

UK workers demand release of Julian Assange, support international vigils

Our reporters
16 June 2018

The Socialist Equality Party has received support from workers in the UK in opposition to the British government's effective detention of Julian Assange in the Ecuadorian Embassy on phoney breach of bail charges, and the demand for his immediate freedom and guaranteed safe passage to a country of his choosing.

Their backing for the WikiLeaks founder is in stark contrast to the wall of silence imposed by the so-called media, the pseudo-left organisations and the Labour Party, including leader Jeremy Corbyn.

In Bradford, the SEP organised a WSWS readers meeting to build support for Assange.

Brendan is a personal injury lawyer.

“In my opinion the case of Julian Assange is a clear dividing line between those who believe in a free and democratic society and those who pay lip service to these ideals yet pursue an agenda of deceit and lies.

“It is obvious to anyone who considers for just a moment why it is that the governments of several western nations, particularly Britain and the US, are investing such time and effort in persecuting Assange. Is it because they care deeply about bringing sexual predators to justice or is it more likely about silencing those who would expose the grim reality of the crimes committed by Britain and the US? The answer is obvious to everyone despite the attempts of many on the so called left, such as the Socialist Party of England and Wales [SPEW], to obscure the real issues.

“SPEW ostensibly supported Assange. They calculated that they must do this or lose all credibility with working class people who rightly see Assange as somewhat of a hero. Yet they also considered that he must answer allegations that are patently untrue. They were able to arrive at this contrived position by citing the defence of women's rights.

“This is merely a convenient cover to allow them the wiggle room they need to betray Assange and to withdraw support for Assange at the critical moment which is fast approaching.

“It is in fact a cynical attempt to justify the betrayal and abandonment of Assange. It is as bogus as the original Swedish allegations, which now appear to have been dispensed with, having served their intended purpose. Assange may now be arrested for breaching bail conditions imposed whilst resisting those same bogus allegations that no longer exist. It is a truly Orwellian nightmare.

“It is interesting to note that since the original allegations have been dispensed with that the silence emanating from certain left groups has been truly deafening and must not be allowed to obscure the central considerations of internet freedom, democracy, accountability and abuse of legal process, to which Assange has been subject for eight years.

“Those who continue to try and hide behind the smokescreen of contrived legal positions must be exposed for the charlatans they are. In short this is a very black and white issue, there are no grey areas. It is a very simple matter to consider even for the most politically naïve; all who support freedom and democratic rights must support Assange. The fate of Julian Assange will affect all of us and we cannot look the other way.”

Luke attends sixth form at school in Bradford.

“Assange has been imprisoned for more than a third of my lifetime. Teenagers of today have grown up in a world of fear, censorship and the presence of a police state. No day has been better than the last and that has certainly been the case for Assange for six years.

“I believe I speak for the majority of young people when I say that the treatment of Julian Assange these

six years is an absolute disgrace. The degradation of his health and the erosion of his human rights provides enough incriminating evidence against the UK government and its obsessive obedience of the USA. This is a crime against one man but it is symbolic of a wider assault on liberty, rights and freedom of speech as we have also seen in the Google censorship of the *World Socialist Web Site*.

“The extent of this brutality has been labelled as ‘torture’ by the former Ecuadorian president Correa and ruled as ‘arbitrary detention’ by the UN. The pressure is on the US and the UK from the international community but it takes much more than governmental pressure. Assange needs the support of thousands on June 19th [at the vigil outside the Ecuadorian Embassy to demand his freedom] and June 17th [at the protest in Sydney organised by the Socialist Equality Party] to show that this bullying and silencing of opposition will not be tolerated.

“This support however, must not stop at the end of the rally; it needs to continue in an international movement for justice and freedom, not just for Assange, or his colleagues like Chelsea Manning, but for the benefit for us all to maintain our freedom of thought and expression. As John Pilger said ‘the silencing of Julian Assange is the silencing of us all’. We must fight against this silencing and not crumble into a fascistic censorship society. We need to follow the example set by people like Pilger and Roger Waters who show that we must not let this issue slip out of the public conscience.

“‘Rise like lions after slumber/In unvanquishable number!’: these words are as true today as they were 200 years ago after the Peterloo Massacre, another assault on freedom of speech. Now we must ‘rise like lions’ and protect our most basic right that is currently denied to Assange and his colleagues. We cannot allow their suffering to continue because tomorrow, it will be someone else and then someone else until none of us are able to speak.

“Keep fighting Julian, the international youth stand in solidarity with you!”

Miklos is an artist who lives in Bradford.

“In a time when the forces of barbarism are intensifying their assault on democracy and free speech, in both the cultural and political area, nothing can be more important than the need to mobilise the working

class in solidarity with Assange in struggle to expose the lies and falsehoods of the capitalist class.”

Freedom for Julian Assange!

Attend the vigil at the Ecuadorian Embassy in London

Tuesday, June 19, 6-8 p.m.

3 Hans Crescent, London, SW1X 0LN

(nearest Tube station: Knightsbridge, Piccadilly Line)

For further details of the vigil visit:
<https://wiseupaction.info/2018/>



To contact the WSWS and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact