

IYSSE establishes club at Australia's La Trobe University in meeting defending zero-COVID campaigner Dr David Berger

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In an important step forward for the work of the International Youth and Students for Social Equality (IYSSE) in Australia and the region, the IYSSE has formed a new club at Melbourne's La Trobe University. The formal founding of the club, ratification of its constitution, and election of the club executive took place at its Inaugural General Meeting (IGM) on Friday, 29 July.

The La Trobe club joins the already established IYSSE clubs in Australia's second largest city and Victorian state capital at the University of Melbourne and Victoria University. La Trobe University's main campus is in the northern Melbourne suburb of Bundoora, more than 13 kilometres northeast of the city centre.

The university was established in 1967 and now has over 36,000 students, including more than 7,000 international students from 110 countries. Of these countries, the top five home nations of international students at La Trobe are, in descending order (as of 2017): India, China, Singapore, Vietnam and Pakistan.

La Trobe has also been one of the universities hardest hit by decades of pro-corporate restructuring accelerated amid the COVID-19 pandemic. At least 15 percent of the university's permanent workforce will have been axed since the beginning of the pandemic. Entire courses, including sections of the humanities and agricultural departments, have also been junked as so-called "cost-cutting" initiatives.

In the weeks leading up to the IGM, IYSSE members and supporters campaigned on campus to raise the level of political consciousness among the student population.

The IYSSE campaigns won warm support, with

dozens of students signing up to be members or contacts of the club.

Among the issues raised by campaigners with students were: the threat of nuclear war erupting out of the US-NATO proxy war against Russia in Ukraine and US aggression against China; the murderous "let it rip" policy of governments in Australia and internationally leading to a resurgence of COVID-19 cases and deaths; and the attacks on democratic rights highlighted by the persecution of WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange, zero-COVID doctor David Berger, and the lock on the Socialist Equality Party's Twitter account last month.

At the IGM, Taylor Hernan was elected the club's president. Hernan told the *World Socialist Web Site* that the formation of the club was "a significant step forward for the building of a revolutionary leadership among students and youth."

He added that "it came after a protracted campaign and lots of discussions with students about a whole array of political and historical issues. This is how the IYSSE raises the level of consciousness on campus."

The IGM was attended by 15 students and youth from across Melbourne.

Immediately following the formal business of the IGM, the IYSSE held a political discussion on the campaign to defend Dr David Berger—a remote area general practitioner and outspoken advocate of eliminating SARS-CoV-2 to save lives. For his exposure of government, media and health authority lies about the pandemic, Berger has been censured by the Medical Board of Australia and required to complete an Orwellian "re-education" program or be deregistered.

In the discussion, one first year La Trobe psychology

student said that the attempt to silence Berger “is denying our right to being able to communicate with others regardless of authority. We’re meant to have their freedom of speech to be able to complain and be able to say, ‘I don’t agree with the way we’re going, and we could possibly die.’ They don’t want that.”

When other IYSSE members related the persecution of Berger to the decade-long attacks led by Washington against Julian Assange for his exposure of imperialist war crimes, the psychology student wrote in the chat, “ohh yes I like Assange.”

Students and youth in the meeting spoke on the timing of the assault on Berger’s free speech. Australia is seeing a resurgence of the pandemic. The day the meeting was held, 157 Australians died from COVID, over a hundred in Victoria alone.

Another student asked about the specific allegations against Berger.

IYSSE members explained that Berger is being falsely accused by internet trolls, right-wing commentators and others of undermining public health messaging about COVID-19 on social media because he has exposed government lies and corporate media falsehoods about COVID-19.

“It sounds incredibly vague in terms of what breaches that kind of code of conduct,” added one La Trobe Masters of Science student. “The way that people use Twitter and that method of communication, I can see why they’d want to silence someone like that who is effectively out of step with authority and is openly disagreeing with that body and may be gaining some traction. The governments and health authorities are getting a bit embarrassed about what’s going on.”

Attendees watched a short clip from the interview Dr Berger did with the WSWS for the Global Workers’ Inquest into the COVID-19 Pandemic.

The following resolution was unanimously passed during the meeting:

This meeting condemns the censorship imposed on Dr David Berger by AHPRA and demands that all restrictions on him be lifted immediately and unconditionally. Dr Berger has warned of the dangers of COVID-19 and has advocated the necessary public health measures to deal with it in opposition to the ‘let it rip’

policies carried out by governments.

He has been a tireless advocate for the health interests of the population and has spoken the truth. All his warnings have been confirmed by events. This is why attempts are being made to silence him. The censorship is aimed not only at him. It is intended to silence the growing number of medical and health professionals appalled and concerned about official policy based on the scrapping of all necessary public health measures.

The censorship imposed on Dr Berger must be ended immediately so that he and others can continue their advocacy in support of the necessary public health measures to deal with the most dangerous pandemic in more than 100 years, and possibly ever.

The meeting concluded with an appeal for attendees to become active in the fight to build the IYSSE by joining campaigns and other initiatives, and to develop their political understanding through regularly reading the World Socialist Web Site.



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