

For a general strike to stop Trump's occupation of Minneapolis!

Socialist Equality Party (US)
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On Tuesday, a coalition of local unions and community organizations in Minneapolis, Minnesota called a walkout for Friday, January 23, framed as a one-day general strike and statewide economic shutdown to oppose the rampage by Trump's Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), including the murder of Renee Nicole Good.

The Socialist Equality Party supports this action and urges the broadest possible participation by workers, students and youth. The call for a walkout has emerged under growing pressure from working people across Minnesota who are outraged by the paramilitary occupation of their city. Protests have spread over the 10 days since the brutal killing of Good, who, according to recently released reports, was shot twice in her chest and once in her forearm as she was driving away from ICE officials.

The call for the general strike can prove to be an important step forward in the fight against ICE's reign of terror in Minneapolis. But this action must be conceived of as the beginning of a broader mobilization of the working class in the city, state and throughout the country against the Trump administration.

The call for action comes as Trump has threatened to invoke the Insurrection Act in Minnesota. This is a qualitative escalation in his conspiracy to establish a dictatorship.

In a Truth Social post, Trump, responding to the protests that have erupted over the ICE murder of Good, declared that if state officials do not "stop the professional agitators and insurrectionists from attacking the Patriots of ICE," he will "institute the INSURRECTION ACT ... and quickly put an end to the travesty that is taking place in that once great State."

By branding protests and popular resistance as "insurrection," the Trump regime is laying the groundwork for mass violence. The Insurrection Act gives the president the power to deploy the US military, overriding the Posse Comitatus Act. Trump's threat to invoke the Insurrection Act against Minnesota's population—absent any request from the state, and in response to peaceful protests—is blatantly illegal.

The stark reality of what is happening was acknowledged in the extraordinary statement by Democratic Governor Tim Walz Wednesday evening. He declared that developments in the state "defy belief" and that "News reports simply don't do justice to the level of chaos and disruption and trauma the federal

government is raining down upon our communities."

Walz stated that "two to three thousand armed agents of the federal government" have been deployed across the state, going door-to-door, "pulling over people indiscriminately, including U.S. citizens, and demanding to see their papers," and "breaking windows, dragging pregnant women down the street, just plain grabbing Minnesotans and shoving them into unmarked vans, kidnapping innocent people with no warning and no due process."

Walz described the operation as "a campaign of organized brutality against the people of Minnesota by our own federal government." Citing Trump's fascist threat that "the day of retribution and reckoning is coming," the governor stated: "That is a direct threat against the people of this state."

What Walz said about the situation in Minneapolis is true. But what is completely lacking is any serious strategy to stop Trump and ICE. Walz spoke about fighting "in the courts and at the ballot box," but Trump has already made clear that he will ignore any legal decisions that challenge his authority. Moreover, the Supreme Court is controlled by a gang of fascists and reactionaries who ruled, in 2024, that Trump cannot be prosecuted for "official acts" carried out as president.

As for elections, Trump is making ever more overt threats to cancel or nullify the 2026 midterm elections, or—if they are held—conduct them under conditions of martial law. In an interview with Reuters published Thursday, Trump declared that he had accomplished so much that "we shouldn't even have an election."

Bloomberg News reported Wednesday that the administration is building a national voter database and demanding states turn over complete voter rolls, including Social Security numbers and home addresses. With this infrastructure in place, ICE agents could be deployed at polling places to "verify" voters, suppress turnout, and intimidate working class and immigrant communities.

In explaining Washington's invasion of Venezuela earlier this month, Secretary of State Marco Rubio bluntly stated, "When [Trump] says he'll do something, he means it." This same logic now applies to Trump's threats to invoke the Insurrection Act, cancel elections and impose martial law.

There is massive opposition within Minneapolis and beyond

to the police-state occupation and Trump's unfolding coup. In the week since the murder of Good, there have been daily demonstrations, high school walkouts, and acts of protest and resistance involving broad sections of the population.

But resistance will only succeed if it is grounded in the active mobilization of the working class, the immense social force that produces all wealth and holds the power to bring society to a halt. What is required is a shift away from the non-struggle and collaboration of the Democratic Party, and toward the independent organization of a mass movement of workers.

This is the significance of the action called on January 23. The *World Socialist Web Site* has repeatedly raised the need for a general strike movement in response to the occupation of Minneapolis. But a general strike is not a symbolic protest or consumer boycott. It means the complete shutdown of production and economic activity.

Workers must reject the threats issued by the governor-appointed Metropolitan Council that participation in strike action is prohibited by public employee laws and collective bargaining agreements. The Trump administration is operating openly outside the bounds of legality. The defense of democratic rights cannot be subordinated to contract technicalities negotiated by the union apparatus to suppress the class struggle.

And the entire working class must be mobilized. While a number of local unions have endorsed the January 23 demonstration, the Minnesota AFL-CIO, closely tied to the Democratic Party, has thus far refused to do so. In the aftermath of the murder of Renee Nicole Good, the state labor federation issued a statement declaring itself "shocked, heartbroken and angry" but did not call for any action. Instead, it directed workers to place their confidence in a "full investigation" and in appeals to "elected officials."

In comments to the WSWS on Thursday, Bernie Burnham, president of the Minnesota AFL-CIO, claimed that she had to consult with the executive board before making any statement about a strike or support for the January 23 action.

The Socialist Equality Party calls on workers to organize independently through the formation of rank-and-file committees in every workplace, school and neighborhood. The fight of workers cannot be subordinated to the operations of the Democratic Party or trade union apparatus, which is hostile to a real struggle against Trump.

Workers should immediately hold emergency meetings at every factory, school, warehouse, depot and workplace, union and non-union. At these meetings, workers should elect representatives to form rank-and-file committees charged with coordinating and directing the struggle and the defense of the people.

Resolutions should be adopted endorsing open-ended strike action. Such resolutions must articulate a concrete set of demands, including the arrest and prosecution of Renée Nicole Good's killer; the immediate withdrawal of all ICE, Customs

and Border Protection (CBP) and Department of Homeland Security (DHS) forces; the abolition of these paramilitary agencies that terrorize immigrant communities; and the immediate release of all detainees held in ICE custody.

Coordinating committees should be established to link these rank-and-file bodies across industries and regions, creating the structures necessary for common action on a mass scale.

There is a powerful precedent for such a movement in the history of the city itself. In 1934, Minneapolis was the site of one of the most militant and significant general strikes in American history, led by Trotskyist militants and the Teamsters. Workers defied the Citizens Alliance, the National Guard and police repression. Despite shootings and martial law, they won decisive victories and laid the foundation for industrial unionism across the country.

Today, the situation is even more urgent. Workers confront not only employers' associations and National Guard repression, but a fascist president, the paramilitary forces of the state and an escalating war abroad and at home.

Minnesota is not, as Walz claimed in his remarks Wednesday, an "island." What is happening in Minneapolis is the spearhead of a broader conspiracy to impose dictatorship. Trump speaks and acts as the political instrument of the capitalist oligarchy, which is dispensing with democratic forms of rule. The Democratic Party, a party of Wall Street and the military-intelligence apparatus, is hostile to any genuine movement against this danger.

The strike movement now emerging in Minneapolis must be expanded across the country and internationally. The International Workers Alliance of Rank-and-File Committees (IWA-RFC) has been established to provide the structure and leadership for such a global counteroffensive. It fights to connect opposition to fascism and dictatorship with the struggle of the working class against war, job cuts, inflation and social misery.

The Socialist Equality Party urges all workers to take up a serious discussion in every workplace about what must be done. The situation is urgent. The way forward is not through appeals to courts or the next election, but through the independent political mobilization of the working class.



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