

Alabama teacher: “We need rank-and-file committees to bring us together in a collective to fight”

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5 October 2025

Longtime educator and founding member of the Alabama Rank-and-File Educators Committee Clare sat down with the WSWs to discuss the Trump administration’s brutal assault on workers, immigrants, and democratic and social rights.

WSWS: The SEP issued a statement, “Trump’s fascist conspiracy and how to fight it: A socialist strategy.” We warn about the escalation of the conspiracy to establish a presidential dictatorship, based on the military, police, paramilitary forces and fascist gangs. What is your assessment?

I’m a veteran, and it is completely against the UCMJ [Uniform Code of Military Justice] for you to obey the orders of the commander who is going against the Constitution! Our oath is not to the president.

What Hegseth and Trump are doing is 100 percent against the Constitution. The military is not ever supposed to be used against American citizens. Trump is trying to establish control and turn this into a dictatorship, run by the oligarchy.

The Democrats haven’t done anything this whole time. When this happens, the people need to say no.

If we can fight to get Jimmy Kimmel back on, we could fight for our own rights. If we could show Disney, we can show the president that we aren’t taking this. Additionally, military members should consider that they are also part of the working class. We are supposed to defend the Constitution of the United States and the law—not the President.

Referring to the reactionary and misogynistic culture being intensified in the military, Clare added:

This is personal for me because I know many women who have served in the military and while serving, stateside and in the field of combat, were sexually assaulted and received no assistance. Matter of fact, they were vilified and scrutinized while their assailants were given slaps on the wrist or no judgment at all. Look at the cases of women at Fort Hood and other bases who were missing and found murdered. This is what we get with a pedophile and sexual assaulter in the White House; Hegseth was also charged with sexual assault and settled out of court.

WSWS: We say that behind Trump stands a fabulously

wealthy elite that, to maintain their profits and their stranglehold on society, is conducting a massive assault on the living standards and lives of workers. They aim to eliminate all the gains established going back to the Progressive era, the New Deal and the Great Society. Could you comment?

They are bankrupting the nation. People are getting distraught, and the services they need are not available. They are robbing the working-class American. They have taken away the “pursuit of happiness.”

What have the Democrats done to stop anything that Trump is doing? Nothing. They are complicit. There are supposed to be three branches of government, but Trump has taken over the judicial branch by putting his cronies in there. When the Supreme Court decided to break the law, the legislative branch should have been on it. But no. Both parties are allowing this felon to do what he wants when he should be in jail.

The ability to stop the president is the power of our collective. Because again, like I said, if we can get Jimmy Kimmel back on the air, then we fight with our voice, we fight with our feet, our money, our vote, whatever, it all needs to be done because we have shown that history has shown that when the working class comes together, we put the hierarchy to shame.

WSWS: Yes, we must use all our powers, but our main power is our labor. We produce all the wealth of society through our labor. The SEP calls for the establishment of rank-and-file committees in every factory, workplace, school, and neighborhood to organize resistance to Trump’s dictatorship. These committees must become centers of resistance, uniting all sections of the working class and preparing for a general strike.

Clare: Yes! Shut it all down. We have the ability to do so. From the trash collectors to the food industry to the hospitals to everything. We’re not going to build another car; we’re not going to build another computer—we’re not going to build another thing. So it has to be a consensus; it has to be everybody together doing it.

How? Spreading information and organizing independently of the unions, which have also proven themselves to be complicit. How many teachers died during the COVID epidemic with no

assistance from the union at all? Not even any lawsuits were filed. We didn't have one lawsuit brought against any district on behalf of people dying in these factories.

Like Trump named it the "Department of War," they could call this a state of emergency, and then we can't have an election. That way, Trump stays in control. People are already losing their jobs because they said something against Charlie Kirk. There was a mass shooting the same day of children, but they don't lower flags to half-mast for them, nor did the Minnesota state representative and her husband, who were assassinated—nothing was done.

We are facing a military dictatorship. They are deploying military into major American cities, which is against the law. And he's doing it anyway. And nobody's saying, 'We won't do this, because it's against the law.'

The Democrats are complicit. Why? Because they're rich also. They're part of the oligarchy. They're not going to go against their own interests.

Workers must fight back. We should get together. We should join the rank-and-file committees and stop them. The only way we're going to do it is to stop working. Shut them down. We need rank-and-file committees to organize the information, share information that we may or may not have from other places, other groups, and bring us together into a collective so we can fight. They help people be educated on what's really going on.

We have to strike; it has to be on a massive scale. I think workers around the world would stay with us.

WSWS: *The SEP statement says, "The capitalist oligarchy has declared war on the working class. The necessary response is the declaration of war by the working class on capitalism, which must result in the socialist reorganization of society." What do you think?*

The working class is losing money, but all these corporations are making money. What is the problem with capitalism? It kills the working class. And there is no limit. What it will do to continue to stay in power? That includes taking our lives. Absolutely. Our lives don't mean anything. We are expendable to them.

Netanyahu is here, chilling with Trump. He literally said, the Palestinians either accept his demands or he'll just "finish them."

Here, they say they are sending troops to the cities to fight crime. Yeah, there's crime, but why? You're not giving people the things that they need. The schools are not getting support. People are poor, people are broken. Yes, that is the wrong thing to do, to steal and to rob and everything else, however. But what do we have—more liquor stores on the corner than schools.

WSWS: *The SEP points to the savage attack on immigrants and explains that depriving these workers of their democratic rights was only the first stage in the overthrow of the Constitution. We say, "No effective struggle can be waged by workers in the United States unless their actions are*

coordinated and aligned with the struggle of the global working class." What is your response?

Some people attack the immigrants, saying they should at least be here "legally." No, did you forget how America was founded? Did you forget what the Statue of Liberty stood for? The people who can pay get in; they have the ability to pay their way in. Those who can't have to work forever to pay, like \$10,000, to get citizenship.

Many of them [ICE agents] are the same criminals involved in the [January 6] insurrection. Many had criminal records before the insurrection, including domestic violence and attacks on others, and should have been in jail. Now they are carrying out kidnappings and running concentration camps used to spread fear [in the population].

There's power in our collective action, not in our separation. Nationalism is not going to do anything but destroy us, because our best comes from the conglomeration of everyone. It is all people coming together, the melting pot.

We are a global entity. Everything that we do coincides with somebody else. Everything that we do comes from somewhere else. Our power lies in the fact that we're the same class everywhere. The working class runs the world. Nationalism is making everybody point to each other when we all should be pointing at them [the oligarchy].

The workers are the real "for the people, by the people."

WSWS: *How would you sum up what must be done?*

First, Democrats have not helped us or used their political power to stop Trump, even when he knowingly and blatantly breaks the law. It is the literal definition of the opposition party to be the "check and balance" against an out-of-control president.

Look at Chicago. The Liar-in-Chief said he was going to get out the illegal criminals. But he's only gone after hardworking immigrants who contribute to society with taxes (and NO, they don't get Medicare, so JD Vance is a liar-in-training). And now they are going after citizens in Chicago. This is a deliberate and planned attack to turn the country into a war zone and just like in war...WE HAVE TO FIGHT BACK!

Second, we need a new party. The founding fathers didn't even believe in a two-party system. Why are we doing it now?

Third, we must teach everyone that capitalism is the enemy. Why is our government rewarding CEOs who don't contribute to society and vilifying people in need?

Fourth, we must get out of the nationalist mindset because we are a global community.

Fifth, we can only do this together. History has proven that together we can fight AND win! So it is past time to RESIST!!



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