

Free Julian Assange! Free Chelsea Manning!

The Socialist Equality Party (Australia) will hold rallies in Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane over the coming weeks to demand that the Australian government take immediate action to secure the freedom of WikiLeaks founder, Julian Assange.

Since he was expelled from Ecuador's London embassy and arrested by British police on April 11, Assange has been held at Belmarsh Prison, dubbed the UK's Guantanamo Bay. He faces the prospect of extradition to the US, over WikiLeaks' exposures of war crimes and global diplomatic conspiracies, on Espionage Act charges that carry a maximum sentence of 175 years' imprisonment.

The persecution of Assange is the sharpest expression of a campaign by governments around the world to abolish freedom of the press and other fundamental democratic rights. The US charges against Assange have opened the floodgates for attacks on journalists in many countries, including recent Australian Federal Police raids on a News Corp reporter and on the ABC, over articles exposing Australian war crimes in Afghanistan and plans for government spying on its citizens.

Successive Australian governments have played a central role in the US-led vendetta against Assange. Whether Greens-backed Labor or Coalition, they have refused to defend the WikiLeaks founder,

despite the fact that he is an Australian citizen and journalist.

The SEP is fighting to build a mass political movement that will force the Australian government to fulfil its obligations to Assange, by using its legal discretion and diplomatic powers to secure his immediate return to Australia, with a guarantee against extradition to the US.

Assange and the courageous whistleblower Chelsea Manning, are class war prisoners. They are being persecuted to establish a precedent for the suppression of growing opposition among workers, students and young people to the escalating drive to war, the austerity agenda of governments everywhere and the turn to police-state measures.

Millions of ordinary people rightly view Assange and Manning as heroes, who are being attacked for exposing the truth. All those who oppose their incarceration and torture must be mobilised. The only way to secure Assange and Manning's freedom, and to defend fundamental democratic rights, is through the development of an independent movement of the working class against militarism, war and their source—the capitalist profit-system.

We call on all supporters of democratic rights and opponents of imperialist war to promote the rallies as widely as possible, and to contact the SEP to become involved.

Melbourne
Sunday, July 14, 2pm
State Library of Victoria
328 Swanston St

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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