Build a socialist movement to stop Trump's dictatorship!

Socialist Equality Party (US)
20 April 2025

Socialist Equality Party members and supporters distributed thousands of copies of this statement at protests across the US on Saturday, April 19.

The Trump administration is moving to establish a dictatorship in the United States. In just 11 weeks of his second term, Trump has unleashed a campaign of repression and terror against immigrants, federal workers, students, and the entire working class.

Trump's partnership with Salvadoran President Nayib Bukele is a warning to every worker and youth. The CECOT prison in El Salvador, which Trump has praised and encouraged Bukele to replicate, is a modern-day Dachau concentration camp: a fortress of mass incarceration and the destruction of all civil rights.

Hundreds have already been sent, and Trump is now openly declaring his intention to deport "home growns"—that is, US citizens. He has told Bukele to "build about five more" CECOTs to house Americans, boasting that he "would love to do that" and is "studying the laws right now" to make it happen.

The Trump administration reflects the naked rule of the capitalist oligarchy. The ruling class, faced with deepening economic, social and geopolitical breakdown, is turning to fascism and dictatorship. Trump's threats to annex territory, his imposition of sweeping tariffs and his open violation of judicial orders all reveal a gangster regime that recognizes no legal or democratic constraints.

At home, the ruling class is carrying out a war on the working class: firing hundreds of thousands of federal workers, destroying social programs, dismantling public education, shredding workers' contracts and expanding the powers of federal agents to target "insubordinate" workers. As for science and public health, the anti-vaccine conspiracy theorist Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. has been tasked with shutting down Health and Human Services agencies amidst the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and the growing threat of an H5N1 "bird flu" pandemic.

Internationally, the Trump administration is preparing for world war. Its trade war measures are aimed at crippling China and forcing every country into alignment with US imperialist interests. They will intensify global conflict and produce massive economic and social dislocation not only abroad but within the United States itself—fueling layoffs, inflation and deepening attacks on the working class.

Trump has pledged to "finish" the ethnic cleansing of Gaza begun under Biden, "annihilate" Yemen, annex Greenland, Canada and the Panama Canal and wage all-out war on China. As Leon Trotsky, the great co-leader of the October 1917 Russian Revolution, explained during an earlier stage of imperialist crisis, the world is confronting the "volcanic eruption of American imperialism."

The urgent question facing workers and youth is: What is to be done?

There are decisive differences between the situation today and the rise of fascism in the 1920s and 1930s. In Germany, fascism triumphed only after the working class suffered historic defeats—after the revolutionary upsurge of 1918-19 was crushed by the Social Democrats and the potential for revolution in 1923 was missed by the immature leadership of the German Communist Party. The Nazis built a mass movement of the ruined middle class and lumpen elements, mobilized to destroy the organized workers' movement.

Today, Trump lacks such a mass base, and the working class is not in a state of demoralization. On the contrary, it is entering into struggle and moving to the left. The April 5 "Hands Off" protests saw millions take to the streets across the country and around the world in opposition to Trump's dictatorship, war, and social inequality.

Trump bases his actions on support from within the oligarchy and the state apparatus—ICE, the police, the military, and the courts. Above all, he relies on the cowardice and complicity of the Democrats to impose his fascist program.

It was under Biden that the US-backed Israeli genocide in Gaza began. It was under Biden that the persecution of student protesters began. It was the Democrats who ensured passage of the Republicans' continuing resolution last month, financing the Trump administration to deepen its

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attacks on democratic rights.

Biden welcomed Trump into the White House in January, wishing him "success," not long after Kamala Harris openly called Trump a fascist. The Democrats refuse to oppose Trump's dictatorship because they agree with its fundamental aims: protecting American imperialism, suppressing social opposition and maintaining the dominance of Wall Street.

As for figures like Bernie Sanders and Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, they claim that it is possible to reform the capitalist system from within and by pressuring the Democratic Party. Sanders has repeatedly refused to call the slaughter in Gaza a genocide, allowed the police removal of pro-Palestinian protesters from his own rally, and has worked to channel all opposition back into the Democratic Party, one of the oldest bourgeois parties in the world.

Sanders and Ocasio-Cortez act as lightning rods, dissipating the anger of workers and youth and preventing the emergence of a genuine, independent movement of the working class.

The effort to sabotage the April 19 protests is a case in point. The "50501" leadership associated with Sanders' "Political Revolution" group, which is closely aligned with the Democrats, attempted to cancel the demonstrations at the last minute, urging people to instead host picnics or visit libraries. This transparent effort to demobilize the movement provoked a wave of anger and defiance across social media among those determined to fight.

History, above all Germany in the 1930s, shows that fascism will be the price paid if the working class doesn't take political power into its own hands.

The fight against fascism and dictatorship is inseparable from the fight against capitalism. This requires the independent, organized and conscious intervention of the working class, armed with a revolutionary socialist program. The working class today is larger, more globally interconnected, and more powerful than ever before. Its radicalization is an objective process, driven by the crisis of capitalism itself.

But this objective strength must be transformed into conscious political action. The Socialist Equality Party (SEP) and the International Youth and Students for Social Equality (IYSSE) are building the revolutionary leadership needed for this historic task. We call for the formation of rank-and-file committees in every workplace and neighborhood, independent of the union bureaucracies and the Democratic Party, to organize strikes, mass demonstrations, and the defense of democratic rights.

The SEP fights for the expropriation of the oligarchy, the transfer of power to the working class, and the reorganization of society on the basis of social need, not private profit. We insist on the international unity of workers in the US and around the world to put an end to war, dictatorship, and exploitation.

The outcome of this struggle depends on the building of a revolutionary party, rooted in the lessons of history and armed with a Marxist program.

We urge every worker, student, and young person: Draw the necessary conclusions from the experiences of the past and the present. Break with the Democrats and all those who seek to tie the working class to the capitalist system. Join the SEP and the IYSSE. Help us build the leadership and organization required to defeat fascism, overthrow capitalism, and secure a future based on social equality, in which social needs take precedence over private profit.

Stop Trump's dictatorship!

No to concentration camps and mass deportations!

Break with the Democrats—build the Socialist Equality Party!

Join the fight for socialism!

To contact the WSWS and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

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