

Watch the Sydney rally to free Assange live!

28 June 2019

The Socialist Equality Party (SEP) in Australia will livestream on both YouTube and Facebook its Sydney rally tomorrow in defence of WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange and the courageous whistleblower Chelsea Manning. The event will begin at 12 p.m. Saturday Australian Eastern Standard Time and 10 p.m. Friday US Eastern Time.

The rally will be addressed by leading public figures in Australia and representatives of the SEP. It will be chaired by Linda Tenenbaum, a longstanding SEP national committee member.

Among the speakers will be prominent cultural and media personalities who have defied the official silence over Assange's persecution and taken a stand in his defence. Collectively, they have played a significant role in alerting the public to the WikiLeaks founder's plight, and explaining its implications for civil liberties and press freedom.

They include Emeritus Professor Stuart Rees, the former head of the Sydney Peace Foundation, who in 2011 presented Assange with the organisation's Gold Medal for "peace with justice"; filmmaker James Ricketson, who was freed from a Cambodian jail after a public campaign against his incarceration on bogus espionage charges; and Mark Davis, a Walkley Award-winning investigative journalist who interviewed the WikiLeaks founder several times in 2010 and 2011.

Nick Beams, a decades-long leader of the Trotskyist movement, and Oscar Grenfell, a WSWS correspondent who has written extensively on the defence of Assange and Manning, will speak as well.

The protest is among the first events to be held since the WSWS International Editorial Board called for the formation of a Global Defence Committee to coordinate urgent actions demanding freedom for Assange and Manning.

This is an international campaign to mobilise the immense power of the working class to prevent

Assange's extradition to the US, where he faces life in prison for exposing war crimes and global diplomatic conspiracies. This struggle is at the cutting edge of the fight against the escalating drive to imperialist war, and the turn by governments everywhere to authoritarian forms of rule amid growing social and political opposition from the working class.

The Sydney rally follows a series of demonstrations organised by the SEP in Sydney and Melbourne, which have been attended by hundreds of workers and young people, and addressed by world-renowned defenders of democratic rights. It coincides with meetings, demonstrations and campaigns organised by the WSWS and the Socialist Equality Parties for Assange's freedom in Britain, France, Germany, the US, New Zealand, Sri Lanka, India and Turkey.

We appeal to all readers of the WSWS and defenders of democratic rights to watch the rally, share it on social media and to your friends, family and colleagues, and join the fight to free Assange and Manning!

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