

“For a socialist movement against war!”

IYSSE wins two seats in Berlin’s Humboldt University student parliament

Our reporters
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The International Youth and Students for Social Equality (IYSSE) will again be represented in the student parliament (StuPa) at Humboldt University Berlin with two members. The IYSSE participated in the election as the only slate with a programme against war and militarism and received 47 votes (2.8 percent) from students of all disciplines last Tuesday.

Although the student parliament elections took place under conditions of the murderous NATO proxy war in Ukraine and the biggest German rearmament since Hitler, these issues were exclusively addressed by the IYSSE. “The danger of a nuclear world war has never been as great as it is today,” the IYSSE warned in its election programme.

“Our re-entry into the StuPa of Humboldt University is a great and significant success,” IYSSE lead candidate Gregor Kahl told the *World Socialist Web Site*. “We discussed the pro-war policy of the German elites and the background of the Ukraine war with hundreds of students. Our call to oppose the enforced conformity and militarisation of the universities met with a great response. Speaking in lecture halls and holding discussions on campus, we found that there is great support among students for an international mass movement against the war. Our campaign has given conscious political expression to widespread opposition to war.”

The result is significant precisely because right-wing groups, with the support of the university administration, tried to make the IYSSE’s election campaign impossible. They systematically destroyed IYSSE posters and flyers so that it was hardly possible for students to find out about the group’s programme and events. Ukrainian nationalists slandered the anti-

militarist position of the IYSSE as “Russian imperialist.”

The IYSSE strongly opposed this attempt to exclude any criticism of German militarism and the NATO proxy war in Ukraine from the campus. It demonstrated how the university administration has been creating a climate of intimidation for years in order to suppress student criticism of right-wing and militarist positions.

For three years now, the university administration has refused to condemn a physical attack by the radical right-wing professor Jörg Baberowski on the IYSSE StuPa deputy Sven Wurm and to take action against the professor. The IYSSE therefore filed a disciplinary complaint against HU President Julia von Blumenthal in June, which met with support among students.

In the disciplinary complaint against Blumenthal, Wurm stated: “The fact that this right-wing extremist ideologue has now taken to roaming the campus as a right-wing extremist activist, destroying student election advertisements and physically attacking students, is also the responsibility of the university presidium. It has supported and defended the radical right-wing structures that have developed under Baberowski’s Chair of Eastern European History for years. Ms von Blumenthal is now continuing this course.”

“Countless fellow students were appalled that the university administration gave right-wing professors and activists a political free pass and even tolerated violence against students,” Kahl reported in this regard. “When student criticism is met with violence at one of Germany’s leading universities, it is an attack on the democratic rights of all students and has international significance.

Baberowski is a principal ideologue of the extreme right and internationally notorious for his relativisation of Nazi crimes and his trivialisation of Hitler--and he is not alone. The June 26 IYSSE election meeting discussed how the shift to the right at the university was systematically promoted and served to ideologically dress up the federal government's pro-war policy. The week before, the IYSSE had analysed the historical and economic causes of the Ukraine war and set out a socialist programme to unite workers in Ukraine, Russia and worldwide against the war and to stop the arms build-up.

During a debate organised by the student election committee, Kahl warned of the danger of a nuclear exchange between Russia and NATO and stated that a third world war was developing. Against this background, he explained the socialist perspective of the IYSSE and the political significance of confronting the politics of HU professors Baberowski and Herfried Münkler. He then appealed to the students present to break through the narrow framework of university politics and take up the struggle against war.

The IYSSE campaign culminated in an international event on Monday, with IYSSE speakers Samuel Tissot from Paris and Thomas Scripps from London reporting on the class struggles in France and the UK. Tissot and Scripps explained that the national trade union bureaucracies and the pseudo-left petty-bourgeois parties and currents they defend have played a key role in dividing struggles along national and occupational lines.

IYSSE candidate Christopher Khamis concluded, "An international movement of the working class against war and capitalism is not a beautiful dream but is developing concretely. As the youth organisation of the Fourth International, we are fighting to lead this movement and advocate uniting it with a socialist programme against capitalism. This is the only way to stop the war. I call on all of you to take part in this fight and join the IYSSE."



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