

Cold war between Maithri & Ranil

It is reported that a severe internal contradiction is developing within the joint administration formed by combining UNP and SLFP Parliamentarians due to the economic crisis that is escalating day by day.

The present government is confronted with a harsh financial crisis due to the debt burden that

escalated due to the wrong economic policies adopted by all governments that have ruled the country,

frauds, corruption and waste and distancing from a production economy due to the erroneous

instructions given by international financial institutions. The state debt is more than Rs.10,000 billion which has made every citizen in the country indebted to the tune of Rs.500,000. Sri Lanka's foreign reserves

have tumbled and the exchange rate of the rupee in relative to the dollar has gone up beyond Rs.152. The government while obtaining loans from foreign financial institutions and burdening the masses with taxes,

finances and price increases is looking for short term solutions. Recently, Ranil – Maithri administration took steps to impose various kinds of taxes and fines and increase the existing taxes on goods

Page 07 >>>



Saving the country from the parasitic clique is the main challenge before us

Comrade Anura Dissanayaka



Many could write philosophical books, literary creations on Fidel Castro, a great human being, his philosophy and Socialism but the real challenge before the country is to get an ability to absorb the richest experiences of Fidel Castro and his practice and adopt them to conditions in Sri Lanka said the Leader of the JVP Comrade Anura Dissanayaka.

He said this delivering the key note address of the people's commemoration held at Viharamahadevi Park in Colombo on the 4th December under the theme 'Beloved Fidel, This is not a farewell!'

Speaking further Comrade Anura Dissanayaka said,

"We have a colossal responsibility. Our country has been made impotent more than ever before. It has been broken down socially. It is a country where no community exists with satisfaction; a country from which youths flee as they have no hope for their future; a country where malnutrition reigns, where mothers suffer from anemia, the Sinhalese looks at Muslims and Tamils as enemies and vice versa, where hatred, enmity reigns and any dirty deal is carried out for power.

How could they become democratic or humanistic rulers? How could they become rulers who love their people? A gang of voracious, insatiable

parasites, who have amassed wealth by plunder, used to high consumption, possessing vehicles worth millions, luxurious mansions, rule our country at present while masses toil to earn money. This gang of parasites depends on this money. A gang of parasites can never build a country or sustain the people.

The challenge before us is to rescue the country from this gang of parasites and build a Socialist Sri Lanka with humanity, where national unity exists, with noble ideals, expectations and where everyone can have hopes for a bright future. There are many examples we could gather from Cuba to make this dream of ours a reality."

The Ambassadors of Cuba in Sri Lanka Comrade Helena Ramos, JVP Leader Comrade Anura Dissanayaka, the General Secretary Comrade Tilvin Silva, the National Organizer Comrade Bimal Rathnayaka, Subramaniam Nagendra

representing Cuba – Sri Lanka Friendship Foundation, Lecturer on Philosophy at Peradeniya University Prof. Desmond Mallikarachchi, Information Secretary of the JVP Comrade Vijitha Herath, Renowned Artiste Dr. Saumya Liyanage, Cuban Graduate and Sports Director of Moratuwa University Rathna Mudali, Specialist on Public Health Dr. Nihal Abeysinghe, JVP Jaffna District Organizer Comrade Ramalingam Chandrasekar, National Organizer of Socialist Youth Union Comrade Eranga Gunasekera, National Organizer of Socialist Women's Union Comrade Samanmalee Gunasinghe, National Organizer of Socialist Students' Union Comrade Rangana Devapriya, Ranura Perera and Nadeeshan Jayakody representing Sri Lankan students in Cuba, Renowned Artistes Deepani Silva and Ariyawansa Ranaweera, the clergy, artistes, intellectuals and a large crowd were present.

We have suspicion that government is protecting bond fraudsters

Comrade Sunil Handunneththi

We ask the government to take the debate on the bond transaction as the first move of the parliament in the new year. It is the parliament that is responsible for the COPE report. The Prime Minister has referred the report to the Attorney General. The action he could take legally regarding the report is another matter. We believe that the decision regarding the report should be taken not by the Attorney General but by the parliament. We have a suspicion that the government is attempting to protect the perpetrators of the bond scam," says Member of the Political Bureau of the JVP and Chairman of the Committee On Public Enterprises (COPE) Comrade Sunil Handunneththi.

He said this at a press conference held at the head office of the JVP at Pelawatta on 26th December, 2016. The Member of the Central Committee Attorney-at-Law Comrade Sunil Watagala also participated.

Comrade Sunil Handunneththi said, "It is the parliament that should decide whether an explanation for the Attorney General is necessary or not. Despite COPE not being an investigative mechanism, it has been proved that Perpetual Treasuries Ltd. has gained an illegal profit from the bond transaction. It is clear from their financial reports as well. All documents based on the recommendations have been included in the report. Hence, we expect the Speaker to take measures to hold a debate on the report soon."

Rise up against Ranil - Maithri Bonapartist regime

Comrade Vijitha Herath

The government that takes steps to sweep people's issues under the carpet is repressing the masses that rise up to win their just rights says the Information Secretary of the JVP Comrade Vijitha Herath. However, ministers, deputy ministers, MPs as well as the former defeated president are given privileges and concessions for its survival he added.

Speaking at a media briefing held at the head office of the JVP on the 1st of December Comrade

Vijitha Herath said, "Former President Mahinda Rajapaksa was given a house by this government. The house on Wijerama Mawatha in Colombo 7 where former Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar lived was used by President Maithripala Sirisena. Later it was given to Mahinda Rajapaksa allocating Rs.30 million for renovations. Without stopping at that the government has presented a supplementary estimate of Rs.19.97 million again to build another building in the

compound. These are the perks the privileged get from the government. Earlier too Mr. Ranil Wickremesinghe allocated money to buy tyres for Mahinda Rajapaksa's vehicle. This is how gratitude is expressed for carpeting the road near 'Sirikotha' to save the UNP from its members. It is because of these privileges and perks that Mahinda Rajapaksa avoids voting against the budget, VAT proposal and the no-confidence motion. These are the real deals between these

individuals."

He further said, "The MPs and ministers are given various privileges and benefits while suppressing people's issues. This is very unjustifiable. This is how a Bonapartist type administration works.

The JVP would rally the masses against the Bonapartist type

government carried out by Maithripala Sirisena and Ranil Wickremesinghe that suppresses people's issues, overpowers people's forces while giving privileges and benefits to MPs and ministers. Also, we ask the people to come forward to defeat the sinister moves of Ranil – Maithri government."



Is a new constitution the solution for the crisis?

A dialogue regarding a new constitution has surfaced in the country due to the reports that Maithri – Ranil government intends bringing in such a new constitution. Various parties too have expressed various analyses regarding this ‘new constitution’. Specially, those in Rajapaksa clique, despite not seeing the said new constitution, are spreading various stories. However, a genuine analysis that should be from the point of view of the left and progressive camp should be made. It is to prevent people being lead astray by the erroneous analyses of all sorts of deceivers.

There is no debate that Sri Lanka needs a new constitution. For, what exists is the dictatorial constitution adopted, without the consent of the people, by J.R. Jayawardene regime in 1978 to strengthen capitalist state mechanism to pave the path for a neo-liberal political journey. This constitution has been amended nineteen times and except for two of them all others are detrimental for the people and heighten dictatorial powers. Specially, the 18th amendment adopted during Mahinda Rajapaksa regime abolished the powers of independent commissions established through the 17th amendment, increased powers of the President and allowed the same person to become the President for a third term. There are only two amendments that have been brought to strengthen democracy in the country. They are the 17th and the 19th amendments. Both of them were brought in with the initiative, contribution and pressure from the JVP and were brought in using the special opportunity when the rule of the capitalist class became weaker and the balance of power changed. In such a situation it would not be detrimental, if it is a possibility, to bring in a constitution that changes J.R. Jayawardene’s dictatorial constitution, strengthens capitalist democracy and enhances, at least for some degree, the rights of the people.

Nevertheless, Ranil Wickremesinghe is attempting to introduce this constitution to the country as a panacea to solve all the crises of capitalism. Believing that the deep socio-economic-political



and cultural crisis confronted by the country at present could be solved by another capitalist constitution is nothing but an illusion. The existing dictatorial, distorted constitution too is an expression of the crisis of the capitalist system and not its cause. Hence, changing the constitution would not bring any solution for the crisis of the capitalist system. The maximum they would get is the democratic clearance they would get to carry out their struggle against capitalist crisis. Hence the solution for the capitalist crisis in Sri Lanka is a change in the social system; a Socialist Constitution that could protect this Socialist social system. However, the constitution the likes of Ranil Wickremesinghe intend bringing would be nothing else but another capitalist constitution.

Within capitalism what could be the stand of progressive social movements regarding a new constitution? This is an issue that should be untangled very carefully. First it should be understood that another capitalist constitution would not be a solution for the crisis of the capitalist system in Sri Lanka and what the country is yearning

for is a social transformation. Also, in the struggle carried out by various people’s forces on behalf of a new society it would be necessary to mediate in the attempt to bring in a new constitution if doing so would broaden democratic rights within the country, human rights could be confirmed and the dictatorial nature of the capitalist state machinery could be changed as they are advantageous to a social transformation. Despite the constitution being capitalist, it is necessary to get involved in a bid to win capitalist democracy. It would never be a political error. The limited opportunities that open due to the weakening of power of the capitalist class and the change in balance of power should be grabbed to enhance the struggle for social change. This was our stand when we brought about the 17th amendment and contributed to the 19th amendment.

However, viewing from the capitalist class that is in crisis, what really exists is a contradiction. The capitalist class itself is in crisis within capitalism and is in a serious contradiction.

Marx said “crisis would result from contradictions within the capitalist system itself.” Capitalist administration talks about broadening democracy, decentralizing power and protecting human rights and media freedom. However, their practice doesn’t do so and the capitalist crisis forces them to deny or restrict democracy, centralize power, violate human rights and curtail media freedom. This contradiction is unfolding before us at present.

The government that bragged it would establish ‘Wi-Fi’ zones throughout the island to give free internet facilities for the young generation not only forgot its promise but went on to impose a tax of 25% for internet users. The government that talks about decentralizing power and form various committees in parliament stating it is to stop centralization of power in practice has presented a draft bill to establish a ‘super minister’ that centralizes all powers. The government that talks about protecting fundamental rights deploys army to attack peaceful agitations and requests enjoining orders from courts

in order to take legal action against agitators. These are only a few examples that indicate the contradiction between what the capitalist administration says and what its practice is.

In reality, a weak capitalist administration that is in crisis can never give democracy for the people unless of course it is grabbed due to the impotency of the administration. The real desire of the current administration is to centralize state power and increase it so that they could implement their neo-liberalist policies without any obstacle and to frighten and suppress people’s forces that rise against such policies. Hence, no one should be deceived by the myth that the capitalist class would weaken itself to affirm democracy for the people.

What would be the moves and conduct of the capitalist class regarding the proposed new constitution? In what sense does Ranil Wickremesinghe faction looks at the proposed new constitution? This is not difficult to comprehend. Wickremesinghe faction needs the new constitution for several reasons. One is to show it to western countries to get loans and to show it to UNHRC to get a postponement of the moves regarding the proposal on human rights investigations that has been adopted earlier. Human Rights Commission meets in Geneva this year and at least publishing a copy of the constitution is essential. It is to escape from UNHCR. In this sense the proposed constitution would be one that also gratifies foreign forces.

On the other hand if the proposed new constitution could be presented and get it adopted it would be a victory for the weak joint administration. It is favourable to the government. The burning issues in the country could be swept under the new constitution. The people could be deceived at least for a short period by making them believe that the new constitution could solve problems. Also, ‘Prime Minister’ Ranil Wickremesinghe may be hoping to get power that he is not entitled to at the moment.

Now, Maithri is in a dilemma. He has to stand on behalf of the new constitution to maintain the government, to be in the good

Red Power: We have entered 2017, a New Year. What are the challenges that are before the country and the people during this New Year?

Comrade Tilvin Silva: In reality, the year 2017 has dawned with many challenges unfolded before the people as well as creating a lot of opportunities. Specially, this is the year people will have to confront the consequences of the destructive economic policy of the joint administration. The year has arrived with massive taxes and fines enforced through the budget that was passed in Parliament in December. As such, the masses will have to shoulder the burden of heavy taxes. Also, people will have to confront the hardships due to slashing of relief. Already, paddy harvest has diminished as there hadn't been adequate water supplies and the fertilizer subsidy funds were not made available to the farmer community. The farmers' income would dwindle and the consumers too will have to pay around Rs.100 for a kilo of rice.

Also, this would be the year the selling of state assets and resources would take place according to the neo-liberal economic policy of the government. At the beginning of January Hambanthota Harbour would be handed over to a Chinese company. Also, 15,000 acres from Hambanthota and Monaragala districts are to be given to China this year. In addition, the selling of several valuable resources such as the East terminal of Colombo Harbour, oil tank farm in Trincomalee, Kahatagaha graphite mines, Pulmoddai mineral sands deposits Srilankan Airlines will

take place this year. These are all challenges confronted by the masses. A massive anti-government series of struggles and agitations will be created. If this is correctly identified the masses will have the opportunity for victory within this struggle.

Red Power: You talk about a series of struggles. Earlier too the JVP had mentioned about this year being a year of struggles. What do you mean when you say this year would be a year of struggles?

Comrade Tilvin Silva: It is very clear that people distressed due to the burden of taxes, the increase in prices of commodities due to the rupee depreciating - the exchange rate of the dollar would exceed Rs.152 - the people distressed due to slashing of relief for education, health, farmer community will have a struggle before them. Also, the masses who are distressed due to the selling of state resources and state institutions have a struggle to protect their resources and institutions. Already, struggles have begun against selling Hambanthota Harbour and lands and the attempt to sell East jetty in Colombo Harbour. We are prepared to give leadership to those just struggles. It is our party that is leading these struggles. While these struggles take place at the sites and in institutions, we are prepared to amalgamate the struggles into a massive people's struggle. We have already planned poster campaigns, distribution of leaflets and agitations and are carrying them out. It is only the JVP that could give leadership to such struggles. Hence, we

Rally for a new political journey in the New Year

Comrade Tilvin Silva General Secretary of the JVP

believe these struggles will become a part of the massive people's power that will be built to defeat capitalism and establish Socialism in the country.

Red Power: You said only the JVP could give leadership to people's struggles that surface in the country. Could you elaborate on this?

Comrade Tilvin Silva: What exists today in our country is not the political situation that existed in the past. The two capitalist political parties that ruled the country alternatively in the past have been forced to join to form a joint administration. This is because both these groups have been rejected by the masses. The capitalist parties have splintered, cliques have divided and are weakened. This is a special situation. The UNP cannot give leadership to people's struggles that arise in the country. They are a part of this government. They are responsible for the severe issues confronted by the country and the people. Could Maithripala faction give leadership to the struggles? They cannot as they too are part of this government. They are partners of the destructive economic processes followed in the country. Then what is the situation of Mahinda Rajapaksa clique? On one hand they are

weak. On the other they cannot come near the struggles. For, the current administration implements the decisions taken during Mahinda Rajapaksa administration. They too increased taxes. Mahinda Rajapaksa kept away from voting against the budget of this government that increased taxes. As such, they cannot do anything in the struggle against cost of living. They too slashed relief; robbed people's assets. People do remember what they

did when they were in power. Decisions regarding many assets and resources that the current administration is attempting to sell were taken during Mahinda Rajapaksa regime. Hence, they cannot do anything regarding the struggle against government's attempt to sell state assets and resources. It was Rajapaksa regime that took the decision to hand over 15,000 acres from Hambanthota and Monaragala districts to China.

Hence, they cannot approach the struggle. It was Rajapaksa who recruited employees for a company (after taking a bribe) instead of recruiting them as employees of Hambanthota Harbour and deceived the employees. This is why Namal Rajapaksa was hooted down by the striking employees of Hambanthota Harbour. As such, Rajapaksa clique cannot lead these struggles. Also, small cliques and groups that limit their

Page 07 >>>





The rise of rightist parties is outcome of crisis in capitalism

Economic instability, populist politicians and a refugee wave is changing the face of politics in Europe. A study by Germany's renowned Bertelsmann Stiftung also has found that the voters in Europe are opting to turn towards right-wing parties for fear of globalization. Sweden Democrats, the National Front in France, the Party for Freedom in the Netherlands and other voices on the far right calling for their once open countries to close up and turn inward. France is also seeing a rise in right-wing support for the Front Nationale (FN) party and its leader Marine Le-Pen profiting from the trend.

According to the Bertelsmann report opposition to the globalization process is also driving people into the hands of right-wing and nationalist parties in other countries in the EU. Hungarian Civic Alliance Fidesz (61 percent, PVV (57 percent) in the Netherlands or Lega Nord (66 percent) in Italy have gained popularity. Meanwhile, all these rightist parties are aligned with US president to be Donald Trump.

Amid a migrant crisis, sluggish economic growth and growing disillusionment with the European Union, right-wing parties in a growing number of European countries have made electoral gains.

The research entitled "Globalization anxiety or value conflict? Who in Europe votes for the populist parties and why?" examined the opinions of nearly 11,000 people in all 28 EU countries. According to a key finding of the paper, globalization appears to be the crucial force behind the growing ranks of right-wing and populist parties' across Europe.

Stating "The lower the educational level, the lower the income and the older the people are, the more likely they are to perceive globalization as a threat," and recommend that "The established parties must include fears of globalization into their work."

Prof. William I Robinson, professor of sociology at the University of California, Santa Barbara states, "The spiralling

crisis of global capitalism has reached a crossroads. Either there is a radical reform of the system (if not its overthrow) or there will be a sharp turn towards "fascism of the twenty-first century." The failure of elite reformism, the unwillingness of the transnational elite to challenge the depredation and rapacity of global capitalism, has paved the way for a far-right response to the crisis.

Trumpism is the American variant of the rise of a neo-fascist right against the crisis around the world, Brexit, the resurgence of the European right, the vengeful return of the right in Latin America, Duterte in the Philippines, and so on."

He has also stated "The world capitalist system is arguably experiencing the worst crisis in its 500 year history. World capitalism has experienced a profound restructuring through globalization over the past few decades and has been transformed in ways that make it fundamentally distinct from its earlier incarnations."

Israel's shameful act

The Israeli press has reported in recent hours that the Government, through the local planning committee, will build more than 5,600 new illegal homes in East Jerusalem, despite the recent resolution of the United Nations Security Council. It is stated that about 2 600 houses will be built in the illegal settlement of Gilo, another number in the colony Givat HaMatos and 400houses more in Ramat Shlomo.

The resolution passed in a 14-0 vote by members of the U.N. Security Council (UNSC) on 24th December, last year states Israel's settlement activity constitutes a "flagrant violation" of international law and has "no legal validity". It demands that Israel stop such activity and fulfil its obligations as an occupying power under the Fourth Geneva Convention. This time the US abstained from voting.

In earlier instances US used its veto power and prevented resolutions being passed. After the resolution was adopted the Israeli prime minister announced that he had ordered the Foreign Ministry to review relations with the UN and cut funding to five of its agencies.

No personality cult for Comrade Fidel

Cuba's national assembly voted late Tuesday to pass a law preventing the use of Fidel Castro's name or image for public streets, buildings and monuments. The legislation is in accordance with the late leader's final wish to avoid a "personality cult."

More than 600 members of parliament voted unanimously in favor of the bill during the assembly's final meeting of the year.

Cuba's revolutionary leader died on 25th November at the age of 90 after leading his country for nearly 50 years.

The law will prohibit the use of Castro's name in the names of institutions, parks, streets and other public places, as well as any honorary titles or medals. It also stops Castro's image being used for monuments, busts, statues and commemorative plaques.

However, an exception can be made for institutions dedicated to the teaching of Castro's legacy and life work. Also the rule would not stop Cuban artists from taking inspiration from the former leader or using his image in their works of art - from literature to music to cinema.

Castro's portrait will remain hanging in schools, businesses and military institutions.

Red light for separatists in China

On 28th December China officially warned separatists in Hong Kong and Taiwan. President Xi Jinping making a speech at China's founding father Sun Yat-sen's 150th birth anniversary said, "All forms of separatist activities will be resolutely opposed by the entire Chinese people." He said, "We will never allow any one, any organisation, any political party to remove a part of territory from China in any form and at any time."

China considers Hong Kong and Taiwan as its territory. Hong Kong leased for 99 years was taken back by China in 1997.

After Donald Trump won the US presidential election directly had discussions with Taiwan leader Tsai Ing-wen, a staunch opponent to the long-held "one China" policy. China announced that US should respect 'one China' policy.

Last year there were anti-china protests in Hong Kong and pro-democracy legislators in Hong Kong had been invited to a forum on the topic of self-determination hosted by Taiwan's New Power Party.

Fengshan, spokesman for the Taiwan Affairs Office says, "A small group of pro-independence forces in Taiwan are colluding with Hong Kong independence advocates to divide the nation. Their attempts will not succeed. They will end up with their heads broken and bleeding."

New year message of the JVP

Let's join hands for a new political journey!

The year 2016 has ended and 2017 has dawned. Many consider New Year as an opportunity to renew life with experiences gained from years that have ended. Hence, if we are able to learn from the experiences of past years and begin the life anew, think anew and take new political decisions this would indeed be an auspicious New Year.

The year 2017 has dawned bringing with it the same challenges that existed in the past year together with new challenges. The Prime Minister himself once said Sri Lanka was burdened with a colossal debt mountain of more than Rs. 10,500 billion. It would not come down but would definitely go up this year.

Due to the debt crisis and dwindling foreign assets the rupee has depreciated resulting in an additional burden on the masses. Also, numerous taxes and fines proposed in the budget and passed by a majority in Parliament as a solution for the economic crisis confronted by the country are to be thrown on people's heads this year. Also, many resources of the country and state institutions would be sold this year. On the other hand people will be further burdened due to the slashing of allocations for education, health and relief for farmers. In this way the New Year would bring many challenges for the

common people.

The number of motor accidents, suicides, robberies, crimes destruction of the environment that escalate day by day burden the common people further.

This is why mere traditional wishing would not make the New Year an auspicious one. Despite people wishing each other on the first day of the year in the past, none of these years became auspicious to the common masses.

Hence, 2017 should be made a real auspicious New Year for the masses. For this the masses in the country should turn the political path they had been taking until now on a new direction. They should join the political path that would lead to genuine victory for the people. They should determine to change the old political decisions and take new political decisions in the New Year. They should enter a new political journey that would take the country towards genuine victories and that would build a new society to replace the old deteriorating society. They should rally and join hands with steadfastness to build a massive people's power, a people's center. Then only the New Year would be a genuinely auspicious one.

We wish all Sri Lankans an auspicious 2017.

Illegally established SAITM is maintained by bending laws

Comrade Bimal Rathnayaka

The South Asian Institute of Technology and Medicine (SAITM) that was established breaking laws of the country is being maintained now by bending laws says the Member of the Political Bureau of the JVP Comrade Bimal Rathnayaka. He said Minister S.B. Disanayaka gave SAITM legal status violating regulations in the gazette that had been issued earlier and emphasized that the present government should not give it authority violating the bill and using political power.

Speaking further at a press conference held at the head office of the JVP on 20th December Comrade Bimal Rathnayaka said, "Minister Kiriella says they cannot do anything about it as it had been done by the previous government. We say that the previous government has done an illegal thing. The Minister of Higher Education has the authority to cancel the gazette that has given illegal authority. Already, several private institutions have gazetted for enrolment. We have a doubt about their standards. We don't know whether permission is given after inspecting the standards.

Hence, SAITM should be abolished. We, as the JVP, hope to discuss with university academics, doctors and other intellectuals regarding this and take legal action against the institution.

Also, the struggle against privatization of education would be continued with students. Giving permission for illegal businesses with money from the rich should be halted."

The National Organizer of Socialist Students' Union (SYU) Comrade Rangana Devapriya too was present.

A letter to President from the JVP

Writing to the President on the 27th December the Member of the Political Bureau of the JVP Comrade Sunil Handunneththi asks the President to take measures to reveal to the country government's agreement to sell Hambanthota Harbour.

The letter states:

Regarding government's decision to sell Hambanthota Harbour

The Prime Minister has already said an agreement would be signed on 7th January to hand over the ownership of Hambanthota Harbour to a Chinese company for 99 years.

We, as the JVP, vehemently oppose selling a people's resource that could be utilized for the benefit of the people and the country.

This becomes a very serious matter as what is going to be handed over

for 99 years is a harbour that is a highly sensitive center for the economy and national security of the country; as it is a matter linked with sovereignty. Another factor is it is a harbour in Sri Lanka, a country which is situated in a geo-politically sensitive area. This could be corroborated historically as well. The Portuguese, the Dutch and the British colonialists fought with each other to capture harbours in this country. For, they knew owning the harbours in this country, which is an island, was decisive to establish their power in the country and the region.

One of the rallying cries that made you president on 8th January, 2015 was opposition to secret, illegal deals of previous Rajapaksa regime; to take legal action against such deals. The secret and corrupt

moves that handed over resources in the country and contracts to racketeers had been severely criticized by the masses. As such, preventing corruption, transparency became your election campaign's rallying cries.

Nevertheless, the people in the country are not aware of the contents of the agreement for the handing over of Hambanthota Harbour to a foreign company despite it would take place in two weeks time. The Parliament too is not aware of it. How could this secret transaction not be a deal? Also, people are perplexed as to how this could differ from the deals committed during the 'black decade'.

This transaction cannot be justified just because it would be presented in Parliament. However, the government is morally

bound to tell the people how it is done when a resource of the country is handed over to a foreign company. Also knowing about it is a right of the people. For, those who are for this transaction, those who sign the agreement, and we, who write this letter, would not exist when the ownership would be handed back after 99 years. This is a matter that involves the future generations as well.

We request you to consider all these and prevent signing of this agreement that hands over a people's asset to foreign ownership; at least to take necessary measures to present it to Parliament so that the country would know what type of agreement it is. As the whole country is watching what steps you would take regarding this, we request you to mediate immediately.

Attack on harbour employees is an attack on those against selling national resources

Comrade Anura Disanayaka

Employees in all other harbours belong to the Sri Lanka Ports authority. However, employees in Hambanthota Harbour do not belong to the Authority; they have been deceived by the previous regime when they were recruited and when the present government decided to hand over the Harbour to a Chinese company they have been confronted with the issue of permanency of their employment said JVP Leader Comrade Anura Disanayaka adding that it is a highly humane issue.

Speaking at a media conference held at the JVP head office at Pelawatta on 11th December Comrade Anura Disanayaka said, "An MoU has been prepared to be signed between Sri Lanka Ports Authority and a Chinese company. The handing over process takes place in two phases - the first for 99 years and then it would be extended for another 99 years. The company gets the ownership of lands, container terminals, gas, livestock, oil tanks, dockyard, ware houses and everything through the agreement. However, there is nothing mentioned regarding the employees. Isn't agitating by employees justifiable in such a situation? The demand they have put forward is justifiable.

The government deployed S.L. Navy to attack the employees when they put forward their just demand. Who is the

Page 07 >>>

Rally for a new political journey... >>> Page 04

politics to pasting posters and issuing media releases too cannot take the leadership of the now emerging struggles. This is why we say only we could give leadership to the struggles that surface in the country. Only we have a programme to queue up these struggles towards one goal on a victorious path.

Red Power: You mention the struggles that surface in the country would be queued up on one programme and towards one goal. What do you mean by that?

Comrade Tilvin Silva: If struggles carried out by various groups or crop up in institutions are allowed to remain isolated they would end in defeat. If they do not get a good political leadership they would go astray; they would be betrayed. As these struggles are the results of the common origin of the capitalist crisis and have been created due to the policy programmes of the capitalist alliance government, all these isolated struggles should be made a common struggle. Then only the struggles become stronger. This could be done only by the JVP. Also, without terminating these struggles at the level of winning demands only, they should be continued until the existing capitalist system is defeated to form a people's administration for a new Socialist society. They should become shareholders of a people's center formed for a people's government. Then only the struggles could end in a genuine victory. Our intention is to give leadership to such a task. We will fulfill it.

Red Power: You mentioned that we are in the middle of crises. Please explain it.

Comrade Tilvin Silva: Yes, clearly the nature and the status of political forces in the country have changed. The current capitalist crisis is reflected not only within the masses. It is not only our class that is in crisis and suffers due to the crisis in the capitalist system. The ruling class in Sri Lanka too is in crisis. The crisis of the capitalist system is reflected through the ruling class as well. We call it the 'crisis in the lower order and the crisis at the top'. Now, not only our class but the ruling class too is in a crisis. Just as our class cannot exist with the old system, the ruling class too can no longer rule the country according to the old system. The ruling class has weakened. Despite the alliance government talking about 'unity', there is chaos within. Despite the UNP and the SLFP joining to form a government, there are clashes and contradictions within. Despite being together for power and privileges, they also clash with each other for more power and privileges. They are weak. The UNP is weak as a party. They do not have much power. This is why they plan to create a 'super' minister. The SLFP is divided. Both factions are weak. Rajapaksa clique deteriorates daily. When the present capitalist government is resented by the masses there is no other capitalist party to become the alternative. As such, the left – we – have an opportunity. It's an opportunity that has never existed before. The 'crisis in the lower order and the crisis at the top' prepares the political environment necessary for a social transformation. This is the opportunity that is before the masses. Our intention is not to allow this opportunity to go astray but to grab it with both hands and use it for the victory of the people. This is the task before us and the masses in this country in this New Year.

Red Power: Alright, what is the programme of the JVP to make use of this opportunity to bring victory for the people? What is your message for the people in this New Year?

Comrade Tilvin Silva: This special political situation that has surfaced pushing capitalist system and capitalist politics into crisis should be used to build a people's government that would create a new society. We have shouldered the task of building the broadest people's power and people's center to achieve this goal. When the 2020 election approaches the capitalist political parties would be further deteriorated and weakened. In such a situation an opportunity would be created to build an alternative force. Already, we have begun the task of amassing people's forces, trade unions, farmers' organizations, various other civil organizations, scholars, intellectuals, professionals, environmentalists, artistes, journalists and other individuals and organizations. We also hope to add the series of struggles that has surfaced at present to this endeavour. In the meantime we continue to build our village associations. Our intention is to amalgamate all these forces into one center and build a force that could achieve power.

We call upon the masses in this country to say good bye to the 68 year old rotating system and to rally for a new political journey in this New Year.

Cold war...

>>> Page 01

and services. Also, the government is planning, on instructions from finance institutions that have promised loans to the government, to sell several state resources and people's assets.

However, when a strong opposition is emerging from the people against these steps taken by the government, the SLFP faction with the government is in a bid to deny their responsibility for the acts. Many SLFP ministers are criticising the government regarding the policies followed by the government. Examples are Minister Dilan Perera's statement that the SLFP would leave the joint government this year and the opposition by the SLFP ministers to the Development (Special Provisions) Draft Bill the UNP attempts to adopt. Getting all provincial councils ruled by the SLFP to defeat the bill stating the bill would allow the government to grab provincial council powers is a slap in the face for the government.

Meanwhile, the crisis has escalated

to a point where UNP and SLFP ministers verbally attack each other through the media. They, who manipulated, on pseudo unity, a joint administration to gain power, now brag that they could form a government without the support of the other. However, what these fake performances indicate is that despite getting together for power, contradictions too would develop against each other for power. On the other hand Maithri faction attempts to shy away from the responsibility of the anti-people's moves of the UNP, the UNP too acts in an irresponsible manner.

In such an environment, a serious issue regarding government's stability is displayed externally while political analysts believe that an inkling of a cold war – a power struggle between Ranil and Maithri could be seen in the confusion. The final result would be the weakening of the government and the capitalist political parties that represent it.

new constitution...

>>> Page 03



books of the western powers and Tamil organizations. However, the opposition to the new constitution from Mahinda faction, the notion they spread that "it is a ploy to divide the country" and the division in the SLFP caused by such moves is disadvantageous for Mr. Maithripala Sirisena. Such a dialogue in the country is indeed unfavourable for Maithri faction. Hence, it is not surprising if he attempts to avoid the 'new constitution'.

Mahinda Rajapaksa clique has already opposed the proposed constitution and would use the situation in a communal aspect to conceal his political bankruptcy. Other parties associating Mahinda faction too would take the same path. Meanwhile, the TNA would look at this as a gimmick to conceal its impotency in politics in the North and to manipulate

the process towards devolution of power to make use of it for its political agenda.

In such an environment, when various parties act according to their class objectives, the proposed new constitution would never be passed with a 2/3rd majority in Parliament and would be very difficult to adopt it by a referendum.

As such, the dialogue regarding the new constitution should not be allowed to turn out to be one that kindles communalism, to suppress the dialogue on class struggle and a change in social system but measures should be taken to win something for the people if a process for a new constitution is taking place. This is what we could do to make this attempt an advantage for our people. We need not completely reject the constitution treating it as a demon or embrace it to hold off our politics completely. Our task is to rally people's forces and organize them for a social transformation. Even a constitution is important to us only if it eases this task and contains room for masses to win democracy and rights.

Attack on harbour...

>>> Page 06

Navy officer who got involved in the attack on the employees? He is none other than the Navy Commander Ravindra Wijegunaratna. He is the officer who mediated in Rajapaksa son's recruitment for the S.L. Navy, his training and promotions. His issue is about his position in the Navy. He was very partial to Rajapaksas then. Now he is trying to show that he is partial to 'yahapalanaya'. What the government wants to show is that they would implement their economic plan by hook or by crook. This attack was not on the journalists and port employees only. It is an attack on those who oppose selling national resources. It is the first signal given to those who oppose ports, lands, mineral sands deposits at Pulmoddai, phosphate deposits etc. Hence, we call upon the masses in the country to rise up against Maithri – Ranil 'yahapalana' regime."

The Member of the Political Bureau of the JVP Comrade Lal Kantha and the Member of the Central Committee Comrade Wasantha Samarasinghe were also present.

New Year & greetings!

New Year 2017 has dawned According to the calendar we use at present. With the dawn of the new year TV channels, FM channels, newspaper institutions and businessmen who owned them, traders as well as politicians compete with each other to wish the people an auspicious new year. People too make their customary good wishes to one another. However, as had been happening for ages, the year goes by without any favourable outcome. The masses are pushed towards misery, penury and distress. This is the truth.

When the new year wishes for an 'auspicious' New Year are made, the year 2016 has already terminated and the new 2017 has dawned for the masses but not with any auspicious messages. What the capitalist administration has given the masses are inauspicious messages. At the beginning of 2017 people are to be burdened with a load of taxes and fines. So, how could the new year be an auspicious one? As allocations for education and health have been slashed the people will have to shoulder this burden as well. This is why wishes for the new year would not be a reality. On the other hand it is during this year that the joint government, following its neo-liberalist policy, carries out its selling spree of state assets and resources belonging to the people. Accordingly, Hambanthota Harbour, the East terminal of Colombo Harbour, Mattala Airport, 15,000 acres of lands from Hambanthota, Monaragala and Embilipitiya districts, Kahatagaha graphite mines, oil tank farm at Trincomalee, mineral sands deposits at Pulmoddai, SriLankan Airlines are to be sold this year. When people living in these areas are pulled out of their lands and the lands are handed over to foreign companies for 198 years how could this year be auspicious? When the harbours, airlines, mineral sand deposits are sold how could this year be auspicious for the country and for those who are employed in these institutions and sites considering the harm inflicted upon the country and the people by such selling?

Would this year be auspicious when paddy harvest dwindles due to not making water and funds promised to replace fertilizer subsidy available for farmers so that farmers lose their income and consumers have to pay Rs. 100 or more for a kilo of rice? These are facts we have to ponder.

People will never have an auspicious year within the capitalist system. Every year has been auspicious and will be auspicious for capitalist rulers and their henchmen, racketeers and big businessmen. They who falsely wish masses have auspicious years always. For the general public the new year has never been auspicious. This is a characteristic of capitalism.

However, we need not be pessimistic. Any challenge would contain an opportunity. This is why they say every dark cloud has a silver lining. Within all the crises the masses are confronted with in the new year there is also a real hope for an auspicious New Year. It is the 'people's center' that is being built to form a people's administration. This is the genuine auspicious message the masses receive this New Year!

There is a path that could cast away fake, false, empty, deceptive wishes and make not only the new year genuinely auspicious but also the whole future could be made auspicious for the masses. It is to cast away the traditional political path they have been following and turn towards a new path. Just like everything old, unusable, unproductive and out dated are cast away to embrace new and fresh things, the unsuccessful, failed wrong political path is discontinued to turn towards a new journey, old capitalism is discarded to turn towards the direction of new Socialism, this year would be not only an auspicious New Year but a New Year that would make the whole future auspicious.

Just as 2017 would be a year in which people are burdened with taxes, fines and increase in prices of essential goods, it would be a year when people will struggle against such burdens. When rulers attempt to sell people's assets, people throughout the island will make this a year of struggle to save their assets. Just as capitalist politicians make their usual moves to deceive masses this year, it would also be a year that liberate masses from deceitful politics of capitalists and guide them along a victorious path.

Hence, instead of merely being satisfied of making the traditional wishes for an auspicious new year, the people must resolve to enter the path to make the New Year genuinely auspicious. If the masses are prepared to decisively struggle against high cost of living, oppression and injustice, struggle against the move to sell people's assets and resources of the country, to become shareholders of the people's center being built with the leadership of the JVP with the intention of establishing a people's administration, this new year would indeed be a very auspicious New Year! We wish all those who struggle to make this new year an auspicious New Year in that context and are prepared to give up the old path to turn to a new path a very auspicious New Year!



To Paddy Marketing Board to inquire about paddy



Against the grabbing of people's lands



Struggle against destruction at 'Uma Oya'



Solidarity with Palestine



Seminar - 'Women's struggle in a dwindling economy'