

# The RCP's call for a "student strike for Palestine" and the real lessons of the 2012 Quebec student strike

Félix Gauthier  
19 November 2024

Since its founding last June, the pseudo-left Revolutionary Communist Party (previously known as Fightback) has made the focus of its political work a campaign for a "Student Strike for Palestine," whose import it has left vague and ill-defined.

Now, however, it is heavily promoting a one-day "Student Strike for Palestine" scheduled to take place at university and CEGEP campuses across Canada this Thursday, November 21, as a major step toward its goal.

The date was set in a statement issued last month by the Students for Palestine (S4P) and Palestinian Youth Movement (PYM), groups that have organized protests across Canada over the past year against Israel's imperialist-backed genocide of the Palestinians in Gaza.

Hundreds of thousands of workers and young people across Canada, and millions around the world, have joined protests since October 7, 2023 to express their outrage over Israel's wanton slaughter of Palestinian men, women and children with the political, material and logistical support of the United States and Canada. Based on an estimate published in the medical journal *The Lancet* in July, upwards of 200,000 Palestinians have now been killed, many with weapons supplied to the fascist Netanyahu regime by American, Canadian and European imperialism.

The organizations—including S4P and the PYM—that have led these protests have proven incapable of providing a viable perspective to stop the genocide, which continues unabated and has now expanded to the West Bank and Lebanon.

They are opposed to the fight for the industrial and political mobilization of the international working class, the only social force capable of halting the genocide. Instead, they have focused their efforts on pressuring the same bourgeois politicians who are up to their necks in the blood of Palestinians to change their policies. Presenting the genocide and the imperialist powers' support for it as merely a moral question and the outcome of a mistaken policy, they claim that if only protesters shout loudly enough and often enough, the powers that be will have to listen. This perspective is epitomized in Thursday's student strike, which the organizers have limited to a single day in advance.

The RCP, which is the Canadian section of the recently renamed Revolutionary Communist International, the successor to the International Marxist Tendency founded by Ted Grant and Alan Woods, shares this bankrupt protest perspective. In its campaign material for a "Student Strike for Palestine" it advances no call for students and young people to turn to the working class and fight to mobilize it in struggle against genocide and imperialist war. Nor does it indict the trade unions and NDP for their support for the pro-genocide, pro-war Trudeau Liberal government, and expose them as the principal political impediment to the mobilization of the working class in defence of the Palestinian people.

Significantly, the RCP does not even mention the call by the Palestinian

trade unions for a global general strike to put a stop to weapons shipments to Israel and the manufacturing of military equipment for the genocide. Instead, it uncritically advances the S4P and PYM's call for a student strike to pressure the ruling class and "make them listen." In a statement welcoming the S4P and PYM announcement of November 21 as the date for a one-day student strike, the RCP declared that such an initiative "is exactly what the movement to free Palestine needs!" It continued: "For the last year millions have protested week after week, signed countless petitions and wrote letters to politicians asking them to find their humanity. The rich and powerful have ignored us..."

*"In order to put an end to this, we need to escalate our tactics and organize mass actions that they can't ignore."* [emphasis in original]

## Israel's genocide against the Palestinians and imperialist world war

Such bankrupt statements offer nothing to the students who will join this week's action because they are outraged by the extermination of the Palestinians and want to play a part in stopping it.

If such humane sentiments are to find progressive expression they must be animated by an entirely different political perspective than the one advocated by the promoters of the November 21 student strike, including the RCP. As *World Socialist Web Site* International Editorial Board Chairman David North explained at a rally held in Washington, D.C. last July 24 to protest the appearance of the fascist Netanyahu before a joint session of the US Congress in July to thank the US for enabling his regime's war crimes,

The building of an antiwar movement requires the mobilization of the working class as an international force. It requires the establishment of the political independence of the working class. And it requires a perspective that has as its aim not protesting to the capitalists, appealing to them to adopt a peaceful policy, but explaining to the working class that if they want to put an end to these horrors, if they want to secure the future, they have to conquer power.

This is the necessary conclusion that flows from an analysis of the escalating war in the Middle East, of which the genocide is a component part. Israel is acting as US imperialism's attack dog in carrying out the "final solution" of the Palestinian problem and provoking a region-wide

war targeting Iran.

Moreover, the war in the Middle East is one front in a developing world conflagration that is being led by American imperialism as it desperately seeks to overcome the collapse of its economic supremacy.

In addition to sponsoring Israel's genocide, the US, Canada and their NATO allies have instigated and are conducting an imperialist war against Russia through their Ukrainian proxies in alliance with overt fascists, with the goal of toppling its government and looting its vast resources. In the Asia-Pacific, Washington is assembling regional and global allies as it carries out diplomatic, economic and military provocations against China in order to prepare for war with its chief economic competitor.

That these are three fronts in a developing global war is openly admitted by leading imperialist politicians and strategists. They increasingly speak of an "axis" of Russia, China, Iran and North Korea, while US President Joe Biden proclaims that "making sure Israel and Ukraine succeed is vital for America's national security."

As twice before in the last century—and as the outcome of the same basic contradictions of capitalism, between global economy and the system of rival nation-states and between socialized production and the pursuit of capitalist profit—world imperialism is hurtling toward the precipice of world war, with the rival great-powers vying to control resources, pools of labour, production networks, new technologies and strategic territories.

But the very process that drives world capitalism toward fascism and world war is fuelling a growing global upsurge of the working class. The number of strikes and mass protests is rapidly increasing, as more and more disenfranchised, impoverished and unprecedentedly urban sections of the international working class enter into struggle to oppose decades of declining living standards, catastrophic climate change and endless militarism.

The instinctive striving of the working class for social equality, democratic rights and world peace, must become consciously articulated in a political program to replace the profit-driven accumulation of capital with international socialism. The struggles of the working class must converge in the conscious struggle for political power to expropriate the capitalist financial oligarchy, and turn giant transnational industries into public utilities, in which workers control production democratically, on the basis of human need and not private profit. This is the program being fought for by the International Committee of the Fourth International (ICFI) and the Socialist Equality Party (SEP), and it is on this basis that we intervene in the anti-genocide protests to fight for the building of an international anti-war movement led by the working class.

### **The RCP, protest politics, and the lessons of the 2012 Quebec student strike**

The RCP is hostile to the necessary struggle to develop a global antiwar movement based on the mobilization of the working class on a revolutionary socialist perspective.

In its campaign material, it does not refer to the broader geopolitical and historical context of the genocide in Palestine, and its relation to the crisis of capitalism. Instead, in the manner of all middle class protest groups, the RCP presents the genocide in Palestine as a single isolated issue, and Western support for Israel as a moral question, as opposed to the vital component of imperialist strategy that it is.

While it misleadingly presents itself as a Communist and at times even a Trotskyist organization, the RCP is committed to channeling the opposition of workers and youth behind the bankrupt and suicidal perspective of pressuring the capitalist establishment. This fact is underscored by its invocation of the 2012 Quebec student strike as a

model for the type of movement that students wanting to fight for an end to the genocide must build.

In a rare statement defining the political character of its campaign for a student strike for Palestine, the RCP states that the methods of the 2012 Quebec student strike "are the methods we must use in the fight for a free Palestine." Not coincidentally, their language is reminiscent of slogans used in the 2012 student strike—"Crions plus fort, pour que personne ne nous ignore"/"Shout louder so they can't ignore us"—which epitomize the middle-class protest perspective of pressuring the ruling class, as opposed to the fight for the working class to become an independent political force fighting for its class interests and developing a movement for workers' power. As one RCP leaflet for their student strike campaign candidly states: "If we shut down the campuses, they will be forced to listen to us."

While the lessons of the 2012 student strike are certainly vital, they are precisely the opposite of those advanced by the RCP and that it is advocating animate students' action against the Gaza genocide through its "Student Strike for Palestine" campaign.

In mid-February 2012, a student strike erupted in Quebec, which was initially triggered by opposition to a 75 percent student fee hike tabled by the Liberal provincial government of Jean Charest. The strike quickly amassed tremendous popular support, persisted for six months, and represented an implicit challenge to the austerity and privatization agenda of the entire ruling class in Quebec and across Canada. At its height, it began to ignite a broader counter-offensive of the working class against the reactionary "user pays" principle, decades of capitalist austerity, and capitalism more broadly. As such, this movement had profound implications for the class struggle throughout Canada and internationally.

The RCP falsely presents the outcome of the 2012 strike as a victory, because there was a change in government, and because the 75 percent fee hike was repealed. In reality, the strike collapsed during a provincial election campaign that was initiated to divert the movement behind an alternate party of bourgeois rule, and smother it.

The Liberal government of Quebec was not "toppled," as the RCP writes. It was merely peacefully replaced by the nationalist Parti Quebecois (PQ), which, once order had been re-established and opposition suppressed, imposed its own tuition hikes and austerity measures. It then went on to whip up the anti-Muslim agitation, which forms a pillar of the far-right anti-immigrant chauvinism that today increasingly dominates establishment politics, at both the provincial and federal levels.

For this maneuver to succeed, the intervention of the trade unions, in alliance with the petty bourgeois student leaders, was essential.

By early May of 2012, the negotiations between the Liberal government and the three student federations (the FEQ, the FEUQ, and CLASSE, the most militant and influential among them) had arrived at an impasse. Quebec's three main trade union federations had pressured student leaders into accepting a deal that largely upheld the fee hikes proposed by the Liberal government. But despite the student leaders agreeing to this sellout (including those from CLASSE), rank-and-file students refused to back down and rejected it overwhelmingly.

In response, the Charest government escalated its crackdown on the student movement by passing Bill 78 (Law 12), legislation designed to criminalize the strike and enforce harsh penalties. This led to increased repression, including police violence and mass arrests. However, rather than crushing the movement, the government's repression galvanized further resistance, drawing the working class into action in solidarity with the students.

Mass demonstrations erupted against Charest's authoritarian measures, with growing calls for a general strike. In direct opposition to the overwhelming sentiment of the working class, the unions pledged to enforce every anti-democratic measure of Bill 78, instructing teachers and other academic staff to report to work, thereby aiding the government in breaking the strike. Their aim was to demobilize and politically derail the

movement, arguing that students and workers should respond to Bill 78 by pushing for the election of a PQ government, or as was summarized in their newly introduced slogan: “From the streets, to the ballot box.”

QFL President Michel Arsenault then wrote to Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) President Ken Georgetti, urging unions outside Quebec to withhold all support—financial or otherwise—from the striking students, claiming that such actions would violate Quebec’s “right to self-determination.”

When CLASSE gave timid and ambivalent support to the burgeoning general strike movement by suggesting that a “social strike” should be considered, the union bureaucrats went ballistic. In his letter to the CLC, Arsenault denounced the call for a “social strike” put forward by “radical sections,” and argued that the priority was to broker a deal, not “fan the flames.” CLASSE refused to respond to, or even acknowledge this letter. It went on to meet with Arsenault a few weeks later, continuing to present him as an ally of the students as it silently dropped its call for a “social strike.”

Despite all the efforts of the trade unions and student unions to contain the mass mobilization, it was evident that the situation threatened to spiral completely out of control. This led the Liberal government to call an early election for September 4, 2012 in an attempt to stabilize the political situation.

That the PLQ was politically and temporarily defeated in 2012 only helped obscure the fact that, notwithstanding its tactical retreat with the repeal of the initial fee hike, the bourgeoisie had won the battle, and was able to continue to implement its agenda of austerity and social reaction through its alternate party of government. In isolating the students from the working class in Quebec and the rest of Canada, the trade unions proved once more to be the ultimate line of defence of the capitalist class in the maintenance of bourgeois order and political stability.

In the case of Palestine too, the trade unions have acted as the guardrails preventing a movement to develop against the capitalist states that defend, support, and perpetrate genocide. When they aren’t loudly pro-Zionist—as is the case in Germany where the major trade unions have declared their solidarity not with Palestine, but with Israel—they seek to orient the working class to the very pro-imperialist capitalist parties that are the main supporters of genocide in their country, as is the case of Labour in Great-Britain, or the union-backed NDP-Liberal alliance in Canada.

### **CLASSE then, and the RCP today**

For all its militancy, CLASSE served as an auxiliary to the unions’ betrayal. While its best-known leader, Gabriel Nadeau-Dubois, ended up openly supporting the diversion of the strike behind the PQ, other more anarchistic elements drowned out all discussion of political perspectives with shrill calls for more “radical” protest tactics, including isolated confrontations with the police.

CLASSE’s “moderate” and “radical” leaders complemented each other in leaving the bourgeois monopoly over political life untouched, and the union-backed PQ unchallenged among youth and workers. What united them was their opposition to a turn to the working class and the fight to mobilize it as an independent political force by breaking the stultifying influence of the corporatist trade union bureaucracy.

CLASSE was instrumental in keeping the strike confined to a single issue, and to a single province. By channeling the students’ energies into putting pressure on Quebec’s bourgeois political establishment, CLASSE kept the students isolated from the working class, their most powerful and only true ally in the defence of social rights, among which is the right to education.

The RCP argues that one of the “main lessons” of the strike is how the student leaders prepared the strike “politically.” They write: “For months, student leaders waged a vast campaign explaining the tuition increase, austerity in general, and the need for a student strike.”

This is not true. The tuition increase was presented as an isolated issue, and “austerity,” it was adamantly argued on the basis of standard petty-bourgeois economics, was not *really* necessary at all under capitalism. From the outset, the struggle was not framed as one against austerity in general, but against one austerity measure in particular; not as a struggle against capitalism, but against “neoliberalism.”

The sole focus on “neoliberalism” became a central plank in the campaign to elect the PQ and “defeat the neo-Liberals,” reinforcing the false impression of students and workers that the enemy they faced was not a social class clinging to its dying mode of production, but rather, a political tendency with erroneous conceptions (not to mention the fact that the PQ shared those same conceptions anyway).

The RCP presents CLASSE as somehow being composed of internationalists, when it writes that it “connected the struggle against the tuition increase to the wider struggle unfolding around the world,” due to its occasional references to a “Maple Spring” (an invocation of the 2011 Arab Spring).

In fact, CLASSE had a completely myopic focus on Quebec and was profoundly steeped in nationalism. Their provincialist narrow-mindedness and nationalist prejudices prevented them from looking toward the working class in Canada, not to mention around the world, for support. Not once did they appeal to students and workers in Canada or internationally. Their manifesto, published in July 2012 to sum up their perspective and lessons learned, made explicit their understanding of the strike as “a democratic movement of Quebecers.”

The RCP not only recommends these nationalist protest politics to youth and students in the abstract, it completely identifies with ASSÉ/CLASSE’s politics, and idolizes its former leader Nadeau-Dubois by quoting him uncritically at length.

Like the other utterly conformist leaders of the strike, Nadeau-Dubois has gone on to pursue a comfortable career. Only more so. Today, he is the leader of the third-party in the Quebec National Assembly, Québec Solidaire (QS)—a nationalist Quebec *indépendantiste* party based in privileged sections of the upper middle class. For years QS has served as a home for Fightback/RCP. Notwithstanding his occasional radical sounding rhetoric during the strike’s more tumultuous days, Nadeau-Dubois’ political trajectory between 2012 and today was entirely organic and predictable.

### **The pseudo-left’s hostility to the revolutionary role of the working class**

Not unlike the police and media, who always vastly overestimate the capacity of “agitators” to somehow summon mass movements, ASSÉ/CLASSE thought at the time that its “methods” were the cause of the explosive popular appeal of the strike. The RCP echoes this self-flattering estimate, when it uncritically quotes Gabriel Nadeau-Dubois on how to “build this strike,” or when it describes the participation of large sections of the working class as the product of the student union’s calls for support.

The reality was very different. While the initial organizational efforts of ASSÉ/CLASSE played a role, they were eventually far more instrumental in scuttling the strike than in unleashing it. The students didn’t need CLASSE to explain to them that a fee hike was not in their best interest. Neither was the willingness of workers to join students in the streets

determined by CLASSE's calls to oppose the Liberals' repressive and anti-democratic legislation.

What the student strike uncorked was the product of decades of social frustration and growing opposition to the decaying capitalist order. There is much documentary evidence illustrating the student leaders' bewilderment at being thrust in the position they found themselves in from one day to the next. The underlying social force which propelled the strike to its remarkable dimensions—the working class—was not at all perceived or understood by the young student leaders, who identified the working class with the trade union bureaucracy, and more generally held it in contempt.

The reality of the working class and the scientific understanding of its social power and revolutionary role elaborated by Marxism remained a closed book to the student leaders, who were steeped in the middle-class anti-Marxist conceptions promoted by the Frankfurt School, anarchism and the student radicalism of the 1960s. Demoralized by the rise of fascism, Stalinism, and by the postwar restabilization of capitalism, the petty-bourgeoisie and its theoreticians blamed the defeats of the socialist movement on the working class itself, and sought different social forces upon which to build opposition to what were increasingly perceived as merely “excesses” of a capitalism which could somehow be regulated within a national framework.

### **The RCP's opportunist, anti-Trotskyist political pedigree**

The RCP/Fightback stands in the tradition of Pabloism, a virulently liquidationist tendency led by Michel Pablo and Ernest Mandel that arose within the Fourth International under conditions of the post-World War II restabilization of capitalism. Mesmerized by the apparent strengthening of the counter-revolutionary Stalinist, social-democratic and trade union bureaucracies, the Pabloites claimed that under the pressure of objective forces the Stalinist and reformist parties and, in the backward countries, the bourgeois-led national movements would be compelled to initiate socialist transformation. Bitterly hostile to the Trotskyist program, they worked to dissolve the national sections of the Fourth International into the “mass movement.”

The International Committee of the Fourth International (ICFI) was formed in 1953 to defend orthodox Trotskyism, in uncompromising opposition to this petty-bourgeois opportunist tendency which rejected the revolutionary role of the working class.

The RCP and its mentors—the late Ted Grant and the current head of the IMT/Revolutionary Communist International Alan Woods—stand out among the various strands of Pabloism for two reasons. First, their insistence that the Fourth International and its perspective of building new mass revolutionary parties in opposition to Stalinism and social-democracy were “stillborn” at the Fourth International's founding in 1938; and second their singular, decades-long insistence on burying themselves in “left” capitalist parties on the grounds they can and must be transformed into instruments to fight for socialism.

Fightback and the IMT systematically promoted illusions in the now defrocked “left” British Labour Party leader Jeremy Corbyn and Syriza, Greece's Coalition of the Radical Left. The former capitulated at every point to the party's Blairite right-wing, ultimately handing the leadership back to the pro-war, pro-austerity Keir Starmer; the latter imposed savage austerity measures on the Greek working class that went well beyond those of its right-wing predecessors.

During 2024, Fightback and the IMT with much fanfare, but no serious theoretical-political preparation, have transformed themselves into the RCP and the Revolutionary Communist International (RCI) with the

stated aim of drawing into their ranks anyone who simply describes himself as a “communist.” This “rebranding” is yet another opportunist maneuver, aimed at capturing the increasing number of radical-minded young people and transforming them into political apologists and props for the trade union bureaucracy, and various establishment left and pseudo-left parties. The RCP specializes in issuing declamations about the need for socialism while cravenly adapting to the union, NDP and QS leaders.

The RCP's “Student Strike for Palestine” campaign—their principal activity since they officially transformed Fightback into the RCP—only serves to underscore that while the labels may have changed and they may on occasion employ more “revolutionary” rhetoric, their politics remain the same. That is to say, bitterly hostile to the struggle to imbue the working class with socialist consciousness, free it from the domination of the labour bureaucracy and mobilize it as an independent and revolutionary political force.

### **The Palestinian genocide as an isolated “mistake”**

The RCP's campaign for a “Student Strike for Palestine” not only adapts to the illusions of youth and students, but actively reinforces them. It presents the genocide in Palestine as a discrete and isolated issue, which is accidental to the bourgeoisie's agenda, and which has nothing whatsoever to do with a broader movement against war and capitalism. In so far as it speaks of a student strike impacting workers, it is solely with the hope of stimulating a broader protest movement. There is no relationship at all between the demands it advances, the student strike it proposes, and working class opposition to war and the capitalist system.

There are objective economic reasons, rooted in the very foundations of capitalism, for the attacks against workers (and by extension students), as well as the sponsoring of genocide and the international escalation toward World War III. Workers must become conscious of these reasons for the potential inherent in their growing movement of opposition to be actualized. But organizations like the trade unions, QS, the now-disbanded CLASSE/ASSÉ, and today the RCP, actively prevent them from arriving at such an understanding.

Entirely reconciled with the existence of capitalism, these organizations and the middle class social layer they represent rather hope for a more comfortable position for themselves within the framework of the current system. Their role in channeling social movements into harmless avenues provides them with the leverage they need to advance their own middle-class interests.

Far from seeking to overthrow the capitalist class, the RCP actually seeks an audience with it. As one of their “Student Strike for Palestine” campaign leaflets candidly states: “We will *force* the rich and powerful to listen to us.” Or as the programmatic statement for their campaign states “we must make them listen!” and “They have proven that they won't listen unless we make them listen.” One could go on.

These are not isolated slips of the pen, but rather concisely summarize the RCP/RCI's entire perspective. In a recent article published by its international organ and titled “Are we facing World War III?”, the leader of the RCI Alan Woods, elaborates his understanding of the causes of the current danger of a global conflagration. He writes:

“One looks on in absolute astonishment to see how the policies of Washington are being determined by the antics of two desperate men—one in Kyiv and the other in Jerusalem. These men, who are actually completely dependent on the money and arms supplied by Washington, evidently feel free to pursue policies that are in direct contradiction to the strategic interests of US imperialism.”

If the genocide in Palestine and the war in Ukraine are in “direct contradiction to the strategic interests of US imperialism,” as the leading voice of the RCI claims, then the problem isn’t US imperialism. If Woods is to be believed, it evidently follows that the struggle against genocide and war does not require a struggle against imperialism, but to the contrary, consists of informing the imperialists of their “true” interests and convincing them to act accordingly. Hence the call to “force” the ruling class to “listen.”

### **The necessity of a turn to the working class**

In 2012, the Socialist Equality Party in Canada and the International Youth and Students for Social Equality (IYSSE) intervened in the student strike on the basis of a revolutionary socialist perspective. We fought to raise the consciousness of youth and students in demonstrations, meetings—including a meeting in Montreal at which Jerry White, the SEP US presidential candidate that year, explained the international significance of the student strike and underscored the global character of the class struggle—as well as over 70 in-depth articles analyzing the events over the course of six months, while providing the only viable fighting perspective.

The SEP explained that the task was not to pressure one or the other section of the ruling class, but to link the fight for the right to education to the broader fight against austerity and capitalism, and therefore to turn the student strike into a catalyst for a working class offensive against capitalism. It fought for a turn to the working class as the only social force capable of defending the right to education and supporting the students, because it is the only social force objectively pitted against capitalism in its entire social being.

As early as February 2012, when the strike was only in its very beginnings, the WSWS alone understood the political challenges it needed to surmount and warned:

The student strike, however, cannot succeed unless it becomes the spearhead of a vast counter-offensive of the entire working class. For this to happen, the strike must go beyond a mere protest over a single issue. Students must consciously turn towards the working class, the only social force capable of offering a progressive alternative to the capitalist system of private property and profit that condemns the overwhelming majority of society to rising unemployment, poverty, and economic insecurity.

It insisted that the student fee-hike was only one element of a broader austerity agenda, which itself was part and parcel of the strategy of the financial aristocracy adopted in every capitalist country and intensified since the crisis of 2008.

The danger of the movement being channeled behind the election of a PQ government was also immediately foreseen, as well as CLASSE’s potential role in that regard. It explained that while CLASSE:

has adopted a more radical stance, initiating the current strike movement, its political perspective does not differ fundamentally from that of FEUQ and FECQ. It conceives of the student strike, which it characterizes as a measure of last resort, as a more aggressive form of protest aimed at pressuring the Charest government into negotiations. For all its angry rhetoric, CLASSE

is opposed to linking the student strike with a movement of the working class against the attacks of big business and its political representatives in Quebec City and Ottawa.

The SEP then went on to explain what a turn to the working class entailed:

A turn to the working class means not only sending student delegations to workplaces, but first and foremost assisting the workers in breaking politically and organizationally from the trade union bureaucracy, which for decades has isolated and suppressed the struggles of the working class.

Since 2012, the ICFI has built a growing network of rank-and-file committees, united through the International Workers’ Alliance of Rank and File Committees (IWA-RFC), to return decision-making power to the rank and file, enable them to break through the union-imposed isolation of their struggles, and develop an intentional working class counter-offensive against austerity, social inequality and war.

Vital as is the building of such new organizations of class struggle, the most decisive question of all is the building of mass revolutionary parties—sections of the ICFI—to systematically oppose to the counter-revolutionary strategy of the bourgeoisie a thoroughly worked out strategy of the international working class.

From the very beginning of its intervention in the 2012 student strike, the SEP fought for an understanding that the heart of the matter was the social question, that is the objective necessity of socialism:

Students are confronted with a political struggle that goes far beyond the single issue of tuition fees. The question has been clearly posed: Who should control the resources of society and how should socioeconomic life be organized?

The same question should be posed to students and youth who oppose the genocide in Palestine today. The struggle against genocide and war cannot be based on the old middle class protest politics of the past, which have dominated protests for the whole preceding historical period, and have lead to nothing but defeat and demoralization. A new genuinely anti-war mass movement is required, based on the most profound and far-reaching understanding of the historical bankruptcy of capitalism.

To build this movement, youth and students must recognize that the turn to the working class requires both direct participation in the growing struggles of the working class, in opposition to the union bureaucracies and all those who work to confine it to trade-union collective bargaining struggles, single-issue protests and parliamentary politics; and a turn to Marxism. For it is through the assimilation of Marxism, the science of the class struggle, and the lessons drawn by the ICFI and its predecessors from the more than a century-long struggle for Trotskyism, that the working class will find the theoretical weapons it needs to overthrow capitalism and emancipate itself.

To be part of the solution, join the IYSSE and the Socialist Equality Party, and build the International Committee of the Fourth International!





To contact the WSWWS and the  
Socialist Equality Party visit:

**[wsws.org/contact](https://wsws.org/contact)**