

Join the International Youth and Students for Social Equality and take up the fight for socialism!

The International Youth and Students for Social Equality (US)
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Schools and universities across the United States are opening amidst an unprecedented political crisis within the state apparatus, the growing danger of world war, escalating attacks on the working class and immigrants, and a broad-based political radicalization of workers and youth.

Many young people are looking for a way to oppose capitalism and inequality. A recent Gallup poll found that for the first time since it began tracking the figure, fewer than half of young people aged 18-29 have a positive view of capitalism. The percentage of young people viewing capitalism positively has dropped a stunning 23 percentage points in just eight years.

The source of this change in consciousness is not hard to find. In the year 2018, in the most “advanced” capitalist country in the world, workers, youth and students are struggling to survive. The younger generation faces a precarious job market, forced to work two or three jobs to make ends meet. They have record student debt, \$1.48 trillion in total. More and more high school youth are discouraged from getting a higher education and are instead funneled quickly into the workforce or recruited to be cannon fodder for US imperialism around the globe.

An 18-year-old today was eight when the global financial crash ushered in a tidal wave of social distress throughout the world, with the major capitalist powers, led by the US under the Obama administration, funneling trillions of dollars into Wall Street to bail out the banks. As a result, social inequality has soared to unprecedented levels.

The consequences are seen both in the growing interest in socialism and in the growth of the class struggle. This year has been marked by significant social upheavals of

workers internationally. Thousands of teachers went on strike over healthcare and low wages across the US in the spring, issues which remain unresolved as schools open. Students and youth themselves organized one of the largest marches on Washington in history in opposition to mass violence in schools but motivated by deeper hostility to war and the social crisis in America.

While there is growing interest in socialism, there is still a limited understanding of what socialism is and how it can be achieved. But this is the decisive issue.

Young people looking for a way forward must first understand that nothing can be achieved within the existing political establishment and the two parties of the ruling class, the Democrats and Republicans.

There is enormous opposition, particularly among young people, to the Trump administration. Since taking office, Trump has overseen a trillion-dollar tax break for the wealthiest Americans, a ferocious attack on immigrants, a \$717 billion military budget, and an escalation of the attack on public education. Trump personifies all that is reactionary and criminal in the American financial oligarchy.

However, the Democratic Party is no less subservient to Wall Street and the military-intelligence apparatus. Indeed, the Democrats have focused their opposition to Trump not on his fascistic policies, but on claims that he is too “soft” on Russia. The purpose of the Democrats’ anti-Russia campaign, backed by most of the media, has been, on the one hand, to enforce a more aggressive foreign policy against Russia, and, on the other, to justify an attack on democratic rights. Under the pretense of combating “fake news” and “Russian meddling,” the Democrats are at the forefront in demanding that the social media companies censor left-wing, socialist and antiwar opinions.

In an effort to block the development of a genuine socialist movement of workers and young people, the Democrats and the media are promoting pseudo-socialist organizations like the Democratic Socialists of America as the safe, state-sanctioned “socialist” alternatives. The role of the DSA and its leading figures, like New York congressional candidate Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, is to provide a “left” gloss for a right-wing, capitalist party.

The real character of the DSA was revealed this past weekend, when Ocasio-Cortez gave obsequious praise to the late Senator John McCain, a right-wing Republican and one of the leading promoters of the illegal 2003 invasion of Iraq. McCain’s legacy, Ocasio-Cortez declared, was “an unparalleled example of human decency and American service.”

The International Youth and Students for Social Equality, the student and youth movement of the Socialist Equality Party and the International Committee of the Fourth International, is fighting for an altogether different program. The ICFI is the leadership of the revolutionary socialist movement, initiated by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, fought for by the leaders of the Russian Revolution of 1917, Vladimir Lenin and Leon Trotsky, and defended through the implacable struggle, led by Trotsky and the Fourth International, against the bureaucratic degeneration of the Soviet Union under Stalin.

The IYSSE fights to turn students and youth to the working class, the only revolutionary class in society capable of carrying out the socialist transformation of the world.

We fight for internationalism, for the unification of workers of all countries, to abolish borders and bring the world’s political map into harmony with the international character of the process of production. We oppose all those tendencies that take as their starting point the nation-state system. The working class is an international class. The problems workers face all around the world stem from the international capitalist system and must be countered with an international socialist program.

We fight for workers control of the means of production. The major banks and corporations must be placed under international social control and run democratically by the workers themselves to meet the needs of society, not private profit.

The vast wealth of the financial oligarchy must be expropriated. A tiny layer of the population has amassed unimaginable fortunes through the exploitation of the vast majority.

We fight against war and the militarization of society. The American war machine must be dismantled. US imperialism, seeking to reconquer the globe, threatens a third world war, this time fought with nuclear weapons. The vast sums expended on militarism by all the capitalist powers must be used to meet pressing social needs, including education, healthcare, and social programs.

We fight for the defense and expansion of democratic rights. The massive US surveillance apparatus must be dismantled and the censorship of the Internet halted. The witch hunts against Edward Snowden, Julian Assange and other whistleblowers and journalists must end, as must the endless wave of police killings and the militarization of US police forces.

We fight for historical truth and against the falsification of history. The development of a socialist movement today requires that workers and youth understand the essential experiences and lessons of the 20th century, above all the real history of the socialist movement, from the Russian Revolution through the Trotskyist opposition to Stalinism and social democracy.

To achieve socialism, the working class must be organized as an independent political force, in opposition to all the parties of the ruling class, in a revolutionary movement to take power and reorganize society on the basis of social equality. Without such a movement, workers and young people throughout the world confront a future of fascist dictatorship, impoverishment and world war.

The future is socialism, but it must be fought for. There is no time to lose.

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