

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

International Youth and Students for Social Equality (UK)
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This statement will be distributed throughout Britain this month during welcome week and freshers fairs.

Students across the UK are returning to campus under conditions that have no precedent since the 1930s and World War II. Hundreds are being arrested for defending the democratic right to protest Israel's imperialist-backed genocide of the Palestinians.

The Labour government is backing to the hilt a war of annihilation, with mass starvation used as a weapon of war, and a campaign of military terror to obliterate all that remains, forcing the Palestinians out of their land. Israeli Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich has declared: "Let them die of hunger or surrender".

Israel's genocide was launched with the full backing of Washington and London. It is the implementation of imperialist plans for a "New Middle East" ruled by the United States and its client state Israel, backed by Britain, France and Germany. This is the meaning of a strategy document drawn up by Israel's "Gaza Humanitarian Foundation", the Boston Consulting Group and the Tony Blair Institute which outlines plans for a "post-war" Gaza.

According to the *Washington Post*, the plan envisions "the relocation of all of Gaza's more than 2 million population, either through what it calls 'voluntary' departures to another country or into restricted, secured zones inside the enclave during reconstruction." The 38-page slide deck translates the concepts of forcible ethnic cleansing from the language of fascist mythology into the jargon of the corporate boardroom.

Genocide and imperialist war

Israel's genocide is a symptom of an underlying disease: imperialism, the final stage of capitalism, characterised by monopoly, the domination of finance capital, economic parasitism and political reaction all along the line. It is a period of history in which the imperialist powers seek constantly to divide and redivide the world among themselves by force.

Gaza is one theatre of an expanding global war targeting Iran, Russia and ultimately China. In Europe, NATO is waging a proxy war against Russia through Ukraine. Its involvement has nothing to do with Ukrainian "sovereignty" or "democracy", but with

sacrificing Ukrainian workers' lives to try and force the collapse of the Russian state, dominate its territory and seize control of both countries' strategic resources.

Putin's invasion of Ukraine is a reactionary nationalist response to these plans. He represents a capitalist oligarchy that emerged from the Stalinist dissolution of the USSR and is hostile to the unification of the international working class against imperialism. His actions underscore the bankruptcy of all hopes for "multipolar" national counterweights to the US.

More wars are planned. Global military spending increased by 37 percent between 2015 and 2024, led by the US at a staggering near \$1 trillion. Prime Minister Keir Starmer has committed the UK to spending 3.5 percent of GDP on the military by 2035, tens of billions of pounds more, with demands growing to go further, faster.

Capitalism and dictatorship

Driving the explosion of militarism is a spiralling economic crisis. Public debts have been run up while growth has stalled, with financial investors preparing to bring down the axe.

Capitalist governments are responding by waging and preparing new wars of conquest and plunder and with a war at home against all the social gains won by the working class through decades of struggle.

Labour is preparing a new austerity budget this November to make up a £20-50 billion "overspend". The French ruling class is seeking at least €44 billion in cuts. German Chancellor Friedrich Merz has declared that Germany, the richest country in Europe, "can no longer afford the welfare state". US President Donald Trump is slashing whole government departments to pieces.

These policies cannot be implemented democratically. Trump is openly establishing a presidential dictatorship, trampling over the Constitution and the Bill of Rights and deploying the military to Los Angeles, Washington, D.C, followed by Chicago. Immigrants have been targeted first, with Gestapo-like Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) raids in working-class neighbourhoods.

Starmer is following suit with the mass repression of political opponents and demonisation of asylum seekers. The rise of Reform UK, the National Rally in France and the AfD in Germany is only one expression of a lurch to the right by *all* capitalist parties and governments.

Political forms of rule are being brought into alignment with the underlying socio-economic reality: the domination of society by a tiny, super-rich elite.

The 50 richest families in the UK hold more wealth than 50 percent of the population. Globally, the top 1.6 percent of the world's population own more wealth than the bottom 48.1 percent, and the world's richest 1 percent have increased their wealth by more than \$33.9 trillion since 2015.

These figures make clear that the fundamental division in society is not race or gender, but class. No serious problem facing humanity can be solved without tackling the monopolisation of society's wealth by the capitalist oligarchy.

The fight for socialism

Among millions of people there is a growing opposition to capitalism, led by the younger generations who have never known the slightest prosperity under this system. Our futures are blighted by war, unemployment, collapsing social services and living standards, ecological catastrophe and dictatorship.

Recent polling places support for socialism at over 50 percent among 18–35-year-olds in the UK, with support for capitalism barely reaching 25 percent. However, the leftward movement of workers and young people everywhere confronts the obstacle of the official “left”: the trade union bureaucracy, radical-talking reformists and semi-reformist parties.

Figures like Jeremy Corbyn, Jean-Luc Melenchon in France and Bernie Sanders in the US win a following with verbal jousts at inequality and war but defend the capitalist system which produces these evils. They advocate reforms without politically preparing a challenge to the oligarchy's grip on wealth and state power, disarming their supporters.

The ruling class cannot be pressured. It views its policies not as choices but as a life-or-death struggle to defend its interests against the existential threat posed by the working class. Its defeat is a revolutionary task. For this reason, the new party being founded by former Labour leader Corbyn and former Labour MP Zarah Sultana is a political trap.

As Labour leader, Corbyn refused to drive out the party's right-wing, and went into two elections committed to NATO membership and the maintenance of Britain's nuclear weapons. He instructed Labour councils to implement cuts demanded by the national Conservative government. His refusal to defend his supporters against the “left-wing antisemitism” witch-hunt paved the way for a campaign which is claiming victims to this day.

This was not an isolated example. Pseudo-left parties elected to power such as Syriza in Greece, Podemos in Spain and the parties of the “Pink Tide” in Latin America all followed the same

trajectory. Their hostility to the class struggle and espousal of a reformist programme based on the preservation of the capitalist system paved the way for a betrayal of mass left-wing movements.

Join the IYSSE!

The International Youth and Students for Social Equality (IYSSE) is the youth movement of the International Committee of the Fourth International, represented in the UK by the Socialist Equality Party.

We stand in the tradition of Leon Trotsky's fight for socialist internationalism. Trotsky, co-leader of the Russian Revolution of 1917, founded the Fourth International in 1938 to organise the vanguard of the working class against the counter-revolutionary betrayals of the Stalinist and reformist parties which allowed Nazism to come to power, strangled revolutions in China, Britain, France and Spain, and paved the way for World War II.

In the founding programme of the Fourth International, Trotsky wrote:

“All talk to the effect that historical conditions have not yet ‘ripened’ for socialism is the product of ignorance or conscious deception... Without a socialist revolution, in the next historical period at that, a catastrophe threatens the whole culture of mankind. The turn is now to the proletariat, i.e., chiefly to its revolutionary vanguard. The historical crisis of mankind is reduced to the crisis of the revolutionary leadership.”

The strength of the working class has grown enormously since these lines were written, as globalisation has linked billions together across national borders, continents and time zones in a world system of production and communication. Only this enormous social force has the power to defeat genocide, war and dictatorship.

We urge students and young workers who are determined to prevent world war and fascism to join the IYSSE and take your place in the fight for the socialist future of mankind.



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