

As the pandemic rages on

The threat of world war looms: Take up the fight against imperialism and for international socialism!

IYSSE (Australia) online meeting

3 March 2022

The International Youth and Students for Social Equality (IYSSE) in Australia is holding an online meeting via Zoom at 4 p.m. (AEDT) Saturday, March 12 to discuss the urgent need to build an international anti-war movement of youth, students and workers as the danger of nuclear war heightens amid the escalating crisis in Ukraine.

The IYSSE urges students and young people in Australia, New Zealand, throughout the region and internationally, to participate in the meeting, which will examine questions of life and death for billions of people around the world. Register for the meeting by clicking this link.

At no point since the Second World War, has the threat of a nuclear exchange been so present. Despite the provocations by the US and NATO powers, Russia's invasion of Ukraine must be opposed.

Russian President Vladimir Putin took the unprecedented post-Cold War action of placing the country's nuclear deterrent forces on alert. Putin, and the section of the Russian capitalist class he represents, cling to the delusion that they can shift US-NATO foreign policy and recognise Russian security interests in Ukraine through threats.

The catastrophe that was set in motion by the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991 cannot be averted through the reactionary ideology of Russian nationalism which serves the interests of the country's oligarchs represented by Putin.

Despite the reckless actions of Putin and the Russian ruling elite, principal responsibility for the present

crisis and the threat of nuclear war lies with US imperialism and its NATO allies. For decades, the US and NATO have been engaged in provocative militarist and economic intrigues in Eastern Europe and throughout the globe.

In 2014, a US-backed coup placed an anti-Russian government in power in Ukraine. NATO has been engaged since 1991 in a relentless expansion into Eastern Europe. The United States took the lead in planning for the use of nuclear weapons by withdrawing from the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty, stationing offensive missiles in Romania and Poland, and undertaking a multitrillion-dollar expansion of US nuclear forces.

In the last week, bellicose war rhetoric of politicians and officials in the US, Britain, Germany, Australia and other imperialist nations have accompanied economic warfare and the sending of NATO weaponry to Ukraine. All of this points to a de facto NATO war against Russia.

The present crisis has emerged out of a very definite context: the COVID-19 pandemic crisis. COVID has exacerbated the social and political crisis globally and has led to nearly one million deaths in the US alone according to official figures. The Omicron variant of Sars-Cov-2 has seen over 2,000 Americans die every day over the past month.

Around the world, governments are dispensing with scientifically-guided measures to stem the virus's spread because they cut across the profit-making ability of the tiny, wealthy capitalist oligarchy. For the ultra-

rich, who have gorged themselves during the pandemic, the lives and livelihoods of workers and their families are sacrifices that must be made in order for their continued domination over the world's resources.

In the face of this mounting social polarisation, the administration of US President Joe Biden aims to manufacture unity at home and project conflict outward through war. Emerging out of the Second World War as the dominant superpower in the world, the United States is now experiencing massive economic, political and social turmoil. It sees Russia and the economic rise of China as the main threats to its plans to retain its position as the global hegemon. As Leon Trotsky, co-leader of the 1917 Russian Revolution with Vladimir Lenin and founder of the Fourth International, said in 1934:

US capitalism is up against the same problems that pushed Germany in 1914 on the path of war. The world is divided? It must be redivided. For Germany it was a question of "organising Europe." The United States must "organise" the world. History is bringing mankind face to face with the volcanic eruption of American imperialism.

But the crisis in the United States is only the most extreme manifestation of the crisis of world capitalism.

In order to understand how to fight against war, youth and students must understand the objective conditions which lead to war. Militarism and armed conflict do not arise out of the minds of individual capitalist politicians. These are merely the reflections of a far deeper process which emerges necessarily out of the contradictions of the capitalist profit system itself. Above all, war emerges because of the division of the world economy into competing nation states, whose ruling capitalist elites vie for control over resources, markets, and spheres of influence.

World war, therefore, can only be averted by the action of the international working class overthrowing the predatory capitalist system and replacing it with world socialism. Youth and students must reject all attempts to divide young people and workers on the basis of nationality. The international working class must adopt an independent position in response to the escalating crisis. It is necessary to oppose imperialism without adapting to Russian nationalism, and to oppose Russian nationalism without adapting to imperialism.

Young people must turn to the world's working class

as the only social force capable of ending capitalism and, hence, ending the war and social misery that it brings. As the youth and student arm of the International Committee of the Fourth International, the IYSSE insists that a Marxist revolutionary party must be built to politically lead the working class to resolve the crisis of capitalism through the establishment of a socialist system based on social need, not private profit.

This perspective and the historical questions that arise out of it—including around the key strategic experience of the 1917 Russian Revolution which ended the First World War—will be discussed at the IYSSE's upcoming online meeting. To learn more about the IYSSE's program to build an international anti-war movement of workers and youth and find out how you can join in this struggle, attend our meeting on Saturday, March 12 at 4 p.m.!

Join the fight against imperialist war and for socialist revolution!

Register for the online meeting here:
https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_BcVL0fDVTdyHObXC5yJgZA



To contact the WSWS and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact