

Indianapolis public meeting shows support for Socialist Equality Party response to Trump's dictatorship

Our reporters
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The Socialist Equality Party (SEP) held a significant public meeting in Indianapolis, Indiana on Monday at the Spades Park Branch of the Indianapolis Public Library.

Workers and students from Indianapolis and surrounding communities attended the meeting which was titled, "After the 'No Kings' protest: A socialist strategy to stop Trump's dictatorship."

Many of those in attendance originally met SEP members and campaigners who had set up a literature table and distributed leaflets during the No Kings protest at the Indiana State House in Indianapolis on October 18.

Others came in response to campaigns for the meeting over recent weeks, including at the campus of Indiana University in Indianapolis, Allison Transmission and Rolls Royce.

George Kirby, SEP member and writer for the *World Socialist Web Site* (WSWS) opened the meeting and welcomed those in attendance. He said, "We're almost a month after the 'No Kings' protest, where millions said, 'No Kings and No Fuhrers.' This was the second wave of protests bringing out millions of youth, workers, professionals and retirees.

"A movement is developing internationally against the threat of fascism, dictatorship and war. What is lacking is a clear political perspective, and this is what this meeting will provide."

Kirby then introduced the main speaker, Jerry White, the labor editor of the WSWS and member of the SEP Political Committee.

White's report first focused on the escalation of the Trump administration's war drive in South America and against the working class in the US. He denounced Trump's claims to be fighting to prevent drugs from reaching the US, saying, "This narrative is a thin justification for longstanding geopolitical aims—the seizure of Venezuela's vast oil reserves, the rollback of Chinese economic influence across South America, and the reassertion of unchallenged US

imperialist dominance in the Western Hemisphere."

White drew a direct link between the preparations for war abroad and the intensification of repression within the United States. He explained, "Increasingly, the administration treats internal political and social opposition as part of a broader security threat."

The report detailed how "the same language used to describe alleged foreign enemies—terrorists, invasions, cartel-linked operations—is applied to immigrants, protesters, and increasingly, the working class," illustrating the merging of "war on terror" rhetoric with domestic law enforcement.

"In cities such as Chicago, Charlotte, Houston, and Los Angeles, ICE raids have taken the form of paramilitary incursions—masked squads, heavily armed, conducting nighttime operations, sealing off apartment buildings and detaining entire families without warrants."

White pointed to the growth of popular opposition to the fascist administration, citing the "No Kings" protests involving millions in more than 2,500 locations that "expressed widespread hostility to authoritarianism and demonstrated the potential for mass working class mobilization."

White explained that this movement had to be developed independently of the Democratic Party, which has acted as Trump's enablers. By reopening the government, he said, the Democrats were giving Trump a green light to escalate his war on immigrants and basic democratic rights, and slash billions from food stamps, public education and other essential services.

White also drew attention to the rise in workplace deaths, specifically highlighting the recent fatalities of postal worker Nicholas Acker and autoworker Ronald Adams Sr. He said, "The horrific death of Nicholas Acker, a young postal worker killed in a mail sorting machine in suburban Detroit is symptomatic of the broader atmosphere of neglect and profit-driven disregard for safety."

White explained that workers needed to form new

organizations of struggle—rank-and-file committees, which were independent of the labor bureaucracies that led the United Auto Workers and other unions. In opposition to the economic nationalism promoted by UAW President Shawn Fain, who has backed Trump's tariffs, White said, the International Workers Alliance of Rank-and-File Committees (IWA-RFC) was fighting for the unity of US, Canadian, Mexican and all workers against the global corporations.

The state of Indiana has a rich history of class struggle and socialism that had to be revived, White said, from socialist railroad leader Eugene Debs and the left-wing novelist Theodore Dreiser to the sit-down strikes in the 1930s at the GM plants in Anderson where militant workers smashed the influence of the KKK and Black Legion. In 2010, GM stamping workers in Indianapolis rebelled against the UAW bureaucracy and formed a rank-and-file committee with the assistance of the SEP, and in 2022-23 many workers in the city and in the state supported Will Lehman, the socialist candidate for UAW president.

The fundamental issue, White concluded, was the need to build within the working class a socialist and internationalist leadership, which is the task of the SEP.

The discussion following the report began with a focus on workplace deaths. Questions were asked about the process for Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) investigations into the death of workers on the job. A former workplace safety expert who was in attendance reviewed the fact that the structure of OSHA investigations is set up to protect the employers.

Attendees were also attracted to the emphasis placed on the history of the SEP as the US section of the International Committee of the Fourth International during the discussion.

Attendee Austin said, "I attended the meeting with a decent grasp of the history and goals of the Socialist Equality Party, with the intention of joining myself. As someone who is beginning to embrace the worldview and ethos of the SEP, I found the meeting to be incredibly validating and feel inspired to continue learning more of the history and principles of the party.

"What is most impressive to me is the historical foundations of the party, on an international scale, along with the holistic approach that the party uses to tackle the issues of today. For example, the principle of social equality was used to address international crises from the situation in Venezuela to the fact that 15 Americans die each day from incidents at their industrial jobs.

"As someone who has been desperately searching for a political party with firm, uncompromising principles, I believe I have found my home. The SEP is a party that fights for the struggles of the working class and is unwavering in

the goal of building class-consciousness."

Kyle said, "I've never interacted with the Socialist Equality Party before but can say that it was an overall very enjoyable experience, and plan to go to future meetings."

Salena also spoke about the emphasis on the history of Trotskyism: "Jerry White made clear how Stalinism undermined and finally overthrew the Russian Revolution because of the isolation within world capitalism and why we need internationalism now. I appreciated that he has more than 45 years of knowledge, that every time I wrote a question down, he was able to answer it in the discussion.

"I do think that answers require a focus on the length of the material. There is no shortcut way, it relies on historical context. The presentation was a thorough introduction to the Socialist Equality Party for those in attendance. I thought it would only be local interventions, but wider topics were presented all rooted in the context of history. There was no pandering or word salads, only direct clear answers for people to grasp what this party is."

After the meeting ended attendees remained in the room for ongoing questions and discussion. Several bought books at the SEP literature display.

Austin said, "At the meeting, I was able to purchase a book, *The Russian Revolution and the Unfinished Twentieth Century* by David North, a leader of the international socialist movement for more than half a century. I am excited to dive into the historical betrayals against the working class by the ruling class, and build a deeper understanding of how we got here and how to move forward. This meeting deepened my understanding of the party, and I am excited to continue my journey with the SEP."



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