

Condolences on the death of Comrade Senthil from the Socialist Equality Party of Sri Lanka

15 March 2007

The following condolences were sent by the Socialist Equality Party of Sri Lanka on the death of Raveenthiranathan Senthil Ravee. Comrade Senthil, a member of the International Committee based in London, was killed in a car accident in Britain on February 28.

The Socialist Equality Party of Sri Lanka sends its deep-felt sympathy and condolences to the wife of Comrade Senthil Ravee, his three children and all his family members.

The tragic death of Senthil on the motorway in the early hours of Wednesday, February 28, is symbolic of the intolerable social conditions that ordinary Tamil people born in Sri Lanka face, particularly in the last three-and-a-half decades. Senthil was returning from visiting Paris to help work through the application for refugee status for his sister in France.

Obviously, he was not driving in a reliable and safe car because he could not afford one, even after being employed in France and Britain for nearly 17 years since he was forced to flee from the brutal repression in the country where he was born. These facts point to an indictment that should be leveled directly against the world capitalist order, which treats human lives only as a cog in the machines of profit making to be discarded if it stands in the way.

While the bourgeois regimes in Sri Lanka, dominated by the United National Party and the Sri Lanka Freedom Party, stand accused mainly of the discrimination, victimizations and the subjecting of Tamil people to a brutal war since 1983, the pernicious role played by the reformist working class parties in the island in this reactionary project cannot be underestimated. It is not an exaggeration to state that the political situation in Sri Lanka, for certain—and for that matter the political equations in the Indian subcontinent and South Asia—would have been

drastically different if the Lanka Sama Samaja Party that spoke in the name of Trotskyism did not carry out the great betrayal in joining a capitalist government in 1964. This served to stabilize the political settlement imposed on the subcontinent by dismembering it into India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka in 1947-48 that was visibly disintegrating by the time of the late 1960s and early 1970s.

Senthil refused to become a mere victim of this political predicament and looked for a way out. He found the program of the world Trotskyist movement, the International Committee of the Fourth International, as the only organization that provided the answers to the burning issues faced by working people in South Asia and internationally. From the time he joined the Trotskyist movement as a youth in his early twenties, in France, he made his life's mission the development of a political movement for the struggle for international socialism, cutting across communal and national divisions that are cultivated in order to defend the decadent world capitalist order.

The world movement for the progressive transformation of the profit system, a system that once more brings the world to the brink of a barbaric nuclear third world war, has lost, in Senthil, a very valuable fighter in its vanguard. This loss can only be mitigated, if not fully recovered from, by our rededication to the task of educating working people throughout the globe and mobilizing them for world socialism.

In our moment of grave sadness, we join with all the comrades and supporters of the struggle for which Senthil stood.

Wije Dias, general secretary



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