

The killing of Renee Nicole Good, the invasion of Venezuela, Trump's conspiracy for dictatorship and the lessons of the American Revolution

Socialist Equality Party (US)
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The brutal killing of Renee Nicole Good by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents and the Trump administration's invasion of Venezuela mark a qualitative escalation in the drive toward dictatorship at home and imperialist conquest abroad. These events expose the Trump administration as a regime of fascist criminals that increasingly operates through raw force, dismisses legality as an inconvenience and regards the working population, domestically and internationally, as an enemy to be subdued.

The invasion of Venezuela, launched on January 3, was carried out to abduct the country's president, Nicolás Maduro, an act of imperialist aggression that violates the most basic norms of international law and state sovereignty.

The United States quickly signaled its intention to seize control of Venezuela's vast oil reserves, transfer tens of millions of barrels of crude to the US, and assert indefinite dominance over the country's energy exports. In the days that followed, Washington seized several oil tankers, including one flying a Russian flag, and issued ultimatums demanding that Caracas sever economic ties with Russia, China, Iran and Cuba and align its oil production exclusively with US interests.

Four days later, on January 7, ICE agents fatally shot Renee Nicole Good, a 37-year-old Minneapolis mother of three. The immediate response of administration officials, which has been to praise the ICE killer and slander Good, makes clear that the killing is treated not as a crime to be prosecuted but as a precedent for future killings.

Countless millions of people in the United States and throughout the world have seen the video recording of Good's murder. Their eyes do not deceive them. But this has not stopped Trump, Vice President Vance and other administration officials from constructing a narrative based on blatant lies, in which the victim of ICE violence is accused of being responsible for her own death.

The White House is using the murder to justify the expansion of paramilitary operations in major cities and the criminalization of dissent under the banner of a war against the "radical left." There are reports of checkpoints being set up in Minneapolis, as the city is placed under effective occupation.

Criminality abroad and dictatorship at home are inextricably linked. The oligarchy has elevated Trump because it can no longer defend its interests through legal and democratic forms. Moreover, the vast resources required to wage war for global dominance must be extracted through a frontal assault on the working class and demands ever greater repression and violence.

On January 6, 2021, Trump spearheaded a coup that sought to halt the transfer of power and overturn the Constitution. This coup is now being

implemented under a second Trump administration, overseen by the sitting president of the United States.

The descent into dictatorship cannot be explained as merely the product of Trump's personal ambitions or psychopathology. The United States is governed by a capitalist oligarchy that fuses the aristocratic outlook of monarchy and the ideological reaction of the slavocracy with the class interests of finance capital.

250 years since the American Revolution—and the repudiation of its legacy

The assault on democratic rights and the conspiracy to transform the United States into a fascistic dictatorship is unfolding amid the approaching celebration of a great historic anniversary.

During this year, 2026, the American and international working class will observe the 250th anniversary of the proclamation of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776, a world-historical event that founded the United States and marked the beginning of a new epoch of political and social revolution.

The military struggle against British rule began in April 1775, when the colonists took up arms at Lexington and Concord. But the American Revolution did not arise as an orderly constitutional dispute conducted by a small layer of colonial notables. It occurred as a consequence of the radicalization of broad sections of the population in opposition to the increasingly oppressive actions of the British monarchy and imperial administration. As repression intensified—through arbitrary executive power, punitive economic measures, the denial of basic rights, and the use or threat of military force—the conflict drove the development of mass resistance that could no longer be contained within established political channels.

This radicalization found expression in an eruption of new forms of political self-organization. Tens of thousands of ordinary people were drawn into active political life, creating local committees, assemblies and networks of coordination that challenged imperial authority and increasingly displaced it. As the historian Richard Alan Ryerson explains: "The American Revolution mobilized tens of thousands of ordinary men in hundreds of communities, large and small, to change both the political and social order..."

Fifteen months after Lexington and Concord, delegates assembled in Philadelphia adopted a declaration drafted by 33-year-old Thomas

Jefferson that proclaimed universal democratic principles as the basis of the struggle for American independence. The document includes what is arguably one of the most revolutionary sentences ever written:

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.

Profoundly rooted in the Enlightenment thought of the 17th and 18th centuries, shaped by the great materialist political and social theorists of that historical period, the Declaration asserted the right of the people to the revolutionary overthrow of oppressive governments. In Jefferson's words: "Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed—That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it..."

The historical legacy of the American Revolution acquires burning actuality in the present. The principles proclaimed 250 years ago are being repudiated on every front. The Bill of Rights lies in tatters, and the political system is being remodeled on the basis of dictatorship. All the "grievances" against King George III outlined in the Declaration—including that he "sent hither swarms of Officers to harass our people"—could serve as an indictment of the present government.

Two-and-a-half centuries after the American Revolution proclaimed that "all men are created equal," social inequality has reached levels without parallel in modern American history.

In 2025 alone, US billionaires (roughly 900 individuals) increased their net worth by 18 percent, bringing their combined holdings to nearly \$7 trillion. Ten individuals account for \$2.4 trillion of this total. Elon Musk, the wealthiest among them, has seen his fortune rise to \$749 billion—more than the GDP of entire countries. Capitalizing on his position at the apex of the state, Trump increased his net worth from \$4.3 billion to \$7.3 billion in a single year, vaulting more than 100 places up the list of America's richest individuals.

According to data released this week by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, labor's share of income in the third quarter of 2025 fell to its lowest level on record in the United States. Tens of millions confront falling wages, surging prices and unmanageable debt. Corporations are using artificial intelligence to eliminate jobs en masse in a bloodbath that will intensify further in 2026.

The Trump administration oversees a sweeping assault on core social programs—including Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, food assistance, public education and public health—seeking to finance global war and domestic repression by stripping the population of even the most basic protections.

This social reality is the basis of dictatorship. When a tiny layer monopolizes wealth and power, democratic forms become increasingly incompatible with the preservation of oligarchic rule. The ruling class responds not by reforming the system but by discarding the forms of legality and expanding the instruments of coercion.

The social, economic and political conditions that have produced Trump are the outcome of decades of bipartisan policy. The utter incapacity and unwillingness of the Democratic Party to oppose Trump's dictatorship reflect the reality that the entire political system is controlled by the capitalist oligarchy.

Five years ago, Trump attempted to overturn the results of the 2020 elections in a fascist coup. The Biden administration treated Trump with kid gloves, and he was never held accountable for this criminal conspiracy.

During the 2024 elections, he pledged to "rule as a dictator from day one," and the Democrats themselves described him as a "fascist." Yet over the past year, as he systematically implemented the drive for dictatorship, the Democrats have worked tirelessly to suppress and demobilize opposition. Trump carries out criminal and unconstitutional actions without even the suggestion from the Democratic leadership that he should be removed from power.

Their priority is never the defense of democratic rights, but the preservation of capitalist rule. They agree with the essential content of Trump's agenda—militarism, austerity, corporate deregulation and the expansion of the repressive apparatus of the state. What they fear above all is not Trump's dictatorship but the eruption of a mass movement from below that threatens the foundations of the capitalist order. To rely on the Democratic Party is to render any genuine opposition to dictatorship impossible.

The events of the first week of 2026—the invasion of Venezuela and the killing of Renee Nicole Good—mark a political turning point. Protests are already developing across the country, including more than 1,000 demonstrations on Saturday. Outrage over the murder is intersecting with a broad popular opposition to war, dictatorship, inequality and the vicious persecution of immigrants.

But the aim of these demonstrations cannot be to appeal to the very gangsters orchestrating these crimes to change their policies. As the demonstrations against the Gaza genocide proved, protests that are not guided by a political strategy aimed at the mobilization of the working class are ineffective.

The Socialist Equality Party puts forward the following demands and program for the protests against the murder of Renee Nicole Good:

- **The immediate arrest and prosecution of all those responsible for the murder of Renee Nicole Good**
- **The withdrawal of all ICE, Customs and Border Protection (CBP), and Department of Homeland Security (DHS) forces from Minneapolis and every other city**
- **The abolition of these Gestapo agencies that terrorize immigrant communities**
- **The immediate release of all detainees held in ICE custody and an end to all raids, renditions and deportations**
- **Full legal rights and protections for all immigrant workers and their families**
- **The withdrawal of all troops from Venezuela and the Caribbean and the dismantling of the US war machine**
- **Repudiation of all support for Israel and solidarity with the Palestinian people facing an ongoing genocide.**

To fight for these demands requires:

- The organized intervention of the working class—the social force that produces everything and whose interests are fundamentally opposed to the oligarchy's assault on democratic rights and social conditions.
- The complete political and organizational independence of the working class from the Democratic Party and its collaborators and apologists.
- The recognition that the fight against war and the attack against democratic rights must be linked to a fight against the capitalist system.
- The implementation of an international strategy that recognizes the necessity to connect the struggles of workers within the United States with those of the working class throughout the world. The fight against globally organized transnational corporations cannot be waged on a purely national basis.

How to begin

The SEP calls for the building of rank-and-file committees in every workplace, school, hospital and neighborhood. These organizations must be independent of the corporatist trade union apparatus, which functions as an arm of the state and blocks genuine resistance. They must be developed as centers of resistance, uniting all sections of the working class—in industry, logistics and transport, restaurants and fast food, social services, legal defense, education, public services, arts and culture, entertainment, medicine, healthcare, the sciences, computer technology, programming and other specialized professions—together with student youth, against Trump’s fascist government, the complicity of the Democrats and the broader assault on democratic rights and living standards.

In the same way that the radicalization of the population in the 1770s produced new forms of political self-organization—committees and assemblies that challenged imperial authority—the fight against dictatorship today requires the conscious construction of independent organizations of workers’ power. It is for this purpose that the SEP and the International Committee of the Fourth International (ICFI) initiated the formation of the International Workers Alliance of Rank-and-File Committees (IWA-RFC).

The factories and workplaces—where the working class is concentrated, where production and logistics can be halted, and where the social power of labor is most directly expressed—must become centers of organized opposition to dictatorship. Rank-and-file committees are the practical means through which workers can coordinate actions across industries and borders, defend targeted communities, expose state and corporate propaganda, and unify struggles against repression, austerity and war into a conscious political movement.

The logic of the struggles of workers in defense of their social and democratic rights leads toward unified mass action, including a general strike. It is necessary to revive the great traditions of class struggle, including the historic 1934 Minneapolis general strike, in which workers confronted and defeated a brutal campaign of corporate and state repression.

No serious movement can be waged against fascism without a direct frontal assault on the wealth and power of the capitalist oligarchy. The obscene fortunes of the billionaires must be expropriated, and the giant banks and corporations transformed into public utilities, democratically controlled and operated for the benefit of society, not private profit. The oligarchs’ domination over political and economic life must be ended.

The claim advanced by figures like the newly elected mayor of New York, Zohran Mamdani, that the conditions of workers can be addressed by tinkering around the edges through minor reforms is a dangerous political trap. The financial oligarchy, like the monarchy and the slavocracy before it, demonstrates through the actions of the Trump government that it is not interested in reform. Its response to opposition is violence and repression.

We emphasize: This is not only an American struggle. The crisis unfolding in the United States is the sharpest expression of a global process. Workers in every country face the same attacks, and they must unite across borders to confront the global system of imperialism and war. Nationalism is the breeding ground of fascism. The SEP fights for the international unity of the working class and the overthrow of the capitalist system in every country.

The first American Revolution (1775-83) was a struggle against the domination of the British Empire. The second American Revolution (1861-1865) required the destruction of slavery through civil war. The third American Revolution, developing as the most critical element of an international struggle, is against the capitalist oligarchy that rules the entire social and political system. It is a question of the conscious and organized offensive of the working class for socialism: to take political power, establish genuine organs of democratic rule, and reorganize

economic life on the basis of social need.

In the course of his interview with the *New York Times*, Trump was asked, “Is there anything that you think can constrain your power on the world stage?” He replied, “Yeah, there is one thing. My own morality. My own mind. It’s the only thing that can stop me.”

The White House megalomaniac is wrong. There is a power greater than Trump and the oligarchy. It is the power of the American and international working class.

But the program and leadership needed to fight back must be built. The Socialist Equality Party advances this strategy as the way forward for workers and youth who want to fight. We call on all those who agree with this perspective to join the SEP and take up the fight for socialism, to secure a future free from fascism, war and capitalist barbarism.



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