmingly opposed to a renewed drive to war.

Wayne State University is a multi-ethnic, largely working-class university, with a sizable portion of students coming from the Middle East. The IYSSE members spoke with students from Libya, Egypt and many other countries.

Students are returning to Wayne State University, located in the Midtown area of Detroit, as the city is under the thumb of Emergency Manager Kevyn Orr and the bankruptcy court. The university has increased tuition by 9.8 percent this semester, part of an overall attack on workers throughout the city.

IYSSE members explained that the war drive is itself rooted in the geopolitical interests of the American ruling class, which is responding to the economic crisis and its declining world position through the use of military force. The Obama administration is currently working to get a resolution passed in Congress to provide political cover for another war of aggression with incalculable consequences.

Nicole Manlove, a graduate student in library and information sciences, said she was opposed to a new war. "It seems like every year there's another war, some new government to topple. I call it new-age colonialism."

"Why not spend money on healthcare and schools

instead?" she asked. "Aren't they saying there's no money to pay pensions in Detroit? Why can't they rebuild the city? Instead they're using the money to kill innocent people."

"People make money on wars. There are real interests at stake. Everyone knows how Iraq worked out. It's capitalism at the expense of human life."

"Our government claims that Assad has weapons of mass destruction," said WSU student Austin. "They said the same thing about Iraq, which just goes to show that we haven't learned anything from our past."

Austin went on to say, "A war with Syria would mean we waste billions or even trillions of dollars, and it would result in the deaths of thousands more people. The claim is that our government has to come in and save the Syrian people. But the American people didn't have someone to come in to save them during the American Revolution or the Civil War. They had to fight for their own rights."

"Where's the demand for proof?" asked Derak James, a graduate student in the chemistry department. "Bush didn't have enough evidence, and neither does Obama. If it was a Republican in office, would any of this be considered OK? The truth is we don't know who set off the chemical attack. What we do know is that the rebels have been caught with chemical weapons, and that we don't know what happened to the stash of weapons that we lost last summer."

James said the drive to war was related to the economic crisis. "This whole economic recovery is a lie," he said. "The reason that the interest rates are so low is because the government is buying up bonds. I mean, it's obvious. Just a little while ago they said that they would have to slow down and eventually stop the

process of quantitative easing, and what happened? The stock market lost, basically overnight, like two years of gains. If that doesn't tell you that the whole recovery is a lie then I don't know what will. And there's no way to get out of it either. The government has backed itself into a corner, and it's just a matter of how long it will be before the whole thing comes crashing down."

Anne Duggan, a professor of French and director of the gender studies program at the university expressed anger at the drive to war: "This will only lead to further loss of life. If the goal is to prevent terrorism, it will only piss people off and cause more terrorism. If it's a peacekeeping mission, why is there no UN resolution? We should have learned our lesson from Iraq and Afghanistan. Fool me once..."

"This is a proxy war," said Sai Namaduri, a sophomore studying biomedical physics. "It's all about profits and business interests." He added that Obama's actions had led him to turn away from the Democratic Party. "After the drone strikes, the NSA revelations and the increased militarization of the police... after all that I can't call myself a Democrat, and I've rejected the two-party system."

The IYSSE and SEP are organizing a demonstration against war at WSU at 3:00 pm on Monday, September 9, by the Flagpoles of Gullen Mall. We encourage all workers and youth in the Detroit area to attend. A meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, September 11. For details, [click here](#).



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