

SEP/IYSSE public meeting: The political lessons of the US and Sri Lankan elections

Socialist Equality Party (Sri Lanka)
26 November 2024

The Socialist Equality Party (SEP) and the International Youth and Students for Social Equality (IYSSE) in Sri Lanka are holding a public meeting entitled, “Elections in US and Sri Lanka: Political lessons for the working class,” at the Mahaweli Center in Colombo at 4 p.m. on December 7.

The election of fascist Donald Trump as US president marks a political earthquake with far-reaching consequences in the US and globally. His election was the result, not of any popular support for his openly fascist policies, but of the bankruptcy of the Democratic Party and its presidential candidate Kamala Harris who maintained an open contemptuous disregard for the burning social issues confronting the vast majority of workers and youth in the US.

Trump’s election underscores the utter degeneration of the American democracy and a turn by the ruling class towards autocratic forms of rule. During the election campaign, Trump openly declared that he would act as a dictator once he takes office.

Trump will establish a government of, for and by the financial oligarchy to carry out a social counter-revolution against the working class and targeting his political opponents, above all socialists and Marxists. He is nominating a cabal of fascists and billionaires as well as his aides and acolytes to fill all the top positions in his administration.

Trump’s installation is taking place amid the escalation of US-led wars in Ukraine against Russia and in the Middle East, as well as advanced preparations for US conflict with China that are morphing into a global war. Trump has rapidly ditched his anti-war posturing of the election campaign and continues this reckless plunge towards nuclear Armageddon.

The US working class will not passively accept

Trump’s massive attacks on its social and democratic rights, setting the stage for major clashes with the new administration when it takes office on January 20.

The only means for defeating fascism, ending the dangers of world war and defending social and democratic rights, is through the independent mobilisation of the working class in the US and around the world in the fight for socialism. That was what the SEP candidates for US president and vice-president—Joseph Kishore and Jerry White—campaigning for against both the Democratic and Republican candidates, as well as the various other capitalist parties and their pseudo-left apologists.

Similar processes are underway globally, including in Sri Lanka. The coming to power of President Anura Kumara Dissanayake and Janatha Vimukthi Peramunaled (JVP) National People’s Power (NPP) government bears striking similarities with the election of Trump.

The JVP/NPP is in no sense a socialist or Marxist party, but is deeply rooted in Sinhala chauvinism and the defence of Sri Lankan capitalism. Its fascistic tendencies, already evident in its murderous patriotic campaign in the late 1980s against the Indo-Lanka Accord, will come to the fore as it seeks to impose the diktats of big business and international finance capital.

Working people did not vote for the right-wing, pro-capitalist policies that the JVP/NPP will implement. Rather, Dissanayake’s victory reflects the intense popular hatred for the country’s traditional ruling parties and the desperate hope that he will somehow alleviate the suffering already faced by broad masses of the population.

These illusions will be quickly exposed. The JVP/NPP has already jettisoned its campaign promise to renegotiate the terms of the International Monetary

Fund (IMF), and agreed to implement its drastic austerity measures in full. These will include further tax hikes on workers, cuts to health and education spending, and the wholesale restructuring and privatisation of state-owned enterprises (SOEs), threatening 500,000 public sector jobs.

Dissanayake is preparing the state apparatus to crack down on the inevitable working-class opposition. He has already ditched the election pledge to abolish the draconian Prevention of Terrorism Act. At the same time, he has signalled the further integration of Sri Lanka into the war preparations of US imperialism throughout the Indo-Pacific against China.

Like its sister party in the US, the SEP in Sri Lanka intervened in the presidential and parliamentary election to politically prepare and mobilise workers for the class battles ahead. Its candidates fought for the political independence of the working class from all bourgeois parties and their pseudo-left apologists on the basis of a socialist program against war, austerity and dictatorial methods of rule. As part of its fight to unite workers in Sri Lanka and internationally, the SEP opposed the communalist and chauvinist politics that permeates the entire Colombo establishment.

We urge all workers and youth wanting to fight fascism, war and austerity to attend our public meeting to discuss the urgent tasks that confront the working class in the wake of the US and Sri Lankan elections and the socialist and internationalist strategy necessary to fight for the interests of working people.

Date & Time: Saturday, December 7, 4 p.m.
Venue: Mahaweli Center, Colombo



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Socialist Equality Party visit:

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