

Australia: IYSSE speakouts opposing war against Iran draw support from university students

Our reporters
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The International Youth and Students for Social Equality (IYSSE) in Australia has held speakouts on university campuses opposing the escalating US-led war against Iran. Events have taken place at Western Sydney University (WSU) and Queensland University of Technology (QUT), with a further speakout scheduled at the University of Melbourne.

IYSSE speakers condemned the criminal and unprovoked US-Israeli war, which so far has claimed the lives of an estimated 2,000 people, largely civilians, and threatens to escalate into a global conflagration.

The Australian Labor government is supporting and complicit in the war crimes against Iran. Australian military personnel were aboard the US submarine that torpedoed and sank the unarmed IRIS Dena in international waters, killing 140 sailors. Labor has deployed missiles, a warplane and personnel, including SAS commandos to join in a war aimed at regime-change and the annihilation of Iranian society.

At QUT, IYSSE member Mark Wilson placed the war in the context of global conflict: “This war is inseparable from the genocide in Gaza, which served as both testing ground and political precedent for the methods now being applied on a vastly greater scale. The war against Iran is itself part of an escalating global war, including the US-NATO war against Russia in Ukraine and, in particular, the preparation for war against China.”

Speaking at WSU, IYSSE club president Zach Diotte said: “Students and young people must turn to the international working class—the only social force capable of ending war. Workers in Australia have no interest in killing workers in Iran, China or Russia. The enemy is not abroad, but at home: the capitalist ruling

class. History has demonstrated this power—from the Russian Revolution, when workers overthrew war and imperialism. That is the perspective we fight for today.”

Socialist Equality Party assistant national-secretary Max Boddy emphasised the growth of the class struggle, including in the US. War abroad, he noted, was accompanied by a war against the social and democratic rights of the working class. Opposition was growing, providing the basis for building a socialist anti-war movement.

The speakouts drew a strong response from students, staff and workers reflecting a growing hunger for a serious socialist alternative to imperialist war. Many stopped to listen and engage with IYSSE campaigners, signed up to be club members, purchased political literature and gave important interviews.

Ethan, an IYSSE supporter, said he joined the speakout because, “I think it’s important to be putting forward this information, opening students’ eyes to a different perspective. The IYSSE is not just impotently protesting against the degenerate morality of American imperialism but identifying the sources closer to home that have aided and abetted this war since its beginning.”

On the Australian Labor government’s role he raised that “Albanese was among the first world leaders to align with this war ... having Australian Defence Force personnel on board the United States submarine that sank the IRIS Dena, killing hundreds of sailors in a categorical war crime; the deployment of the military plane to the Middle Eastern theatre to provide instantaneous and very detailed targeting information for American planes and bombers. It is not merely a

bystander to this war. It is involved to a degree that absolutely constitutes collaboration and culpability in the war crimes that have been committed.”

As a solution to the crisis Ethan said “There needs to be a building of class consciousness among people, not just in Australia, but across the globe. We need to build an independent movement of the working class that has the ability to bring about an end to the war, to remove the ability of capitalists and the ruling class to enact austerity and social counter-revolution at home and imperialist war crimes abroad.”

He explained: “The imminent activation of the draft in the United States, and the possibility of the development of an Australian draft, are measures that must be opposed with the utmost ferocity. The sending of Australia’s youth to war, to die in a battlefield in West Asia in the name of capitalist oil barons and oligarchs of the tech sector and finance, is a crime perhaps hitherto unseen. The amount of death and destruction that would be involved in the full-scale invasion of Iran, which is what the developments point towards, will be utterly devastating to every nation on the planet.”

Abigail, a student at QUT, said on the war against Iran: “It’s anti-humanitarian, and it’s just insane what’s happening. I think that a lot of Australians don’t support it.” When asked about the support given by the Labor government for the war, she said “It’s really a disgrace. Like, it’s not OK, and none of us support it, and we don’t want our country to be known as supporting it.”

Yakup, a student at WSU, told the IYSSE: “Most people in the US in fact don’t support the war on Iran, most didn’t know this war was going to happen, don’t understand why it’s happening and are only educating themselves about the war after it started. It’s true that the US has been waging wars in the Middle East for decades, like in Afghanistan and Iraq. You’re right in saying the US population is anti-war and that Bush was voted out for his hawkish policies.”

Looking at the wider regional consequences, Yakup warned: “I think as a result of this war, the whole of the Middle East like Dubai, Qatar, Bahrein, Kuwait, the UAE are probably going to be finished. The rich people in those countries who I’m pretty sure support the US, are going to move. To expect a country like Iran wouldn’t fight back was crazy.”

“I think this will escalate into something worse. While Trump threatened to send Iran back to the stone age... the US has already taken too many steps deep and it’s not going to end for a while.”

An **international student studying IT** told IYSSE interviewers that the war reflected the determination of American imperialism to dominate the Middle East. “Iran declined to be a US ally and support the US in the genocide that is happening,” he said.

He noted that “governments around the world are backing the US and Israel, for example, saying, no matter what illegalities they commit, that ‘Israel has the right to defend itself’.” On international institutions, he was blunt: ‘The UN is a joke. They are not acting upon anything.’ He added that the war had broad political backing in Washington: “The US Senate and Congress obviously side with what Trump is doing.”

He warned that the logic of the current conflict pointed toward further escalation: ‘Even if Trump manages to obliterate Iran, he won’t stop there. He’s going to try to conquer every other country.’



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