Condemn the LTTE's violent attack on Sri Lankan socialist

The WSWS Editorial Board
11 October 2002

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) have intensified their attacks on the members and supporters of the Socialist Equality Party (SEP) on the island of Kayts in the north of Sri Lanka.

On Tuesday October 8, a well-known member of the LTTE, Karthikesu Amirthalingam, violently assaulted SEP member Nagarajah Kodeeswaran, a 27-year-old father of three and a founding member and treasurer of the Ampihainagar Fishermen's Cooperative Union in Kayts. While Kodeeswaran managed to escape, he suffered serious knife wounds to the head, neck and shoulders. But for the fact that he was able to take shelter in a local store, in all likelihood he would have been killed.

Soon after the incident, SEP members in Kayts reported it to local police, but to date no action has been taken to arrest the individual involved. He has since made violent threats against other SEP members and supporters.

Tuesday's assault marks a serious escalation in the LTTE's attempts to intimidate and silence the SEP. Less than a week ago, the *World Socialist Web Site* and SEP launched an international campaign against death threats issued in September against the SEP in Kayts by two local LTTE officials, Semmanan and his deputy Arunthavan. The threats were made after the fishermen's union, under the SEP's leadership, refused to hand over money in response to efforts by the LTTE to extort funds to build a new office. It appears that the financial demand was a conscious provocation, designed to justify a violent campaign against the LTTE's political opponents.

The attacks on the SEP coincide with a sharp shift to the right by the LTTE, as it moves to accommodate itself to the new power-sharing deal being stitched together in the course of the current Sri Lankan peace negotiations. Shamelessly offering itself as a junior partner to the Colombo regime and its free market economic program, the LTTE is abandoning any pretence of defending the interests and democratic rights of the Tamil masses.

The LTTE's latest actions in Kayts have far-reaching political significance. The SEP (and its predecessor, the Revolutionary Communist League) is well known throughout Sri Lanka, for its indefatigable defence of the minority Tamil population. Since the start of the civil war in 1983, the SEP has waged a relentless and uncompromising campaign against the Sri Lankan government, defending the LTTE against the ongoing military assault and demanding the complete withdrawal of all Sri Lankan troops from the north and east. The response of the Sri Lankan state—and its political agents—has been state persecution, including the murder of several SEP members and the jailing of others.

Throughout the past decades, the SEP has made entirely clear its principled political differences with the LTTE's nationalist and separatist program. That the LTTE is now responding to these differences with violent attacks indicates the type of regime it is preparing to establish in the north.

The WSWS and the SEP welcome the numerous letters, emails and faxes that have been sent during the past week in support of our campaign against the LTTE's death threats. But this must now be intensified. We call on the entire Tamil community, in Sri Lanka and around the world, to publicly condemn the LTTE's murderous assault on Kodeeswaran and demand that the LTTE issue an unequivocal statement repudiating these methods, which serve to discredit the Tamils' cause. Amirthalingam must be immediately arrested and the LTTE must bring to order and discipline all

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those involved in the death threats.

We again call on all human rights organisations and individuals committed to the defence of democratic rights to denounce this criminal attack and uphold the right of the Socialist Equality Party to conduct its political work free from intimidation and violence.

Letters and statements should be posted or emailed to:

Jaffna

Ilamparithi
LTTE Jaffna Office
Potpathy Road, Kokuvil
Jaffna

Colombo

LTTE
c/- Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission
PO Box 1930
Galle Road
Colombo 3
Email: slmm-hq@mfa.no

They can also be posted or faxed to:

London

The LTTE
c/- Eelam House
202 Long Lane
London SE1 4QB
United Kingdom
Telephone: 44-171-403-4554
Fax: 44-201-403-1653

Please send copies of all statements to the WSWS at:
Email: editor@wsws.org
Fax:
United States: 248 967 3023
Britain: 0114 244 0224
Australia: 02 9790 3501

To contact the WSWS and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

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