

The YGBL in Russia and Ukraine protests attempts to ban the IYSSE at Bochum University

Young Guard of Bolshevik-Leninists
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This statement was submitted by the Young Guard of Bolshevik-Leninists in Russia and Ukraine to the Student Council of Bochum University, which has voted to call upon the university administration to ban the IYSSE from campus. The YGBL is a Trotskyist youth group that works in political solidarity with the IYSSE and its parent organization, the International Committee of the Fourth International.

With the activities of the IYSSE taking on an ever wider scope, the same is happening with the far-right attacks on these activities.

Wherever in the world there is an IYSSE meeting on the war in Ukraine and its likely catastrophic consequences due to the escalation by imperialism, the ultra-right uses the same blueprint to go after the IYSSE.

The ultra-right thinks they can confuse young people by slandering our international movement and are denouncing everything that the IYSSE says and does among students as the promotion of a “pro-Russian narrative.”

The latest attack on the democratic rights of the IYSSE of this sort is taking place at the Ruhr University Bochum. And it is again based on these false accusations about a “pro-Russian narrative.”

We, as comrades of the IYSSE in Germany in Russia and Ukraine, want to say that all these accusations are not based on a true representation of reality, but only on the political interests of our opponents on the right.

The IYSSE is the youth wing of the nearly century-old international Trotskyist movement, which was the main opponent of Stalinism and the policies of the Soviet bureaucracy that led to the tragic collapse of the Soviet Union.

This collapse plunged Soviet society back into the barbarism of the 1990s, when, amid the absolute impoverishment of the majority of the population, a bunch of oligarchs enriched themselves by selling off everything that had been created in the USSR as a legacy of the October Revolution.

When this collapse took place, the entire elite of the imperialist powers of the West rejoiced as if the “end of history” and the “full flowering of capitalism” had arrived. Finally, society could develop through “personal enrichment” and the “free market” around the world.

The main heir to the 1990s plunge into barbarism in the USSR is the current Putin regime, which has established its dominance through the merger of mafia groups with the state apparatus and the capitalist profit machine based on the exploitation of the Russian working class.

At the same time, the rule of the Putin regime was also based on the support of its imperialist big brothers, who, for the time being, benefited from the establishment of stability on the territory of the former Soviet Union.

Everything continued until imperialism was confronted with the harsh reality of the crisis of capitalism, and Putin’s regime with the fall of its dream of aligning with the imperialist powers in NATO.

Contradictions heated up and led to a series of proxy conflicts in Georgia, Syria and more broadly in Ukraine. The situation is now escalating at such a pace that the whole world is on the brink of World War III which would threaten the very likely use of nuclear weapons.

Almost 27 years ago, in December 1996, Russian

historian Vadim Rogovin gave a lecture at the University of Bochum. His lecture was an explicit criticism of Stalinism and Yeltsin's regime of capitalist restoration.

If someone had dared to accuse Rogovin and the International Committee of the Fourth International of promoting a "pro-Russian narrative," the entire audience in the lecture hall would have laughed at such accusations.

Thus, we see that the Trotskyist movement was the main critic of the Stalinist regime and then regimes of Yeltsin and Putin in the Kremlin. This clearly contradicts the accusations against the IYSSE by the Student Council.

In fact, all accusations of a "pro-Russian narrative" are based on what is a pro-German imperialist narrative, the essence of which is the revival of Germany as a military power capable of leading Europe in opposition to other economic blocs.

The recent actions of the German government very clearly show a basic strategic course toward rebuilding the full power of German imperialism at a scale which it has not had since the days of Hitler.

But as is often the case, the pursuit of strength in reality indicates serious weakness. The German government is trying to turn back the wheel of history by reviving national chauvinism, as if in this way it could save itself from the crisis of the entire world system of capitalism.

The laws of history, as Leon Trotsky said, are stronger than bureaucratic apparatuses. These laws stand on the side of the working class, the only force capable of moving humanity forward.

That is why the youth will only be able to defend their future by uniting with the workers in an independent struggle for their rights. This is the program the IYSSE presents to the youth and we call on everyone to defend our democratic right to fight for this program to the end.



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