

Open Letter to the International Socialist Organization

Reverse ISO position supporting political censorship at NYU

The International Youth and Students for Social Equality
10 February 2017

In its decision barring the International Youth and Students for Social Equality from club status at New York University, the school's Student Activities Board claimed the IYSSE was "too similar" to the International Socialist Organization to merit club status. The SAB cited the existence of the ISO's club to justify its decision denying the IYSSE's application.

Hundreds of students and professors have signed petitions supporting the IYSSE's application, with many expressing their opposition to the SAB's act of political censorship. The IYSSE submitted a new application for club status earlier this month.

The International Socialist Organization, however, has refused multiple IYSSE requests for support. By refusing to support the IYSSE's democratic right to free speech, the ISO is solidarizing itself with the NYU administration and its allies on Wall Street and the military-intelligence apparatus.

On February 7, the International Youth and Students for Social Equality wrote the following letter to the leadership of the International Socialist Organization asking them to reverse their support for the administration's anti-democratic political censorship of the IYSSE. The ISO has yet to respond.

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To the International Socialist Organization:

Last semester, New York University's Student Activities Board (SAB) rejected the International Youth and Students for Social Equality's (IYSSE) application for club status. The SAB justified this anti-democratic decision by claiming that the International Socialist Organization already had established a club at NYU, and that the IYSSE was insufficiently dissimilar to accept its application to establish a second socialist-

oriented club. In effect, the Student Activities Board is using the ISO's club status to keep the IYSSE off campus.

Opposing this pretext, a leader of the IYSSE at NYU wrote to the SAB on November 19, 2016:

"The ISO and the Socialist Equality Party, the parent organization of the IYSSE, are completely different tendencies with different histories and opposed positions on fundamental political questions. One could say that the differences between the ISO and IYSSE are more significant than those that separate the Democratic and Republican parties."

On December 6, 2016, I sent an email to the ISO, asking you to support our efforts to establish a club on campus. I wrote, "The IYSSE would appreciate your club's support in our fight for free speech and to democratize the club application process."

The ISO has not responded to this letter. Last week, on February 1, I personally asked ISO at NYU Vice President Paul Heideman to sign a petition supporting our application for club status. He refused.

Regardless of the ISO's political differences with the IYSSE and its parent organization, the Socialist Equality Party, your refusal to oppose the SAB's act of political censorship and to forthrightly endorse our application for club status is a clear violation of the elementary democratic principles of free speech. The ISO's failure to uphold the IYSSE's right to form a club is all the more unprincipled in light of the fact that the SAB is using your official status to keep us off campus. Your action can only be explained as a calculated decision to block the IYSSE so that NYU students will not be exposed to the politics of a socialist organization whose views are different from and

critical of the ISO.

The SAB has stated that it will decide at any time within the next two weeks whether to accept the IYSSE's new application for club status. As this deadline is rapidly approaching, we ask that you reverse your present anti-democratic position, and that you immediately issue a public statement supporting our application. Please inform us of your decision on this matter without unnecessary delay.

Isaac Finn



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Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact