Oppose the state-organized witch hunt of opponents of genocide on US campuses!

International Youth and Students for Social Equality (US)
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The International Youth and Students for Social Equality denounces the forced resignation of University of Pennsylvania (UPenn) President Liz Magill on December 9. This witch hunt is aimed at suppressing the mass opposition of student youth and faculty to the genocidal war being waged by the Israeli fascist regime against the Palestinians in Gaza.

Magill's resignation was forced through by means of an alliance between right-wing billionaire donors, fascist Republicans, the Biden White House, the Democratic Party and the military-intelligence apparatus. Along with Harvard University President Claudine Gay and Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) President Sally Kornbluth, Magill was subjected to a McCarthyite hearing in the House of Representatives. The presidents of three of the most prestigious academic institutions in the world were subjected to demagogic questioning spearheaded by the antisemitic, far-right Republican Elise Stefanik over their alleged failure to address the supposed wave of antisemitism sweeping across college campuses.

With Magill's ouster, the attack on democratic rights by the American ruling class has reached a qualitatively new stage. Over the past two months, universities and colleges around the country have moved to ban student groups such as the Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP) and Jewish Voice for Peace. In addition, students have been suspended and have had job offers revoked.

When students opposed to the genocide in Gaza have been doxxed, threatened and attacked, university administrations have demonstratively refrained from defending them. Screenings of the documentary *Israelism*, which exposes the systematic indoctrination of American Jewish youth with far-right Zionist ideology, and their growing opposition to it, have been banned at the University of Pennsylvania, Hunter College in New York and other campuses.

New York Democratic Governor Kathy Hochul has threatened to withdraw state funding if university presidents fail to "denounce antisemitism and calls for genocide" on college campuses. While the campaign has so far centered on the campuses, it increasingly extends to high schools. High school students in New York City and San Diego who have organized protests against the genocide in Gaza and voiced opposition to it in student newspapers have been denounced as "antisemites" by the media, and pro-Palestinian teachers have been victimized.

The message is clear: Anyone who dares voice opposition to or even question the policies of the Israeli state is to be silenced, driven from the campuses, blacklisted and attacked and hounded by far-right mobs on social media and at campuses and workplaces. The central aims of this witch hunt are twofold: First, the destruction of free speech on the campuses and beyond, and, second, the complete subordination of schools and universities to the interests of the state, the military and the aims of US foreign policy.

Like every major pro-war and anti-democratic campaign in history, this witch hunt is built on a pack of lies. The first lie is that there exists a broad-based antisemitic movement on US campuses calling for a "genocide of Jews." The only people subjected to genocidal policies today are the Palestinians, whose deliberate ethnic cleansing in Gaza meets the textbook definition of genocide. And the only students who have been violently attacked on US university campuses in the past two months are Palestinian and pro-Palestinian students, three Palestinian undergraduates who were shot in Vermont, and many others who were physically assaulted, doxxed and threatened for speaking out against genocide.

The second and related lie is that opposition to the state of Israel constitutes "antisemitism." This claim, which implies that the Zionist state of Israel is synonymous with the Jewish people and Judaism, is itself based on a racist assumption: that all Jews, by blood or some other mystical connection, have an inherent loyalty to the Israeli state.

The truth is that Zionism historically emerged as a nationalist reaction by sections of the Jewish bourgeoisie and middle class against the Marxist and socialist movement in the European and Jewish working class. Although it was granted false legitimacy by the fascist horrors of the Nazi Holocaust, the Zionist state never represented the social interests of the Jewish masses, but rather those of a capitalist ruling class and imperialism. In fact, Jewish people and organizations, especially Jewish youth, have played a leading role in protests against the genocide in Gaza.

The equation of opposition to Zionism and genocide with antisemitism is not only false and slanderous. It also serves to strengthen and rehabilitate the actual fascist and antisemitic right, while criminalizing left-wing opposition to capitalism, fascism and imperialism.

It is no coincidence that this campaign is spearheaded by the fascistic New York Republican Representative Elise Stefanik, a supporter of Donald Trump and the fascist coup attempt of January 6. Stefanik invokes the racist and antisemitic "Great Replacement

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Theory," which alleges a conspiracy by international Jewry to flood "white" countries with masses of non-white immigrants. She is the personification of the transformation of the Republican Party into a fascist party dominated by outright neo-Nazis, white supremacists and Christian fundamentalists.

The Democratic Party is fully complicit in this far-right assault on democratic rights. For years, the Democratic Party and outlets like the *New York Times* have systematically worked to undermine democratic consciousness through racialist falsifications of the history of the American democratic revolutions such as the 1619 Project and anti-democratic witch-hunting campaigns like #MeToo.

Now, over the genocide in Gaza, the Democratic Party and Biden administration are consolidating their de facto alliance with fascist forces. While figures like Stefanik are now legitimized as "opponents of antisemitism," Ukrainian neo-Nazis are praised as fighters for "democracy" and armed to the teeth by NATO to fight an imperialist war against Russia, and Benjamin Netanyahu's fascist cabal is raining US-manufactured bombs, shells and missiles on the people of Gaza.

There is an insoluble connection between the imperialist rampage of the US and its proxies abroad and the state-led attack on democratic rights and strengthening of fascist forces at home. The US veto in the UN Security Council of a resolution calling for a ceasefire makes abundantly clear that the Gaza genocide is state policy of the American ruling class. Bernie Sanders, the chief representative of the nominally "left" faction of the Democratic Party, continues to publicly oppose a ceasefire.

This open embrace of fascist mass murder in Gaza is part of a new imperialist redivision of the world, which began with the imperialist-provoked war against Russia in Ukraine, now well into its second year, with hundreds of thousands of dead. The conflict in the Middle East signifies a new front in the war between US-NATO and Russia. War preparations against China are also far advanced. With the staggering violence inflicted upon the Palestinians, the imperialist powers are sending a message as to how they intend to deal with opposition to their rule, both abroad and at home.

But this policy is meeting with growing popular opposition. The naked crackdown on free speech is an admission by the US political establishment that it has already "lost the youth," that there is no popular support for its policies, and that it is no longer able to stampede public opinion as it has in the past. Despite relentless pro-Israeli war propaganda and attempts at censorship and intimidation, millions of people have turned out in mass protests and students who have been victimized have remained steadfast in their opposition to the genocide.

In November 2022, the International Youth and Students for Social Equality, the youth and student organization of the International Committee of the Fourth International (ICFI), issued a call for the building of a global mass anti-war movement among workers and young people. With the mass demonstrations of millions across the globe against the genocide in Gaza, this movement has begun to emerge, and it is coinciding with a resurgence of the class struggle internationally.

The critical question now is that of class orientation and political leadership. The bitter experience of the past two months has demonstrated that the genocide in Gaza cannot be stopped through appeals to the perpetrators of genocide in Washington, London, Berlin and Paris, as well as in Jerusalem. If anything, the violence has escalated. The only force capable of stopping the slaughter by stopping weapons production and arms shipments is the working class.

As we stressed in our November 2022 statement:

> The IYSSE does not only seek the support of workers in the struggle against war. We recognize that the defeat of imperialism depends upon the emergence of the working class, armed with a socialist program, as the leading and decisive revolutionary force in the fight against the world capitalist system. Just as it was the Russian Revolution, the greatest intervention of the working class in world history, that brought an end to the first global carnage of World War I, it will be the intervention of the international working class that will today stop the escalation toward World War III.

The IYSSE therefore calls upon students and youth in the US and internationally: Go to the factories and workplaces! Turn to the working class as the chief force to defend democratic rights! Fight against imperialist war, fascism and the capitalist system as a whole! Raise the following demands:

• Defend free speech and all democratic rights! Stop the witch hunt of opponents of genocide!

•For the right to free, high quality education for all! Throw the CIA, military and corporate billionaires off the campuses!

• For a unified movement of workers and students in the US, Europe, Israel and Palestine against imperialist war and capitalism!

Those who agree with this program should fight to establish IYSSE chapters at your schools and college campuses.

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