

The way forward in the fight against Trump and May

By Chris Marsden
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This statement is being distributed at anti-Trump demonstrations being held in Britain on February 20. To download a pdf version of this statement for distribution, click on the "Leaflet" link above. Tens of thousands are protesting throughout Britain against US President Donald Trump.

Those taking to the streets are angered by Trump's anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim measures, threats of war against China and North Korea, his appointment of a cabinet of fascists, generals, big business figures and family members and his gratuitous sexism. He is widely seen as the most prominent representative of similar right-wing movements in Europe and internationally, including France's National Front and, in Britain, not only the UK Independence Party but also the Conservative government of Prime Minister Theresa May.

However, the two rival groups organising overlapping rallies on February 20, the Stop Trump Coalition and Stand up to Trump, offer no means through which a struggle can be taken forward against Trump's cabinet of billionaires and social reactionaries and May's pack of baying Thatcherites.

The main protest outside parliament as MPs debate whether Trump's planned state visit should be cancelled is organised by the Stop Trump Coalition. It is led by an alliance of Labour MPs, including former party leader Ed Miliband, the Liberal Democrats, the Green Party, Plaid Cymru (Party of Wales) and others. It is backed by Trades Union Congress General Secretary Frances O'Grady and a dozen leaders of British trade unions who campaigned for a Remain vote in the referendum on European Union (EU) membership last year.

Beneath a pose of moral outrage, the aim of the coalition is to minimise the impact of Britain's

decision to leave the EU for British capitalism by maintaining access to the single market and ensuring that the UK remains oriented to an alliance with the major European powers.

Unable to reverse the EU referendum result in parliament due to the pledge by Jeremy Corbyn's Labour Party not to block Brexit, the pro-Remain forces have taken to the streets hoping to use anti-Trump and anti-racist sentiment as a means of amplifying their anti-Brexit message.

Nowhere will you hear its leading political figures denounce the EU's own vicious anti-migrant measures, which include a Fortress Europe policy that has led to the deaths of tens of thousands of refugees. Instead, there is a sickening depiction not only of the UK but the other European powers as a great civilising alternative to May's alliance with Trump.

Writing in the *Guardian*, Paul Mason insists, "We need a Dump Trump foreign policy," which he defines as an "alliance with countries whose governments and peoples share our values," including "France, the Netherlands, Germany, Canada and Greece."

In reality, France's Socialist Party government is presently showing its commitment to "our values" by imposing a state of emergency under which thousands of homes have been raided and hundreds arrested, while its police brutalise immigrants at Calais and several were only recently involved in the anal rape of a young Muslim man. In France and in the Netherlands, officially sanctioned racism and xenophobia has brought far-right parties to the brink of governmental office.

Equally significant is Mason's citing of Greece, which under Syriza is imposing austerity measures dictated by the EU that have brought about social ruin.

This is the reality of life for working people, whether

inside or outside the EU—a fact which is of no consequence for the extraordinarily privileged upper-middle class layers that make up the Stop Trump Coalition leadership.

Mason also makes clear the militarist agenda of his “progressive” alternative, denouncing Trump for threatening the NATO alliance and urging that the UK “maintain sanctions against Russia.”

The main figure in instigating the “Stop Trump Coalition” campaign is *Guardian* journalist Owen Jones.

When the first UK protests against Trump were launched, Jones announced his own protest in London while mounting a McCarthyite witch-hunt against the Socialist Workers Party. He declared that he would not support protests involving organisations including the Stop the War Coalition, Stand Up to Racism, the People’s Assembly, the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament and the Muslim Council of Britain, because the SWP, described as a “cult which covered up rape,” was involved—a reference to allegations made in 2013 against a former leading member that were badly mishandled by the organisation.

Jones’ real political motives were revealed in a tweet in which he called opposing protests “a sectarian Peoples [sic] front of Judea pro Brexit demo.”

Stand up to Trump does include pro-Brexit tendencies including the SWP, the Communist Party of Britain and Counterfire, but also others hostile to the Blairite wing of the Labour Party and their anti-Corbyn alliance. It boasts that a representative of Corbyn’s office has “observer status.” But holding up Corbyn as the figurehead for an alternative movement offers no alternative at all.

Corbyn’s constant effort is to appease his party’s right wing on every issue—not only regarding their naked militarism, but on refusing to defend the migration rights of European workers and in demanding that Labour councils loyally impose the austerity measures demanded by the Tories. In the end, Stand up to Trump merely shadows the forces grouped in the Stop Trump Coalition—limiting itself to having May’s invitation to Trump “rescinded” by building “the broadest-possible movement.”

Trump will not be defeated by denying him an audience with the queen! He is not an aberrant individual to be merely ostracised, but the

representative of the capitalist oligarchy in the US, just as May is here in the UK. That is why the only force that can defeat their “special relationship”—a euphemism for the imposition of savage austerity and turn to trade and military war on both sides of the Atlantic—is the working class, armed with a socialist and internationalist programme.

The defence of the democratic rights of immigrants, women, Muslims and other minorities, now under sustained attack, must become an integral part of the fight against inequality, unemployment, poverty, police violence, dictatorship and war. It requires a mass independent political movement of the working class, above all its younger generation, against the capitalist system and for a socialist society free from all forms of oppression.

In this life and death struggle against the governments in Washington and London, the ally of workers and youth in the UK are not the governments in Berlin, Paris and Athens, but the workers of America, Europe and the world. Recognising this, we urge all those in attendance today to take the decision to join the Socialist Equality Party, British section of the International Committee of the Fourth International.

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Socialist Equality Party visit:

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