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Outside the courthouse in East London, 15 April.

Malema Sentenced to 5 Years:

Fight This Racist Outrage!

Today's ruling by the KuGompo City (East London) magistrate, sentencing Julius Malema to 5 years in prison, is a massive escalation of the legal vendetta against the EFF leader. Make no mistake: behind this stands Donald Trump, whose demand that Malema be locked up is the spearhead of an onslaught against South Africa's black majority and national sovereignty. To buy the pretext of "gun safety" peddled by the magistrate and AfriForum is, at best, totally naive.

Ramaphosa and the GNU are hellbent on appeasing Trump. Just look at their despicable appointment of apartheid leftover Roelf Meyer as ambassador to the US! From Venezuela, to Palestine, Lebanon and Iran, we can see across the globe that this is the road to hell. *Asijiki!* All of us in Trump's crosshairs have a direct interest in fighting this racist, outrageous sentence: ***Hands off Julius Malema! Resist American empire!***

Malema's legal team immediately filed for leave to appeal the sentence (which was granted, even as the magistrate denied leave to appeal the **conviction**). Of course we must use every judicial avenue available. But it is a dangerous trap to pin our hopes on finding "a sober judge", as invoked

by numerous EFF leaders in recent days. Any judge who hears the appeal will be under massive pressure from the US imperialists and their Fifth Column, the white South African ruling class—whose outlook and class interests the bourgeois judiciary is beholden to.

The more the struggle to defend Malema is directed along the judicial road, the greater the danger that EFF Ground Forces will be demoralised, or be provoked into isolated adventurist actions. To counteract this, we must direct our energy into mobilising the working masses—who have the genuine interest and ability to force the state to back down.

This means we must tie the defence of Malema to defending the masses against US imperialism and the GNU. We must leverage this shared interest to fight against the obstacles thrown up by the bureaucratic leaderships of the trade unions and working-class organisations. From the SACP and COSATU, to NUMSA and SAFTU, their deafening silence in response to Malema's case is part and parcel of paralysis in response to the jobs bloodbath and privatization onslaught. This must be fought: ***For a united front to defend ourselves against US imperialism and the GNU!***