

Memorial meeting planned in Paris for Comrade Raveenthiranathan Senthil Ravee

29 March 2007

The International Committee of the Fourth International and the *World Socialist Web Site* will be holding a memorial meeting in Paris on Sunday, April 15, to honour Raveenthiranathan Senthil Ravee.

Comrade Senthil was a Tamil member of the ICFI, the world Trotskyist movement, who was killed in a car accident in the early hours of February 28 on the London-bound motorway. He was returning from a visit to Paris, where he had been trying to secure refugee status for his sister.

Born on October 12, 1969, in Jaffna, Sri Lanka, Senthil belonged to a generation that paid a heavy price for the betrayal of the once Trotskyist Lanka Sama Samaja Party (LSSP), when it joined the capitalist government of the Sri Lankan Freedom Party in 1964. The LSSP's support for a constitution that institutionalised anti-Tamil racism had a lasting impact on the political development of the working class, undermining confidence in a socialist perspective and facilitating the growth of petty bourgeois nationalist organisations amongst both the Tamil and Sinhala masses.

Senthil grew to maturity in this political climate and became involved in the national struggle from the age of 15. He was driven into exile as a result of the combined repression of the Sinhalese and Indian army in the late 1980s—a situation made worse by the factional infighting between the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and other nationalist groups.

It was in France in 1991 that Senthil, along with others in the Tamil exile community, first had contact with supporters of the ICFI and came to understand not only the significance of the betrayal of the LSSP, but of the struggle of Sri Lanka's Trotskyists to defend the perspective of socialism.

He became a committed internationalist, working tirelessly to build the influence of the ICFI amongst

both Tamil and French workers. When the Tamil-language section of the *World Socialist Web Site* was launched in 2000, he embraced this as a decisive instrument in building the ICFI on the Indian subcontinent.

It is fitting that Comrade Senthil's memorial meeting should be held in Paris at the height of the presidential election campaign. He represented the polar opposite of the nationalist outlook of the French left, from the Socialist Party through to the various groups claiming to be Trotskyists, who are lining up behind PS candidate Ségolène Royal and whose political role does not differ fundamentally from that of the LSSP.

The memorial meeting will be addressed by international speakers from the Socialist Equality Party. By examining the historic lessons of events in Sri Lanka, the meeting will advance a socialist perspective for the French, European and international working class.

WSWS/ICFI memorial meeting

Raveenthiranathan Senthil Ravee (1969-2007)

Fighter for Trotskyism and socialist internationalism

The ideals he fought for: the theory and programme of the International Committee of the Fourth International

Sunday, 15 April, 3 p.m.

FIAP Jean Monnet, 30 rue Cabanis, Paris

Métro: Glacière

Speakers:

Wije Dias, Sri Lanka SEP

Chris Marsden, British SEP

Peter Schwarz, German SEP

Click here for a link to the Tamil/French leaflet for the April 15 meeting.



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Socialist Equality Party visit:

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