

# IYSSE antiwar campaign resonates with workers and youth in Berlin

Our correspondents  
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The campaign of the International Youth and Students for Social Equality (IYSSE) against the revival of German militarism has met with great interest among workers and students in Berlin.

The IYSSE, the youth organization of the German Socialist Equality Party (Partei für Soziale Gleichheit--PSG), has spoken not only with students at Berlin's Humboldt University, where it is holding a meeting on Thursday, but also with workers and young people at workplaces, unemployment offices and adult education institutions.

Workers more often than not leave the unemployment office frustrated because they feel powerless against the bureaucracy, which sends them away without giving them any support. Nevertheless, many laid off workers stopped to hear about the campaign against war. Many also bought copies of *The return of German militarism and the tasks of the Partei für Soziale Gleichheit* and said they would like to attend the meeting.

A worker named Nico remarked on the connection between militarism and the attacks on social programs as he left the unemployment office in the Berlin district of Wedding. "If they build up the army, this will take even more money away from education and support for the unemployed," he said.

He explained that he had lost his apartment a year ago when new owners raised the rent after having renovated the building. At first he lived with friends, but when he lost his job, his circle of friends shrank as well.

"It's a vicious circle," he said. "I have no fixed residence to report because I cannot register the address of a friend or the address of a homeless shelter with the authorities. Without a fixed residence, no one will hire me. But no landlord will lease an apartment to me because I cannot show I have a job with a secure income."

Asked whether the social welfare office could assign him a residence, he said no. "They always say that there are much needier people who must be served first," he said. "After awhile, I gave up. They should not be surprised when people end up in a criminal milieu. Whenever it happens, there is a big outcry and they act shocked."

Nico responded positively to the existence of a youth organization and party that defends the social rights to a job and a good income and seeks to unite the workers internationally on the basis of a socialist program.

Eva, another laid off worker, also made the connection between the austerity measures that are being implemented throughout Europe and the preparations for war. She was especially shocked at the one-sided reporting by the media, particularly on the conflict in Ukraine.

She left the unemployment office in Wedding without having received any help. "I had a good position at a school in Berlin," she said. "It was my job to provide support for children with learning disabilities. I also had a lot of fun helping children to learn and teaching them to express themselves more clearly. Then my position was eliminated as part of the austerity measures approved by the Berlin Senate and I couldn't find a new job."

She said she was having difficulty applying for a new position because the principal of her old school was on sick leave and the substitute principal refused to give her a reference. "It is frustrating to see that while so many children really do need the help I could provide, the school administration and the Senate are cutting positions where they can expect the least opposition."

Many workers entering the Tempelhofer Hafen, a large, busy shopping center in Berlin, stopped by the information table of the IYSSE to take fliers on the

upcoming meeting. Many people expressed indignation at the reporting by the media and bought copies of the PSG resolution. One couple said they had read that even the moderate National Broadcasting Council had criticized the right-wing character of television reporting on Ukraine.

At adult education schools, many students took IYSSE leaflets and expressed interest in the campaign against the drive toward war. At a school in the Neukölln district of Berlin, a student named Michael approached WSWS supporters and told his friends: “The WSWS is a good news web site that you should read all the time. I read it regularly and find the analyses of political events very good.”

He remarked on the debate about defective weaponry in the German army that has recently dominated the German media, saying: “As if they just now found that out! They have known that a long time. But now they need a debate so they can get the population to agree to more military spending. The reports on the humanitarian crisis in Kobani are being used to justify the export of weapons and a military intervention abroad.”

He found the meeting of the IYSSE against militarism very important because people had to take a stand in opposition to war.



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