Resolution for the Fourth National Congress of the SEP (Sri Lanka)

The strategy and program of the SEP in the fight against the JVP government and capitalism

Socialist Equality Party (Sri Lanka)
1 October 2026

We are publishing here the first part of the main resolution of the Fourth Congress of the Socialist Equality Party (Sri Lanka), held from August 11–13, 2026, in Colombo. The resolution was unanimously adopted by the Congress. It will be published in three parts. The second part is published here.

1. This Fourth Congress of the Socialist Equality Party (SEP) in Sri Lanka is being held amid a deepening political and economic crisis of global capitalism, marked by unfolding world war pushed by the imperialist powers and moves by the ruling class to impose austerity and dictatorial forms of rule. A major factor intensifying the political crisis of bourgeois rule is the resurgence of class struggle globally.

2. The criminal US-Israeli war on Iran, which began on February 28, marked a turning point in this imperialist world war, adding to the US-NATO war against Russia in Ukraine, Israel's imperialist-backed genocidal war in Gaza, and US escalation of war preparations against China. The unfolding world war will drag the whole planet into disaster unless it is stopped by the revolutionary mobilization of the international working class.

3. The crisis confronting US imperialism has further intensified because of the unprecedented debacle of its war on Iran, which has failed to achieve any of its aims: the overthrow of the Iranian government and destruction of its military power and its nuclear program. However, this crisis will not compel Washington to scale back its war effort.

4. The accession to power of the Trump administration in 2025 has profoundly escalated the global geopolitical and economic crisis of capitalism, marking a desperate and reckless response by American imperialism to the erosion of its global dominance. The Trump administration began the year 2026 with a military invasion in Venezuela, openly violating international law and kidnapping its president Nicolás Maduro and his wife. Within two months, the US, along with Israel, launched a criminal war of annihilation and extermination against Iran, threatening to set the entire Middle East, and indeed the world, on fire.

A statement by the National Committee of the SEP (US) on March 2, 2026, pointed out: "The war against Iran is, in this sense, a war for global hegemony, directed not only at Tehran but at Beijing, Moscow and the European capitals whose dependence on Middle Eastern energy gives Washington an instrument of coercion. The Trump administration has threatened not only Iran but also its nominal allies—imposing tariffs on European goods, threatening Greenland, seizing control of Venezuelan oil, and making clear that in the emerging era of great-power competition, the United States intends to use its military supremacy to maintain dominance over every strategically significant region on Earth."

5. The US-Israeli war on Iran underscores the urgency of the campaign waged by the International Committee of the Fourth International (ICFI) to build an international movement of the working class against imperialist war based on socialist policies. As David North wrote on the WSWS on March 3, 2026:

> The working class and youth must draw from the war the necessary conclusions. It is not enough to be appalled. Horror, left to itself, exhausts itself in impotent frustration or isolated episodes of individual resistance. What is required is the development of a mass working class socialist movement, which is guided by an internationalist socialist program, infused with genuine revolutionary morality, and opposed in every respect to the depravity of the ruling class.

The 60-day "peace agreement" with Tehran amid Washington's debacle does not mean the end of the war. American imperialism is also preparing new wars to recover its position. The SEP in Sri Lanka, along with its sister parties in the ICFI, is developing this campaign for an international anti-war movement among workers, youth and oppressed people in Sri Lanka and South Asia.

6. The continuing and uncontrollable growth of the fundamental contradictions of capitalism—between the globalized economy and the nation-state system and between socialized production and private ownership of the means of production—compels imperialism to turn to class war at home and intensified war of plunder abroad.

7. A WSWS Editorial Board statement published on June 7, 2026, stated: "The contradictions that are driving imperialism to war are also driving the working class into struggle. The growth of the class struggle springs from the same crisis that produces the war. Out of that crisis emerges the only social force capable of putting an end to it. War and social revolution are two sides of the same historical process."

The ruling class's moves to war, austerity and dictatorship produce growing opposition from the working class. In the US, the working class is re-emerging after decades of imposed passivity: mass healthcare worker strikes, widespread walkouts by educators and graduate students, the more than 100,000-strong mass protests in Minneapolis against the Trump administration's brutal anti-immigrant crackdown and federal occupation of the city, and the spontaneous eruption of a movement for a general strike in response to state killings and occupation. In the same way, struggles of workers have erupted in Europe and South Asia, including in India, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh. These developing class struggles

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provide the objective basis for a unified international movement of the working class against war, austerity and dictatorship, which the ICFI and its sections, including the SEP in Sri Lanka, are fighting to build.

8. Sri Lanka, strategically located in the Indian Ocean, has already been dragged into the maelstrom of global geopolitical and economic crisis; its crisis is not merely national but a concentrated expression of the global systemic breakdown.? It is only within this context of global capitalist crisis—the breakdown of the nation-state system, the unfolding world war and the resurgence of the class struggle internationally—that the revolutionary implications of the Sri Lankan crisis and the strategic tasks of the working class can be comprehended and fought for.?

9. The coming to power of the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP)-led National People's Power (NPP) government, headed by President Anura Kumara Dissanayake, is a stark expression of this global crisis, at the level of a small, indebted, semi?colonial country. The JVP/NPP was elected in late 2024, exploiting popular anger towards the traditional parties of the ruling elite, including former President Ranil Wickremesinghe's United National Party (UNP), the Rajapakses' Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna (SLPP), the Samagi Jana Balawegaya (SJB)—an offshoot of the UNP, the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) and various Tamil and Muslim parties.

10. Amid a continuing economic and political crisis following the 2022 mass uprising—which forced then-President Gotabhaya Rajapakse to flee the country and resign as his government collapsed—a significant section of the ruling elite, with the support of major powers, selected the JVP/NPP, which had never been in power, to defend capitalism in Sri Lanka, under conditions of the collapse of the traditional parties. The JVP/NPP was brought to power for the specific task of ruthlessly implementing the austerity measures dictated by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and suppressing the opposition of working people.

11. Formed in the late 1960s as a petty?bourgeois radical organization based on an eclectic mixture of Maoist–Castroite guerrillaism and Sinhala populism, the JVP has evolved, over six decades, into a thoroughly pro?imperialist party of the bourgeois political establishment that now enforces the austerity dictates of the IMF and the strategic requirements of US imperialism. The JVP's evolution is not an aberration but the inevitable outcome of its petty?bourgeois class nature and politics. With its allegiance to the Maoist-Stalinist theory of two-stage revolution, the JVP opposed the Theory of Permanent Revolution, directing its hostility towards the working class and particularly Tamil plantation workers.

12. The Theory of Permanent Revolution was first formulated by Leon Trotsky in 1905 and guided the Russian proletariat to victory in the October 1917 revolution. It posits that in countries of belated capitalist development like Sri Lanka, the national bourgeoisie is organically incapable of completing fundamental democratic tasks: land reform, national unification and democratic rights. Only the working class, leading the rural peasantry and other oppressed masses, can accomplish these democratic tasks, while simultaneously undertaking socialist measures. The revolution must be "permanent" in its uninterrupted progression from democratic to socialist tasks and its international extension. This stands in complete opposition to the Menshevik two?stage theory, later adopted by Stalinism, which subordinates the working class to the bourgeoisie under the pretext of completing the "national democratic" stage, postponing socialist measures to a distant future that will never come.?

13. The transformation of the JVP from a petty-bourgeois radical movement into the direct instrument of IMF austerity and US imperialism is a powerful vindication of the six-decade political and theoretical struggle waged by the Revolutionary Communist League (RCL) and its successor, the SEP, for the political independence of the working class. It confirms that all petty-bourgeois nationalist tendencies, however radical their rhetoric, inevitably become props of capitalist rule and imperialism because of their hostility to the program of international socialism. The strategic and programmatic lessons of the struggle of the RCL/SEP are of decisive importance for workers and youth today in building an independent political movement of the working class, rallying the rural poor and other oppressed masses, against the JVP/NPP government, bourgeois rule and world imperialism, and forging the revolutionary party required to lead that struggle to victory.

The betrayal of Trotskyism and origins of the JVP

14. The JVP was founded in May 1965, by Rohana Wijeweera and a small group of youth, in the aftermath of the Lanka Sama Samaja Party's (LSSP) historic betrayal of Trotskyism. In 1964, the LSSP entered a coalition government with Sirimavo Bandaranaike's capitalist Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) just as a massive wave of workers' strikes was developing against her government's austerity measures. The LSSP had already begun a political backsliding along the nationalist parliamentary path, adapting to the capitalist state established in 1948 with so-called independence, as part of the post-war imperialist settlement.

Pabloism, a revisionist current associated with Michel Pablo that emerged within the Trotskyist Fourth International in the early 1950s, provided political backing and encouragement for the LSSP's nationalist degeneration, culminating in the 1964 betrayal, by promoting subordination to bourgeois nationalism and abandoning the independent political mobilization of the working class.

15. The ICFI was formed by orthodox Trotskyists in the Fourth International in 1953, in opposition to the Pabloites. The latter repudiated the basic tenets of Trotskyism, attributing a progressive role to the Stalinist bureaucracy and bourgeois and petty-bourgeois nationalist movements in former colonial countries and rejecting the necessity of building revolutionary parties based on the working class. The ICFI's struggle against this revisionist tendency and in defence of orthodox Trotskyism was instrumental in exposing the LSSP's degeneration in Sri Lanka.

16. The 1964 Great Betrayal by the LSSP was the first time in the history of the Fourth International that a party claiming to be Trotskyist openly joined a capitalist government, shattering the confidence of broad layers of workers and youth in the independent political movement of the working class. The political vacuum created by it paved the way for petty?bourgeois currents like the JVP to emerge in Sri Lanka.

17. The LSSP's betrayal of Trotskyist principles of socialist internationalism and the political independence of the working class was bound up with its adaptation to Sinhala populism. In the years leading up to 1964, the LSSP lined up with Philip Gunawardena's Sinhala chauvinist Mahajana Eksath Peramuna (MEP) as part of the United Left Front. After joining the SLFP-led coalition, the LSSP supported the Sirima-Shastri Agreement, which expelled a section of the Tamil-speaking plantation workers to India. In the second coalition government of the SLFP, LSSP and the Stalinist Communist Party (CP), which came to power in 1970, LSSP leader Colvin R. de Silva, as Constitutional Affairs Minister, drafted a new constitution, which made Buddhism the state religion and Sinhala the state language, thus enshrining Sinhala/Buddhist supremacy.

18. The LSSP's betrayal had a profound impact in Sri Lanka and internationally. Various Maoist tendencies, mainly in India, exploited it to denounce Trotskyism while promoting peasant?based guerrillaism and petty?bourgeois communal politics, which gained influence among radicalized youth at the expense of genuine Marxism.

19. The JVP, formed by a breakaway faction of the Stalinist-Maoist Communist Party, was able to expand by recruiting unemployed Sinhala rural youth in the island's south. The formation of the JVP was a right-wing petty-bourgeois response to the LSSP's betrayal. It seized on the

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betrayal to oppose all that was positive in the struggle waged by Sri Lankan Trotskyists, particularly by the Bolshevik Leninist Party of India (BLPI), which was formed in 1942 as the all-Indian section of the Fourth International, on the initiative of LSSP leaders, to fight for the political program and perspective of Permanent Revolution for all of South Asia, against British imperialism and its national bourgeois agents. The BLPI opposed the phony independence in India (1947) and Sri Lanka (1948) and the Stalinists who collaborated with the colonial rulers. It fought to build a united movement of the working class in the region, rallying the oppressed masses, based on socialist internationalist policies. The JVP rejected the revolutionary role of the working class and promoted the oppressed peasant youth as the revolutionary force, substituting their "armed struggle" for the conscious independent political mobilization of the working class against capitalist rule.

20. The LSSP's betrayal prevented the building of a revolutionary leadership based on the working class, capable of leading the rural poor in the south, as well as the oppressed Tamil minority, which faced the capitalist class's Sinhala-chauvinist, discriminatory rule. This strengthened Tamil nationalist bourgeois parties and later, in the mid-1970s, created the conditions for the emergence of Tamil separatist groups like the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in the north and east.

21. In contrast to these petty-bourgeois formations, a group of brilliant youth who opposed the LSSP betrayal took up the struggle for genuine Trotskyism against Pabloite revisionism. Working with the ICFI, they founded the RCL in 1968 as its Sri Lankan section.

22. Grounded in the ICFI's struggle against petty-bourgeois radicalism, Comrade Keerthi Balasuriya, the founding general secretary of the RCL, took the initiative to combat the reactionary politics of the JVP. His seminal 1970 work, *The Politics and Class Nature of the JVP*, marked a crucial intervention in this political struggle and was an essential component of the fight to build a revolutionary party of the working class based on Trotsky's Theory of Permanent Revolution.

23. Keerthi's analysis exposed the JVP's fraudulent claim to be a "Marxist-Leninist" party. He prophetically warned that the JVP's rejection of the revolutionary role of the working class and its nationalist, petty-bourgeois outlook would inevitably lead it into the camp of the bourgeoisie—a prognosis confirmed over the following decades, culminating in its assumption of governmental power at the end of 2024.

The Trotskyist leader insightfully stated: "Any leadership not based on the conclusion [that the tasks of the democratic revolution can only be realized through proletarian socialist revolution] ends up subordinating the working class to the bourgeoisie and leading it to catastrophic defeats. It is inevitable that the JVP, which rejects this conclusion, will also end up as an appendage of the capitalist class."

24. Among its "Five Lectures," which falsified Marxism, the JVP denounced independent workers' struggles as "capitalist tactics" and portrayed Tamil-speaking estate workers as privileged aliens and the representatives of "Indian expansionism."

Anticipating the consequences of this reactionary outlook, Keerthi warned that in a period of crisis, as British imperialism and the Sri Lankan bourgeoisie devastated the conditions of plantation workers, "petty-bourgeois hostility to these same workers would turn into a weapon in the hands of monopoly capitalism. This racism is one that leads to fascism. The JVP is creating an anti-working-class movement in Lanka, which could well be utilized in the future by a fascist movement." This warning was to be confirmed within two decades.

25. The guerrilla uprising of the JVP in April 1971, mobilizing rural Sinhala youth and bypassing the working class, only showed the bankruptcy of its radical petty-bourgeois teachings, which the Trotskyists of the RCL had exposed in advance. The JVP-led insurrection was crushed by the SLFP-led coalition government with military assistance from India; it killed thousands of young people and imprisoned the JVP's leaders, including Wijeweera, and thousands of members and supporters.

26. The RCL opposed the witch hunt against the JVP and the bloody repression of 1971 and vigorously campaigned in the working class for the release of political prisoners. This campaign was part of its struggle to rally rural masses behind the working class. Its demand later became a major slogan in the 1976 general strike against the SLFP-led coalition government, demonstrating the political impact of the RCL's campaign.

27. The UNP government led by President J.R. Jayawardene, which came to power in 1977, was compelled to release these political prisoners. Jayawardene allowed the JVP to function openly and legally as he shifted Sri Lanka toward "open market" economic policies, integrating the country into the globalized capitalist system in response to a severe economic crisis. Jayawardene calculated that he could utilize the JVP as an important tool to suppress working-class opposition to his government's economic policies, given the JVP's hostility to the working class and its communal politics. The JVP's subsequent trajectory would fulfill Jayawardene's expectations.

28. The Jayawardene government crushed the public-sector employees' general strike in 1980, sacking about 100,000 workers. Anticipating continued mass resistance to the government's policies, it intensified anti-Tamil communal violence, culminating in the launching of a 26-year communal war against the LTTE in 1983. The JVP supported these moves by the ruling elite; it opposed the 1980 strike, making the bogus claim that it would strengthen the UNP regime. The JVP's scabbing role and the treacherous role played by the LSSP, the Stalinist CP, the Nava Sama Samaja Party (NSSP) and the trade union bureaucracy, which refused to mobilize the working class on a political program against the UNP government, enabled it to inflict a historic defeat on the working class.

29. The RCL carried out a courageous campaign among workers during the 1980 strike, against the scabbing role of the JVP and the treachery of the "left" parties and trade union bureaucracy, to mobilize the working class in an independent political movement based on a socialist program against the UNP government.

30. The racialist war against the LTTE, initiated by Jayawardene's UNP government in 1983, was the culmination of decades of anti-Tamil discrimination imposed by Colombo since so-called independence in 1948. Successive governments, assisted by the bourgeois opposition parties, utilized the anti-Tamil racialist war to suppress the struggles of workers, youth and the rural poor and to divide and weaken the working class. The RCL/SEP stood alone throughout the 26-year war in fighting to unite the working class across communal divisions, based on international socialist policies, against racialist war and the separatist program of the LTTE.

31. The JVP fully backed the communal war against the LTTE under the banner of defending the "Motherland." In 1985, JVP leader Wijeweera, in a speech to the party's central committee, later published as *What Is the Solution to the Tamil Eelam Struggle?*, branded the LTTE as a continuation of the ancient Indian Chola invasion of Sri Lanka. The JVP's "defence of the Motherland" campaign took an even uglier turn in July 1987, when India intervened with the Indo-Lanka Accord, signed by then-Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and President Jayawardene. Its aims were to bring the war to an end by disarming the LTTE, while offering certain concessions to the Tamil elite, in order to limit the war's impact on India's southern state of Tamil Nadu, prevent political instability there, and defend bourgeois rule in Sri Lanka.

32. The period of 1987–89 demonstrated the JVP's evolution into a fascist movement directed against the working class and political opponents. Opposing the Indo-Lanka Accord and Indian military intervention from the right, saying it would "divide the motherland", the JVP launched a fascistic campaign which it called a Patriotic People's Movement. It operated a network of death squads targeting not the state,

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but workers, leftists and trade-union militants. The JVP's murderous campaign was waged in concert with the government and its military, and particularly in close collaboration with UNP leader R. Premadasa, who was first prime minister and later president.

33. The RCL took a unique position in opposing the Indo-Lanka Accord from the standpoint of working-class internationalism, against both the JVP's chauvinist-fascistic campaign and the LSSP, Stalinist CP and Pabloite NSSP, who lined up with Jayawardena in supporting the Accord. The RCL fought to unite the working class in Sri Lanka and India against the Accord and Indian military intervention.

The ICFI statement issued in November 1987, entitled "The Situation in Sri Lanka and the Political Tasks of the Revolutionary Communist League," firmly based on the Theory of Permanent Revolution, established that the democratic rights of the island's Tamils could be achieved only through a unified struggle of the working class, cutting across Sinhala and Tamil communal lines, for socialism. It raised, for the first time, the call for the United Socialist States of Sri Lanka and Eelam.

The statement explained how the Indo-Lanka Accord revealed the vicious nature of the national bourgeoisie:

> In the unlikely event that the countless tragic experiences of this century have not already sufficiently demonstrated the perfidious and reactionary character of the national bourgeoisie in the backward countries, the signing of the Indo-Sri Lankan accord and the Indian invasion of the Northern and Eastern provinces of Sri Lanka provide yet another bitter lesson to the oppressed toilers. … The policies of Jayawardene and Gandhi have shattered whatever still remained of the myth that the national bourgeoisie of India and Sri Lanka have any progressive role to play in the future of their two countries.

Drawing the necessary political lessons from the LTTE's capitulation to the Indian bourgeoisie, the statement said:

> [T]his latest historical experience has demonstrated the bankruptcy of petty-bourgeois nationalism, which has been shown to be incapable of achieving national self-determination. In times of historical crisis, when the fate of entire peoples hangs in the balance, there is no place for sentimentality. Sympathy for the plight of the LTTE and concern for the fate of its fighters are no excuse for failing to say what must be said: The policies of the Liberation Tigers are principally responsible for the grave setbacks which the national struggle has suffered since July 29, 1987.

Flowing from the reactionary character of the national bourgeoisie and the bankruptcy of petty-bourgeois nationalism, the ICFI stated that the tasks of the democratic revolution fall to the working class. Its statement explained that the democratic rights of oppressed nations are "achieved as a by-product of the socialist revolution led by the proletariat which, having established its dictatorship, guarantees to all oppressed people their legitimate democratic rights. As the framework for the genuine equality of nations, it proposes the creation of a voluntarily united socialist federation."

34. As part of the JVP's fascist campaign, three members of the RCL were murdered: R.A. Pitawela, a teacher, in November 1988; P.H. Gunapala, a worker at Peradeniya University, in December the same year; and Greshan Geekiyanage, a youth in Chilaw, in June 1989. The JVP targeted the RCL because it opposed both the Indian military deployment and the Sri Lankan war based on the perspective of uniting the working class across ethnic lines and fought for a Sri Lanka-Eelam Socialist Republic as part of a Federation of Socialist Republics in South Asia and internationally.

35. The RCL, with the assistance of the ICFI, launched an international campaign for a united front of workers' organizations against the state terror unleashed by the UNP government, as well as against the JVP's fascist attacks. This was part of its independent mobilization of the working class and exposure of the treachery of the LSSP, the Stalinist CP, the Pabloite opportunist NSSP, and the trade union bureaucracy. These parties rejected the RCL's call for a united front and turned instead to the bourgeois state, accepting arms provided by the UNP government against the JVP's fascist terror, and opposing the independent mobilization of the working class. This revealed the political subservience of these parties and the union bureaucracies to the bourgeois state.

36. The UNP government, particularly under President Premadasa, attempted to strike a deal with the JVP, aiming to use it to contain growing rural unrest and stabilize bourgeois rule. However, when it realized that the JVP was unable to do that job, the Premadasa government decided to turn on the JVP in November 1989, along with a bloody repression against rural youth.

The UNP government ruthlessly unleashed state terror, killing an estimated 60,000 young people, particularly in rural areas, as well as JVP leaders and members. The RCL issued a call, *Stop Rural Massacre!*, in November 1990 and, with the collaboration of the ICFI, organized a campaign to mobilize the working class in Sri Lanka and internationally against the bloody repression of rural youth.

37. The reorganized JVP's re-entry into politics in 1994 marked another turning point. Amid a deep political crisis and the collapse of the UNP's 17-year rule, the ruling elite decided to rehabilitate the JVP as a safety valve. The JVP's past role as a strident defender of the bourgeois unitary state, as clearly demonstrated in its vociferous support for anti-Tamil racialist war, and also its anti-working-class character, as expressed in its fascistic attacks on the working class, were fundamental in the ruling elite's decision to bring it back to the political mainstream. While continuing to use "socialist" and Marxist phrases, the JVP leadership entered parliamentary politics, integrating itself into Colombo's bourgeois political establishment.

38. This rightward turn reflected the JVP's adaptation to the underlying processes of globalized production that began in the 1980s and, in particular, resulted in the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991 and its satellite Stalinist bureaucratic regimes in Eastern Europe in the same period. This adaptation was a part of international developments, also seen in the Sandinista movement in Nicaragua and South Africa's African National Congress, which exchanged guerrilla fatigues and AK-47s for parliamentary suits.

39. While continuing to use Marxist or socialist rhetoric to hoodwink the masses, the JVP publicly declared its abandonment of outdated "isms" and adopted investor- and business-friendly economic policies. In the late 1990s and early 2000s, it backed SLFP-led administrations and in 2004 formally joined the SLFP-led coalition government of President Chandrika Kumaratunga, with four leading JVP members, including today's president Dissanayake, holding ministerial posts for about one year.

40. The JVP continued its vociferous support for the anti-Tamil racialist war, vehemently opposing any negotiated settlement through limited power sharing among Sinhala, Tamil and Muslim elites, from the standpoint of Sinhala chauvinism. As the JVP itself has repeatedly boasted, it pushed President Mahinda Rajapakse of the SLFP-led United People's Freedom Alliance (UPFA), who came to power in 2005, to resume the war in 2006.

41. The JVP's integration into the bourgeois establishment was

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accompanied by a turn towards the imperialist powers, particularly the US. It publicly supported George Bush's "war on terror" and called for US assistance to prosecute Sri Lanka's racist war. A WSWS article titled "Sri Lankan parties back imperialist war against Afghanistan," published on January 31, 2002, exposed the JVP's alignment with US imperialism: "In expressing its support for the US war against Afghanistan, the JVP expressed the views of sections of the military, state bureaucracy and business that are looking for US military assistance against the Tigers [LTTE]. As the party statement put it: 'We need diplomatic subtlety to use the present world environment to protect the unitary character of the country and defeat separatism.'"

42. The LTTE, the principal Tamil separatist organization, underwent an evolution similar in many respects to that of the JVP. It promoted armed struggle, rejected the independent political mobilization and unity of the working class and advanced the establishment of a separate Tamil state as the means to secure the democratic rights of the Tamil people. As a petty-bourgeois nationalist movement, however, it was incapable of maintaining political independence from either imperialism or the Indian bourgeoisie. This was demonstrated by its initial acceptance of the Indo-Lanka Accord and, following the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, its increasing appeals to the imperialist powers for support for its separatist agenda, even as those powers backed Colombo's communal war. The LTTE's military defeat in May 2009 was not merely a battlefield setback, but the logical outcome of its historically bankrupt bourgeois nationalist and separatist perspective. The bitter experience of more than a quarter century of communal war, culminating in its bloody end, powerfully vindicated the program of Permanent Revolution for which the RCL/SEP has fought. The democratic rights of the Tamil people can be secured only through the united and independent political mobilization of the working class—Sinhala, Tamil and Muslim—rallying the rural poor, in the struggle for a Sri Lanka-Eelam Socialist Republic as part of a Union of Socialist Republics in South Asia and internationally.

43. In 2015, the JVP played a significant role in the campaign to remove President Mahinda Rajapakse and install Maithripala Sirisena under the banner of "good governance," which was really a Washington-sponsored regime-change operation aimed at shifting Sri Lanka's foreign policy orientation in favor of the US against China. UNP leader Ranil Wickremesinghe and former President Kumaratunga were central to this operation. During the next four years, the JVP leadership closely collaborated with the pro-US elite and privileged middle-class layers, including academics, masquerading as "civil society."

44. The rebranding of the JVP as the National People's Power (NPP) marked a major turning point in the organization's six-decade history. The new front, publicly launched in November 2019, was a carefully calibrated initiative by the Dissanayake-led JVP leadership, in association with upper-middle-class layers and sections of the elite and big business. Initiating the National Intellectual Organization, the JVP incorporated academics, professionals and NGO activists to prepare a rebranded party to take power as the traditional parties—the UNP and SLFP—were fracturing and widely despised by the masses.

45. Sections of the ruling elite, along with politically conscious layers of the upper middle class, were seeking an alternative capable of effectively blocking the independent mobilization of the working class, as the traditional parties visibly failed to contain mounting mass anger over austerity and authoritarian rule.

A political column in the *Sunday Times* on October 20, 2024 revealed a private interaction with JVP leader Dissanayake in early 2019 in which "one of the UNP stalwarts… offered a suggestion… to rebrand the party whilst retaining the identity of the JVP… He said that a new face would be appealing domestically and to the outside world." It would also "draw away criticism about [the] JVP's previous record linked to violent incidents."

46. The JVP/NPP leadership's central political role in derailing and undermining the 2022 mass uprising—which created an unprecedented political crisis for bourgeois rule—became a key factor in its acceptance by the elite, big business and foreign diplomats as a suitable defender of capitalism in Sri Lanka. The bourgeois media and Western diplomats treated the rebranding as evidence that the JVP had abandoned its earlier anti-imperialist rhetoric. Through initiatives such as the so-called "Collective of Tri-Forces," presenting ex-service members as a necessary disciplined social force, the party cultivated military backing and aligned itself with the establishment's growing reliance on authoritarian methods.

To be continued

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