Stop the attacks on immigrants! For a socialist policy of open borders and full rights for all workers!

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In a joint press conference Friday with Japanese Prime Minister Shinz? Abe, President Donald Trump made it clear he would not be deterred by the Appeals Court ruling delaying his anti-Muslim travel ban from pressing ahead with his attacks on immigrants.

Declaring that there are "tremendous threats to our country," he restated his demand for "extreme vetting" of travelers from predominantly Muslim countries and added darkly, "We will be doing things to continue to make our country safe," promising to announce new measures next week.

The administration, with its fascist political adviser Stephen Bannon and its ultra-right immigrant baiter Jeff Sessions now confirmed as attorney general, is already beginning to implement Gestapo-like tactics against undocumented workers, as outlined in Trump's January 25 order mandating the construction of a wall along the border with Mexico.

That order, which is barely being mentioned in the press, dramatically expands the categories of undocumented workers targeted for detention and summary deportation, including people merely suspected of committing a crime. It expands the border patrol, seeks to enlist local police in the detention of immigrants, and provides for the building of new immigrant detention centers near the US-Mexico border. It aims to create the infrastructure for the mass roundup and deportation of as many as 8 million people living in the US.

On Wednesday, one day before the Appeals Court ruling upholding a lower court restraining order on Trump's travel ban, immigration police in Phoenix, Arizona arrested and deported a 36-year-old mother of two who has been living in the US for 21 years. She was detained when she made a routine visit to her local immigration office. Also this week, immigration raids were carried out in the Los Angeles area in which more than 160 workers were seized, put on buses and sent to Tijuana, Mexico.

In the current dispute within the political establishment over Trump's anti-Muslim travel ban, no faction within either of the two big business parties or the corporate-controlled media is taking a principled stand in defense of the democratic rights of immigrants. The entire framework of the official debate is reactionary, accepting the supposed right of the state to terrorize, jail and deport so-called "illegal aliens." For the most part, Democratic critics of Trump's immigration policies attack them as being counterproductive in the "war on terror" and bad for business.

Trump's war on immigrants is, like his other right-wing policies, a continuation and intensification of policies carried out by previous administrations, Democratic as well as Republican. The Obama administration deported more than 2.5 million immigrants, more than all previous US governments combined.

No one is raising the fact that people from Central and Latin America risking their lives to cross one of the most dangerous and militarized borders in the world are fleeing grinding poverty and murderous violence—the legacy of a century of US imperialist oppression, including Washington-imposed dictatorships.

Trump's escalation of the assault on immigrants is part of a global phenomenon. Attacks on immigrants and refugees are intensifying all around the world, as capitalist governments from North America to Europe and Australia seek to make the most impoverished and vulnerable workers scapegoats for the destruction of jobs and living standards at home resulting from their own policies.

More than 15 years of the so-called "war on terror"—a pretext for the renewal of colonialist war and plunder in

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the Middle East and elsewhere—have produced the greatest refugee crisis since World War II. The millions who are fleeing the mass killing and destruction inflicted on their countries by the major imperialist powers, led by the United States, are met by the European governments with walls, barbed wire, concentration camps and racist agitation. Tens of thousands are perishing at sea because of the anti-refugee lockdown imposed by Fortress Europe.

The mass persecution of immigrants and the rising tide of national chauvinist poison is the response of the international bourgeoisie to the mortal crisis of the capitalist system. This goes hand in hand with the erection of trade barriers and a new eruption of trade and currency wars, as each capitalist class seeks to resolve its crisis at the expense of its rivals, while they all turn on the working class.

As the history of the 20th century shows, this is the prelude to world war. All of the conditions of the 1930s—slump, austerity, economic nationalism, the collapse of bourgeois democracy and the turn to dictatorship—are once again emerging. Among the foulest expressions of the putrefaction of capitalism is the treatment of immigrants.

What Trotsky wrote in May of 1940 could, with a minor updating, be cited as a description of present conditions:

> The world of decaying capitalism is overcrowded. The question of admitting a few hundred extra refugees becomes a major problem for such a world power as the United States. In an era of aviation, telegraph, telephone, radio and television, travel from country to country is paralyzed by passports and visas. The period of the wasting away of foreign trade and the decline of domestic trade is at the same time the period of the monstrous intensification of chauvinism, and especially of anti-Semitism… Amid the vast expanse of land and the marvels of technology, which has also conquered the skies for man as well as the earth, the bourgeoisie has managed to convert our planet into a foul prison.

The brutalization of immigrants is one of the most damning expressions of the bankruptcy of the nation state system to which capitalism is tied. The globalization of economic life and the technological integration of the world population—the Internet communications revolution, the advances in travel, the linking of workers all over the world in transnational production networks—have progressed far beyond what existed in Trotsky's day.

But under capitalism, these revolutionary changes, which could propel a vast expansion of the productive forces and the living standards of the world's people, are employed to intensify the exploitation of the working class, add to the already obscene wealth of the ruling elites, and fuel national conflicts and the drive to world war. Governments all over the world foment hatred of immigrants to divide the working class and divert attention from the real source of workers' suffering, the capitalist system.

The Socialist Equality Party and the International Committee of the Fourth International reject the entire framework of the official discussion on immigration. We advance a socialist and internationalist solution to the crisis facing immigrant workers. It is based on the strategic perspective of the international unity of the working class and world socialist revolution.

We stand for the right of workers from every part of the world to live in the country they choose, with full citizenship rights, including the right to work and travel without fear of deportation or repression.

The fight for this program must begin with the rejection of all attempts to divide native-born and immigrant workers. Only by uniting with the working class internationally can workers in the US or any other country successfully struggle against globally mobile capitalist corporations and advance their own independent solution to the world economic crisis: the reorganization of world economy to meet social need, not private profit.

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