

Take up the fight for socialism! Mobilize the working class against dictatorship, genocide, and world war!

International Youth and Students for Social Equality (US)
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Students across the United States return to campuses this fall under extraordinary conditions that have no precedent in American history. The Trump regime is implementing an escalating coup d'état, openly moving to establish a fascist dictatorship in the United States. The military occupation of Washington is part of an unfolding presidential coup that continues and deepens the January 6, 2021 insurrection, but this time executed with the full apparatus of the capitalist state.

National Guard troops from six Republican states now patrol the nation's capital, with Trump declaring the occupation could continue indefinitely. Nearly 9,000 armed personnel—troops, federal agents and police—now control America's seat of government. Trump's "border czar" Tom Homan has declared: "President Trump doesn't have a limitation on his authority." When Ukrainian President Zelensky mentioned postponing elections during wartime, Trump responded ominously: "So, let me just say, three and a half years from now... if we happen to be in a war with somebody, no more elections."

The ruthless methods utilized by US imperialism abroad are being prepared for use against the American and international working class. The United Nations has officially declared famine in Gaza City; the first time the organization has declared famine outside of Africa. This is the culmination of policies meant to deliberately exterminate the Palestinian people through mass starvation, with 83 percent of the death toll consisting of civilians.

The same ruling class orchestrating the Gaza genocide with the most advanced military technology in history is now preparing to suppress American workers with similar brutality. Extreme social inequality under American capitalism has become incompatible with democratic forms of rule. The United States is once again a "house divided," with today's division between a tiny stratum of billionaires and the vast majority facing constant economic insecurity. The ruling class sees no peaceful way out of its deepening crisis and has turned to authoritarian rule as its means of survival.

Universities are no longer sanctuaries of free expression but have become direct targets of the Trump administration's campaign to establish dictatorship. International students

opposing the genocide in Gaza have been abducted by federal agents, thrown into unmarked vans and held incommunicado. University funding faces unprecedented cuts designed to force institutional capitulation. The regime's attacks extend beyond campus politics to target the very foundations of higher education: scientific research is being defunded and redirected to serve military purposes, humanities programs face elimination, and cultural institutions are undergoing systematic purges.

The ruling class has not forgotten the campus upheavals of the 1960s at Columbia, Berkeley, Michigan and other centers of student radicalization. They remember Kent State in 1970, when four students were murdered by National Guard troops amidst protest against the Vietnam War. What we witness today reflects their determination to prevent any resurgence of mass student opposition through preemptive repression, including through expulsions, the threat of destroyed careers, and even federal prosecution.

Students entering university campuses this fall represent a generation that has never known capitalist prosperity. Their teenage years have been characterized by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic that has killed and disabled tens of millions globally. They lived through the January 6 coup attempt, witnessed the outbreak of the US-NATO war against Russia, and watched the genocide in Gaza live-streamed in real time. Recent reports show that 40 percent of college-educated Gen Z workers have "given up" finding employment in their field, while Gen Z underemployment reaches 41.2 percent. Unemployment for those with master's degrees nearly doubled from 3 to 5.8 percent in just one year.

The Trump administration's dictatorial policies are tied to preparations for global conflict. Trump's meetings with Putin and the implementation of trade war tariff policies are preludes to a direct conflict with China. Notwithstanding tactical disagreements between different sections of the ruling class over the continuation of the US-NATO war against Russia, they remain united behind the use of war on a world scale to prop up American imperialism. Just this week, Trump has launched a violent escalation against Venezuela, dispatching

guided missile destroyers, an attack submarine and 6,000 military personnel to the Caribbean, exploding the myth that he is somehow a “peace president.”

The United States seeks to reorganize the world through war, but with over \$30 trillion in debt, it confronts the threat of state bankruptcy. The move to dictatorship and war shows not the strength of American capitalism, but the extent of its deep crisis.

The Democratic Party is not opposed to Trump’s escalating authoritarianism. For seven months, the Democrats have stood by as Trump carries out systematic attacks on the working class, dismissing the military occupation of Washington as mere “political theater.” Bernie Sanders has openly endorsed Trump’s border policies, declaring agreement on “making sure our borders are stronger.” His “Fighting Oligarchy” tour is intended to let off steam and once again redirect opposition among workers and youth back behind the Democratic Party.

Trump’s assault on democratic rights represents the deepening and extension of policies initiated under the Biden administration. Biden’s violent suppression of student protests and encampments in spring 2024—carried out through coordinated police raids, mass arrests and university-sanctioned expulsions—established the template for systematic repression that Trump now implements on a vastly expanded scale. From Columbia to UCLA and dozens of other campuses, the Biden administration orchestrated a nationwide crackdown that shattered any illusions about Democratic Party support for free speech or student rights.

The trade union bureaucracies have remained criminally silent amid this bipartisan war on free speech and the right to protest, offering collaboration rather than resistance. The UAW and other unions have abandoned both immigrant workers and university student workers under their supposed protection. Meanwhile, the identity-based movements that dominated campus politics in recent years have revealed their complete irrelevancy. The #MeToo response to American fascism is nonexistent. Black Lives Matter offers no perspective against Trump’s dictatorship.

Opposition among students, youth and the working class is steadily growing. Millions protested against the Gaza genocide last year, and the “No Kings” demonstrations in June drew over 10 million Americans to the streets, the largest protests in US history. Opposition to Trump’s attacks exists throughout the population, but these movements have failed to stop the regime’s advance because they rely on the false perspective that the ruling class can be pressured into policy changes. The ruling class views its policies not as choices but as life-or-death struggles to defend its interests against the existential threat posed by the working class.

Only the working class possesses the objective social power to halt dictatorship, genocide and world war. The working class can transform society, reorganizing it on the basis of human need rather than private profit. What confronts America today

parallels the crisis Lincoln faced in 1861: Just as preserving democratic principles then required destroying slavery’s economic base, defending democracy today necessitates ending capitalism and establishing workers’ power and socialism.

There is simply no precedent for what is now unfolding in America. The International Committee of the Fourth International (ICFI) and its youth movement, the International Youth and Students for Social Equality (IYSSE), are the only forces advancing the fight for democratic rights under conditions of the collapse of American democracy. The time for halfway measures and liberal appeals has passed. The perspective of protest must be replaced with the perspective of class struggle.

The reformist organizations that seek to divert students’ and workers’ opposition into the safe channels of the Democratic Party serve only to prop up the very system they claim to oppose. The Democratic Socialists of America (DSA) and campaigns like that of Zohran Mamdani represent nothing more than the left wing of the Democratic Party, peddling the dangerous illusion that capitalism can be reformed through electoral politics. Their program of mild reforms offers no answer to dictatorship, genocide or world war—indeed, it serves to legitimize the system responsible for these horrors.

What is required is not reform but revolution. The working class is the decisive revolutionary force in society, with the power to put an end to war, genocide and dictatorship. Students must actively fight to connect their struggles with those of the working class, understanding that their future depends entirely on the success of the socialist revolution.

The death agony of American capitalism creates revolutionary possibilities alongside the threat of fascism. The outcome depends on building a mass socialist movement in the working class, in the US and internationally.

**Turn to the working class and take up the revolutionary perspective that alone can guarantee a future for humanity!
Build IYSSE clubs on every campus!
Study the works of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky!
Join the IYSSE today!**



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