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Soldarity with Russian activist

Defend Socialists and Environmental Activists in Izhevsk: Demand the politically motivated charges against Dmitriy Tsarenko be dropped!

Publication date: Wednesday 20 May 2020

- News from around the world -

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Since late April, Dmitriy Tsarenko (aka Morozov), one of the leaders of the Russian Socialist Movement's branch in Izhevsk, Udmurtia, has been under increasing pressure from the state apparatus in particular, from the Interior Ministry's "Center for Combating Extremism," often wielded by the authorities against political opponents. On May 15th, the police attempted to charge him with an arson attack on the office of Russia's ruling United Russia party, and on May 18th, Dmitriy was officially charged with on the ridiculous offense of "justifying terrorism" in connection with a speech he gave at a protest in March. There, Morozov demanded that antifascists jailed as part of the Network Case, which was fabricated by the secret police, be freed. Breaking this article of the Russian Criminal Code can carry a sentence of up to three years.

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Any conviction of Tsarenko will be more than just another appalling instance of the Russian government cracking down on its opposition it will set a highly dangerous precedent, allowing practically any supporter of the solidarity campaign defending these political prisoners to be charged with the same crime. Russia's oldest human rights organization, Memorial, lists the accused in the Network Case as political prisoners.

We believe the criminal charges against Dmitriy to be politically motivated and linked to his active role in organizing protests of several hundred against the construction of a hazardous waste treatment plant in a nearby town bordered by bodies of water, his outspoken criticism of Udmurt Republic Governor Alexander Brenchalov, and his plans to run for local office this year. This crackdown on Morozov is right in line with the trend of growing repression we've seen this last month, as Russians' levels of trust in a government incapable of stemming the spread of the epidemic or providing them with direct financial support plummet.

We are calling on you to help launch an international campaign in solidarity with Dmitriy Morozov (Tsarenko). Reach out to your allies on the left, in environmental activism, and in human rights work and publicize his case using the hashtag #HandsOffMorozov #SolidarityIsNotACrime, and send letters demanding the charges be dropped to Russian Federation embassies in your countries, as well as to the Udmurt Investigative Committee (press@18.sledcom.ru) and the Government of the Udmurt Republic (gov@udmurt.ru). (Make sure to use Dmitriy's legal last name, Tsarenko.)

Contact information: socresist@gmail.com (please, send the copies of your protest separately)

20 May 2020

Russian Socialist Movement

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