

SEP (Australia) condemns the arrest of Julian Assange

SEP Political Committee
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The Socialist Equality Party (Australia) emphatically condemns the decision of the Ecuadorian government to end the political asylum granted to Wikileaks publisher Julian Assange, literally opening the door for British police to arrest him.

The UK is holding Assange on trumped-up bail charges, and on an extradition request from the Trump administration, which is seeking to prosecute him for his role in Wikileaks' lawful publishing activities.

The claim by Ecuadorian President Lenin Moreno that Assange had repeatedly violated "international conventions and daily-life protocols" is a transparent lie. The decision to hand over Assange to British authorities, paving the way for his extradition to the US, is a fundamental breach of international law and democratic rights. Moreno and his government stand condemned before history as stooges of US and British imperialism.

Assange is now in grave danger. The Trump administration is pressing for his extradition to the US, where he will be indicted on fabricated charges and face a heavy jail term or even the death penalty. Assange's only "crime" has been to expose to the world the war crimes and diplomatic intrigues of US imperialism.

The US is at the centre of a vast international conspiracy to silence Assange and Wikileaks. The fact that Washington has expended enormous resources to lay its hands on one individual is a warning that it is not just hell-bent on exacting revenge, but is seeking to suppress any independent voice as it prepares new crimes.

The SEP calls on workers and youth around the world to take action to demand that the British government immediately release the Wikileaks publisher. The defence of Julian Assange is bound up with the broader

fight to defend the democratic and social rights of the working class and to oppose the US-led drive to war.

Australian Foreign Minister Marise Payne has issued a thoroughly deceitful statement declaring her confidence in the British police and justice system. Governments, Labor and Coalition, have violated their responsibility to provide the legal assistance to which Assange is entitled as an Australian citizen. The attitude of all of them was summed up by Labor prime minister Julia Gillard who publicly branded Wikileaks as a criminal organization.

The SEP demands that the Australian government end its collaboration with the Trump administration to railroad Assange before US courts. We will hold rallies Friday April 12 at 1 p.m. at the Martin Place Amphitheatre in Sydney, and at 4 p.m., outside the Victorian state library in Melbourne, to demand that the Australian government take immediate action to defend Assange. We appeal to all workers, young people and defenders of democratic rights to attend.



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