

More letters on LTTE threats

16 March 2009

The World Socialist Web Site has received further letters in response to the March 9 statement "Oppose LTTE campaign of threats and violence against SEP supporters in Europe!" We urge our readers and supporters to send protest letters demanding the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) immediately cease its attempts to suppress political debate within the Tamil community and end all threats against Socialist Equality Party members and supporters. (Previous correspondence can be viewed [here](#).)

To Tamils Forum

Sir,

The International Students for Social Equality at Glasgow University condemns violence and intimidation by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) against members and supporters of the International Committee of the Fourth International (ICFI).

At recent European demonstrations, in Paris, Berlin and London, against the vicious Sri Lankan military offensive, Socialist Equality Party (SEP) supporters were threatened with violence, subjected to anti-Sinhala abuse and told to cease distributing political material.

These threats came from stewards from a range of LTTE groupings. SEP supporters campaigning for a March 15 public meeting in Paris against the civil war and the oppression of the Tamils of Sri Lanka also had their leaflets seized and destroyed by the pro-LTTE Comité de coordination tamoul en France (CCT). These threats and actions from the LTTE constitute a gross violation of democratic rights and follow LTTE's habitual response to its political opponents—violence, kidnapping and assassination.

The SEP in Sri Lanka, and its forerunner the Revolutionary Communist League, the Sri Lankan section of the ICFI, has an unblemished record of championing the democratic rights and social aspirations of the oppressed Tamil masses. The SEP demands the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of all Sri Lankan troops from the north and east as a crucial first step in uniting the working class and peasantry, Sinhala, Tamil and Muslim, to overthrow the reactionary Sinhala elite-dominated capitalist state and establish a United Socialist States of Sri Lanka and Eelam that will ensure the democratic rights and basic social needs of all.

The LTTE's violence and intimidation reflects the bankruptcy of its bourgeois nationalist perspective, which aspires to create a capitalist Tamil statelet dependent on one or more imperialist powers.

We demand the LTTE and its auxiliary organisations in Europe

immediately cease attempts to suppress political discussion amongst Tamil people worldwide and cease all violence and threats directed towards SEP members and supporters.

Yours sincerely,
Steve Johnstone
President ISSE Glasgow

British Tamils Forum Wimbledon, London, United Kingdom

I vehemently oppose the recent and past threats and violence of the LTTE against Socialist Equality Party (SEP) members in Europe and elsewhere. These anti-democratic actions are in contradiction to your claim to be the only true representative of the interests of the Tamil people. Their interests cannot be defended separate from a commitment to preserve the democratic rights of all people globally, including your political opponents. As your organization knows, the SEP and its predecessor the RCL, has a long, proud history since its founding in 1968, of championing the rights of Tamils as an inclusive part of the struggle to defend, unite and mobilize the working class of Sri Lanka and India against world capitalism.

It is the failed policy of divisive nationalism that has created your movement's isolation and crisis. Your desperate acts of communal violence against genuine socialists further isolate your organization from the world Tamil population and the oppressed masses in every country who cherish democracy and equality, and who are increasingly coming into opposition with capitalist-imperialism, nationalism and communalism. Your politics only weaken the Tamil people by aiding imperialism in its divide and rule tactics against the international working class.

Hands off the members and supporters of the SEP!
Sincerely,
Robert Louis
(from California)

To the LTTE,

I have been shocked and saddened to read of attacks by members of the LTTE upon Socialist Equality Party and supporters, apparently aimed at preventing free public discussion of the situation in Sri Lanka.

The SEP has long defended the democratic rights of the Tamil people. The LTTE should respect the democratic rights of the SEP—and other groups—to speak about developments in Sri Lanka.

All such harassment and intimidation by LTTE members should cease immediately.

Dr Scott Mann
Associate Professor
School of Law
University of Western Sydney

To the British Tamils Forum and LTTE,

The International Students for Social Equality (ISSE) society at the University of Manchester, England would like to firstly emphasise our continued support for the democratic rights of the Tamil people in Sri Lanka and extend our sympathy for their plight. We consider ourselves strong proponents of human and democratic rights and oppose the 25-year war that has blighted the lives of a whole generation.

The longstanding persecution of the Tamils in Sri Lanka has been steadily increasing since the mid-twentieth century. Both the ISSE and the Socialist Equality Party puts forward the struggle for a socialist program in order to bring an end to such racist and systematic oppression by the Sinhala elite.

On this basis we support the rights of the Tamil masses not to be intimidated or physically harmed and the right to freedom of speech. In light of the recent threatening behaviour and assaults on members and supporters of the Socialist Equality Party in Britain, France and Germany, by those purporting to represent the LTTE, we demand that our democratic rights be similarly respected.

We note that the LTTE has a decades-long history of employing violence, including assassinations and kidnappings, against its political opponents in Sri Lanka. We oppose the persecution of the Tamil masses by the Sinhalese ruling elite, and your violence against our members does nothing other than to play directly into the hands of those who hold power.

We strongly condemn the campaign of threats and violence by the LTTE and pro-LTTE groups against our members in Sri Lanka and Europe and call upon the LTTE to issue a statement demanding an end to the above.

Sincerely,

The committee of the International Students for Social Equality
(University of Manchester)

Dear Sir,

I am writing to protest strongly against the blatant anti-democratic attacks—threats and physical abuses—perpetrated by the supporters of the LTTE against the members and supporters of the Socialist Equality Party (SEP) in Europe.

The SEP, the country unit of the International Committee of the Forth International, has continually opposed the decades-long military

oppression carried out by successive Sri Lankan governments against the Tamil population. The SEP of Sri Lanka and its forerunner the RCL (Revolutionary Communist League), from the early 80s, persistently and vigorously promoted the call for the "immediate and unconditional withdrawal of all Sri Lankan troops from North and East". Presently, the SEP is the only political party in Sri Lanka that directly and unconditionally opposes the war. This history makes the LTTE's attacks against the SEP politically absurd and extremely alarming.

Though, this is not the first time LTTE attacked the SEP. In 1991 two members of the RCL were abducted by the LTTE in Kilinochchi but it was later compelled to release them due to a strong international campaign waged by the International Committee of the Forth International. During the 2005 presidential election in Sri Lanka, under a de-facto ban pronounced by the LTTE on election activities in the North and East, two campaign meetings that the SEP held in Jaffna were violently interrupted and participants threatened and abused.

These activities clearly demonstrate the bitterness of the LTTE against the socialist empowerment of the oppressed Tamil masses, which unifies them, in their common struggle against capitalist oppression, with the workers, young people and the oppressed of the Sinhala and Muslim communities and the world over. The outright hostility toward Socialist Internationalism, in the present world context, could only drive one further down in the blind, deadly alley of nationalism.

With their despotic approaches, the results generated by short-sighted nationalist projects of any "race" serve the same purpose. In this manner, the frequent attacks made by the LTTE on the south of Sri Lanka ideologically aligns with the pit-calls of the ultra Sinhala nationalists to annihilate the human mass in the remaining LTTE-held areas so the "war on terror" can be concluded soon. Both these policies would only provide the all-important fuel for the newly charged-up machine of neo-colonial, capitalist repression.

The Tamil people oppressed by decades of war need a new perspective. Their just democratic rights could not be gained through politically moribund nationalism. As a supporter of the SEP and the WSWs, I hope the LTTE would seriously consider not continually hindering the democratic right of the people to choose what politics they want to engage in.

Pandula Godawatta
Freelance Documentary maker
Sri Lanka/UK



To contact the WSWs and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact