

Hands off COVID-19 whistleblower Rebekah Jones!

Health Workers Action Committee of Sri Lanka
29 December 2020

The Health Workers Action Committee (HWAC) of Sri Lanka vehemently opposes the fascistic attack on Rebekah Jones, a prominent data scientist and COVID-19 whistleblower, who has been exposing the real level of COVID-19 infections in Florida and at K-12 (kindergarten to 12th grade) schools across the US.

Jones was targeted because she has spoken out against the homicidal policies of Florida's Republican Governor Ron DeSantis and the Trump administration. Her interventions have opposed the back-to-work and back-to-school drives that have produced the record upsurge of the pandemic throughout the US.

We express our solidarity with the campaign launched by the Socialist Equality Party (US) against the harassment of Jones and in support of her ongoing efforts to continuously update her COVID Monitor website.

We admire Jones's principled and determined position to provide an objective statistical analysis of the coronavirus infections in defiance of being fired from her state sector job for doing so. Jones has done her utmost—and to the best of her ability—to present a true picture of the pandemic and to protect lives.

As Jones correctly pointed out, the brutal police raid on her home in early December is reminiscent of Hitler's Gestapo. It is another reminder to the working class in the US and elsewhere that the ruling elite is dispensing with democratic forms of rule.

Successive US administrations are notorious for the persecution of courageous whistleblowers, such as WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange, Chelsea Manning, who was accused leaking cables on the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq and Edward Snowden, who revealed Washington's vast spy network against its own citizens.

Manning was imprisoned for seven years; Assange is locked up in the coronavirus-infected Belmarsh prison outside London awaiting a verdict for extradition to the US and a possible 175-year prison sentence; and Snowden had to flee the country.

We understand the dangers that lie ahead for Jones and call upon the international working class to come forward and defend her.

The manipulation of COVID-19 statistics to deceive working people is very familiar to us here in Sri Lanka. These distortions were employed by governments in South Asia from the outset to downplay the dangerous and highly infectious nature of the coronavirus with disastrous consequences.

As health workers we currently do not have accurate statistics on how many health workers are infected by the coronavirus in Sri Lanka. In most cases, hospital managements have not revealed who has tested positive with COVID-19 from the PCR tests.

It is the same for almost all the factories owned by the big business apparel conglomerates or other companies as they do not provide accurate statistics or information about the number of infections. In this way corporate management is profiteering and pushing ahead with unsafe "back to work" policies.

In this way, US to South Asian governments are protecting the wealth of the corporates and billionaires while infecting the workers and poor with this deadly virus.



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