

IYSSE holds meeting opposing mass deportations at Texas A&M University

Chase Lawrence
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Last Friday, the International Youth and Students for Social Equality (IYSSE) held a successful meeting at Texas A&M University opposing the mass deportations by the Trump administration. Around 30 people attended, most of whom stayed for further discussion after the meeting ended. The attendees were broadly opposed to both the Trump administration and the Democrats and showed a genuine interest in Marxist, Trotskyist politics.

The meeting was introduced by A&M IYSSE president Josh Andrews, who also introduced the masking policy at the meeting and the movement's position on the continued pandemic and attacks on public health. N95 masks and instructions on how to use them were given to attendees at the check-in table for the meeting, and the majority of attendees wore them.

The opening report was delivered by Tom Hall, a writer for the *World Socialist Web Site* and a member of the Socialist Equality Party (SEP) National Committee. Hall described the preparations for dictatorship by the Trump administration, and its origins in the staggering rise of social inequality. He counterposed the toothless opposition of the Democrats, whose main difference with Trump hinges on their support for the Ukraine war and supports the aims of his domestic policies, and the opposition from the working class, which is fighting against the attacks on its living standards, jobs and social rights.

Hall stated that in gutting what remained of social programs, Trump was in the process of “reducing the capitalist state to the ‘bodies of armed men’” described by Friedrich Engels.

This was the significance, as he stated, of appointing Elon Musk to head the so-called Department of Governmental Efficiency (DOGE), as well as cabinet

picks like Linda McMahon for the Secretary of Education who are pledged to dismantle the programs which their departments provide.

The massive inequality that lead to such a system where fascistic filth like Trump float to the top of the garbage heap which is American politics was examined. Hall pointed to an article in the *Wall Street Journal*, “Meet the World’s 24 Superbillionaires,” 16 of which are “centibillionaires.”

The report also exposed the whitewashing of Trump by the Democrats, and in particular the Democratic Socialists of America, with Hall pointing to the role of the DSA-aligned *Jacobin* magazine, which declared in a recent headline, “on day one, Trump wasn’t the dictator he promised to be.”

Hall called for the formation of rank-and-file committees in factories, workplaces and schools to stop the deportations, and made the point that opposing the deportations was not just a moral question but a strategic one for the working class.

Following the opening report, which was warmly met with a round of applause from the audience, most of those in attendance stayed for the question and answer portion of the meeting which lasted until around 8 p.m.

One student asked about the rise of the far-right in Europe, mentioning the rise of Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni and the Alternative for Germany (AfD) and how these were to be fought. He also asked whether Marx’s analysis of capitalism remained relevant, given the domination of finance capital over industrial capital.

Seconding the students’ pointing to developments in Europe, Hall responded that the Marxist movement had long analyzed the emergence of finance capital as bound up with the emerging objective conditions for socialist revolution. He pointed in particular to Lenin’s

pamphlet *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*.

Hall stressed that the working class is the only social force capable of stopping fascism and that this is the force students must turn to. Hall explained the necessity for an international struggle of the working class against the corporations, which now operate on an overwhelmingly international scale.

“War and dictatorship was the [capitalist] solution 100 years ago for the crisis ... the other solution was the 1917 Russian Revolution.” Hall stated.

Another student asked about Elon Musk’s illegal taking of power over large sections of the American government, and asked if those in Texas have an obligation towards “direct action.”

In his response, Hall emphasized the need, not for individual acts of protest, but for “a turn towards the workforce” at Musk-owned factories throughout the state. In particular, he stressed that winning Tesla workers at the massive “Gigafactory” in Austin, which employs around 20,000 people, is a strategic issue.

In response to a question on the activity of rank-and-file committees, Hall pointed to the rank and file committees in the auto industry, USPS and other industries. Hall also pointed out that socialist autoworker Will Lehman received thousands of votes—hundreds from Texas workers—on a program of building rank-and-file committees independent from the bureaucracies and both political parties, abolishing the UAW bureaucracy, and putting the UAW’s resources and all negotiations under workers. A number of committees, such as at Ford and Mack Trucks, have been established at auto plants in the past years.

Hall cited the Railroad Workers Rank-and-File Committee’s important intervention into the 2022 contract struggle, where workers voted down a contract brokered by the Biden White House and pushed for a national strike in opposition to the sellout union bureaucrats.

One question raised the perspective of the Frankfurt School philosopher Theodor Adorno, the philosopher of the pseudo-left. Demoralized in the aftermath of the rise of Hitler, Adorno repudiated the Marxist positions that the working class is the revolutionary class in modern society as well the central and primary role that economic relations play in determining social thought. Hall’s response posed the following question to this perspective: “If you believe Adorno, then what hope is

there for anything?”

In response to this, and to another question, the real perspective for defeating fascism was put forward. Hall spoke to the advanced state of the crisis in America, where workers have “had enough but don’t know what to do,” in no small part due to the political vacuum created by the official “left,” the Democrats, and its pseudo-left satellites such as the DSA, and that workers, many of whom voted for Trump, were angry and suffering from buyers’ remorse and are looking for a way to fight against this “deeply hated administration.”

There was also a question as to the Spanish Revolution, and how it failed. Hall pointed to the fatal role of the Stalinists in betraying the revolution and subordinating it to the Liberal bourgeoisie. While it’s not possible, for length consideration, to reproduce all of the remarks, this author would point readers interested in this question to this article: “Eighty-five years since the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War.”

The meeting ended up lasting almost an hour beyond its assigned time, during which many attendees expressed their interest in learning more about Trotskyism and the IYSSE. Many bought copies of the IYSSE’s literature from its table, including the Socialist Equality Party Statement of Principles and the pamphlet *Was there an Alternative to Stalinism in the USSR?*



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