



HOW THE WESTERN CAPITALIST POWERS

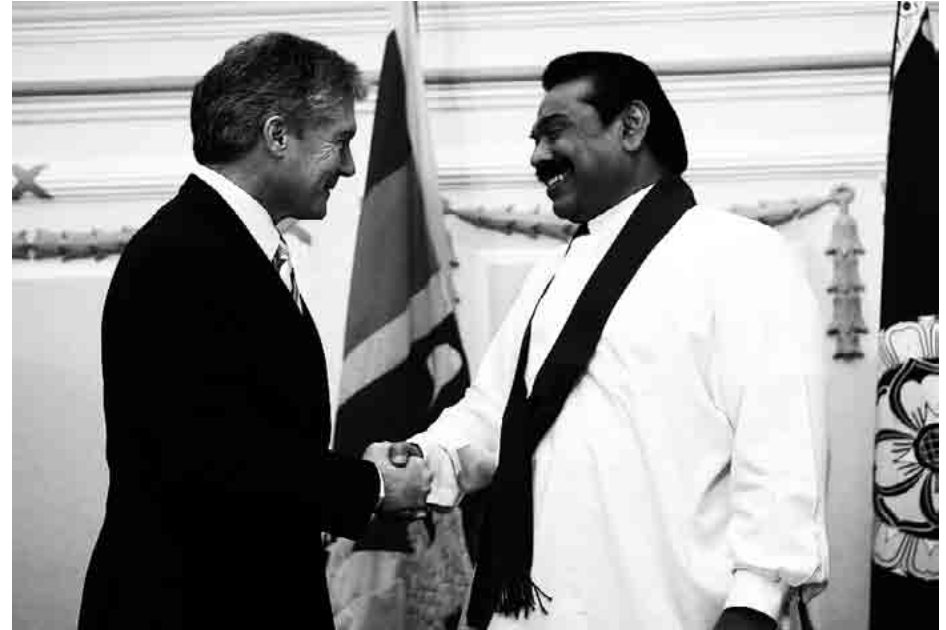


ENGINEERED THE HORRIFIC SETBACK



TO THE TAMIL LIBERATION STRUGGLE

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Joyfully agreeing to further repress the Tamil people. Colombo, 9 November 2009: Foreign Minister Stephen Smith and Sri Lankan president Mahinda Rajapaksa warmly greet each other & work out a Memorandum of Understanding to stop “people smuggling” – i.e. to stop embattled Tamil people from fleeing from tyranny.

6 July 2010– Three weeks ago, two hundred asylum seekers were transferred from Christmas Island to the Curtin detention centre in Australia’s North West. The highly remote Curtin camp enables the government to almost completely isolate asylum seekers from their friends and supporters. As the Howard-era Curtin hellhole is being reopened, the number of asylum seekers detained in Australia has reached 3,800. Detention centres are overflowing because the racist authorities are determined to keep refugees imprisoned for long periods. In January up to 400, mainly Tamil, detainees held desperate protests in Christmas Island over the length and conditions of their imprisonment.

Many Tamil asylum seekers have been detained for more than 15 months without their visa applications being processed. The ALP regime of Julia Gillard, who was yesterday praised by none other than Pauline Hanson (*The Australian*, 6 July) for her racist position

Overleaf above: The head of the Sri Lankan Navy meeting Admiral Timothy J. Keating, Commander United States Pacific Command in February 2009.

Overleaf below: Tamil children, victims of the Sri Lankan government’s brutal war against the LTTE, 13 April 2009.

on the refugee issue, has made clear its intention to deport more Tamil and Afghan asylum seekers. This outright discriminatory move targets the two main groups of asylum seekers fleeing to Australia. When three months ago Immigration Minister Chris Evans (then under Rudd) announced that more Tamil asylum seekers would be deported back to Sri Lanka, he claimed that the situation there is improving. Yet hundreds of Tamil people continue to pay huge sums of money and risk their lives in hazardous journeys to flee Lanka. If they head towards Australia, however, they face more hellhole conditions. And if they then end up being deported they are in great peril. Even conservative refugee advocates note that at least nine asylum seekers returned to Sri Lanka by the Howard government were killed. Following a visit to Sri Lanka, Phil Glendenning of the Catholic Church's Edmund Rice Centre stated in May that:

"We found that of the 11 people removed to Sri Lanka over the course of the last year or so, that all of them had been arrested at the airport.

"Some of them had been bashed, assaulted. One man has permanent hearing damage, another has had sight damaged."

- ABC News Online, 19 May 2010

Members of the Tamil minority in Sri Lanka are fleeing persecution at the hands of the racist regime there which is currently headed by President Mahinda Rajapaksa. In the last five months of the most recent phase of the Sri Lankan Civil War which ended with the May 2009 defeat of the Tamil liberation guerilla group, the LTTE (known as the Tamil Tigers), the Sri Lankan military butchered between 7,000-20,000 Tamil civilians through indiscriminate shelling of LTTE-controlled areas. After the government's victory, 300,000 Tamil people were forcibly held in squalid camps in Manik Farm in the North of the country for several months. Tens of thousands of people still remain in them.

Alongside the Tamils imprisoned in Australian detention camps are well over a 1,000 asylum seekers from Afghanistan. The Afghan nationals are fleeing the effects of, on the one hand, the war started by the brutal U.S./Australian imperialist invasion of their country and, on the other, the succession of religious fundamentalist forces that have arisen out of the Western-orchestrated defeat of the pro-women's rights, pro-Soviet government that ruled Afghanistan from 1978 to 1992. It is a bitter irony that those fleeing the effects of the real crimes committed by Western capitalist states are then treated by those same states as serious criminals to be locked up without any rights.

The "tough," "border protection" policy of the ALP government - and that of the even more extreme Abbott Opposition - seeks to make the Australian masses direct their anxieties over unemployment, housing and access to social services into irrational fears about being "swamped" by refugees and "outsiders." The aim of such racist fear mongering is to get the real causes of the masses' problems - the capitalist corporate owners and their failing system - off the hook. You see, although the likes of Gillard and Abbott

squabble over details, both are committed to upholding the rule of the wealthy capitalist class. And that means, above all else, diverting working class people away from struggle against the capitalist exploiters.

That is why if the union movement wants its members to be focused and united enough to be able to take on the greedy capitalist bosses, it must actively challenge the racist campaign against refugees. The workers movement must demand: Stop the deportations! Close all the detention centres - Asylum for the Tamils, Afghans and all imprisoned refugees!

Every person who makes it to this country or who is intercepted en route here should be able to stay in Australia with the full rights of citizens!

WESTERN IMPERIALISTS FLICK THE TAMIL BLOOD ON THEIR HANDS ONTO THEIR OPPONENTS

Last November, Australia's Foreign Minister Stephen Smith visited the Sri Lankan leadership in order to strengthen measures to stop Tamil refugees. During the trip Smith raised the spectre that "terror syndicates" were behind the flow of Tamil refugees to Australia. In doing so, Smith not only demonised Tamil asylum seekers but also endorsed the Colombo government's barbaric "anti-terror" war against the LTTE resistance movement.

The outcome of Stephen Smith's Colombo trip and the Gillard/Rudd government's cruel incarceration of Tamil refugees is yet more confirmation that the Western capitalist rulers are not and will never be allies of the Tamil national liberation struggle. Yet, in desperation, the large Tamil Diaspora in the West has for the last several decades pursued a strategy of appealing to these capitalist governments to come to the aid of the Tamil people. This strategy has continued since the defeat of the LTTE last May. However, the Western governments strongly backed the Sri Lankan state's brutal war on the Tamil people. On 5 November 2008 as Lankan artillery and air attacks rained death on the Tamil people, then Commander of the U.S. Pacific Joint



Denied asylum: For up to six months over 250 Tamil refugees were stuck in a port at Merak, Indonesia in overcrowded conditions without access to proper medical care. They were heading to Australia but Rudd pressured the Indonesian Navy to intercept their boat.

Command, Admiral Timothy Keating, told foreign correspondents in New York:

“We are very pleased the Sri Lankan navy has been able to wage an increasingly effective campaign against the LTTE ...

“We are assured and gratified by the progress that the Sri Lankan military is making, and I think, the Sri Lankan military would be the first to admit that there is work to be done.

“I am confident the Sri Lankan military has very best intentions in the world. Surely, they would like to have greater capability and capacity, but the progress they are making is commendable.”

- *Thaindian News* website, 6 November 2008

This stance in practice continued right up until a few days before the end of the war. The attitude of the Western governments to the outcome of that war can be summarised by the statement by Britain’s then Minister of State - Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Lord Malloch-Brown to the House of Lords:

“... in our initial contacts with the president, we congratulated him on finishing a brutal 26-year war, which was instigated by the Tamil Tigers- a terrorist group.”

- *Lords Hansard* text for 20 May 2009

To be sure, in the very last days leading up to the crushing of the LTTE when it was absolutely clear that the side that they wanted to win was going to triumph, the capitalist rulers in the U.S., Europe and Australia did start to make noises about human rights in Sri Lanka. Of course, they reserved their toughest attacks for the LTTE. However, they did also begin to raise “concerns” about the actions of the Sri Lankan military. What a cynical exercise! After having played the decisive role in ensuring the victory of the Sinhala-chauvinist, Sri Lankan government, now that this victory was certain, the Western imperialists wanted to wipe their hands clean of any responsibility for the bloodbath. Washington in particular saw the coarseness of its Colombo allies as starting to become a bit of an embarrassment to the devious Obama project to restore the U.S.’s battered international image. So, especially with the Tamil Diaspora energetically exposing the atrocities in Sri Lanka, Washington and its allies realised that they needed to slightly distance themselves from the Rajapaksa regime’s massacres while in practice continuing to maintain their support for Colombo.

Enter now that relentless mouthpiece of Western imperialism, the Murdoch media. As Eelam War IV drew to a close, the Murdoch and other capitalist media started to churn out a whole lot of smoke to hide the role of Colombo’s Western backers. Moreover, they incredibly tried to put the blame for the suffering of the Tamil people onto the West’s enemies and current rivals. Rupert Murdoch’s flagship British newspaper, *The Times* led the charge on this score. A series of articles by *Times* journalist, Jeremy Page, claimed that support from Iran, Russia and - you guessed it - that Communist bogeyman



Tamil people massacred by the Sri Lankan military.

China were the decisive factors in the Sri Lankan military’s victory. Furthermore, he ludicrously asserted that support from these countries is “why Western governments are so powerless to negotiate a ceasefire to help civilians trapped on the front line” (*The Times*, 2 May 2009).

The fanciful nature of Jeremy Page’s claims would make any crackpot conspiracy theorist proud. Granted that the countries he mentions played a bad role in this conflict – especially capitalist Russia which provided crucial weapons to Colombo such as MI-24 helicopters. However, their role was secondary compared to the game-breaking support given by Washington and its regional ally, India. However, Page deceptively makes out that India, Britain and the U.S. had effectively wound back

their support for Colombo. You got to be joking!

In keeping with whom Western imperialism sees as its biggest obstacle, Sri Lanka articles in the right-wing *Times* newspaper laid the greatest responsibility for the plight of Tamil people on China. In these articles, Jeremy Page made much of a major harbour facility that China started building in the Sri Lankan town of Hambantota in 2007. According to Page this was of decisive significance to the conflict. China, which has infrastructure development and aid projects with a very large number of “Third World” countries, however insists the facility is purely for civilian use. In any case the port is not scheduled to come into operation until ... 2022!

Oh Rupert Murdoch and your poodle editors and journalists, thou art clever! For decades you have branded the LTTE as “terrorists” and thus helped to get the LTTE banned in the entire Western world. For decades you have done untold harm to the Tamil national liberation struggle. Only when you were confident that the LTTE were on the verge of being crushed and assured that the struggle for Tamil Eelam was on the verge of a massive defeat, did you pretend to show any sympathy for the Tamil people’s plight. However, that was only so that you could direct solidarity for the Tamil people into support for Western imperialism’s predatory global agenda. Perhaps you think that the Tamil people and their supporters can be turned into staunch supporters of Western imperialism. Perhaps, like many Iraqi Kurds have (hopefully temporarily) become. After

all, the underlining, albeit unsaid, message behind *The Times* articles on Sri Lanka over the last year is that supporters of Tamil rights should support military strikes against Iran and campaigns to undermine Communist China.

Unfortunately, the analysis put forward by Jeremy Page and Co. has been picked up by others. Other Murdoch publications, as you would expect, have echoed the line of *The Times*. Furthermore, the media of the Tamil Diaspora have also widely retailed Page's assertions. Having been remorselessly slapped in the face with the "terrorist" tag by the Western media for years, Tamil activists clutched to the newly born seemingly sympathetic coverage in *The Times*. It is like how a person who is dying of thirst will drink contaminated water even if he knows that the source of the water is dirty. Only, of course, that the diseased water may kill the dehydrated person so that he never reaches the fresh, flowing creek that he so yearns for and would have shortly stumbled into.

There is, however, another reason why Jeremy Page's thesis has found a hearing among some Tamil Diaspora organisations. You see, many Tamil Diaspora organisations are at the moment politically dominated by an agenda that panders to the upper class and upper-middle class Tamils rather than to the working-class Tamils within the Diaspora. And the upper class and upper-middle class Tamils are loyal to Western capitalism because they are "doing well" under this system. Such Tamils are thus quite happy to accept any analysis like Page's that gets Western capitalism off the hook.

Meanwhile, even some in the Tamil community who know that the claims of *The Times* are far-fetched are for *realpolitik* reasons thinking that Tamils should throw their lot in with the Western imperialists. The way they see it, it is the Western imperialists who are still the most militarily and diplomatically powerful forces in the world and it is their ally India which is the regional power in South Asia. According to their perspective, if Tamils become loyal agents of the West and its Indian ally, if they join the capitalist crusade against Red China and even the anti-Muslim "War on Terror" then the Western and Indian rulers will in turn protect the Tamil people. The fledgling, post-Prabakaran leadership of the LTTE has tragically started down that course. Under the leadership of their late, and revered, leader V.Prabakaran, the LTTE nationalists, while also mistakenly appealing for support from India and other capitalist powers, did nevertheless maintain a fair degree of independence from those powers. Now, however, the new LTTE leadership under "KP" (Kumaran Pathmanathan), from a position of weakness for the movement, appears willing to dump that independence. In an interview with *India Today* on 25 June 2009 which outlined a new "pragmatic" approach, KP stated:

"Even though we are fully aware how India has contributed to the military victory of Sri Lanka, we do not hate India. We consider Tamil people would be the true and reliable friends of India in its own geo-political struggle with other countries, especially with China."

Yet it is likely that Indian intelligence agencies, most probably alongside the CIA and

Britain's MI5 which had both been hunting him for years, contributed to KP's own arrest some six weeks after this interview.

Indeed, if some in the Tamil community think that supporting capitalist India against the PRC will win support for the liberation of their people, they had better realise that the arch oppressor of the Tamil people has also made it clear that ... he too considers that ties with India have precedence over those with the PRC! Just a few days ago, Lankan President Rajapaksa declared that India's role on the island was a permanent feature whereas others (referring to China) were limited to economic engagement:

"The Chinese will come to Sri Lanka, build some projects and go, but the Indians will come here, they will build and they will stay. This is the difference in our relations with China and India..."

Times of India website, 28 June 2010

History has proven, with its customary ruthlessness, that India and the Western countries, as long as they remain under capitalist rule, will never be allies of the oppressed Tamil people. Most fundamentally this is because the capitalist system is a system counterposed to liberation. It is a system that maintains all sorts of tyrannies against nations because that helps it to reinforce the rule of the exploiting classes over the labouring classes and the dominance of the rich imperialist powers over the poorer countries. Any serious consideration of the way forward for the Tamil national liberation struggle must base itself on this understanding. That is why we here wish to detail the role played by capitalist India and its Western senior partners in the victory of the Colombo butchers in Eelam War IV.

THE MAIN FACTORS THAT ALLOWED THE LANKAN REGIME TO WIN EELAM WAR IV

For three and a half decades, the Tamil Tigers could not be militarily squashed. This includes the period since 1983 when, with the exception of relatively short periods of ceasefire, the Sri Lankan military was in a full-scale conflict with the LTTE. Indeed, in a war lasting from late 1987 to early 1990, the LTTE even trounced an Indian Army intervention force in Sri Lanka.

So what changed from the time of the beginning of the last ceasefire in early 2002. One theory intimated by the Western mainstream media is that in the last period of the conflict the Colombo government threw out human rights concerns that had previously held them back. This is an absolutely ludicrous analysis! Ludicrous because Sri Lankan governments have never shown any concern for the welfare of Tamil people since the conflict began. It is enough to note that in July 1983, 3000 Tamil civilians in the capital Colombo were slaughtered in a pogrom organised by the Sri Lankan government, then headed by President J.R. Jayawardena. From then onwards there were many war

Look who was coordinating their work at the height of the massacres of Tamil people!



Sri Lanka Naval Headquarters, Colombo, 28 April 2009: A delegation of the United States Pacific Command calls on the Commander of the Sri Lanka Navy Vice Admiral Wasantha Karannagoda. The official website of Sri Lankan Navy describes the meeting as follows: “The delegation led by Lieutenant Colonel Michael Pettigrew was warmly welcomed by the Navy Commander. They held cordial discussions on issues of mutual interests [like stopping LTTE boats] with the Navy Commander and several high ranking Naval officials of the Sri Lanka Navy.”

crimes against Tamil civilians during the conflict, including strafing (attacking, usually with automatic weapons, ground targets from low-flying aircraft) of villagers from Israeli supplied Kfir jets. One of the most notorious crimes was the 9 July 1995 massacre of over 120 Tamil civilians in a strike by the Sri Lankan air force on The Church of Saint Peter and Saint Paul in Navaly in the Jaffna peninsula. The attack followed the Sri Lankan military distributing leaflets telling Tamil people to gather at places of worship to avoid getting caught up in a government offensive. Hundreds of Tamils then took refuge at the church but it was heinously targeted even though it was well away from any fighting.

One cannot also explain the recent victory of the Sri Lankan military simply in terms of it getting better weapons. As a state power, the Sri Lankan forces have always had access to more sophisticated weaponry than the LTTE and yet this was not enough for them to triumph in the past. Moreover, the Indian Army, that was delivered a solid punch in the face by the LTTE in the late 80s, had even greater weaponry.

So what changed then? What factors allowed the Lankan military to be able to defeat the LTTE? Well, there are four key reasons:

1. The banning of the LTTE or any financial donations to them under draconian Anti-Terror Laws in the U.S., Britain, Western Europe, Australia, Canada and India severely restricted financial and other support to the LTTE from the Tamil Diaspora. Especially after the September 2001 attacks in New York, the “War on Terror” was used as a justification by the Western powers and their allies to constrict the LTTE’s lifelines from abroad.
2. Indian patrols stopped LTTE sea cargo vessels and the flow of LTTE reinforcements or tactical retreats by sea. Moreover, U.S. and Indian training of the Sri Lankan Navy and joint exercises with them greatly assisted the Lankan military to stop LTTE seaborne shipments and stop LTTE naval and amphibious operations. Given that Sri Lanka is an island this was crippling for the Tamil liberation forces.
3. The 2004 defection from the LTTE of an Eastern Sri Lanka based faction led by Colonel Karuna weakened the LTTE. The Karuna group then treacherously provided the Sri Lankan military with vital intelligence about the LTTE and acted as an anti-LTTE death squad.
4. During Eelam War IV, the Indian state provided the Sri Lankan military with key intelligence, including satellite-based intelligence, about the LTTE and its positions. So did the U.S. intelligence agencies which sometimes funnelled their data to Colombo via their Indian counterparts.

If we look at each of these four reasons, only the third one is not directly a result of the assistance to the Colombo regime by the Western powers and their Indian ally. Yet even here the grubby fingers of Washington and New Delhi can be found. It is known that India’s notorious Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) intelligence agency and possibly even directly the CIA were involved in fomenting the Karuna traitor split. RAW later facilitated the recruitment of Tamil refugees in South India’s Tamil Nadu for the Karuna group. Earlier RAW had assisted another anti-LTTE paramilitary group, the ENDLF, to recruit to its group. Due to RAW’s protection, ENDLF’s leader, Paranthan Rajan, was virtually unhindered in India as he openly offered big salaries to recruit cadre. RAW even had Paranthan Rajan released after being arrested by police. Later he and his ENDLF started recruiting for the Karuna group.

WHY “THIRD WORLD” GOVERNMENTS AND SOCIALISTIC STATES ALSO PLAYED A BAD ROLE IN THE LANKA WAR

Although the Western imperialists - and their Indian and Israeli allies - and capitalist Russia played the decisive role in ensuring Colombo’s victory over the Tamil resistance forces, the “Third World” countries and the socialistic states were also on the wrong

side of this conflict. And while the Western capitalists moved deviously in the immediate aftermath of Rajapaksa's victory to escape responsibility for their role, the "Third World" nations and socialistic states continued to diplomatically back the Colombo government uncritically. As a result, on 27 May 2009, the UN Human Rights Council passed a resolution uncritically supporting the Colombo regime's conduct in the war by a margin of 29 to 12 with 6 abstentions. Those supporting the resolution included not only key Lankan military suppliers like India, Russia and Pakistan but also most of the "Third World" nations on the Council - from Bolivia to Ghana, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Philippines and South Africa. Most regrettably the two socialistic states on the Council - most energetically Cuba and also China - supported the resolution.

All these countries opposed an alternative resolution put forward by European Union (EU) states including Britain, Germany and Italy which, while reserving its toughest attacks for the LTTE, had mild implied criticisms of the Sri Lankan government too. The Western nations were hoping that their gentle raps over Colombo's knuckles would distract everyone from noticing that they were in fact the decisive players in ensuring the Lankan government's murderous triumph and, what is more, are themselves in Afghanistan (and in the case of some of them Iraq too) acting with the same barbarity that their wayward Colombo dogs did against the Tamil people. The EU-led alternate resolution also sought to manipulate concern for the welfare of the persecuted Tamil people in order to open up institutional channels for them to expand their own neo-colonial tentacles within Sri Lanka.

Although the stance of the EU countries was utterly cynical and self serving, the terrible diplomatic position taken by both the socialistic states and the "Third World" capitalist nations on the Human Rights Council cannot be ignored. Worryingly their position represented broader opinion worldwide. Thus Vietnam supports Rajapaksa's stance with the same stridency as its socialistic brother Cuba which actually led the charge to scuttle any Human Rights Council resolution containing even the mildest criticisms of Colombo. Meanwhile, Chavez's Venezuela is as staunch a backer of Colombo as Morales' Bolivia and the overwhelming majority of African, Arab and other Muslim-majority states also take a similar stand.

So why did all these governments stand against the just struggle for national liberation of the Tamil people. A big part of the answer to this question is rather obvious in the case of the capitalist governments of "Third World" states. Those governments are themselves exploiters of their own toiling masses and many of them also brutally subjugate ethnic minorities and imprisoned national groupings in their own countries. Thus they have far more in common with the Lankan government than with the oppressed Tamil people. But having suffered so much under colonialism would not the masses in these countries have natural sympathy for a people like the Tamils who are fighting against national

oppression? Yes, for sure! However, the corrupt rulers of these nations, while they do sometimes posture as anti-colonial, are ultimately dependent on the imperialist powers.

However, what about the socialistic states? Why have they also stood against the Tamil people's just struggle? Unfortunately, while these states have made huge strides forward in liberating their own masses and in bringing greater equality between the different ethnic peoples of their own countries, their compromising, half-way governments pursue a foreign policy of seeking a coexistence with the capitalists rather than the worldwide defeat of capitalism. To be sure, the anti-capitalist nature of these states means that Cuba and China do also take progressive positions on some international issues. These socialistic states opposed the invasion of Iraq and China and – more resolutely - Cuba show greater solidarity with the Palestinian cause than most of the rest of the world. However, in the main, the leaders of Cuba and China seek to break out of their isolation by imperialism not through encouraging movements against capitalism but mainly by building good relations with any capitalist government that agrees to have friendly relations with them. And it turns out that among the "friendly" capitalist governments is the murderous one that rules Sri Lanka.

The reality of the friendship-with-"friendly"-capitalists policy pursued by the Cuban, Vietnamese, Chinese etc leaders is that they often turn a blind eye to the crimes of those "friendly" capitalist governments. Such a policy is not only harmful to oppressed peoples like the Tamils but is completely counterposed to the internationalism that is a defining feature of genuine communist parties. In March 1919, Lenin and Trotsky's Bolshevik party that was ruling Soviet Russia joined together with other communist parties around the world to build the Third (Communist) International. Until it began to degenerate in the mid-1920s, the Third International tirelessly organised the struggle to emulate the socialist victory in Russia around the world. The Bolshevik leaders saw this work as not only their duty to the world's oppressed but as a matter of the very survival of the new socialist order in Russia. They knew that if the rest of the world remained dominated by capitalist rule, imperialism would eventually succeed in destroying the Russian workers state. Today, the struggle to reorient the foreign policy of China and Co. onto an internationalist path is a matter not only of crucial importance to the toiling and oppressed people around the world but is essential if these socialistic countries themselves are to be freed from the unyielding pressure of world capitalism.

The governments of both the socialistic states and the "Third World" capitalist countries cannot escape blame for siding with the Colombo butchers. Nevertheless, it is true that when Washington, London, Berlin and Co. started criticising the Lankan government - as they moved to cover their backsides - at the end of the Lankan war, this pushed the poorer capitalist states and socialistic states alike further onto Colombo's side. The socialistic countries in particular have good reason to be suspicious when the imperial



Manik Farm, Northern Sri Lanka, August 2009: Rain floods the giant camp where 300,000 Tamils were imprisoned for several months in unsanitary conditions.

powers talk “human rights.” For when these states are attacked by the U.S., British and Australian rulers over “human rights” this is inevitably a cover for promoting capitalist counterrevolutionary forces there. The governments of the poorer capitalist countries also resent meddling by the richer capitalist powers – meddling which is often aimed at increasing imperialist exploitation within their borders. For although the leaders of these countries are tied to the imperialists, they do wish that the latter would not bully them so much.

The Rajapaksa war criminals played up to these sentiments with devilish skill. After having received game-breaking support from the Western powers for the war, they now turned around and portrayed themselves as victims of colonialism. The fact that the Tamil Diaspora movements appealed to the Western capitalists to be their saviours made it much easier for Rajapaksa and his cronies to do this. This only proves how disastrous is the Tamil Diaspora’s current strategy of trying to win over the imperial powers. For not only did this not stop – and was never going to stop - Washington, London and Canberra from backing the Colombo butchers, it also acted to help alienate some of the oppressed Tamil people’s natural allies: on the one hand, the socialistic states and, on the other hand, the masses of the world’s ex-colonial countries. Thus despite the sincerity, hardworking devotion and organisational competence of Tamil Diaspora activists, in the end what the Tamil people got was **the worst of both worlds.**

THE LANKAN RULERS BOGUS ANTI-COLONIAL PRETENSIONS

Given the level of training, arms and intelligence that the Lankan military received from the Western powers and their Indian and Israeli allies, it is the height of hypocrisy for the Rajapaksa government to have portrayed itself as brave opponents of Western imperialism. Yet this posture is not entirely new for a Lankan government. To understand why, we have to step back and look at the particular history of Sri Lanka and also look more generally at the nature of capitalist regimes in the poorer countries.

In the poorer capitalist countries of the so-called “Third World” the fruits of the masses’ toil are not only plundered by the local rulers but by the corporate bosses of the rich capitalist nations. Western and Japanese capitalists make huge profits from exploiting sweatshop labour in these poorer nations. American, Canadian and Australian mining companies plunder their wealth and give little in return to the local people. Meanwhile, local agricultural and cottage industry producers in these poorer states are forced to sell their produce at a pittance of their final sale price to the huge retail and wholesale conglomerates that monopolise the world market. When these poorer countries then become indebted to the “First World” capitalists, they have to pay huge interest payments to the American, British, Japanese and German banks that dominate the IMF (the International Monetary Fund, one of the major arms of international finance capital.) Furthermore, they are *arm twisted* into brutal austerity measures including the slashing of social services and the privatisations of state assets, all of which allow the imperialists to grab even greater control of these countries’ economies. Alongside this economic subjugation comes the disrespectful attitude of imperialist politicians, diplomats and businesspeople in their dealings with the “Third World”: with their arrogant behaviour, their high-handed lectures and their barely-veiled racial supremacist attitudes. All this neo-colonial oppression shapes the national consciousness of the “Third World” countries and Sri Lanka is no exception. The island’s peoples suffered under nearly 450 years of direct colonialism by three different Western powers. Today, the brutal exploitation of Lankan workers by Japanese, Australian and American manufacturers shapes the Lankan masses outlook.

The ruling classes of the poorer capitalist countries are compelled to somewhat acknowledge this mass anti-colonial sentiment in order to stay in power. Furthermore, the local capitalist class is upset by how much of their own country’s wealth is plundered by the imperialists. For that leaves less booty for them, the local exploiting class, and also makes them more unpopular with their own people. At the same time the “Third World” exploiting classes are thoroughly reliant on the bullying rich country corporations both to get a niche in the market and for access to capital. Moreover, the rulers of “Third World” capitalist nations often depend on their imperialist masters to help them stay in power. That assistance can come in the form of military support, covert operations to

disrupt opponents, bribery of opposition figures, media propaganda, financial backing etc.

The rulers of the ex-colonial countries are thus at one and the same time resentful of their imperial masters and subservient to them. The “Third World” capitalists complain of the arrogance and greed of the Western and Japanese elite, yet they are in awe of the imperialists and would like nothing better than to be like the imperial bully boys.

The only way that the weight of imperialism can be thrown off the “Third World” countries is by mobilising the masses, in particular the working class. Yet the capitalist rulers in the “Third World” fear such a struggle. For they know that such a mobilisation could see them toppled from power as well.

Nevertheless, the different pulls upon the ruling elites in the poorer capitalist states result in regimes with a wide variety of postures *vis a vis* the imperialist powers. At one end are ruling classes that can only be described as puppets of the imperialists. Many of these puppet regimes are in countries that have had or still have strong leftist resistance movements. For in these nations, including the likes of Colombia and the Philippines, the local exploiting classes very much rely on the colonial masters – in particular Washington – to save them from being overthrown by the restive masses. In return the local rulers show the most slavish loyalty to their imperialist “saviours.” In other cases, the imperialists have directly installed compliant regimes when they decided that the local elites were not doing enough to stop, or were incapable of stopping, communist - or other anti-imperialist – movements. A classic case is Indonesia. In the 1960s Indonesia had the world’s largest Communist Party that was not in power. The U.S. and its allies feared a communist victory there and concluded that the then capitalist rulers were not hard enough on the PKI, the Indonesian Communist Party. Hence in 1965 the CIA and the Australian Secret Intelligence Service helped organise a right wing coup to bring the military chief Suharto to power and to unleash a horrific massacre of over a million Communists, trade unionists, peasant activists and ethnic minorities. Having thus established a thoroughly loyal regime in Jakarta, Washington was able to ensure that even after Suharto was toppled from power in 1998 the Indonesian ruling class remained a firm underling of Western imperialism.

A particular case amongst the puppets of the imperialists is the South Korean ruling elite. Since South Korea is both a frontline state in the anti-communist Cold War against North Korea - and indirectly China - and a country that has had militant leftist-inspired student and workers movements, Washington and its allies have maintained a very firm grip on the political regime there. Tens of thousands of U.S. troops continue to occupy South Korea. Furthermore, over the years the CIA has organised coups to ensure just the regime it wants in Seoul. In 1979 the CIA, working through its South Korean counterparts the KCIA, assassinated their own puppet, then South Korean president, Park Chung

Hee. Park himself came to power in a military coup in 1961 and sent 320,000 troops to fight alongside the U.S. in the Vietnam War. Yet by 1979 he had outlived his use by date for Washington ... and so they eliminated him.

At the other end of the spectrum of capitalist-ruled, ex-colonial countries are ruling classes that maintain a strong anti-colonial posture. Historically amongst these rulers are those of nations that have had militant struggles for independence against direct colonialism – like Angola, Mozambique and Algeria (where the rulers postured as “anti-imperialist” in the 1960s and 70s.) In these countries an anti-imperialist pretence is essential if a regime is to have any credibility. Yet typically what made such an anti-imperialist posture possible was the backing that they received from powerful socialistic states: the USSR when it existed and now the increasingly influential Peoples Republic of China (PRC.) This backing not only protected these “non-aligned” states from military attack by vengeful imperialism but enabled them to receive access to capital and technology without having to hand over control of a huge chunk of their economy - as is typical in dealings with the capitalist powers. For example, in the time of the USSR, hundreds of thousands of people from friendly African, Asian and South American countries became highly trained specialists by studying on scholarships at Soviet universities. Meanwhile, from 1970-1975, the PRC conducted one of the biggest genuine aid projects in Africa when it built the famous 1860km long TAZARA railway from landlocked Zambia to the Tanzanian port



September 2007, Bay of Bengal: The Australian Navy joins the navies of the U.S., India, Japan and Singapore in “Malabar,” one of the biggest ever peacetime, military exercises in the world. The thinly veiled aims of the exercise were to intimidate China and to practice naval operations against Tamil Tiger cargo vessels. The Sri Lankan government openly welcomed the exercise saying it would bolster military cooperation against Tamil Tiger arms smugglers.

of Dar-es-Salaam. Apart from its immense economic importance to Zambia in allowing a route for its copper and other exports, the railway allowed Zambia to escape blackmail from the then white-supremacist colonial regimes in South Africa and Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe.)

Of course, even so-called “anti-imperialist” ruling classes of poorer capitalist countries are, just like the imperialists’ puppets – and the imperialists themselves – exploiters of their own people. Furthermore, despite their rhetoric few of

these rulers completely align themselves with the socialistic powers, not least because they fear that this would encourage communist forces in their own countries. Moreover, since the richest nations in the world remain capitalist and still control the world market and finances, economic cooperation with socialistic powers is not in itself sufficient to free poorer capitalist countries from the grip of imperialism. Nevertheless, by having strong economic links with previously the USSR and now with the PRC some of the capitalist rulers of “Third World” nations have been able to demand a better deal from the capitalist powers. Good relations with the USSR when it existed and now with the PRC also plays well with the home constituencies of the “Third World” capitalists. The ex-USSR and PRC were/are rightly seen by the masses in the ex-colonies as strongholds in the fight against imperialist domination of the world. At times, “anti-colonial” capitalist rulers have played up to this sentiment by even claiming that they themselves are “socialist” or even “Leninist.” Moreover, these “Third Worldist” elites seek further credibility at home and a better position to bargain with the capitalist powers by sometimes rebuffing these imperialist powers on diplomatic issues. Thus, in various periods, especially when the Soviet Union still existed, certain “Third World” capitalist governments like those of Syria, Tanzania, Libya and Ethiopia have been sharply critical of Western imperialism and its allies like Israel and (formerly) apartheid South Africa. More recently several left-leaning populist governments in Latin America, bolstered by their burgeoning links with the PRC, are also taking a similar stance.

In between such avowed anti-imperialists and the puppets of the imperialists within the “Third World” is a whole host of other capitalist ruling classes. Among these is the ruling class of Sri Lanka. Over the last sixty years, the Sri Lankan elite has maintained cordial relations with both the big capitalist powers and with the socialistic PRC - and earlier with the Soviet Union as well. To be sure, Colombo’s orientation has swung back and forth through the years and its external policy is hotly debated within the Lankan capitalist class. The free-market United National Party (UNP) has tended to favour even closer ties with the Western powers than the more nationalist Sri Lanka Freedom Party of which President Rajapaksa is part of. Yet, on the whole, all Colombo governments have sought to gain whatever advantages they could by playing off the imperial powers against the socialistic states and their allies.

The Lankan bourgeoisie’s foreign policy direction has been in part conditioned by the political climate within the country. The mid and late 1930s saw militant workers struggles on the island from the tea plantations to the transport sectors. The workers braved brutal repression by the British colonial rulers. Many of the struggles were led by the then-socialist Lanka Sama Samaja Party (LSSP) which would go on to claim a Trotskyist orientation. The LSSP led the independence struggle from British colonialism and both it and a smaller pro-Moscow offshoot, the Communist Party of Sri Lanka, continued to gain strength after independence. Faced with a militant, pro-socialist working class sections



Bala Boluk, Western Afghanistan, May 2009: Afghan child wounded by U.S. airstrikes that killed over 100 civilians. Barbarity of the Western imperialists is mimicked by the Rajapaksa regime in Sri Lanka.

of the Sri Lankan ruling class simply pretended to themselves be for socialism! Whereas in the likes of the U.S. and Australia there was widespread anti-communist hysteria in the 1950s, in Lanka the mainstream capitalist SLFP – completely disingenuously to be sure – was speaking of bringing “Yugoslav-style socialism” to Sri

Lanka. Indeed, sympathy for socialism has been so widespread amongst the Lankan masses that in 1978 the conservative UNP government changed the official name of the country from the “Republic of Sri Lanka” to the “Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.” Could you imagine Tony Abbott doing that!

The Lankan exploiting class knew too that accepting amicable diplomatic ties with socialistic states would help them to claim that they were indeed not puppets of Western imperialism. So in 1951 when Red China offered terms far more favourable than any capitalist country, the pro-Western UNP Lankan government signed a pact to trade rubber for Chinese rice. The Western capitalists were alarmed that just three years after independence Ceylon (as Sri Lanka was still called then) had become the first non-Communist Asian country to sell what Washington considered “strategic” materials to revolutionary China. In response the U.S. cut off aid to Ceylon. Meanwhile, Washington’s “United States Information Agency” (USIA) started more blatantly interfering in Ceylonese politics. USIA assisted in the dissemination of material in Ceylon – where Buddhists are a majority - accusing Mao’s China of anti-Buddhist attitudes. The USIA also secretly supplied anti-communist material used by the UNP in the 1952 election (“Confidential Security Information [declassified]”, *Richard Nixon Pre-Presidential Collection*, 1953, page 6.)

Then Washington’s alarm over Ceylon multiplied many times over when leftist-led workers and urban poor carried out a massive island-wide general strike in August 1953 that turned into the beginnings of a revolutionary clash. Even according to official figures, security forces arrested nearly 400 people during the August 1953 events and 21 people were killed - mostly strikers murdered by the state forces.

So, in November 1953, then U.S. Vice-President Richard Nixon visited Colombo as part of his infamous Cold War, Far-East trip. Nixon's brief was in good part to scuttle the *Rubber-Rice Agreement* with Communist China. Yet by the end of the trip Nixon was so reassured that he stated that:

"... it was evident that Ceylon had entered into the rubber-rice pact with communist China, purely for economic reasons ... the misunderstanding over the pact, and the attitude of the free world concerning it, should be cleared. "... Ceylon had no sympathy for Communist regimes – either the Soviet Union or China, and it was completely wrong appraisal of the situation for anybody to think otherwise."

Nixon's trip convinced him that it was Western capitalism that the Ceylonese ruling class looked for their "inspiration" to. And he was dead right! This remains the case today. For all their pretensions of "independence," the Lankan bourgeoisie slavishly seek to imitate the Western imperialists ... to the point of even faking Oxford-educated English accents! The Rajapaksas are no different. For all his contrived "common touch" Mahinda Rajapaksa's luxurious presidential compound, known as Temple Trees, is itself a mansion passed down from British administrators and wealthy colonial businessmen!

Following Nixon's Colombo trip, the U.S not only accepted the Rubber-Rice agreement with China but resumed and boosted aid to Ceylon. Washington understood that while the Lankan rulers may be trading rubber for rice with Red China for economic reasons and to make them look "non-aligned," it was the Voice of America that had its transmitters in Ceylon pumping out pro-capitalist propaganda throughout South Asia not Radio Moscow. Nixon realised, too, that allowing the Colombo capitalists to portray themselves

as "independent" would assist these precariously placed rulers to stay in power. Sure the U.S. would prefer if Lanka helped to isolate the young Chinese socialistic state. However, Washington considered that allowing Ceylon-China relations was a lesser evil when compared with the "dangers" that would arise if the Lankan capitalist rulers were identified by the Ceylonese masses as Western puppets.

With ups and downs to be



Israeli Kfir jets supplied to the Sri Lankan military played a big role in the war and were notorious for bombing Tamil civilians. Since the jets use U.S. General Electric-made engines, their sale to a third country requires U.S. government approval. U.S. support to the Sri Lankan military was often channelled through Israel and India.

sure, Washington has continued this policy towards Colombo ever since. Of course, sometimes Colombo crossed Washington in UN votes. However, when it really counted they have been right behind the capitalist powers. In late 2001 as the Bush regime geared up to invade Afghanistan, then Lankan president Chandrika Kumaratunga offered Washington, "full access to the country's port, airfields and other facilities" for use in Afghanistan. And she and Rajapaksa delivered! On 11 March 2008, then Commander of the U.S. Pacific Joint Command, Admiral Timothy Keating, lauded Colombo at a Senate Armed Services Committee for providing blanket over-flight and landing rights in support of U.S. operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. Indeed, already by 2002, the Lankan regime was also enabling U.S. warships to dock at Colombo harbour to refuel and provide shore leave for sailors (*U.S. Gets its Long Foothold in Sri Lanka, Paper No. 2171*, B. Raman, 15 March 2007.) Sri Lanka is also one of the not too numerous countries (mainly other strong Washington allies like Australia, Japan, Singapore and the Philippines) to endorse the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) – a scheme to target Western enemies, in particular socialistic North Korea, under the guise of "Combating Weapons of Mass Destruction."

The Lankan rulers act as servants of imperialism not only in the military sphere. The Lankan ruling class acts to guarantee enormous profits for Australian, British, Japanese and American corporations by enforcing their sweatshop exploitation of Lankan workers. Four days ago the Rajapaksa government released a Budget that would do justice to the most servile of IMF puppets. The budget included raising taxes on staple items like wheat flour and milk powder, slashing import tariffs on luxury items and foreshadowing cuts to corporate taxes.

So, pro-Tamil rights activists must not fall for the Colombo regime's occasional "anti-colonial" pretensions. Never should we think that just because Rajapaksa sometimes flaunts a supposed "anti-imperialist" stance, we should respond by appealing to the Western imperialist powers. No, Rajapaksa's pretensions should be exposed for what they are: a complete fraud. Despite some hot air rhetoric and some wily playing off of different powers against each other, the Lankan elite are at bottom running dogs of imperialism. The potential friends of the oppressed Tamil people are the forces that have an interesting in standing up to imperialism: the international working class, the masses of the ex-colonial countries and, under internationalist leadership, the world's socialistic states.

If anyone doubts who Lanka's rulers are actually organically tied to, let's hear it from the horse's mouth. At a Washington speech in 2004 to mark independence celebrations, Sri Lankan Ambassador to the U.S., Devinda R. Subasinghe, waxed lyrical about the deep bonds between the Lankan and U.S. governments:

"One of the key elements of this relationship has been, as I have observed over the past

year are the values that Sri Lanka and the United States share, both among the people and within the Governments. Shared values of democracy, free enterprise, our position on the global war on terrorism from which we ourselves have suffered for a 20-year period, and the continued global openness of the global trading and economic systems.”

Of course, we should look at what Rajapaksa himself says too. Soon after the war ended, *Time* magazine asked him if his conduct of the war would jeopardise relations with the U.S. and European governments. Rajapaksa confidently replied:

“I don't think they're so petty-minded. They're the people who encouraged us to defeat terrorism. We followed what [George W.] Bush said.... **We fought their war....**”

Time, 27 July 2009 [emphasis added]

The editors of *Time*, that loyal imperialist mouthpiece, themselves gave the war-criminal Rajapaksa their seal of approval, albeit somewhat shamefacedly. They concluded their feature story on him with the statement that:

However unlikely it may seem, Rajapaksa could reinvent himself once again as a champion of pluralism and economic liberalism. With few other political options, that may be Sri Lanka's best hope for the future....

THE WASHINGTON FACTOR

Time magazine's "support with mild criticism"-attitude to Rajapaksa captures part of how the Western capitalist rulers have decided to deal with their sometimes "wayward" guard dogs in Colombo. If Nixon and Co. long ago realised that allowing the Lankan capitalists to posture as "non-aligned" would help its embattled lackeys to stay in power, his successors found that putting some distance *in public* from the Lankan regime would also allow Washington to duck responsibility for Colombo's increasingly grizzly crimes. It is like a dog owner who scolds his dog when everyone gathers to complain that it has viciously attacked people but then when no one is looking feeds the dog a juicy piece of meat as reward.

Washington's stance is hardly unique to Lanka. It backs many blood-soaked dictatorships that it also mildly rebukes *in public* for show. So a year ago, U.S officials had their grubby fingers all over the coup that overthrew Honduras' elected government of Manuel Zelaya. However, after widespread condemnation of the coup, the Obama regime then cynically criticised the coup in public while moving to stymie opposition to it. Now Washington has normalised relations with the right-wing regime coming out of the coup after sham elections held under the military dictatorship.

In situations where Washington backs an openly barbaric regime, it sometimes outsources part of the task of providing direct support to the regime to its rabid junior partners. Thus the U.S. propped up apartheid South Africa up until the 1990s through its Israel and Taiwan allies. After the 1991 Dili massacre of East Timorese people by the Indonesian military,



Mizoram, India, 2004: U.S. troops in a joint training exercise with Indian soldiers at the Counter Insurgency and Jungle Warfare School (CIJW). The school, initially established in the 1970s to help quell Naxalite (Maoist) and national liberation movements in India, was more recently also used to train the Nepalese government forces in their bloody operations against communist insurgents and the Sri Lankan military for its anti-Tamil war. The U.S. farmed out some of the tasks of supporting Colombo's anti-Tamil war to its Indian capitalist ally.

the U.S. formally cut off open military support to Jakarta but left that task to Australia which openly continued to train Indonesia's Kopassus Special Forces killers. In the case of Sri Lanka, the U.S left part of the task of providing munitions to its Pakistan ally and later in the post-Soviet period also to India which has become Washington's deputy sheriff in South Asia. India provided the Lankan military with mobile radars and also with anti-aircraft guns for use against the LTTE's budding air force. In fact, it was Indian intelligence passed on to Sri

Lanka that proved most decisive in the defeat of the LTTE. India also trained Lankan military personnel at its Mizoram Counter Insurgency and Jungle Warfare (CIJW) School. The Indian trainers at the CIJW School were themselves trained by U.S. special forces.

Then there is that nasty crusader for reactionary causes: Israel. Israel not only trained the Lankan military at camps in Israel but Israeli personnel and/or "mercenaries" were reported to be providing on the ground backing for the Lankan military. The U.S. encouraged Israel to provide Colombo with more and more military equipment during the war and reportedly the U.S. paid for much of this. Israeli Kfir jets were the backbone and most lethal element of the Lankan Air Force. Since the jets use U.S. General Electric-made engines, their sale to a third country requires U.S. government approval. However, U.S. authorities slimily claimed that they have "not been requested to review such a sale."

Indeed, the Western powers have gone to great lengths to hide details of their arms supplies to the Sri Lankan military. Yet even the facts available show that these supplies were enormous. For example, in just a one and a half year period from October 1998 to February 2000, the officially listed sales of U.S. arms to Sri Lanka include: two Bell 412 helicopters, 40mm grenade launcher ammunition, two Hughes AN/TPQ-36 Firefinder artillery and mortar locating radars, 300 M35A2 two-and-a-half tonne cargo trucks and three Hercules C-130E aircraft (*Kfir Mystery*, Sangam Research, 24 August 2000.)



How Western capitalist states will "support" the Tamil people!
7 April 2009: British police brutally attack Tamil protesters in London.

For its part Britain, from 2006 to 2008 alone, sold Lanka \$24.5 million worth of military equipment. This included armoured vehicles, machine gun components, grenades, ammunition, components for combat aircraft and semi-automatic pistols (*TamilNet*, 2 June 2009.) And that is just what was **officially** provided! Western ally Slovakia, meanwhile, supplied 10,000 rockets to Colombo in the same period.

The Western governments also gave logistical support to the Lankan military. On 5 March 2007 the U.S. and Sri Lanka inked an Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement under which the U.S. military's use of Lanka's ports, airspace and airports would be exchanged for U.S. provision of spare parts, supplies, fuel and training to the Sri Lankan Armed Forces. It was in this area of military training that the U.S. gave its most decisive support to the Lankan war drive against the Tamil people. Often Washington would use truly Orwellian announcements to cover up the significance of their support for the blood-soaked Lankan military. Thus U.S. official reports sometimes described U.S. training of the Lankan military as efforts to ... improve human rights and promote non-lethal methods! *Washington Post* staff writer, Dana Priest, exposed the reality behind such doublespeak:

In Sri Lanka, U.S. military training is described in a fiscal 1999 report to Congress by the State Department as an effort to "train key military leaders in human rights principles and procedures." In fact, in "fid" ["Foreign Internal Defense"] exercises the Green Berets and SEALs have trained the Sri Lankan army in long-range patrolling, tactical reconnaissance, rapid reaction air and sea attacks and maritime operations that are aimed at depriving Tamil rebels of easy access to supply bases in Tamil Nadu across the Palk Strait in India, according to Defense documents and interviews. At least 500 Sri Lankan and 115 U.S. troops were involved in the 1996 and 1997 exercises. More have taken place this year.

- *U.S. Military Trains Foreign Troops*, Dana Priest, 12 July 1998

U.S. joint training exercises with the Lankan military expanded in size and scope as time went by. For example, in late October 2006 the Lankan Navy and U.S. Marine Corps held a massive naval exercise on the beaches of the Sri Lankan city of Hambantota. The amphibious exercises involved over 1,000 U.S. Marines and large support ships of the

USS Boxer Expeditionary Strike Group. Here is how the *Stratfor* current affairs agency described the exercise:

The exercises will no doubt threaten the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, which is part of the U.S. reasoning behind the exercises.... "On a tactical level, training the Sri Lankan armed forces in amphibious maneuvers will allow the United States to test its counterinsurgency tactics by proxy against the Tigers, who will surely bear the brunt of any new Sri Lankan military capability.

- *Sri Lanka: Exercises with U.S. Send a Message to China*, Stratfor, 20 October 2006

The *Stratfor* article also noted that the exercise was a "way to signal to China that the Indian Ocean is U.S.-Indian territory."

U.S. military training of their Lankan allies had a focus on enabling the Sri Lankan military to cut off LTTE supply routes to the island. Already in 2004 the Sri Lankan Ambassador to the U.S., Devinda Subasinghe, praised the growing U.S. support to the Sri Lankan Navy:

"I would also like to recognize a new dimension to the Sri Lanka - US relationship that is symbolized by the appointment of a Defense Attaché to the Embassy. That is the increasing defense and security relations between our two countries. We have been fortunate the Sri Lanka Navy has received a Cutter that will provide the offshore patrol capabilities in interdicting arms smuggling and other activities that are ongoing off our eastern shores. As well, the increase in the number of positions that the Sri Lanka military has received in terms of training and other defense related training courses...."

I myself visited the US Pacific Command along with the Commander of the Sri Lanka Navy, Vice Admiral Daya Sandagiri last year to discuss military-to-military relationships as well as increased sourcing and transfer of equipment as we fight our global war against terrorism and maintain the military capabilities of all three armed forces in Sri Lanka. I am happy to report to you that the Commanders of all three services have had exchanges with their US counterparts in Hawaii as well in the case of the Sri Lanka Navy the counterparts in the US Coast Guard and the Chief of Naval Operations...."

- 8 February 2004 speech, Embassy of Sri Lanka in Washington website

This U.S. backing for the Lankan Navy continued to expand. In a 11 March 2008 statement before the U.S. Senate Armed Services Committee, then Commander of the U.S. Pacific Command (USPACOM), Admiral Keating, stated that USPACOM was "enhancing the Sri Lankan armed forces ability to deter [*deter! what a liar!*] renewed violence, and improving their maritime security capabilities through Section 1206 capacity building authority."

It is unclear to what extent U.S. officers and Special Forces were actually on the ground directing the Sri Lankan military during the war. Washington has long used



October 2000: *Victims of a horrific massacre of 24 Tamil prisoners on 25 October 2000. Atrocities against Tamil People in Sri Lanka did not just start in the last year of the Civil War as portrayed by the Western media.*

April last year, at the very height of the final bloody battles, a top level delegation of USPACOM held a meeting on “issues of mutual interests” at Sri Lankan Navy headquarters with the Commander of the Sri Lanka Navy Vice Admiral Wasantha Karannagoda and other high-ranking Lankan Navy officials (Sri Lankan Navy website). Their “issues of mutual interests” could only have been about how to best stop cornered Tamil resistance fighters from escaping by sea or getting relief supplies and equipment by boat into the, then, small sliver of remaining LTTE-held territory.

WASHINGTON’S WAR ON THE LTTE PRECEDED THE “WAR ON TERROR”

Some who cling on to the idea that the Western capitalist powers can eventually become supporters of the Tamil struggle have surmised that the Tamil people were unluckily caught in the crossfire of the post 9-11 “War on Terror.” And that if not for 9-11, Washington, Canberra and Co. may have backed the Tamil cause. Yet in fact as we have shown above, Western military backing for Colombo’s war on the Tamil people long precedes 9-11. Indeed **the United States first designated the LTTE as a Foreign Terrorist Organisation in 1997, some four years before George Bush declared his “War on Terror.”**

Of course, the U.S. and its allies then seized on the 9-11 atrocity to justify intensifying their drive against those forces in the world that they saw as getting in their way. This was in no way a general targeting of so-called terrorist groups. Thus Miami-based, anti-communist Cuban exile groups like Commandos F4 and Brothers to the Rescue which have been responsible for bloody, terrorist attacks in Cuba (including the 1976 explosion of a Cuban civilian airliner that killed 73 people) were not banned. No: Washington, London, Berlin, Canberra etc. only targeted those groups that were seen as an obstacle to their global imperialist agenda. **The Tamil resistance movement was**

the cover of training, exercises and “exchanges” to unleash its Special Forces in actual combat operations abroad such as against leftist insurgents in El Salvador in the 1980s and against leftists in Colombia up until today. What is certain is that right until the very end of the fighting last year, the U.S. military was holding high-level meetings with its Lankan counterparts to coordinate the war and pass on U.S. intelligence. **Indeed, on 28**

not caught in the crossfire of the West’s “War on Terror.” It was instead one of the actual targets of this war!

The effect of the various bans on providing support to the LTTE that were imposed in the Western capitalist countries cannot be underestimated. Since the Tamil population in the North and East of Sri Lanka was so embattled and poverty stricken, Tamil resistance forces had previously depended a lot on the Tamil diaspora for material assistance. Without this and with Washington and New Delhi able to ensure that LTTE maritime supply routes were cut, the LTTE were seriously crippled.

TAMIL SOLIDARITY MOVEMENT MUST CHANGE COURSE!

The cruelty of the Australian ruling elite’s persecution of Tamil refugees may cause some who have placed their faith in the Western capitalist powers to realise the error of their approach. It is indeed high time for the Tamil solidarity movement to change course. It is time for the movement to finally look to the international working class and those oppressed by imperialism as its true allies. This does not simply mean adding the workers movement to the list of potential friends that the Tamil rights movement should appeal to. No, one cannot walk on opposite sides of the street at the same time. One cannot appeal to the trade unions if one is also pandering to the capitalist bosses that attack these unions. One cannot seek solidarity from the Palestinian people if one is simultaneously appealing to the Western imperialist powers that back Israel. A choice has to be made. The movement must be radically reoriented. To undertake this reorientation, the movement must be ripped free from the political tendencies of upper class Tamils and those upper-middle class Tamils that are comfortable with the social system in the West. This will be a painful process. But it must happen! Or else it is certain that the oppression of the Tamil people will continue.

The hideousness of Canberra’s treatment of Afghan and Tamil asylum seekers has brought a wave of sympathy for the Tamil cause amongst politically aware Australian trade unionists and amongst leftists here. For this wave to not be dissipated and for it to be carried in the right direction, the Tamil movement must clearly declare its firm solidarity with the working class movement. That includes also supporting the interests of Sinhala workers who after all are exploited by the same brutal capitalists that are behind the butchering of the Tamil people. It is true that Sinhala-Buddhist chauvinist propaganda has swept away a big chunk of the Sinhala masses especially in the wake of Colombo’s military victory. Yet ethnic chauvinism does not feed the stomach. Sooner or later the inability of the Lankan rulers to provide for Sri Lanka’s people will come to a reckoning, the more so because the world capitalist economy is lurching towards a new crisis. Before, they blamed Tamil people for everything to distract the Sinhala masses from the true cause of their suffering. Now after the Tamil people have been temporarily vanquished that is harder to do. Eventually the Sinhala worker will ask why he or she

is struggling to buy rice while the Rajapaksas and their cronies - and the Colombo 7 elite that they serve- steal an ever-greater share of the national income. Why has the recent budget made basic staples more expensive and frozen public sector wages while luxuries affordable by the rich have become cheaper? Why are sweatshop Western and Japanese bosses and IMF bankers leaching more and more of the country's wealth while Rajapaksa speaks of Sri Lanka's glorious "independence"? Can you really blame Tamils for all this too?

It is up to the, hitherto all too unsatisfactory, Lankan left to provide real answers to the Sinhala workers and to unite them with their Tamil brothers and sisters in a common struggle against class exploitation and the national oppression of the Tamil people. However, the Tamil solidarity movement must fashion its agenda to make such a perspective more realisable. That means, for example, turning away from calls for a general economic boycott of Sri Lanka. The hurt that would cause Lankan workers (including the impoverished Upcountry Tamil plantation workers) would only drive them into the arms of the Sinhala ruling class. Instead, we should target specifically the blood-soaked Lankan ruling class and always seek to drive a wedge between them and the Sinhala and Muslim masses.

As supporters of the Tamil struggle in Australia we must primarily focus on opposing the Australian rulers that back the Colombo butchers. It is, of course, counterproductive to project that the Australian exploiting class would be allies of the Tamil struggle but there is much we can do to stop them doing harm. We should oppose all of Canberra's measures that serve to embolden Colombo's persecution of Tamil people. We should demand an end to the Australian government's ban on support for the LTTE, demand a halt to all deportations of Tamil refugees and should demand asylum for all Tamil - and indeed *all* - asylum seekers.

Having demands aimed against the Australian capitalist class is the way to organise solidarity with the Australian workers movement. It is also the way to build links with sections of the Sinhala working class who, after all, suffer terrible exploitation by greedy Aussie bosses in Sri Lanka's Free Trade Zones. To this end, we in Trotskyist Platform propose that the Tamil solidarity movement organises political actions here in Australia against Ansell, the Australian-owned company that both runs the biggest foreign-owned factory in Sri Lanka and the plant most notorious for ill-treating workers. Barely two months after the Lankan military's bloody massacres that ended the war last year, Ansell very publicly made a huge donation to the Sri Lankan military. Demonstrations in Australia should demand a signed statement by Ansell bosses that they will halt all donations to the Lankan military. Furthermore, we should seek to force Ansell to "compensate" for its previous donation to the military by demanding that the Ansell bosses hand over an equivalent amount to Tamil rights and relief organisations. Sinhala (and obviously Tamil)

Australian-Owned Corporation Supporting The Barbaric Sri Lankan Military



Sri Lanka Ministry of Defence official website

Colombo, 14 July 2009: Local executives of Australian-owned and controlled Ansell Lanka Ltd. hand over 650,000 rupees to Sri Lanka's Secretary of Defence Mr. Gotabaya Rajapaksa for the Api Wenuwen Api fund. The fund is to build housing for the Sri Lankan military forces in "appreciation" of their victory in the war against Tamil rebels. In the same ceremony, Ansell Ltd also donated a consignment for 2 million rupees worth of surgical gloves to the Sri Lankan Army. Ansell's rubber glove factory is the biggest foreign-owned manufacturing enterprise in Lanka and is notorious for its sweatshop exploitation of local workers. Ansell owners support the state forces that brutally enforce this exploitation.

workers rights advocates who are not hostile to the Tamil struggle would be encouraged to also join these demonstrations. Thus the demonstration demands would include not only support for the Tamil cause but demands in support of Ansell Lanka workers – like higher pay. Among the specific actions that we could consider is a blockade of Ansell's head office in Melbourne. From there we can build towards trade union industrial action here that can really hurt Ansell's profits and force them to submit to our demands.

The ideas outlined here are described in more detail in the Trotskyist Platform leaflet that we reprint below. The leaflet titled *Oppose Sri Lanka's Brutal Occupation of Tamil Areas* was issued on 12 May last year in the final stages of the war. It is thus somewhat dated. However, it includes much information about the way forward for the Tamil liberation struggle and we thus strongly encourage our readers to go through this leaflet.

OPPOSE SRI LANKA'S BRUTAL OCCUPATION OF TAMIL AREAS

12 May 2009 - The Sri Lankan Army is butchering Tamil people in the North of Sri Lanka. The Army has violently taken over historic Tamil homelands previously held by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), a group fighting for self-determination for the oppressed Tamil minority. But most of those killed by the Army's invasion have been Tamil civilians.

On April 8, artillery shells fired by the Army killed 129 Tamil civilians inside a so-called "no-fire zone." Three of the shells hit a childcare/nutrition centre at Pokka'nai where many were waiting to obtain humanitarian milk rations for children. Then on April 20 – somewhat fittingly also the 120th anniversary of Hitler's birth - the Army unleashed a new genocidal assault. They killed thousands in a 48-hour period. In April, the U.N. stated that 6,500 civilians had been killed in the last three months. This bloodbath keeps getting worse. In a two-day period from May 9, Army shelling of Tamil civilians residing in the LTTE controlled region killed over 1,000 and possibly up to 2,500 people.

Tamil people worldwide have protested against these atrocities. And now a growing number of non-Tamils are getting involved too. It is crucial that the powerful trade union movement joins in these actions. If our unions fail to stand up for a people facing such murderous injustice then their own integrity as a force standing up to injustice – standing up to the exploitation of workers – will be weakened. The workers movement has a real interest in standing with the oppressed Tamil people. After all, the same Western ruling elite that backed Colombo's invasion of Tamil areas are also the very same class that exploits working class people in their own countries.

Pro-Tamil protesters have desperately tried to appeal to the humanity of the rulers in the West who most know have been holding up Colombo's agenda. But these capitalist rulers in the U.S, Britain, Australia etc don't make their decisions based on humanitarian considerations. Rather what matters to them are the profits of the big business owners whom they serve. This is why the organised workers movement is so crucial to saving the Tamil people. Union industrial action to protest against Canberra's support for Lanka's occupation can hurt the profits of Australia's corporate elite and hence force their politicians to back off from supporting the Colombo regime. If this were to happen in all Western countries then it would pull the legs out from under the political/economic platform from which the Lankan Army launches. **Rally against Washington and Canberra's support for the Colombo butchers! Down with the Sri Lankan Army's bloody occupation! Demand that the racist Sri Lankan Army get out of all Tamil majority areas in the North and East of the island!**

THE COLONIAL TIMES: DIVIDE & CONQUER

The carnage in Sri Lanka is the result of decades of discrimination of Tamil people

on the island by capitalist Sri Lankan governments. These racist policies are, in turn and in part, a product of 443 years of subjugation of the island by, successively, three different colonial powers.

At the time of invasion by the imperial powers, the Sinhalese and Tamil people lived generally amicably together in separate states on different parts of the one island. There was cultural interaction and trade between the two neighbouring nations. But when the colonial overlords - in particular the last ruler the British - took over, they rammed the separate nations into a single domain, in part for administrative convenience and in part to make it easier to play off the two ethnic communities against each other. Especially as both the Sinhala and Tamil people became more energetic in their calls for an end to colonial rule and all the deprivation, terrible mistreatment and repression that it brought, His Majesty's representatives in Ceylon (the British name given to the island) became more devious in fostering rivalries between the Sinhalese and Tamils. "Divide and conquer" is, after all, what British imperialism is famous for!

In the meantime, both the Sinhala and Tamil upper classes were becoming fearful that the masses who were agitating for independence were simultaneously demanding things like ... heaven forbid! ... an equal vote for all residents regardless of caste and an end to discrimination by castes. What made the upper classes especially nervous was that more and more of the toilers were showing their allegiance to the Marxist parties that were spearheading the independence drive. So the privileged politicians from the two communities sought to keep their respective populations behind them by

A force for human rights"? Get real!



U.S. soldiers torture an Iraqi detainee in the notorious Abu Ghraib prison.



Hatton Bogawantalawa, Sri Lanka, November 2006: *Striking tea estate workers march through the estate demanding a pay rise. Mainly women and descendant from those Indian Tamils who were brought by the British colonialists as indentured labour, upcountry estate workers are both the most downtrodden workers in Sri Lanka and the most strategically placed. The working class is the class that can lead the Lankan masses of all ethnicities to champion Tamil national rights and win their own liberation from capitalist exploitation.*

each whipping up, and appealing to, rival ethnic chauvinist feelings. In the case of the Tamil elite politicians, they could at least point to a legitimate fear that the Tamil minority would be oppressed in a majority-Sinhalese independent Ceylon. Under colonial rule, all the non-European peoples on the island - whether Sinhalese, Ceylon Tamil, Muslim Moor or up-country Tamil (the latter are descendants of those brought by the British as semi-slave labour in the nineteenth century and have a culture and heritage somewhat distinct from Ceylon Tamils) - were arrogantly downtrodden by the British. The Tamil people rightly feared that after independence they would still be downtrodden - this time under Sinhala rulers.

DISCRIMINATION & POGROMS

After independence in 1948, the Ceylonese upper class – both Sinhalese and Tamil – continued to fear the wrath of the masses that they exploited. For the organized workers movement that had arisen together with the leftist parties in the 1930s continued to grow in militancy and sophistication. In August 1953, anger at the conservative United National Party government for increasing the price of rice and cutting back social services culminated in a massive general strike (called a hartal). The hartal turned into a semi-uprising involving clashes with the police and army. Flying pickets of workers and

poor people stopped scab buses and trains. Rail lines were torn up to stop scab trains from operating and scab buses were pelted with stones and smashed or stopped by street barricades of felled trees. The August 1953 struggle united Tamil and Sinhalese workers, urban poor and peasants all together. The capitalist ruling class was so terrified of revolution that the Cabinet had to hold its emergency meeting aboard a British warship docked in Colombo harbour.

After the 1953 hartal, a large section of the capitalist class was convinced that they would be toppled from power unless they could better divert the hostility against them of the Sinhala masses into hatred for the Tamil minority. So in 1956, the new Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) prime minister, S.W.R.D. Bandranaike introduced a policy called the Sinhala Only Act. That's like having a policy here called the "Whites Only Act" (indeed for much of the last century Australia did operate under a White Australia Policy.) The openly racist name Sinhala Only was chosen because half the point of the Act was not only to discriminate but to be seen to be discriminating – the Sinhala capitalists were determined to make the Sinhala poor think that their upliftment must come at the expense of the Tamils.

The Sinhala Only Act made Sinhalese the sole official language of the country. Until then, Tamils had been heavily employed in the public service, in the postal service and railways and in clerical jobs. The salty, infertile soil in the Tamil Northern part of Sri Lanka meant that it was only through such jobs and education that Tamils could make a living. But after Sinhala Only, the Tamils, lacking proficiency in Sinhalese language, were largely driven out of public service jobs – and that was precisely what the Act was meant to do. Then in 1971, the newly elected "United Front" government introduced a policy to exclude many Tamils from the universities. Later dubbed "Standardisation," the policy made people living in the mostly Tamil populated areas have to score higher entrance marks to get admission to the universities than students living in majority Sinhala areas.

Each discriminatory policy coming from Colombo inflamed racist attitudes at the base of society. This led to several outbreaks of murderous mass rioting against Tamil people. Among the biggest of these were in 1956, 1958 and 1977. These were like the horrific White supremacist riot at Cronulla Beach in 2005 but even more sustained. Hundreds of Tamil people were murdered in these attacks with the acceptance and covert (and sometimes even overt) participation of state forces. Very often the Sinhalese extremist mobs were stirred up by Buddhist monks – who in Sri Lanka form the most racist force in society, somewhat like America's Christian right preachers and India's hard line Hindu nationalists.

THE EMERGENCE OF THE LTTE

As the oppression of the Tamils intensified, attitudes within the Tamil community radicalised. In the 1950s, mainstream Tamil politicians in the Federal Party called only



Killing of Tamils - 15-02-09

The UN estimated that 6,500 civilians were killed and another 14,000 injured between mid-January and mid-April 2009 as the LTTE and the Tamil population that supported them were forced by the Sri lankan war machine into a narrow strip of land in the north of the island. There are no official casualty figures after this period but estimates of the death toll for the final four months of the war range from 15,000 to 20,000.

for regional autonomy for the Tamils as part of a federated united Ceylon. But by the mid-1970s, most Tamil people wanted a separate Tamil homeland: Tamil Eelam. The youth were the driving force behind the calls for Tamil Eelam. A shaping experience for these youth was the brutal government repression in 1973 of “Black Flag” protests held in Jaffna against anti-Tamil discrimination and the “Standardisation” policy. The violent repression of this struggle convinced many of the youth of the impotence of the non-violent, parliamentarist strategy adopted by the Tamil political leadership of the time.

There was, however, another big factor shaping the trajectory chosen by the radicalizing Tamil youth. And that was the shocking betrayal of Ceylon’s socialist parties. Although short of being genuinely revolutionary like Lenin’s Bolsheviks, the Marxist parties in Ceylon did at one time stand against Sinhala chauvinism. When the 1956 Sinhala Only Act was being enacted it was the ostensibly Trotskyist, Lanka Sama Samaja Party (LSSP) and the pro-Moscow Communist Party (CP) that were, together with the Federal Party, the strongest in opposing the policy. The left parties campaigned for “parity of status” between the Sinhalese and Tamil languages. Many Tamil youth at the time who like their Sinhalese brethren were generally attracted to the liberating goals of communism looked

to the socialist parties to also defend Tamil rights. Here it is worth noting what happened in the 1956 elections in the Northern electoral seat of Point Pedro. In that electoral district which at the time covered the entire Vadamarachi area, the very region from where most of the founding Tamil Tiger leaders would later emerge, the people voted in to parliament the Communist Party’s candidate. But later the LSSP and CP betrayed both the Tamil people and Sinhalese working class when they went into coalition with the Brandranaike clan’s SLFP. In 1964, the two supposedly socialist parties entered the SLFP-led bourgeois government and took up ministerial posts. The LSSP and CP leaders were motivated by a mixture of, on the one hand, naked self-seeking careerism and on the other hand the illusion that that there was a parliamentary road towards socialism. The pseudo-Marxists claimed that by joining with the SLFP they were making an alliance with a so-called “anti-imperialist wing” of the bourgeoisie and in doing so were making capitalism more progressive as the first step towards socialism. The truth, however, is that by joining with a bourgeois party, the ex-left parties necessarily had to suppress their class-struggle program and kowtow to Sinhala-Buddhist chauvinism. The LSSP and CP, in fact, later went on to be part of the very same “United Front” government that instituted the notorious “Standardisation” of university entry. It is telling that when Tamil youth staged their March 1973 Black Flag rally, the immediate target of their demonstration was a visit to Jaffna of LSSP minister N.M. Perera and CP minister Pieter Keuneman. In the space of a few years the LSSP and CP had travelled from being bona fide (albeit not Bolshevik) leftists to being the most cynical of fake-leftists, from being champions of Tamil rights to being the enemies of the Tamil people.

With the then Sri Lankan “left” offering no alternative, radical youth who could have been attracted to an internationalist, class-struggle strategy for Tamil liberation instead turned to Tamil nationalism. Meanwhile, the youth’s anger at the hopeless conservatism of the parliamentary Tamil parties - the All Ceylon Tamil Congress and the Federal Party - convinced them that they would need to take the road of armed struggle. Eventually V. Prabakaran’s LTTE emerged as the strongest of the Tamil militant groups. Known as the Tamil Tigers for short, the LTTE built up a highly disciplined, well-trained and effective guerilla force. Their ranks especially swelled after a horrific pogrom in July 1983. Then over 3,000 Tamils in Colombo and throughout the country were murdered by rampaging Sinhala racist mobs. Again the state forces colluded with the extremist rioters.

As the LTTE’s numerical strength grew, they achieved a number of spectacular military victories. But they are unable to achieve Tamil national liberation because their Tamil nationalist outlook prevents them from uniting with the natural ally of the oppressed Tamil people, the Sinhala working class who too is viciously subjugated by the rich Sinhala ruling class. At times the Tigers have even driven the Sinhala poor back into the hold of their own exploiters – such as in particular cases in the past where the LTTE has responded to gruesome Army atrocities by in turn killing Sinhalese civilians.

Nevertheless, the LTTE's courageous resistance against the murdering Army, the incredible dedication of their cadre and their reputation for incorruptibility has won them the hearts of most Tamil people. Even today after suffering serious military setbacks and with Colombo claiming that the Tigers are on the verge of total defeat, there is some chance that the LTTE will regroup into a force based on its original hit-and-run, classical guerilla warfare strategy. The Sri Lankan military's slaughters of Tamil civilians are a desperate attempt to diminish support for the LTTE. The Lankan rulers hope that their mass killings will demoralise Tamils and drive them into partially blaming the LTTE's militancy for the rivers of Tamil blood that are engulfing the Tamil homeland. But the Army's determination to herd fleeing Tamils into virtual prison camps proves that even they know that liberation fighters will continue to arise from within the embattled Tamil people.

WESTERN RULERS GAVE THE COLOMBO GOVERNMENT THUGS THE GREEN LIGHT

So how is Colombo able to prosecute and get away with this genocidal invasion? For one, it has the backing of the Indian government. Although Indian governments are capable of producing crocodile tears to appease sympathy for Eelam Tamils within South India, the Indian Military's training of Lankan Army officers and Indian intelligence about LTTE positions have been vital to the Sri Lankan Army's recent offensive. But what has been most decisive is the support of the Western powers for Sri Lanka's war. Colombo has received much military and economic backing from the U.S. and its allies, including Australia. It is Israel that has supplied the Sri Lankan Air Force with the KFIR jets that have so destructively bombed Tamil towns and villages. The Israeli military and intelligence agencies have also trained Sri Lankan forces. Often Washington outsources such tasks to states like Israel when it wants to be more covert in providing military support to a brutal regime. During the apartheid days, Israel and Taiwan were among the most open supporters of the racist South African government.

Importantly, the Western capitalist governments have also cut off both humanitarian support to Eelam Tamils and financial support for the LTTE from the large Tamil expatriate community. The U.S. and European Union have proscribed the LTTE by branding it a "terrorist" organisation and Tamil activists have faced repression everywhere in the West from Britain to Australia. Outrageously, Australian authorities are trying to imprison three Tamils, Aruran Vinayagamorthy, Sivarajah Yathavan and Arumugam Rajeevan, on charges of providing financial support to the LTTE. The three Tamil men have been hounded by the Australian authorities since 2007 when they were first jailed. Meanwhile in Britain, a Tamil activist Arunachalam Chrishanthakumar was convicted on terrorism charges of coordinating supplies of material to the LTTE.

Arunachalam Chrishanthakumar's conviction came on April 17, right at the height of the

Colombo regime's terrorist onslaught against the Tamil people. Ten days earlier, British police brutally attacked a rally of Tamil protesters and made four arrests, including on the pretext that the demonstrators were flying the LTTE flag. Such repression against expatriate Tamil activists serves to send a signal to the Sri Lankan government that Britain, the U.S, Australia etc is right behind their offensive. And the Colombo butchers sure have got the message!

WHY WASHINGTON, LONDON, TOKYO & CANBERRA ARE AGAINST THE TAMIL NATIONAL LIBERATION STRUGGLE

It is worth noting that most of the organisations involved in armed campaigns for genuine national self-determination claims have been banned or are severely restricted by the West. Check out Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade "list of terrorist organisations" with which financial dealings are banned and you will see that it includes not only the LTTE but Hamas and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) as well as the PKK (Kurdistan Workers Party), a group fighting a just struggle for a Kurdish homeland in Turkish-controlled Kurdistan. In contrast, **bogus** separatist movements not only escape designation as "terrorist" but are covertly financed by the CIA and other Western imperialist agencies. Such movements include the like of the Tibetan Youth Congress (TYC) which carries out violent attacks on the communist-run Tibetan Autonomous Region of China. Like its "spiritual" godfather the Dalai Lama, the TYC fraudulently calls for "Free Tibet" to disguise their real goal which is to overthrow the current Tibetan Autonomous Region government that is dominated by liberated slaves and serfs and their descendants and replace it with an order like the old feudal Tibet where 5% of the population lorded it over the masses of slaves and serfs. Tamil people would be interested to know that the ruling class in the old Dalai Lama-run Tibet was not only an aristocracy but included large numbers of wealthy and ruthless monks – whose terrifyingly brutal contempt for their slaves/serfs mirrored the warmongering contempt for the Tamil people of Lanka's Buddhist monks. The TYC for its part can be compared with Sri Lanka's right-wing Jathika Hela Urumaya (JHU) party (which is part of Rajapakse's governing coalition), only that unlike the JHU the TYC is thankfully out of power. In March last year, the TYC was central in inciting riots in the Tibetan capital Lhasa where, in a scene that could have resembled past anti-Tamil riots in Colombo, rampaging racist monks murdered 18 civilians and burnt down the Muslim mosque. Yet the TYC are not branded as "terrorist" by Washington and its allies ... no, such designations are only reserved for those like the LTTE, PFLP and PKK whose agendas don't fit in with U.S. imperialism's schemes.

So why does the struggle for Tamil Eelam clash with the Western powers' agenda? Firstly, one must understand that the rich ruling classes in the West and Japan not only exploit workers in their own countries but make profits at an even more exorbitant rate

from superexploiting labour, plundering natural resources and dictating markets in the “Third World.” In Sri Lanka, the U.S., British, Japanese and Australian capitalists are all in there. Australia is actually the second biggest foreign investor (after Japan) in Lanka (*Daily News*, Sri Lanka, 21 March 2007), i.e. the second biggest exploiter of grossly underpaid labour. The biggest foreign industrial plant in Sri Lanka is the Australian-owned Ansell Lanka rubber products factory in the Biyagama Free Trade Zone just to the East of Colombo. The Australian bosses are notorious for their abusive treatment of workers in the Free Trade Zones. In January 1995, the Ansell Lanka workers became so desperate that, as part of a strike demanding recognition of their union, they removed members of the hated management from their offices and led them at gunpoint to a remote storage area. These audacious methods worked - the imprisoned managers had no choice but to sign a piece of paper acceding to the workers demands. The famous strike victory by the Ansell Lanka workers then set off a spate of similar hostage taking of managers at other workplaces within the Free Trade Zones.

How then do the greedy Western and Japanese capitalists operating in Sri Lanka stop such workers revolts from spreading? In the end, they can only fall back on those very same methods that their junior partners in the Lankan ruling class use: set the workers against each other by inciting ethnic tensions and try to divert the rage of the Sinhala workers at their poverty-stricken condition on to the Tamil masses. Now, it is true that the Australian, American, Japanese and British corporate parasites feel that a war environment is bad for business. But they would all rather have that than have united contingents of Sinhala and Tamil workers marching into their offices to take them hostage! This conclusion drawn by the business owners then gets filtered through to their home country governments in Washington, Canberra, London and Tokyo who in turn frame their policy on Sri Lanka accordingly. Let us not forget that under the capitalist political structure that operates in the West, it is the interests of the wealthy business elite that determines government policy and not the interests of the working class masses.

The second factor shaping Western policy on Sri Lanka is their wish to have control of the excellent deepwater natural harbour in Trincomalee and to generally have hegemony over the strategic sea lanes that pass adjacent to the island. Not only does much international cargo pass through these waters but he whose warships have access to Lankan waters and harbours has a big advantage in asserting naval dominance over the strategic Northern part of the Indian Ocean. The U.S. and Britain see holding this advantage as important to putting the squeeze on pro-communist China. To be sure Washington and its allies could potentially deal with any political force on the island willing to be their puppets. But they have calculated that a Tamil Eelam created by a militant liberation struggle is going to be less likely to unquestioningly accede to their diktats and more prone to challenging their “right” to access Trincomalee harbour than the current Colombo regime.

Lastly but not least, the Sri Lanka policy of the Western imperialists is influenced by their desire to maintain the current social “order” in nearby India. Now, to India’s impoverished masses this “order” is terribly oppressive. But India’s cutthroat capitalist system, sold by Western mouthpieces as “the world’s largest democracy,” produces fabulous profits for U.S., and to a lesser extent British and Dutch, corporations exploiting sweatshop labour. Furthermore, the Western capitalists see India as a bulwark against successful, socialistic China and are relying on New Delhi to quell the revolutionary socialist agitation in Nepal. However, Washington, London, The Hague, Canberra etc are worried about the “stability” of the Indian political set-up itself. They know that there are large pockets of working class militancy in India. They also know that poor landless and tenant farmers have been rapidly swelling the ranks of Maoist insurgents in the countryside. Meanwhile in neighbouring Nepal, support for communism has burgeoned over the last few years and the political conditions there seem capable of producing a pro-communist revolution. Therefore, as far as India’s thieving Western overlords are concerned, the last thing the country needs is the triumph of Tamil Eelam next door which would inevitably encourage India’s own imprisoned nations – like the Kashmiris, the Sikhs of Khalistan and the Nagas in the North East – to step up their own struggles for self-determination. Washington, London, Canberra and, indeed, New Delhi knows that any encouragement for separatist struggles in India could be just the push that could knock down the whole fragile Indian political “order.”

Despite their hostility to the Tamil struggle for self determination, the Western rulers have not been able to totally bury from the public eye the truth about the Sri Lankan government’s massacres of Tamil civilians. This is because of energetic protests by the large Tamil expatriate community. From Toronto to London to Paris to Sydney, Tamil people have rallied in thousands-strong demonstrations against Colombo’s invasion. Tamil youth have especially been at the forefront of the actions and have sacrificed hours upon hours of their time to staff protest camps and coordinate actions. In terms of logistics and nuts and bolts details, the Tamil protests have been extremely well organized.

The main thrust of the protests in Australia has been to appeal to prime minister Kevin Rudd to demand that the Sri Lankan government agree to a permanent ceasefire with the LTTE. Tamil community rallies have chanted “Australia: Save the Tamils!” But far from showing any signs of supporting the embattled people of Tamil Eelam, the Australian government has continued to make statements that can only encourage the Colombo government. For example, on April 29, Australian Foreign Minister Steven Smith made a point of declaring on ABC Television, when referring to the conflict, that neither Australia nor the international community believe this could be solved by the creation of an independent Tamil state. Then in his May 12 speech to parliament Smith upheld all of the Colombo regime’s lying “rationales” for its invasion:

Australian Government Happily Gives A Nod & A Wink to The Mass Murder of Tamil People



What was the Australian state doing in the horrific final week of the Lankan Civil War in May 2009? Well on 14 May 2009, a high level Australian Government delegation led by National Security Advisor Duncan Lewis and Australian High Commissioner to Sri Lanka Kathy Klugman went to Sri Lankan Naval Headquarters in Colombo to pay a very warm visit to a key military butcher of the Tamil people, Sri Lankan Navy Vice Admiral Wasantha Karannagoda.

“Madam Deputy Speaker, Australia continues to condemn the terrorist tactics of the LTTE. Australia urges the LTTE to allow civilians caught in the conflict zone to leave, to end its practice of forced recruitment and to renounce terrorism.”

Such ranting can only assist the Sri Lankan government to sell its anti-Tamil onslaught which, after all, it claims is a “war against terrorism.”

To be sure, as ordinary people in the West hear more accounts of the killings of Tamils, Western leaders have uttered some words to try and make them look like they actually care for the plight of the Tamil people. They are slightly worried that the naked terror of their thugs in Colombo makes them look bad. Most cynically, that conservative paper of the British ruling class, the Rupert Murdoch owned *The Times* even ran an article that with utter distortions tried to shift the blame for the atrocities in Sri Lanka from the West to ... Communist-run China! More generally, Western governments, while reserving their toughest condemnations for the LTTE, have made a show of asking the Sri Lankan government to stop using heavy weapons and have sometimes called for a temporary pause in fighting to allow civilians to leave the conflict zone. Yet any slap on the wrist that the Western governments deal to President Rajapaksa’s regime in Sri Lanka is always made in the context of the Western powers making clear that they side with Colombo against the Tamil resistance. For example, even when speaking of the suffering of Tamil civilians, Stephen Smith blames mostly the LTTE. And when he referred to the bombing and artillery fire against civilians he could not even bring himself to identify the Sri Lankan Army as the culprits, thereby deliberately leaving open the possibility that Colombo’s outrageous claim that it is the Tamil Tigers who are shelling Tamil civilians is true:

“Reports of abuses from within the conflict zone include accounts of civilians forced by the LTTE to stay in its territory, of forced recruitment of children and adults by the LTTE, deaths and injuries from bombs and artillery, and families desperately seeking news of their loved ones.”

- May 12 Speech to Parliament by Stephen Smith

The U.S., Australia and the European powers merely want Colombo to more “smoothly” manage the transition to what the West hopes will be a post-LTTE environment on the island. There is a slight difference in emphasis in the way that Washington, Canberra and London view the situation from the way that the Lankan government does. For Rajapaksa’s coalition government the overriding motive, which is to satisfy the greed of the Colombo 7 rich and the Western overlords, is mixed in with their own fanatical Sinhala-Buddhist chauvinism. In contrast, the Western ruling classes orient to Sri Lanka from the point of view of pure greed ... full stop! Thus without being swayed by particular racist notions about the supposed superiority of the Sinhala race over the Tamil race, they are able to examine events in Lanka with more cold calculation than their hot-headed pet lion cubs in Colombo. The Western imperialists fear that Colombo’s zeal will make it harder to have “stability” on the island once the LTTE is defeated, which

is what they hope will happen. Washington, London, Canberra etc want Rajapaksa to show greater finesse in covering up war crimes (like they often do.) They also want his regime to do more to cultivate a layer of compliant, well-heeled Tamils that they can work through. This is what U.S. Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton meant when she called on Colombo to engage Tamils who do not espouse violence or terrorism (read tame sell-out Tamils.) Additionally, the Western rulers like to occasionally throw some firm words at Rajapaksa simply to remind him that he and his ilk are only subordinate local thugs while they are the imperial godfathers.

However, the Western governments' occasional touch on Rajapaksa's wrist should not fool any supporter of Tamil liberation! For these governments continue to do much to support the crushing of Tamil resistance. The U.S. and European Union continue to outlaw the LTTE as a "terrorist" organization and the Australian state is still prosecuting three Tamils on charges of providing financial support to the LTTE. Furthermore, last week, police and the Parramatta Lord Mayor Tony Issa forcibly shut down a vigil by Tamils at Parramatta's Church Street Mall. Police roughed up the peaceful demonstrators and arrested and charged another three Tamil men. Mayor Issa chimed in with the racism typical of the Australian establishment: he told the protesters to "go back to Sri Lanka" if they were not happy!

Even when Western regimes make statements that have a pretence of being firm on Colombo, the main "solution" to the conflict that they offer is to insist that the Tamil Tigers lay down their arms and surrender. Is that not also what the Sri Lankan government wants? So make no mistake about it: the message coming from the U.S., Britain, Australia etc is far from being "even handed"! After all, are they demanding that the Sri Lankan Army lay down its arms and surrenders? Far from it! For example, at an April 13 Foreign Affairs Press Conference held in Perth, Stephen Smith called for "the Tamil Tigers to lay down their arms" but only "called on the Sri Lankan government to resolve these matters not **just** by military means but by political dialogue" (emphasis added.) In other words, it is fine for the Sri Lankan government to wage its military onslaught ... but it should use other means as well. Here Canberra is marching in lock step with its big brothers in Washington. At an April 24 Daily Press Briefing, Acting State Department Spokesman for the new Obama Administration, Robert Wood, demanded that, "the Tamil Tigers must stop holding civilians and stop putting them in harm's way. We call on the Tamil Tigers to lay down their arms and surrender to a third party." And in his May 12 parliamentary speech, Stephen Smith again emphasised that, "Australia continues to urge the LTTE to lay down their arms." All these statements must be music to the ears of the Sri Lankan military. One would not be surprised if Sri Lankan Army Commander, Sarath Fonseka, orders an extra artillery barrage against Tamil-held areas every time he hears a Western leader call for the Tigers to surrender.

The way that the U.S. and its allies are responding to the onslaught in Northern Sri Lanka is no aberration. When Israel murderously attacked the Palestinian people in Gaza late last year – which was more than coincidentally the same time that Colombo began its offensive – Washington and Canberra backed Tel Aviv. In similar fashion to how the Australian rulers today call on the LTTE to lay down its arms, acting Prime Minister at the time, Julia Gillard, stated: "We are calling on Hamas and other militants to cease shelling Southern Israel. Obviously, they have broken the ceasefire and engaged in an act of aggression against Israel." (*The Sydney Morning Herald*, 29 December 2008.) The fact is that the capitalist rulers of the U.S., Britain, Australia, Japan and Germany have much more in common with the butchers in Colombo and Tel Aviv than with oppressed peoples fighting for liberation. In Afghanistan, the occupying U.S./Australian/NATO forces terrorise the local population with all the brutality of Sri Lanka's war on the Tamil people. Last week, as confirmed by the Red Cross, U.S. air strikes on houses in the western province of Farah killed over a hundred Afghan civilians. On February 12, Australian special forces troops raiding houses in Sarmorghab village in Afghanistan's Oruzgan Province shot dead five innocent children.

In Sri Lanka, the military herds desperate Tamil refugees who are fleeing its onslaught into virtual detention camps. Meanwhile, here, Australian authorities seize seaborne refugees– who are largely fleeing the effects of the interventions in Iraq and Afghanistan that Australia has participated in or the wars that it has encouraged as in Sri Lanka – and also imprisons them in detention facilities. Let us not forget too that while, today, the Sinhala-chauvinist ruling class in Lanka seeks to consolidate their dispossession of Tamil people from sovereignty over their own ancestral homelands, in this country the White colonial ruling class dispossessed the indigenous Aboriginal people through a genocide that began 221 years ago. Today this continues in a different form. Over 500 black people have died in state custody in the last 28 years - many simply killed by racist cops and prison guards. Those Aboriginal people that have stood up to these killings, themselves face repression. Several Aboriginal people were jailed for their participation in the defiant mass community outpourings in Redfern in February 2004 and in Palm Island in November 2004 that responded to the racist police murders of, respectively, 17 year old Aboriginal youth TJ Hickey in Redfern and 36 year-old Aboriginal man Mulrunji Doomadgee on Palm Island. Even now Aboriginal hero Lex Wotton languishes in jail on a six-year sentence for his prominent role in the November 2004 Palm Island resistance struggle. Meanwhile, as part of the "Intervention" into Northern Territory black communities, the Australian federal government administers restrictions on access to welfare payments that are so openly discriminatory towards Aboriginal people that it would make that godfather of Sinhala Only, S.W.R.D. Bandranaike proud.

DON'T APPEAL TO THE WESTERN IMPERIALISTS – THEY ARE THE ENEMY!

Not only have Western capitalist governments been hitherto opposed to the Tamil liberation struggle - they can **never** be genuine allies of the oppressed Tamil people. For in the West's current political system, the whole state structure – the police, army, overseas embassies, secret police, courts, foreign affairs officialdom etc – are genetically tied to the rich capitalist class. Hence, regardless of which political party is warming the majority of the seats of parliament, all significant decisions are made to accommodate the interests of big business profiteers. And the interests of an oppressing class definitely does not include lifting the oppression of subjugated peoples abroad.

Thus even if the current Western rulers mooted an intervention under the guise of supporting the Tamil people **this should be rejected**. For any imperialist intervention cannot but in the end be disastrous for Eelam Tamils, for the Sinhala poor and for the terribly exploited up-country Tamil masses. Let us not forget what happened in 1987. Then, after a ferocious Sri Lankan Army onslaught on the Jaffna Peninsula, the capitalist Indian government started to pretend that it wanted to protect the Tamil people. In June 1987, the Indian Air Force dropped parcels of basic necessities into embattled Tamil areas as a gesture aimed at winning Tamil support for its impending intervention. The following month, Indian Peace Keeping Forces entered Sri Lanka. Many Tamils expected that while the Indian forces were not going to deliver an independent Tamil Eelam, at least the Indian Army would protect the Tamil people from violence. But just a few months passed before the Indian Army itself turned on the Tamil people and launched a ferocious assault against the LTTE. Tamil people have pointed out that the extreme brutality of the Indian “Peacekeepers” towards civilians in that offensive dwarfed even that of the Lankan Army up to that time. Now, while India is capitalist ruled it is itself trampled upon by the rich imperialist countries. If these Western imperialist powers were to themselves directly intervene in Lanka they would be even more predatory than India was (if that is, indeed, possible.) Furthermore, they also would not have to worry about the potentially restraining effect of a tens-of-millions strong Tamil-speaking population at home – as India did.

Let us here consider two hypothetical scenarios where Western powers could intervene into Lanka under the disingenuous pretext of aiding the Tamil people. In one scenario, imperialist intervention is triggered by the following events. Firstly, the Tamil national liberation forces win a series of major military victories. Secondly, this liberation struggle is accompanied by solidarity agitation by anti-racist Sinhalese in the South. As a result of both of these conditions, the Sinhala-chauvinist regime in Colombo loses the authority of the masses in the South and the whole social order looks shaky. In that situation, the worried Western capitalists choose to intervene to both save the Western-dominated

social system in the South and to head off the buoyant Tamil liberation struggle. They do this by appearing to suddenly reverse their previous hostility to Tamil Eelam. They arrange a Western-controlled “independence” process. But they carefully construct this set up to ensure that the new nominally “independent” Tamil Eelam becomes their hopelessly subservient and exploited puppet. Furthermore, by amputating Tamil Eelam territories from Sri Lanka, they relieve the fragile Colombo regime of the running wound that is bleeding it to death.

A script similar to the above was actually played out in East Timor in 1999. At that time the Indonesian capitalist regime that was occupying East Timor was facing growing social unrest at home. The previous year, mass student and worker struggles within Indonesia challenged the then Suharto dictatorship. Furthermore, not only were the East Timorese people continuing to doggedly maintain their resistance to the Indonesian occupation but some Indonesian leftists were starting to openly support the Timorese struggle and this was feeding into broader opposition to militarism within Indonesia. Still, some in the Indonesian ruling class stubbornly believed that they could continue ruling East Timor as before. However, another section of the elite knew that unless they came to an accommodation with the East Timorese independence movement, the East Timor question risked undermining their shaky hold over the rest of Indonesia. The U.S. and Australian overlords concurred with the latter wing of the Indonesian ruling class and encouraged this faction to stand up to the unrepentant pro-occupation faction. While worried about the “stability” of Indonesia, the Australian rulers were excited about what this new policy offered them. For the previous 24 years they had backed Jakarta's occupation of East Timor, calculating that the Indonesian military would be the useful armed intermediary that would facilitate Australian exploitation of East Timor's seabed oil and gas reserves. Now, the Australian capitalists saw a chance to grab East Timor as its very own direct neocolony and to thereby guarantee the plunder of an even greater share of that country's natural wealth. However, the Australian ruling class knew that there was a serious hurdle to overcome before they could reach their goals. And that was potential obstruction to Australian colonialism from within the Fretilin separatist movement. Would the ranks of the Fretilin separatist movement, after having made so many sacrifices to wage a guerilla struggle for an independent East Timor, now simply consent to the nation being turned into a neocolony of Western powers? Thus these Western powers realised that they had to bring Fretilin under control. To do this they sent a U.N. force to East Timor, including 300 Australian troops and cops, to herd Fretilin fighters into camps to begin disarming them. In return for Fretilin “agreeing” to this arrangement, the U.N. would facilitate the “independence” process through supervising a referendum on independence. Not surprisingly, pro-independence forces won the referendum easily.

But when anti-independence forces, as expected, went on a burning and killing rampage following their electoral defeat, Fretilin, already corralled into camps, was unable to



Australian military bringing “human rights” to East Timor. Under the guise of saving East Timorese people, Australian imperialists grabbed East Timor as its own neocolony and subjugated the Timorese masses.

protect the people. Having made the pro-independence masses helpless, the imperialists allowed the right-wing riots to run their course before a massive Australian-led military force cynically invaded East Timor under the pretext of being its “saviours.”

Far from “protecting” the local population from violence, the Australian-led U.N. occupation forces subjected the East Timorese people to a new reign of terror. Australian and New Zealand troops and police bashed, imprisoned and in some cases simply opened fire on the numerous dissident elements in and around Fretilin who objected to the now rebranded occupation. Perhaps the most telling example of how subjugated the “new” East Timor is came in May 2002 when the “sovereign” Timorese government signed a “treaty” with Canberra that gave Australia the lion’s share of royalties from impoverished East Timor’s biggest resource – the Greater Sunrise oil/gas field located in the Timor Sea. This took place on the very day of East Timor’s formal “independence”! With Australian-owned multinationals Woodside and BHP and the Australian government stealing its energy resources and with smaller Aussie bosses leaching profits from Timorese labour in other sectors, the local population has been reduced to a level of poverty much worse than even during Indonesia’s occupation. A sizeable proportion of people have stunted growth due to malnourishment and many have to forage in the rubbish dumps where the food scraps left over from the high-living Australian and U.N. bureaucrats and entrepreneurs end up. Naturally, this situation fuels unrest. The occupiers have responded by cracking down ever more violently. On 4 December 2002,

Australian police and the U.N.-controlled puppet Timorese police opened fire on a rally of high school students protesting against cop violence. Five protesters were shot dead and 13 others received gun shot wounds.

As the Australian ruling classes became confident that they had established a subservient local state apparatus in Timor, they reduced the size of their own military presence. But this reduction did not last long. When the Fretilin government proved to be not obedient enough in agreeing to Australia’s theft of Timor’s oil, the U.S. and Australia started to covertly undermine the regime. In May 2006, Canberra seized on the instability that it had helped create to again send a big contingent of troops to occupy the country. Using this military presence, Canberra was able to engineer a coup d’etat to replace the Fretilin (which can be thought of as the East Timorese equivalent of the LTTE) government. Then on 23 February 2007, the Australian military rammed two tanks into a camp for internally displaced persons (IDPs) near the airport in the capital Dili after refugees had resisted attempts to force them to leave the site. Australian troops opened fire shooting dead two IDPs and wounding several others. To this day, Australian troops continue to occupy tiny East Timor. This is hardly the kind of imperialist-controlled and fraudulent “independence” that the Timorese nor indeed the Tamil people need!

Given that the Sri Lankan Army has recently made major military advances, it is out of the question that the Western powers will at this time make an East Timor-style intervention into Lanka. What is slightly more likely is that the Western powers, perhaps under the cover of the U.N., intervenes to try and facilitate the surrender of the LTTE. The Western intervention would be sold as being a move to protect Tamil civilians but the price of this “protection” would be that the LTTE would have to give up its arms. The foreign “peacekeepers” would then be the “third party” whom the LTTE are supposed to surrender to according to the Obama government’s program that the Tamil Tigers “lay down their arms and surrender to a third party.” Make no mistake about it, if this were to happen it would be catastrophic for the Tamil people. Rabid Sinhala-Buddhist chauvinist elements in the South could celebrate the LTTE’s demise by going on a bloody rampage. Already, advances by the Army have encouraged hardline Buddhist monks to create a climate of extreme militarism in the South. Not only have temples frequented by Tamils been destroyed but even non-Buddhist Sinhalese have been targeted. For example, monks and other violent racists have attacked and damaged churches. A defeat of the LTTE could see pumped up anti-Tamil racists unleash a pogrom much worse than even in July 1983 if any Tamil dares to raise their voice against discrimination. Furthermore, regardless of what one thinks of the effectiveness of the LTTE’s nationalist program, it is certain that if the Tigers are disarmed, the Tamil people in the North and East would be open to a new round of massacres from the vengeful Army that now sees no force that can challenge it. And it would not only be the Lankan Army that commits such atrocities. Pro-government paramilitaries (including traitors in the Tamil community like the TMVP

group of LTTE renegades) could also unleash terror.

It is important here to recall the events of 1982 in Lebanon at the Sabra and Shatila Palestinian refugee camps. The backdrop to these events was Israel's brutal invasion of Lebanon to crush the oppressed Palestinian people. Following the invasion, a "Multinational Force" of U.S. marines and French troops intervened under the guise of being peace makers. The arrangement was that the Multinational Force "Peace Monitors" would shepherd away out of Beirut the Palestinian guerillas protecting the refugees and in return the "Peace Monitors" would themselves "protect" the Palestinians in Beirut. What happened however was that after shepherding out the Palestinian fighters, the Multinational Force withdrew from the refugee camps thus allowing Israel to get its Christian-fascist allies in Lebanon's Phalangist group to storm in and massacre over 3,000 defenceless Palestinian refugees. We must learn the lessons of this bloodbath! **Tamil people should never trust a force containing imperialist militaries to protect them.**

CUT OFF THE LANKAN GOVERNMENT'S LIFELINE – STOP CANBERRA & WASHINGTON'S SUPPORT FOR COLOMBO!

The protests against Colombo's invasion must continue but they must be transformed from rallies **appealing** for support from Western governments to demonstrations **against** these governments and their support for the Sri Lankan regime. We should think of it this way: If a person has encouraged his fierce dog to attack you it is useless for you to plead to that dog owner to save you from his dog. But if you take a firm stand against the dog owner, rough him up and make it clear that he is going to be made to pay for encouraging his dog to attack you then he may indeed be forced to put his dog back on a leash. And if you succeeded in making this vicious dog owner scared enough he might even stop feeding his rabid dog until the dog stops his attacks.

Among the demands of the pro-Tamil protests here should be:

- That the Rudd government stop making statements that **encourage** the Colombo regime's occupation. Australian government ministers should SHUT UP their calls on the LTTE to disarm. And they should SHUT UP their statements blaming the LTTE for the bloodbath of Tamil civilians.
- That Canberra and Washington stop their military aid for the Lankan government.
- That all "anti-terror" restrictions on the LTTE be lifted.
- That all government restrictions on Tamils and others in Australia sending financial and other material support to pro-LTTE organizations and the LTTE itself (whether for food aid **or for purchasing arms**) be immediately lifted. We need to help the Tamil people in Sri Lanka to be able to get the arms that they need to defend their lives!

- That the charges be immediately dropped against the three Australian Tamils facing imprisonment on accusations of providing material aid to the LTTE.
- That the charges be dropped against the three Tamil protesters arrested in Parramatta last week. For a halt to all police harassment and intimidation of Tamil protests!
- That all Tamil refugees (along with other refugees) arriving in Australia be immediately granted residency with full citizenship rights.

In fighting for these demands Tamil people can find many supporters. For starters, from Australia's Aboriginal people who understand too well what genocide is all about and have much experience in fighting against it. Many Aboriginal activists are extremely well read and knowledgeable about other peoples' liberation struggles including that of the Tamil people. Then there are the Palestinian people and their numerous supporters - they too understand how the Western rulers sponsor regimes that crush downtrodden peoples. And then there are the sympathizers of the many other genuine liberation struggles of subjugated nations – including those of the Kurds, the Basques, the Chechens, the Bangsamoro Muslim people of the Philippines and the Kashmiris, Sikhs, Nagas and other imprisoned peoples in India.

Most centrally, there is the working class in Australia. It is the glue that can unite the various oppressed peoples together because the working class is the class that has no material interest in supporting the capitalist order – that social order that is ultimately responsible for perpetuating the subjugation of all the different oppressed nationalities. In a positive sign, some Australian union leaders have begun to speak out about the killing of Tamil civilians and the May 7 Unions NSW meeting passed a motion calling on the Sri Lankan government to ensure the safety and wellbeing of civilians caught up in the war. This must be built into a much stronger stand where the union movement unequivocally opposes the Lankan government's occupation of Tamil areas and Canberra's support for it.

It is the organized workers movement that has the power, through being able to turn production *off and on*, to make the Western ruling classes really back down. Trade union contingents need to be mobilized here to participate in the pro-Tamil protests as a step towards building the union industrial action urgently needed to oppose the Colombo government's invasion. In motivating this program, we can point to past struggles by the workers movement of Australia when it has mobilised against national oppression. One such struggle was waged in the years immediately following WWII. In the war years, the Dutch colonialists from Indonesia moved to Australia after their Japanese rivals overran them. After Japan was defeated at the end of WWII and moved out of the territories it occupied, the Dutch imperialists based in Australia moved to reconquer their Indonesian

colony. But in solidarity with Indonesian independence fighters, Australian seamen and waterfront workers prevented the ships carrying Dutch personnel and material from being loaded or sailed. These union bans gave crucial assistance to the Indonesian independence movement.

The workers movement today must recall the spirit of these powerful acts of solidarity with the Indonesian independence movement to come to the aid of the embattled Tamil people. Although Sri Lanka as a poor neocolony possesses few major economic interests in Australia that could be hit by industrial action as the post WWII Dutch had, union strikes and bans can **put the squeeze on the Australian ruling class for its backing of Sri Lanka's occupation of Tamil areas.** In particular, **workers industrial action should target the Australian operations of Australian businesses that are making big money in Sri Lanka – like Ansell Ltd, Bluescope Steel and textile manufacturer Pope Packaging.** It is ultimately the owners of these corporations (and the bosses of similar U.S., Japanese and British companies operating in Sri Lanka) alongside the Colombo 7 ultra-rich that the whole Sri Lankan government policy is designed to serve. It is only when these Western corporate exploiters find that their Colombo attack dogs' invasion is causing their own operations to be hurt by protest actions will they "realise" that they will need to **reign in their dogs.**

PRO-TAMIL PROTESTERS MUST CLEARLY STAND AGAINST THE WESTERN CAPITALISTS

In seeking to win support from the workers movement as well as other subjugated peoples, ordinary Australian Tamils must genuinely support the struggles of these other oppressed sectors. Thus Tamils must, for example, support the Aboriginal peoples struggles for justice and land rights. They must support the Palestinian fight for self-determination and must oppose the horrific imperialist occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan. Tamil people also need to explain to the workers movement how their cause coincides with the worldwide workers struggle against the exploiters of labour. They must explain how the discrimination and violence suffered by Lankan Tamils is a result of the drive by the Lankan capitalists to divert the anger of the poverty-stricken Sinhala toilers away from the capitalists that exploit them. And Australian Tamils should outline how, today, as the global capitalist economic crisis deepens the hardships of the masses, the Lankan exploiting class is ever more frenziedly deepening this diversion. In truthfully describing their struggle in this way, Australia's Tamil masses will show their concern for the workers' cause.

Only if the different streams of the movement are united into one giant torrent can there ever be sufficient force to push the common oppressor back. The common focus that can unite the different streams is **opposition** to the capitalist powers of the world. It is they who are the direct oppressor of Aboriginal people, who incite those who violently



Young victims of the Sri Lankan government's genocidal assault against the LTTE in the final months of the war.

crush the Tamil, Palestinian and Kurdish people and who at home leach fabulous profits from workers' toil only to sack these same workers when ever those profits fall a little.

Pro-Tamil protests should, therefore, move away from appealing to the Australian and other Western ruling elites to be their saviour. For not only is this futile, not only does this confuse pro-Tamil activists as to who their friends are and who their enemy is but it has the effect of dividing Tamil people from other exploited and oppressed people. What are Aboriginal people suffering grinding oppression under the Australian rulers to think when they hear Tamil people touting these very same people as "saviours"? What are militant trade unionists to think when they know that the current Australian government continues to maintain the previous Howard regime's fascist laws against construction unions? When one downtrodden group pleads for support to the imperialist enemy this inevitably means knifing in the back other oppressed groups because one can only appeal to the capitalist powers if one agrees to ignore or even uphold its subjugation of other groups.

A real sign of advancement of the Tamil solidarity movement will be seen when Australian flags are removed from the protests. Currently, Tamil people are carrying the flag as a show of loyalty to the Australian establishment. But not only is this establishment supporting the regime that is butchering the Tamil people, this establishment, the Australian state, serves only the interests of a wealthy few and not the vast majority of working class Australians. So while it was overall terrific that there were hundreds of Tamils swelling the ranks of the Sydney May Day march, the fact that Tamil demonstrators carried the Australian flag would have repelled many other participants. For proud trade unionists and leftists understand that this is the flag of the exploiters of the working

class. To Aboriginal people the Australian flag is deeply offensive – it is the flag under which they were massacred and dispossessed. In fighting against genocide, the Tamil people should not raise the flag that symbolises the genocide of another people. Today, the Australian flag is especially raised by racist youth to show their support for the disgusting 2005 White supremacist riot at Cronulla Beach. These racists target anyone who is not white – not only “people of Middle Eastern appearance” but also East Asians, Aboriginal people, Indians, Tamils etc. Finally, the current Australian flag contains that hated symbol of British imperialism and subordination to the monarchy: the Union Jack. Let us not forget that it was British colonial rule of Ceylon that has paved the way to the hell that Tamil people in Sri Lanka are in today. The only way that the flag of Australian capitalism should go up in a Tamil demonstration ... is in smoke!

Some politically astute Tamils now sense that the movement needs to take an anti-imperialist direction. But many of these people are currently reluctant to make this turn because they know that this will put off upper class Tamils – Tamils that are thoroughly loyal to the current social system in Australia because it suits *them* just fine. Although astute Tamil activists don't themselves agree with the outlook of the bourgeois Tamils, they have misgivings about breaking with these bourgeois Tamils because they feel that to a certain degree, at particular times, the upper class Tamils have given some financial and other support to the cause. But at this desperate time, now is especially not the time for sentimentality. Furthermore, history has proven that at critical moments, the upper class Tamils care far more about preserving their privileged position than they do about supporting Tamil liberation. This has always been the case going right back to 1949. Then G.G. Ponnambalam's All Ceylon Tamil Congress supported the disenfranchisement of citizenship rights of Up-Country Tamils because they feared the Up-Country Tamils' strong support for the Marxist parties and militant trade unions. It was this blatantly discriminatory act against Up-Country Tamils that built the platform for the Sinhala Only guillotine that would fall upon the Ceylon Tamils eight years later. It is far, far more important for the Tamil masses to build unity with the oppressed peoples and working classes of the world than to cling on to the slender and erratic “support” of capitalist and wanna-be capitalist Tamils.

SPLITTING THE SINHALA POOR MASSES AWAY FROM THE WARMONGERING SINHALA EXPLOITING CLASS

There is another crucial reason why the movement in defence of the Tamil people must take a definite line against Western imperialism. This has to do with the way that Rajapaksa's SLFP and their JVP coalition partners are selling their bloody invasion to the Sinhala, Muslim and Up-Country Tamil masses. Their military onslaught is in part being sold through a subtle implied message in their propaganda that it is necessary in order to stop an imperialist plot to further subjugate Sri Lanka by dividing it into two. Such

dishonest propaganda works because there is legitimate hatred of the colonial powers in Lanka. The country was raped by three different European colonial powers and today much of the wealth sweated out by its toilers is still directly or indirectly grabbed by Western “multinational” corporations. Meanwhile, people of all ethnicities from the island are still treated with racist arrogance by imperialist societies. Witness the nasty treatment often meted out to Sri Lankan cricket teams touring Australia – the brunt of which has most recently been borne by Up-Country Tamil, spin-legend Muttiah Muralitharan.

That is why it is important for the Tamil solidarity movement to call Rajapaksa's bluff by exposing how it is he and not the Tamil separatists who are carrying out the agenda of the Western imperialists. Far from trying to engineer the break up of Sri Lanka, the Western powers have always been opposed to Tamil Eelam. If worldwide protests against the Colombo regime's occupation take a strong line against the Western powers that are backing it then they will help prove to the masses in the South that it is in fact Rajapaksa's SLFP, the JVP and the monks who are dancing Baila with the Western imperialists.

Already the working people of Sri Lanka are highly suspicious of the “anti-imperialist” credentials of their rulers. The Lankan state that is committing genocidal killings of Tamils also unleashes anti-worker violence in the service of Western “multinational” corporations. A typical incident occurred on 5 September 1994 (see *Multinational Monitor*, 1 January 1995.) It was then that workers at the Australian-owned Ansell Lanka rubber gloves factory (mentioned earlier) and two other smaller foreign-owned factories had assembled to march from the Biyagama Free Trade Zone to Colombo to present a petition. The Ansell workers were demanding a pay increase, increased sick days and permanency. But the police blocked the road with a huge truck to stop the 7,000 marchers from setting off. When the workers peacefully proceeded to march anyway, the Sri Lankan police first fired tear gas and then started shooting. By the end of the incident, eight workers had received gun shot wounds from the police attack and many more were also injured.

There is truly a chasm that separates, on the one hand, the Colombo 7 rich and their Western capitalist senior partners and, on the other hand, the toiling masses in the South. A big gap also separates the ruling class politicians - giving orders from the plush environment of Kotte - from the naive Sinhala rural poor youth who just to gain an income enlists in the Army which then sends him as cannon fodder to kill Tamils and be killed by the Tigers. Presently, this chasm is sealed over with the glue of Sinhala-Buddhist chauvinism – the one thing that currently keeps the Sinhala masses tied to their exploiters. A wedge must be driven in to break this glue and open up the chasm.

It is primarily the responsibility of the political left in the South to drive this split. But to date what passes for the “Marxist” left in Sri Lanka has woefully failed to take up this

task. There are some exceptions. The stance taken, for example, by socialist politician Wickramabahu Karunaratne against Colombo's anti-Tamil terror points to the possibility that leftists in the South will mobilise against the Army's bloody takeover of Tamil areas. Such leftists must, however, stand firm for the long haul and must break decisively from all the worst practices and treachery of the Lankan "Marxist" left. They must not go down the road of the LSSP and CP or more recent traitors like Vasudeva Nanayakarra who once spoke of defending Tamil rights but then ditched those positions to become part of capitalist governments. The tragedy of Lanka is that the socialist movement once promised so much. It led the independence struggle from the British and organized militant strike struggles including among the especially exploited Up Country Tamil estate workers. The upper classes were so scared of the Marxist-trained Lankan workers movement that they granted some concessions to pacify the masses – concessions that enabled the Lankan masses to enjoy standards of basic health care and education slightly better than other "Third World" capitalist countries. But today after all the left's sellouts and capitulations to Sinhala-Buddhist chauvinism, life for the masses of Lanka is like living in a hellhole.

There are five major lessons that Lankan leftists must draw if they are to rebuild a movement worthy of the name "Marxist" - a movement with enough integrity to challenge the Sinhala chauvinist terror and the social order that spawns it. Firstly, socialist parties must reject coalition with any capitalist parties. The LSSP and CP excused such coalitions by claiming that the SLFP reflects an "anti-imperialist," more "democratic" wing of the capitalist class. This is rubbish! In a country like Sri Lanka that is still in practice downtrodden by imperialist countries, all wings of the capitalist class are tied to the capitalists of the richer countries. And no wing of the exploiting class is consistently "democratic" either. This is because in semicolonial countries so much of the wealth is plundered by rich-country corporations that the masses are reduced to abject poverty. Thus the capitalist ruling class can only keep its desperate toilers from revolting by repressive means or by diverting them with the most extreme nationalism. The "progressive" SLFP whom the "left" most often joined with has often been a more fanatical proponent of Sinhala chauvinism than even the conservative UNP.

Secondly, Lanka's history has proved that there is no parliamentary road to socialism. Even if a leftist party were to be elected to govern without bourgeois coalition partners, it would not be able to institute decisive progressive measures. For if it tried to, it would face sabotage by the state organs – the police, army, courts and bureaucracy - that have been built up and hardened to serve the interests of the exploiting class. For example, could you imagine Lt. General Fonseka obeying a hypothetical socialist party's orders to protect Tamil rights activists and crush violent Sinhala racists? Or obeying an order to seize the corporate assets of Colombo 7 high fliers to make them the common property of all people? And would he and his ilk simply accept being sacked by the government



Another unspeakable tragedy unfolding at the hands of the Sri Lankan war machine.

to allow leftists to institute an anti-chauvinist, anti-capitalist program? No way is the answer to all of these three questions! That is why any ostensibly socialist party that has illusions in the parliamentary road to socialism must eventually sell out – like the LSSP, CP and Vasudeva Nanayakarra have - because they must inevitably make their program acceptable to the Lt. General Fonsekas that dominate the state apparatus. For real communists, parliament is only an arena to gain a wider hearing for the party's views. The means to achieve real progressive change is the class struggle, a struggle that must eventually culminate in the seizure of state power by the toiling masses.

Thirdly, the party that the masses in the island need is not one of showy leaders who think that they are on a higher intellectual plane than their own ranks. That is how many of the LSSP and CP leaders sometimes acted. These parties at times seemed to be led by a collection of stars and big egos. Instead, the communist party that is needed must have a leadership that is close to the people. Not a leadership that seeks to "combine" the struggle for liberation with personal ambition but a leadership that in its political work is devoted solely and 100% to the struggle of the masses.

Fourthly, without women playing a leading role in the struggle there can be no liberation. In Lanka's ex-Marxist parties, male intellectuals have dominated the leadership. But although women of all ethnicities are terribly oppressed in Lanka, women toilers are strategically placed to spearhead the revolutionary struggle. Largely, women tea pickers

form the backbone of the economy and women form a high proportion of the process workers in the Free Trade Zone, textile, clothing and footwear industry factories. In the North and East, women have played a big role in the armed Tamil national liberation struggle and this has to a degree challenged the subservient role foisted upon them in traditional Tamil society.

Fifthly, any party calling itself communist and worth its salt must defend the right of nations to self-determination. This is what Lenin and Trotsky's Bolsheviks taught us:

The right to self determination means only the right to independence in a political sense, the right to free, political secession from the oppressing nation.... Just as mankind can achieve the abolition of classes only by passing through the transition period of the dictatorship of the oppressed class, so mankind can achieve the inevitable merging of nations only by passing through the transition period of complete liberation of all the oppressed nations, i.e., their freedom to secede.
- *The Socialist Revolution and the Right of Nations to Self Determination*, V.I. Lenin, 1916.

In Sri Lanka, this means insisting on the right of the Tamils in the North and East to establish Tamil Eelam. After years of pogroms and mass killings of Tamils, the only way that the island can be freed from the pernicious grip of Sinhala chauvinism is if Tamil Eelam is separated out of Lanka and thereby the national question is taken out of the picture. And only when this Tamil Eelam is granted can the Tamil masses begin to rebuild trust in their Sinhala counterparts so that in warm, neighbourly friendship the Sinhala and Tamil working classes can cooperate in removing the exploiting classes, both Sinhalese and Tamil, from power.

THE TAMIL PEOPLE ARE NOT ALONE

Right now it is an extremely grim, tormenting time for Tamil people the world over. While their people are being crushed in the North and East of Lanka it seems that all the powerful forces in the world are against them. But the Tamil people are, in fact, not alone.

Firstly, there are all the other peoples suffering national subjugation who can understand from their own experience what Tamil people are facing and can be united with Tamil people to jointly struggle against their oppressors. The dispossessed Aboriginal people of Australia, other indigenous peoples in the U.S., Canada and Chile, the Palestinians, the Kurds, Philippine Moros, Kashmiris and Nagas as well as the occupied peoples of Iraq, Afghanistan and East Timor. Then there are the other peoples who face racial oppression – including Asian, African and Middle Eastern minorities in Australia and South Asians and Jamaicans in Britain. U.S. blacks are still terribly downtrodden no matter that there is a person with a black face heading the administration of the system that oppresses them.

Secondly, although capitalist powers dominate the world, not every country in the world is capitalist-ruled. There is Cuba, the Peoples Republic of China (PRC), Vietnam and North Korea. One of these countries, the PRC has the world's fastest growing economy and is a rising world power. To be sure, the transition to socialism in China and the other workers states is far from perfect and far from secure. But the fact that the core of the PRC economy is still based on collectively-owned production rather than the capitalist profit system means that if the PRC were to decide to intervene into another country's affairs there is a **possibility** that this intervention could be genuinely liberating. The PRC is in fact the only world power that **could** intervene into a "Third World" country like Sri Lanka without a predatory motive. Unfortunately, rather than pursuing the internationalist goals of Lenin's revolutionary communists in Russia, the PRC leaders subscribe to a conservative, distorted form of Marxism that turns its back on the international struggle for liberation. PRC leaders only concentrate on trying to build socialism in their own country while striving to maintain "peaceful coexistence with capitalism" internationally. They plead with the capitalist world to not interfere in their own affairs by in turn promising not to challenge the terrible oppression of capitalist rule internationally. This policy of "non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries" is utterly national-centred. However, it should not be confused with the foreign policy of the capitalist powers which is always geared to deepening the exploitation of "Third World" countries. So, for example, the PRC has built truly mutually beneficial economic relationships with African and Latin American countries which is a far cry from the way that Western powers have arrogantly demanded that these countries slash social services, privatise and hand over control of key economic sectors. However, the reality of the PRC's "peaceful coexistence with capitalism" also means that it seeks cordial relations with every capitalist government no matter how oppressive. And that means that the PRC (like their socialistic counterparts in Cuba) has cordial relations with the bloodthirsty regime in Sri Lanka. Furthermore, no matter how much Western powers attack socialistic rule in the PRC, the PRC government still tries to build good relationships with these capitalist powers - build good relationships, that is, with the globe's most reactionary forces, the forces that are ultimately responsible for the carnage of Tamils. Nevertheless, as long as the PRC remains under a form of workers rule, there is a possibility that its inward looking foreign policy will be overturned. This possibility exists because the "peaceful coexistence with capitalism" policy is not only damaging to the world's oppressed but puts in danger the socialist gains in the PRC itself. For no matter how much the PRC grovels to capitalist governments, capitalist rulers cannot but seek to sabotage its socialist construction. There are elements within the left wing of the ruling Communist Party of China who to a degree understand this and they are also the ones resisting greater capitalist incursions into China itself. On the other hand there are right-leaning forces who want even more accommodation with capitalist governments internationally as well as greater "freedom" to operate for pro-



Dili, 2004: East Timorese people protest outside the Australian Embassy against the Australian government's theft of East Timor's oil resources. Australian intervention to "liberate" East Timor was aimed to secure its "right" to plunder the impoverished country's natural resources.

capitalist forces within China. This contest between the PRC left and the PRC right will shape not only China but indeed the whole world. The world's oppressed, not least the Tamil people, need the genuinely communist forces to triumph within the PRC. Part of the march towards that triumph will come through popularising the need for a foreign policy that is based on an alliance with the exploited and oppressed of the world. We therefore make the following appeal. Sister and brother Chinese masses: You have made much headway towards your liberation since you grabbed state power through your great Revolution 60 years ago. But here in the capitalist world – from Mexico to Sri Lanka to India to Australia - we are still suffering. We need your help – help us to achieve our liberation too! Drop your foreign policy of "non-interference"! We respectfully warn you too that unless you help us to rid ourselves of our oppressors, these same oppressors will gang up and eventually succeed in rolling back your revolution. And then

you too will end up in the miserable position that we are in today.

Thirdly, there is that sleeping tiger – the Sinhala working class who too is subjugated by the same rulers that murder Tamil people. Although Sinhala-Buddhist chauvinism has currently infected many Sinhala workers, eventually more thoughtful Sinhala worker activists are going to realise that this chauvinism is a threat to them as well. If the Colombo regime succeeds in its anti-Tamil agenda, the chauvinist hysteria in the South will be so bad that any workers' strike, any social struggle will be crushed on the grounds that it is a threat to Sinhala-Buddhist supremacy. That is why a component of the Sinhala toilers must break completely from chauvinism and become champions of the fight for Tamil Eelam. But, on the contrary, if some section of the Sinhala toilers does not rise in time to fight against the oppression of Tamil people, then the Tamil people will face a horrible future.

Fourthly, there is the working class in the rest of the Indian subcontinent. Unlike their double crossing rulers, the Indian toiling masses are genuinely sympathetic to the oppressed Eelam Tamils. Although workers in the subcontinent are terribly exploited they have plenty of fight in them. Just last August, millions of workers in India's airport, rail and banking sectors simultaneously struck against price rises and anti-worker government policies. Especially if boosted by a surge in the Nepalese revolutionary movement, there could be a strengthening of the class struggle in the subcontinent. If that happens, the masses may acquire the muscle needed to strangle the New Delhi arm that helps to hold up Colombo's anti-Tamil invasion.

Last but not least there are the working masses and anti-racists in the rest of the world –including the West and Japan. The fact is that the reactionary policies of the imperialist rulers – from their bloody occupations of Afghanistan, Iraq, and East Timor to their support for Tel Aviv's and Colombo's terror – does no good for working class people in their own countries. Far from it! In fact, the more the Western ruling classes are able to get away with predatory interventions abroad, the more confident they are to exploit toilers in their own countries and make workers pay for their system's economic crisis. More politically astute workers and leftist activists see this. Today, even despite all the anti-Tamil propaganda coming from Murdoch's newspapers and from the big business or government-owned TV stations, there are a growing number of non-Tamils – from anti-war activists, to Palestine supporters to some trade unionists – who see the necessity to oppose the slaughter of Tamil people. The key question now for the Tamil solidarity movement is to ensure that the struggle here turns **from one that appeals to the Australian ruling class to one that opposes it. Build towards workers political strikes to protest against the Australian rulers' support for the Sri Lankan Army's occupation of Tamil areas! Hit with trade union industrial action Australian business owners – like those of Ansell Ltd, Bluescope Steel and Pope Packaging –**

that profit from and shape Lanka's blood-soaked political order! We must by such worldwide methods push these Western corporate bigwigs and their politicians against the wall. Push against the wall until Rajapaksa and the other thugs realise that they will need to back off from the Tamil people if they want to save their godfathers in the West from our wrath. Stop the brutal killings of Tamil people – Demand that the Sri Lankan Army immediately withdraw from all Tamil majority areas! Support the creation of Tamil Eelam so that Sinhala and Tamil workers, who then will be friendly neighbours living mostly in the separate states of Lanka and Eelam, will again trust each other enough to build strong class struggle solidarity!



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