

The defense of science requires a fight for socialism!

Socialist Equality Party (US)
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The “Stand Up for Science” protests taking place today mark a significant development in the growing opposition to the fascistic Trump administration. Thousands of scientists, workers, professionals, students and youth have organized demonstrations in Washington D.C. and more than 100 other locations across the United States, Canada and Europe to oppose Trump’s attacks on science and democratic rights.

The Socialist Equality Party welcomes these demonstrations. We call for the broadest possible mobilization of the working class and for the expansion of the protests internationally. There must be a global fight against the destruction of critical public health programs, as well as infrastructure monitoring Earth’s weather and climate, the health of lakes, rivers, forests and grasslands, fish and wildlife, and more.

This assault is being spearheaded by the fascist billionaire Elon Musk in the name of improving “government efficiency,” which is Orwellian doublespeak for eradicating all limitations on the accumulation of wealth by the corporate oligarchy.

Trump and Musk are taking particular aim at all aspects of public health, already slashing over 5,000 positions across the 13 units of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Their chief agent is HHS Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr., who embodies the total repudiation of science and progress.

One of the most notorious purveyors of anti-vaccine disinformation and quackery, with no relevant health qualifications, Kennedy now oversees what were once the world’s preeminent public health agencies. He is responsible for handling multiple health crises, including the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, a catastrophic flu season that has already killed 20,000 Americans this winter, the growing threat of an H5N1 “bird flu” pandemic, and the worst measles outbreak in the US in over a decade. With this vicious opponent of science at

the helm of HHS, the dangers posed to the American and world population cannot be overstated.

Among the most significant attacks on science carried out in just the first six weeks of the Trump administration are:

- Withdrawing from the World Health Organization and any form of international collaboration to fight viruses and diseases that know no borders
- Denying the reality of climate change and seeking to ban any discussion of the role of giant corporations and the fossil fuel industries in causing it
- Implementing funding freezes affecting scientific research across multiple agencies and universities, including the cutoff of billions in funding for the National Institutes of Health
- Laying off roughly 5,000 workers at the Environmental Protection Agency, National Park Service and Forest Service
- Manipulating vital Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports to cover up science related to bird flu, while imposing a gag order across public health and other federal agencies
- Threatening to completely dismantle the Department of Education

All these actions will have vast real-world ramifications for the American and international working class. Cumulatively, they represent characteristic ideological features of far-right politics: contempt for science, education, public health, philosophical materialism, and the progressive legacy of the Enlightenment. The administration’s ultra-nationalist “America First” program is inherently hostile to international scientific collaboration, which is essential for addressing global challenges like climate change and pandemic prevention.

The fight for a scientific understanding of nature and society must reject all attempts to divide humans by race, a social construct engendered by the capitalist ruling elite

to suppress social opposition. This requires an explicit rejection of the bipartisan attacks on immigrants, including the attempts by Trump to end birthright citizenship.

Any defense of science, however, cannot be left in the hands of the Democratic Party, which has been given a platform at many of today's protests. It was the Biden administration which carried out the "forever COVID" policy of unending mass infection, death and debilitation with Long COVID. The continued spread of COVID-19, as well as the emergence of bird flu and the return of long-eliminated pathogens like measles, are all a consequence of the Biden administration's open repudiation of public health, which paved the way for Trump and Kennedy.

Eight years ago, similar protests were organized against the first Trump administration under the banner of a "March for Science," involving over 1 million people globally. That these demonstrations must be repeated today is a testament to the failure of any strategy aimed at pressuring the Democratic Party, one of the two parties of the American capitalist class.

A break with the Democrats also requires a break with the trade union bureaucracies, which have long stifled any independent challenge to the ruling elite. They share central responsibility, along with the pseudo-left Democratic Socialists of America (DSA), for the unsafe reopening of factories, workplaces and schools at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, which led to the needless deaths of hundreds of thousands of Americans.

Special note must be taken of the United Auto Workers (UAW), an official supporter and sponsor of today's protests, which has worked to wholly accommodate itself to the Trump administration. On Tuesday, after Trump announced his latest round of tariffs against Canada, Mexico and China, UAW President Shawn Fain declared, "We look forward to working with the White House to shape the auto tariffs in April to benefit the working class."

Anyone who studies economics scientifically knows that tariffs will only bring ruin to the working class, because of both skyrocketing prices and the thousands of layoffs in the auto industry and beyond that will result.

The fight for science is above all a class issue. As with the book-burning of the Nazis, every reactionary government and historically outmoded social class has denigrated and persecuted science and a materialist world outlook for definite political ends. The development of science has thus always depended on progressive social forces.

Under capitalism, the international working class is the revolutionary force in society, whose objective position stands in direct opposition to the capitalist state, trade union bureaucrats, corporate oligarchs and the capitalist socioeconomic system as a whole.

Modern science and technology have made it possible to wipe out hunger and disease, vanquish ignorance and mysticism, and provide a high standard of living for every human being on the planet. Moreover, the revolutionary developments in transportation and communications, most recently through the artificial intelligence (AI) revolution, have shattered the barriers to human interaction and made possible the education and integration of all humanity on a scale never before seen in history.

The fight for science and human progress can only take place through the building of a socialist movement in the working class. Scientists are experiencing the same process of proletarianization now affecting doctors, teachers and other professionals. Scientists must recognize their common interests with all workers facing attacks on their living standards, jobs and democratic rights. No matter your education level or salary, to the oligarchy that rules America, you are as expendable as any other worker.

A genuine defense of science requires the preparation of mass strike action by all federal workers, including those in scientific agencies, against job cuts, funding freezes and attacks on working conditions. This must be connected to a broader movement of the entire working class, in the US and internationally, against inequality and exploitation.

The same scientific methods necessary to understand the natural world must also be applied to understand society. A materialist analysis clearly demonstrates that capitalism is a historically outmoded social system that stands as the chief obstacle to human progress.

We call on all those attending today's protest to join the International Youth and Students for Social Equality and the Socialist Equality Party and to build a revolutionary socialist movement, to carry forward the defense of science as part of the struggle for a socialist society based on social equality instead of private profit.



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