The JVP crisis and the SEP's struggle for Marxism in Sri Lanka

The International Students for Social Equality
8 November 2011

The International Students for Social Equality (ISSE), the student wing of the Socialist Equality Party (SEP) in Sri Lanka, will hold a public lecture in Colombo on November 17 on the internal crisis of the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP).

A de facto split has emerged in the JVP, with a dissident group accusing the party leadership of opportunism and blaming it for falling support. Both factions have publicly declared that they made "mistakes" by entering into the Kumaratunga government in 2004, supporting President Mahinda Rajapakse's election in 2005 and backing former army commander Sarath Fonseka in last year's presidential elections. Neither side has offered any explanation.

Despite its claims, the JVP was never a Marxist party but was based from the outset on Stalinism, Castroism and Sinhala populism. Over the past two decades, the party has been integrated into the Colombo political establishment and stridently supported the communal war against the country's Tamil minority. Widely discredited among workers and youth, the dissident faction is desperately trying to revive the JVP as a new political trap for the working class.

The SEP and its forerunner the Revolutionary Communist League (RCL) have conducted a principled political fight against the JVP on the basis of genuine Marxism for the past four decades. The book *Politics and class nature of the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna*, written by former RCL general secretary Keerthi Balasuriya in 1970, remains essential reading for anyone wanting to understand the JVP's origins and evolution.

The ISSE meeting will present an analysis on the JVP's crisis based on genuine Marxism, which is fundamentally opposed to all forms of nationalism and communalism. We invite workers, youth and students to participate in this vital discussion.

Speaker: Wije Dias, SEP General Secretary
Venue: Mahaweli Centre Auditorium, Green Path, Colombo.
Date: Thursday, November 17
Time: 3.30 p.m.

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