

London meeting to free Assange and Manning

Attendees from Scotland speak out: “Workers have to make their voices heard”

Our reporters
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The Socialist Equality Party meeting held in London, May 12, in defence of Julian Assange and Chelsea Manning was livestreamed to public meetings in Glasgow and Inverness. A number of those attending shared their thoughts on the jailing of Assange and Manning and on the need for a powerful, international campaign to win their freedom.

Joe, a musician, said, “The main thing that drew my attention to the awful conditions Assange was being held under was the coverage by the *World Socialist Web Site*. This underlined the severe lack of any response with credibility from almost every other news source.

“I feel that there has been a lack of response from most parties. Most of the main political figures I have seen talking about it only seem to mention the trumped-up sexual assault charges, failing to acknowledge that he is being charged with computer hacking and that a US extradition could lead to him being killed on espionage charges. Their attitude towards him can be summed up by the video in Parliament of when his arrest was first mentioned. It was met with cries of support and clapping.”

He said, “It really has set the bar for the future, if anyone steps out of line on what they are reporting, their lives and livelihoods could also be in danger. This is shown by the lack of any proper response from the major newspapers and websites. Years ago, they published the documents from WikiLeaks as a huge scandal, and now cannot come to the defence of Assange, who is most definitely in danger.

“I think we need to continue raising awareness about the unlawful arrest of Assange, the documents he leaked, and the people that want him silenced.

“In order to try and gain his freedom, I do not know what other actions to take, but more people need to know of the abhorrent conditions he was kept in and the illegality of his arrest. My only other comment is that I find it refreshing and inspiring the work the SEP has done in response to this issue and hope that we can pull together to secure the freedoms of Julian Assange and Chelsea Manning.”

Calum, an archaeology student from Inverness, said, “There should be aggressive action now on behalf of the working class, or this thing will be acceptable, commonplace. It’s almost a test of authoritarian power. Something has to be done now, or else this is the future we can look forward to. We have to fight it right now.

“I think the response of the main parties has been pathetic. It has definitely shown where their true loyalties lie. Workers have to make their voices heard against this or it is going to continue. It’s a trend of internet censorship, censorship in all forms. It’s all part of a climate of authoritarianism. It shows how beholden the UK, Europe, Australia, Sweden are to American imperialism, and blows up the notion that these countries in Europe are somehow standing up to America.”

Daniel is a Deliveroo worker. He said, “Democracy is nothing if it is built on lies. When you have someone whose only goal is to tell the truth being directly persecuted and facing a possible death threat for telling the truth, you have a democracy that is broken and a system that needs fixed.”

He added, “I think it’s shameful that there has not been any response from any party but the SEP. Kudos to the SEP.”



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