Australian SEP candidate arrives in Colombo

Our correspondent
15 August 2013

James Cogan, Socialist Equality Party (SEP) assistant national secretary and Senate candidate for South Australia in Australia's forthcoming federal election, has begun his Sri Lanka tour. Arriving at Colombo's international airport in the early hours of August 14, Cogan was greeted by leading SEP (Sri Lanka) members.

Cogan is scheduled to address meetings in Colombo and Galle on August 15 and 17 respectively and will participate in a press conference at the Nippon Hotel in Colombo on August 16. His tour is a part of the SEP's election campaign in the Australian federal elections on September 7. The central theme of the SEP's election intervention is for the unification of workers and youth throughout the Asia-Pacific region and internationally against the growing danger of a US-led war against China.

"I am looking forward to the public meetings in Colombo and Galle," Cogan said. "Our election intervention in Australia is a part of our campaign to mobilise the international working class against war, the destruction of living standards and the violation of democratic rights."

Cogan said that every country in the region was being dragged into Washington's war plans. "In Australia, former elected Prime Minister Kevin Rudd, with the involvement of Washington, was removed from the office in 2010 in an anti-democratic coup in order to align Australian politics completely with US foreign policy. As a result, US marines have now been stationed in northern Australia and other bases are being used by the US for satellite intelligence gathering and to direct drone attacks in Pakistan and Afghanistan. These things were exposed by the American whistle blower Edward Snowden."

Cogan said that the opposition to war had to be organised on the basis of an international socialist perspective. In 2003, the antiwar movement against the US-led invasion of Iraq was politically neutralised because it was subordinated to the UN and other imperialist organisations. "This is the significance of the International Committee of the Fourth International's campaign to develop the international unity of the working class," he said.

Cogan's visit occurs as Sri Lanka is caught in the midst of increasing geo-political tensions in the region. The Obama administration is pressurising the Rajapakse government to distance itself from Beijing as part of its campaign to isolate China. Beijing became the main supplier of weapons and funds for Colombo's war against the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam. The cash-strapped Sri Lankan government is also heavily dependent on loan aid from China.

Members of the SEP and its youth wing, the International Youth and Students for Social Equality, have been campaigning among workers and youth in Colombo and at several universities for this week's public meetings. Those speaking to SEP and IYSSE campaigners have shown great interest in the issues to be discussed at the meetings—the global financial crisis, US military aggression and drive to imperialist war, and the necessity for the international unification of the working class on a revolutionary socialist program.

To contact the WSWS and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact

© World Socialist Web Site