

No to the censorship of anti-war meetings! Against the militarization of the University of Stuttgart!

IYSSE

7 June 2026

The administration of the University of Stuttgart is prohibiting student anti-war meetings on campus. It has denied the officially recognised IYSSE university group a room request for a meeting titled “What’s Behind the War on Iran?” The reason given was that the IYSSE is under surveillance by Germany’s domestic intelligence agency, the Office for the Protection of the Constitution (Verfassungsschutz, BfV). The university administration stated that it “will not approve any other rooms for the IYSSE for the same reason.”

This represents an outrageous attack on students’ democratic rights. The IYSSE is a university group officially recognized by the Stuvus (student council), and—like all other recognized university groups—the university administration is required to provide it with rooms. By deliberately refusing to do so, the administration is censoring anti-war meetings and attacking students’ rights to political discussion and freedom of expression.

This shameful attack is not directed solely against the IYSSE. It is directed against all students who reject the government’s war policies and adopt a critical stance towards political developments. The university administration’s message is unmistakable: Anyone who takes a stand against rearmament, militarism and war has no place on campus.

The censorship of the IYSSE is clearly linked to what is happening at the University of Stuttgart and at universities throughout the state of Baden-Württemberg. While critical student voices are being silenced, the University of Stuttgart is being rapidly transformed into a center of militarism.

Transformation into a center of militarism

With the establishment of the “Innovation Campus for Security and Defense,” universities in Baden-Württemberg are to be systematically integrated into the rearmaments race. In addition to the University of Stuttgart, the Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT), Furtwangen University and other institutions are part of this project.

The goals are openly stated on the University of Stuttgart’s website:

The new Innovation Campus for Security and Defense connects universities, non-university research institutions, security- and defense-related companies, technology-oriented startups, and security agencies within a high-performance innovation ecosystem.

The aim is to “bring research results into application more quickly and accelerate the scaling of new technologies.” The Innovation Campus, it continues,

addresses the demands of the current security policy paradigm shift and makes a responsible contribution to the development of security-relevant technologies as well as to the technological sovereignty of Germany and Europe.

This is the sinister bureaucratic language of war preparations, all too familiar in German history. The university is no longer to be a place of critical scholarship and free debate but rather a supplier to the arms industry, a hub in the “innovation ecosystem” of the war machine. The civil clause, which mandates research for exclusively peaceful purposes, is effectively being undermined. The German government has explicitly stipulated in its coalition agreement to “remove obstacles that stand in the way of dual-use research or civil-military research cooperation.” The universities in Baden-Württemberg are directly implementing this with the Innovation Campus.

This is not an isolated incident. At Humboldt University in Berlin, the university administration attempted in June 2025 to ban anti-war meetings organized by the IYSSE on the flimsy grounds that students had no right to discuss “general political issues” at the university. This blatant act of censorship was only repelled by a broad protest campaign on campus.

As the IYSSE at Humboldt University stated at the time: “The question is whether our university is a place of critical debate or whether it degenerates into a militaristic training ground for executives.” The same question arises today at the University of Stuttgart.

The Context: Rearmament, Conscription and War

The censorship at the University of Stuttgart is not simply an arbitrary, blundering act. It is part of a broader social trend in which criticism of war and militarism is being systematically suppressed, while preparations for war are in full swing.

The German federal government has launched the largest rearmament program since Hitler. Military spending is set to rise to 5 percent of gross domestic product—that is, 225 billion euros [\$US 259 billion] annually, nearly half of the current federal budget. The stated goal of the government is to make Germany capable of waging war against the nuclear-powered Russia within five years. To this end, compulsory military service, which was suspended in 2011, is to be reintroduced. Today's students are to be tomorrow's cannon fodder.

At the same time we bear the costs of this war policy: through cuts in education, healthcare and social services; through inflation and wage theft. While billions are allocated for tanks, drones and ammunition, there is “no money” for affordable housing, for fully funded universities or for a functioning healthcare system.

This policy is deeply hated by the population. The historical experiences of fascism, world war and the Holocaust have become deeply ingrained into the popular consciousness. Precisely for this reason, those in power are resorting to ever more drastic measures to suppress opposition. The censorship at the University of Stuttgart is an expression of this development. Anyone who says “No” to war is to be silenced.

The university administration cites the Verfassungsschutz to justify its censorship. This does not make the situation better but worse. The Office for the Protection of the Constitution is not a neutral body that monitors organizations' compliance with the Constitution. It is a political instrument, riddled with right-wing networks and deeply entangled in the right-wing terrorist structures that were able to murder with impunity in Germany for decades.

The Verfassungsschutz has classified the IYSSE and the Socialist Equality Party (SGP) as “left-wing extremist” and “anti-constitutional”—even though the party has never advocated violence or committed any crime but solely because of its political convictions. The SGP and the IYSSE reject nationalism, militarism and capitalism and advocate the international struggle of the working class against war and social inequality. It is precisely this that is to be criminalized.

The government has declared in court that any political stance is anti-constitutional if it refers to “objective class antagonisms,” criticizes the Bundeswehr and intelligence services as undemocratic or makes positive references to Marx, Engels, Lenin or Trotsky. In a scandalous ruling in 2021, the Berlin Administrative Court determined that “Marxist class thinking and the propagation of class struggle” are incompatible with the Basic Law.

The logic behind these decisions is easy to see: If socialist ideas are declared unconstitutional, then tomorrow striking workers, demonstrating students or left-wing bookstores can be criminalized using the same argument. This is exactly what is already

happening. The left-wing daily newspaper *Junge Welt* is being monitored by the Verfassungsschutz, left-wing cultural centers are being shut down and demonstrations banned. Parallels to the anti-socialist laws of Chancellor Bismarck in the 19th century and to the Nazis' ideologically based laws are obvious and are being drawn by the courts themselves. Anyone who fights “alleged imperialism and militarism,” according to the Verfassungsschutz, is an enemy of the Constitution.

Defend democratic rights! Against censorship and militarism!

The censorship of the IYSSE by the Stuttgart university administration is an attack on all students. Anyone who remains silent today when anti-war meetings are banned will be affected themselves tomorrow. The trend is clear: The university is to be brought into line, critical voices are to be silenced, while the campus is being transformed into a military research facility and a recruitment ground for the next war.

We call on all students at the University of Stuttgart: Do not accept this! The democratic rights that apply at the university are not a favor granted by the university administration, which can grant or revoke them at political will. They are the result of decades of struggle and must be defended against the authoritarian attacks by the university administration and the government.

Now is the time to act! Send a short WhatsApp message to +49 177 3263434, fill out the form below and come to the tables in the K2 foyer on Wednesday, June 10, at 1:00 p.m. to organize resistance. Support the fight against censorship and against the militaristic restructuring of the university!



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