

James Cogan to participate in Unity4J online forum to defend Assange and Manning

Watch from Friday, 4 p.m., US eastern time, Saturday: 7 a.m., Australian eastern time

15 March 2019

James Cogan, the national secretary of the Socialist Equality Party (Australia) and writer for the *World Socialist Web Site*, will be participating in the 20th Unity4J online forum. The online discussions were initiated last year to develop the international campaign to win the freedom of persecuted WikiLeaks publisher and Australian citizen Julian Assange.

The co-hosts of Unity4J are principled publishers and journalists, independent of corporate and state control: Joe Lauria, the editor-in-chief of *Consortium News*, and Elizabeth Vos, the editor-in-chief of *Disobedient Media*.

The forum can be viewed at the websites of Unity4J and Consortium News, on YouTube and via Twitter. If readers know of other means to access the forum, please send a comment and we will update this information.

For North American readers, Unity4J will begin streaming this evening, at 4:00 p.m., March 15, US Eastern Time. In California and the West Coast, it starts at 1:00 p.m. In Britain, the forum commences at 8:00 p.m., in western European countries at 9:00 p.m., and in Moscow at 11:00 p.m.

In Australia's eastern time zone (New South Wales, Victoria and Tasmania), the forum will broadcast at 7:00 a.m. on Saturday, March 16. In New Zealand, it begins at 9:00 a.m.

To get the time for your location, click here to access a time convertor.

Cogan will discuss with Lauria and Vos the implications of the re-imprisonment of Chelsea Manning, the courageous whistleblower who leaked the information that WikiLeaks published in 2010 exposing

US war crimes and diplomatic intrigue and conspiracies.

Last Friday, Chelsea Manning was sent back to prison for refusing to give false testimony against Julian Assange to the grand jury in the Eastern District of Virginia. By at least early 2011, the grand jury indicted the WikiLeaks publisher on unprecedented charges of espionage and/or conspiracy.

Well aware of the sweeping implications for centuries-old principles of freedom of speech, the presiding judge ordered that the laying of charges against Assange and WikiLeaks be sealed. The existence of such an indictment is now out in the open.

The vindictive re-imprisonment of Manning further underscores the urgency of the fight to end Julian Assange's arbitrary detention by the British government in the Ecuadorian embassy in London.

Manning's freedom is inextricably linked with the struggle to secure Assange's right to leave the London embassy unhindered, and return to Australia, if he chooses to do so, with a guarantee from all Australian political parties that any extradition request by US authorities will be rejected.

Cogan will review the ongoing campaign that the SEP Australia is waging to mobilise the working class behind the demand that the Australian government take immediate diplomatic and legal action to free Julian Assange from arbitrary detention by the government of Britain.

He will also, if time permits, speak on the initiatives underway by the SEP in the United States to fight for the freedom of Chelsea Manning. Initial meetings and rallies were rapidly organised by the SEP (US) and

International Youth and Students for Social Equality (IYSSE) at a number of major campuses this week.

We urge all WSWs readers to participate in the Unity4J forum and promote it as widely as possible through social media and other means.



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