

WSWS editorial board chairman demands release of Sri Lankan socialists

7 August 1998

The WSWS is publishing here the text of a letter faxed to the LTTE on August 6 by David North, the chairman of the WSWS editorial board.

To the leadership of the LTTE:

On behalf of the editorial board of the *World Socialist Web Site*, I am writing to you concerning the July 28 arrest of two members of the Sri Lankan Socialist Equality Party in Kilinochchi. We have information that LTTE authorities who control that region seized Thirugnana Sambandan and Kasinathan Naguleshwaran as they were posting SEP placards.

LTTE officials in the area have confirmed the arrests to relatives of the SEP members, but have given no information as to their condition or whereabouts. We are told that the LTTE police official who has control over these individuals, one Pottu Amman, is notorious for violence against detainees.

You should be on notice that the *World Socialist Web Site*, published by the International Committee of the Fourth International, has a daily international audience of thousands of readers, embracing every continent, including the Indian subcontinent. In the two days since we first posted a report on the arrest of Sambandan and Naguleshwaran, we have received scores of letters protesting their seizure and demanding their immediate release. We are in the process of informing hundreds of organizations -- human rights, labor, Tamil -- of our comrades' arrest, and are publicizing their plight to news organizations around the world.

The BBC World News Service has already carried interviews with our representatives concerning the arrests.

In carrying out a politically motivated attack on SEP members you are attacking an international socialist organization that is known throughout the world. The determined opposition of the SEP of Sri Lanka, and its forerunner, the Revolutionary Communist League, to

Sinhalese chauvinism, and its struggle to mobilize the Sri Lankan workers and oppressed against Colombo's racist war in the north, are well known throughout Sri Lanka, India and the world. Indeed, the struggle of the SEP-RCL against Sinhalese chauvinism predates the very existence of the LTTE.

It is impossible to portray these arrests as anything other than an attempt to intimidate and repress political opposition to the policies of the LTTE.

Should any harm come to the SEP members in your custody, your entire leadership will be held politically responsible by informed individuals and organizations internationally.

We demand you immediately give an accounting of the fate of Thirugnana Sambandan and Kasinathan Naguleshwaran. Where are they being held? What are the charges against them?

We further demand that their relatives and comrades be allowed to visit them and make sure that they are not being mistreated.

Finally, we demand that they be released and any and all charges against them be dropped.

We expect a speedy reply to this letter.

Sincerely,

David North, chairman of the editorial board

See Also:

LTTE remains silent

International protests mount against arrest of Tamil socialists in Sri Lanka

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To contact the WSWS and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact