

Stop ICE murders and dictatorship! Build a rank-and-file movement of the working class for a general strike!

Socialist Equality Party (US)
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The following statement will be distributed at protests organized as part of a national day of action on January 30, 2026.

Across Minnesota and throughout the United States, anger and outrage are growing over the ICE murders of Alex Pretti and Renée Nicole Good, the mass roundup of immigrants, the paramilitary occupation of American cities and the conspiracy by the Trump administration to establish a presidential dictatorship.

Last week's massive demonstration of tens of thousands in Minnesota and the popular outrage over the murder of Pretti have shocked the political establishment, both Republican and Democratic. But the so-called "tactical retreat" by Trump is a maneuver. The danger of dictatorship has not receded—It is intensifying.

The Trump government operates as a criminal conspiracy against the democratic rights of the people. In justifying ICE murder, the Trump regime has declared the state's unlimited right to kill. Vice President JD Vance stated this explicitly after Good's killing, saying that the agent who shot her was "protected by absolute immunity ... he was doing his job." The principles invoked by Vance derive from the jurisprudence of fascism.

The drive to dictatorship is inseparable from the staggering levels of social inequality in the United States. Trump speaks and acts as the political representative of the capitalist oligarchy, which, faced with growing economic, social and political crises, is abandoning all democratic norms to maintain its wealth and power.

While working people struggle with skyrocketing housing costs, mass layoffs and collapsing public health systems, America's billionaires gained \$1.5 trillion in Trump's first year back in office—an astonishing 22 percent increase—lifting their combined wealth to \$8.2 trillion. ICE's operations are one element of this war on society, aimed at terrorizing the population and suppressing resistance to exploitation and the destruction of basic social rights.

The oligarchy is not only defending its wealth through dictatorship—It is enriching itself through the machinery of repression. The Trump administration's immigration crackdown has created a multibillion-dollar windfall for major corporations, which now profit directly from ICE's reign of terror. In the past year alone, companies like Palantir, Deloitte, Amazon and Microsoft have received over \$22 billion in contracts with ICE and CBP as it terrorizes the population.

At the same time, the Trump administration is responding to a deepening domestic crisis and mounting political opposition by escalating its criminal actions abroad. This week, Trump threatened war against Iran if it did not accept a list of US ultimatums, declaring he was prepared to strike "with speed and violence." These threats follow the illegal invasion of Venezuela and kidnapping of President Nicolás Maduro on January 3.

The escalation of war is not only aimed at asserting US imperialist interests abroad, including preparing for a conflict with China, but will be used to justify the criminalization of dissent at home.

Under these conditions, the Democrats and media talking heads, who are presenting the tactical maneuvering of the Trump administration as a major shift, are peddling complacency and lies.

Minnesota Governor Walz and Minneapolis Mayor Frey are hailing their "productive" phone calls with Trump as the administration is overseeing ongoing raids in Minneapolis, assaulting protests in Texas against the roundup of children and drawing up databases of protesters. The fascist attack on Ilhan Omar on Tuesday, justified and inspired by Trump, was followed by an FBI raid on an election office in Georgia on Wednesday, part of the Trump regime's efforts to undermine the 2026 elections.

On Thursday, Senate Democrats reached a deal with Trump to keep the government funded. The agreement includes full-year funding for most agencies and a separate continuing resolution to keep the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) operating for at least two more weeks while negotiations continue over meaningless "guardrails."

In plain terms, the Democrats have agreed to keep ICE funded and operational while they work out a deal with the fascist president. At the same time, they voted for a military spending bill that places no limits on Trump's war-making powers. The Democrats are co-conspirators, not opponents, in the campaign of terror at home and aggression abroad.

In the final analysis, the Democrats stand with Trump in defense of the capitalist system and the wealth of the oligarchs. Their greatest fear is not a military-police dictatorship but a working class movement that escapes their control and threatens the existing concentration of wealth and the organization of society on a capitalist foundation.

There is immense and growing opposition to the Trump administration's fascist agenda. But this movement must be armed with a political perspective, a strategy for victory, and new forms of organization rooted in the power of the working class.

It is enormously significant that the demand for a general strike is emerging—not from union leaders, Democratic politicians or any section of the official establishment but from below. Workers, students and progressive layers of the middle class are drawing the critical conclusion that protest alone is not enough and that only the mass, coordinated action spearheaded by the working class can defeat the Trump regime and halt the escalating campaign of state violence.

However, neither January 23 nor January 30 constitute a general strike. A general strike is not a consumer boycott or one-day protest. It is the organized shutdown of production by the working class.

The trade union apparatus is doing everything it can to block this from happening. While some state and local unions have endorsed protests, they have insisted that workers remain on the job, citing "no-strike clauses" in contracts that they themselves negotiated.

Alex Pretti was not only an ICU nurse but a member of AFGE (American Federation of Government Employees) Local 3669. The union apparatus, however, while issuing empty statements of regret, is proposing no strike action or doing anything to mobilize their members in collective action. The United Auto Workers released a brief declaration acknowledging Pretti's union affiliation. While stating that "the labor movement must not be silent," it proposed no action by the 400,000 active members of the UAW.

The political function of the well-paid operatives that staff the union apparatus is to maintain the domination of the Democratic Party over the working class and to preempt any development of an independent movement from below.

The Socialist Equality Party proposes the organization of a nationwide general strike with the following demands:

- **The removal of ICE agents from Minneapolis and all cities; the disbanding of the organization; and the criminal prosecution of its officials and all agents responsible for murder and other acts of violence.**
- **The immediate end to the vicious persecution of immigrants living in the United States.**
- **The immediate release from detention of all immigrants who have been swept up in the ICE dragnet.**
- **The resignation and prosecution of all members of the Trump administration responsible for the violation of rights guaranteed by the US Constitution.**

To fight for these demands, the SEP calls for the building of rank-and-file committees in every factory, depot, warehouse, office, school and hospital. Workers should hold emergency meetings, elect delegates, draw up demands and link together across industries and regions.

These committees must coordinate mass action, defend those under attack and lay the foundations for a general strike, that is, the complete shutdown of economic activity. This cannot be limited to Minneapolis. Trump's conspiracy for dictatorship is national, and the response of the working class must extend across

the entire country.

Opposition to dictatorship must be connected to the growing movement of the working class against inequality and exploitation. More than 46,000 nurses are on strike across New York City, California and Hawaii in opposition to intolerable conditions and the subordination of healthcare to corporate profit. At the same time, the national contract covering 30,000 oil refinery workers, who are responsible for two-thirds of the country's refining capacity, is set to expire on Sunday, February 1.

The SEP and the International Committee of the Fourth International initiated the International Workers Alliance of Rank-and-File Committees (IWA-RFC) to provide the structure and leadership, not only in the United States but throughout the world. The IWA-RFC fights to connect opposition to fascism and dictatorship with the struggle of the working class against war, job cuts, inflation and social misery.

A general strike, however, is not a panacea. If its aim is merely to pressure the Trump administration or appeal to sections of the state, it will end in defeat. The central issue is not how to "influence" the existing institutions but who holds power and in whose interests society is organized.

The Socialist Equality Party is fighting to build a revolutionary leadership in the working class. The fight against the Trump dictatorship is the fight against the oligarchy, and the fight against the oligarchy is the fight against capitalism. The SEP is the US section of the International Committee of the Fourth International (ICFI), which is leading a global movement to unite workers across all countries in a common fight to overthrow capitalism and establish workers' power and socialism.

We also call on students and young people to join the fight against dictatorship. There have already been walkouts at hundreds of schools and college campuses, which should be expanded. The International Youth and Students for Social Equality (IYSSE), the student and youth movement of the SEP, urges students to go to the factories and warehouses. Build a unified movement of students and workers against repression, inequality and war.

To stop the march to authoritarian rule, repression and war, the working class must intervene as an independent political force. This requires the development of a mass socialist movement, rooted in the fight for equality and the democratic control of society by the vast majority. The struggle we face is not only against a criminal government but against the capitalist system that gave rise to it.



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