

Working-class resistance is developing across the Indian sub-continent and internationally against the ruling elites

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The following speech was delivered by Socialist Equality Party (Sri Lanka) General Secretary Wije Dias to an online public meeting organised by the SEP, “The Covid-19 pandemic and the need for a socialist strategy.” The meeting, directed to workers and youth in Sri Lanka, India and throughout South Asia, was held on May 30.

Comrades,

This public meeting marks a new and higher stage in the struggle of the International Committee of the Fourth International (ICFI) and its Sri Lankan section, the Socialist Equality Party (SEP) to build the Indian section of the ICFI. The participation of the national secretaries of the SEPs in the USA, comrade Joseph Kishore and in Canada, comrade Keith Jones and also the assistant national secretary of the SEP France, comrade Gnana, on this platform, is a powerful expression of the importance and urgency given to that task by the ICFI.

The founder of the Fourth International, Leon Trotsky, in writing an open letter addressed to the Indian workers, on the eve of the catastrophic Second World War, in July 1939, ended it with the following words:

Complete independence from the bourgeoisie is indispensable to the proletariat, above all in order to exert influence on the peasantry, the predominant mass of India’s population. Only the proletariat is capable of advancing a bold, revolutionary agrarian program, of rousing and rallying tens of millions of peasants and leading them in struggle against the native oppressors

and imperialism.

We continue the struggle advocated by Trotsky on the basis of the theory of Permanent Revolution, to found the Marxist revolutionary party to educate and mobilise the working people and youth to fight against the false promises of the Indian bourgeoisie and the naked treachery of the Stalinist communist parties and their pseudo-left hangers on.

As the previous speakers have explained, today world humanity, including we who live in South Asia, is confronted with the biggest terrible menace since the Second World War. In India, the responsibility for this catastrophic pandemic situation lies squarely with the bourgeois government of Narendra Modi, propped up by the treacherous Stalinists of the CPI, CPI(M) and several other petty-bourgeois fake-left groups and trade unions.

After World War II, as part of the reactionary world settlement between global powers, under the hegemony of US imperialism and the Moscow Stalinist bureaucracy, a deal was worked out for fake independence for the British colonies in South Asia. Under this scheme, India was subjected to a bloody irrational partition, on Hindu and Muslim religious lines, as India and Pakistan. In Sri Lanka (then Ceylon) brutal parliamentary Acts were passed to deport over one million immigrant Tamil workers.

The revisionists, of the Pablo-Mandel variety, that developed within the Fourth International, shamelessly adapted to the reactionary post-war settlement and dissolved the Trotskyist revolutionary parties into Stalinist and bourgeois nationalist parties. That is how

the Indian section of the Fourth International, the Bolshevik-Leninist party of an undivided India, founded in 1942, with its sections in Sri Lanka and Myanmar (then Burma), was liquidated.

The ICFI was founded in 1953, to fight and eradicate Pabloism from the Fourth International and rescue its revolutionary internationalist program. To make a long story short, after a long drawn-out struggle, the ICFI was able to bring to a successful conclusion that struggle against revisionism in 1985-86. The book-length record of this struggle and its important lessons, in this region, is presented in the document, *The International and Historical Foundations of the SEP-Sri Lanka*, now available on the internet.

The attempts made by the SEP-Sri Lanka to build a revolutionary party in India were enormously strengthened by the founding of the *World Socialist Web Site* in 1998. Through it, the ICFI's struggle to build the world party of socialist revolution was brought to the instant notice of working people and youth on every continent.

Historical necessity, and the validity of the struggle to bring to the working class the Trotskyist perspective of world socialism, has been revealed today more than ever before. At the same time, the situation has unraveled the treacherous role played by all those parties and groups, which opposed that struggle, under various banners of peoples' fronts, to defend barbaric capitalism and the rule of the elite class. This is most explicit in India, more than any other country in the world.

Previous speakers have explained, with genuine statistics in hand, what a tragic situation was wrought upon the working people and oppressed poor by capitalist rule on a world scale, and in India in particular. This situation will exacerbate the disaster waiting to happen, due to the escalation of war tensions in the region by US imperialism, which consciously works to make India a cat's paw in the aggression against China. Despite all the chauvinist boastings of every bourgeois party, the Congress party included, they have displayed their complete subservience to the strongest imperialist military power. The Indian bourgeoisie, as the main policeman for US imperialism in the region, is working hard to bring the whole of South Asia into the maelstrom of a nuclear war.

The resistance of working people is developing in this

region, as well as around the world, against the ruling classes, which are responsible for the increasing devastation due to the pandemic and the intensification of war tensions. We have seen two general strikes in India last year, and tens of thousands of farmers involved in a protest for over six months.

As comrade Joe explained in his remarks: "The experience of the past year has not been in vain, but has had a profoundly radicalising impact on the consciousness of masses of workers and youth throughout the world. For workers throughout the world critical questions of program and perspectives are raised."

These are the questions of the international workers' movement that are also addressed by the ICFI and the *World Socialist Web Site* every day.

It is urgently necessary to develop a chain of rank-and-file action committees, independent of the trade unions, which stand as a barrier and betray every militant initiative of workers in every country. Rank-and-file committees must be coordinated on a world scale, in line with the call issued by the ICFI, for a Workers International Alliance of Rank-and-File Committees. This is to facilitate a global struggle for a socialist solution to the global pandemic and world war.

The decisive task for the realisation of this program is the building of ICFI sections in every country, including India. It is the only way to realise the program for a federation of socialist states in South Asia. We invite all listeners today, to join the struggle initiated by the Sri Lankan section of the ICFI in this region.



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