

The political significance of the 2024 May Day Online Rally

Johannes Stern
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The following speech was given by Johannes Stern, editor of the German-language edition of the WSWS, as the summation of the International May Day 2024 Online Rally, held Saturday, May 4.

This year's online May Day rally has been a powerful demonstration of the revolutionary role of the international working class. We have given expression to the globally-integrated character of modern society, with workers listening in from dozens of countries across every habitable continent.

Today we have heard speeches from 12 countries, spanning five continents, given in 8 different languages, with subtitles in 10 languages, all presenting a unified revolutionary socialist perspective.

The central focus of this rally has been the genocide in Gaza and the war in Ukraine, which mark the opening stages of World War III. All the catastrophes which plagued mankind in the 20th century—world war, genocide, nuclear weapons, fascism, economic crises, pandemics—have returned with a vengeance in the 21st century.

The source of these problems lies in the nature of capitalism, a social system based on private ownership of the means of production and the division of the world into rival nation-states.

The objective crisis of world capitalism is radicalizing millions of workers, youth and intellectuals all over the world. Today we have heard reports on the powerful wave of anti-war protests against the genocide in Gaza which have swept the globe since last October. Masses of workers and youth are horrified by the daily atrocities being committed by the Zionist state of Israel, backed to the hilt by all of the imperialist powers. There is a growing determination to struggle and ensure the very survival of humanity.

This rally has placed central emphasis on the Marxist

conception that the international working class is the social force which can put an end to imperialist war, genocide, fascism and the broader descent into capitalist barbarism. But to fulfill its revolutionary task it needs a conscious political leadership.

In the *Transitional Program*, the founding document of the Fourth International written in 1938, Leon Trotsky famously wrote, “The world political situation as a whole is chiefly characterized by a historical crisis of the leadership of the proletariat.”

Today, with the threat of nuclear war greater than at any point in history, the task of resolving the historical crisis of the leadership of the proletariat attains the most burning urgency. Without a socialist revolution, mankind faces the threat of nuclear annihilation.

Therefore, as we draw this year's May Day rally to a conclusion, I urge you to make the decision today to join the ICFI and the Socialist Equality Party in your country. If you live in a country where there is not yet a section of the ICFI, fill out the form at wsws.org/join to get in contact with us. Take it upon yourself to study the history of Trotskyism, learn our program, and lay the foundations for building a new sympathizing group of the ICFI, which will ultimately become a new section of the world Trotskyist movement.

In this process, there is no more valuable resource than Mehring Books and its counterparts internationally, which publish the works of classical Marxism and the ICFI. These can be accessed at mehring.com.

If you have not already, please make a generous donation today to support the work of the WSWS and the ICFI at wsws.org/donate and set up a monthly recurring donation to sustain our work going forward.

Share the video of this rally as widely as possible on social media and with your coworkers, friends, and

family.

To commemorate this May Day, the day of international working class solidarity, pledge to renew and deepen the struggle for world socialist revolution.

Mobilize the working class against imperialist war!

Stop the genocide in Gaza!

Put an end to the threat of nuclear war!

Oppose fascism and authoritarianism!

Fight for a socialist public health program against COVID and future pandemics!

Secure the freedom of Comrade Bogdan Syrotyuk!

Students and young people, build the IYSSE at your campus or city!

And to everyone watching today, join and help build the International Committee of the Fourth International, the World Party of Socialist Revolution!



To contact the WSWS and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact