

Sri Lankan SEP to hold plantation workers' congress

Socialist Equality Party

7 May 2012

The Socialist Equality Party and the International Students for Social Equality are holding a congress of Sri Lankan plantation workers on May 20. The one-day event has been called to discuss and adopt a socialist program to defend the basic democratic rights, jobs and living conditions of estate workers.

Tea, rubber and coconut plantation workers, who are among the lowest paid and most oppressed section of the Sri Lankan working class, have been hard hit by austerity measures imposed by the government. Recent increases in the price of oil, gas and electricity, as well as wheat flour and milk powder, are a major blow to estate workers and the working class as a whole.

The plantation companies are demanding increases in the backbreaking workload of estate workers and cuts to their poverty-level wages, in order to remain "internationally competitive."

All of the trade unions, including the Ceylon Workers Congress, the Lanka Jathika Estate Workers Union, the Up-country Peoples' Front and the Democratic Workers Congress, function as industrial policemen, suppressing workers' struggles on behalf of the employers and the government.

The SEP and the ISSE have called the congress to discuss a counter-offensive by plantation workers and the political perspective that must guide it. The first step is a political rebellion against the trade unions and the formation of Action Committees as the basis for an independent movement against the companies and government.

To unite workers in Sri Lanka and internationalism, all forms of nationalism and chauvinism must be rejected. Workers can only fight for their most basic rights as part of a revolutionary struggle for a workers' and peasants' government and the reorganisation of the economy along socialist lines.

We call on workers, students and intellectuals to attend and send delegates to the SEP and ISSE plantation workers' congress on May 20 to discuss these vital issues.

For details please contact:

The General Secretary

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Conference Venue:

Christian Workers Fellowship (CWF) Hall
Danbar Road
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Date and Time: May 20, 10.00 a.m.



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Socialist Equality Party visit:
wsws.org/contact