Turn the Intra-Class Battle for Power Into A Revolutionary Struggle for Democracy and Freedom:

By: Surendra Ajit Rupasinghe:

The presidential election is a decisive battle for power between two rival fractions of the Comprador Capitalist Ruling Class. It is to choose which fraction shall lead the country and the people to the future. The aftermath and the ensuing consequences of the election may prove to be as momentous as the election itself. The rising conjuncture constitutes a decisive turning point. There are many powerful players in the fray and the stakes are high. Behind the stage and pulling the strings are the global and regional hegemonic powers vying for strategic leverage in the Land of Lanka. The various foreign powers, particularly the US, China and India, have sunk their fangs deep into our blood veins and vital lifelines. This is as they contend to hook up the Land and the people of Lanka as cogwheels in their respective play for strategic supremacy and regional domination. Internally, the game is being played out by the political representatives or agents who act as proxies to advance the interests of these contending imperialist powers.

The forces of neo-fascist dictatorship represented by the Mahinda Rajapakse Regime (MRR) and concentrated within the Rajapakse toika and dynasty simply cannot afford to lose power. Geneva is one looming factor. Nor can the Regime face the wrath of the masses or any kind of a People’s Tribunal. Exercising ideological supremacy and political hegemony over the State is crucial to the survival and growth of this theocratic-fascist camp that thrives by exploiting, manipulating and intensifying violent division. Victory at the election is also equally decisive for the common Opposition. Once the swords have been drawn it is difficult to sheath them without a decisive victory. This intra-class battle may lead to a decisive violent confrontation and generalized civil unrest. The forces of neo-fascist reaction will thrive in such a scenario of generalized anarchy and chaos. Under some manufactured ‘crisis of national security and foreign conspiracy’, Martial Law may be an option. My whole political line, analysis and orientation is to prepare the people of Lanka not only to be alert to the possible and horrible scenarios ahead, but more fundamentally to rise up to take up our responsibilities, as opposed to being muted spectators in this intra-class battle for power. This is so we may together guide the ship of liberty and freedom through the volcanic explosions and thundering storms towards the shoes of an enduring victory for the people of Lanka.

The Maithripala coalition gives hope to an ever widening popular base of support that, above all, demands the overthrow of the corrupt, narco-crony-mafia Rajapakse Regime and a return to the Rule of Law, Democracy and civilized decency. There are those who cry for dignity, freedom and democracy from fascist terror and tyranny. There are those progressive bourgeois liberal forces, such as Dr. Nirmal Ranjith Dewasiri who hope that the struggle to overthrow the MRR by a common opposition candidate may open democratic space for broader democratic mass mobilization. Dr Wickremabahu Karunarathne hopes that the strengthening and possible victory of the bourgeois opposition may open up space for advancing the struggle for democracy and freedom against the neo-fascist Rajapakse Dictatorship, including vital space for advancing the struggle of the oppressed Tamil Nation for liberation. The genuine democratic aspirations of these liberal, social-democratic forces must be united with, even though their analysis may be illusory and utopian at best. Although ideologically divergent and while maintaining our independent revolutionary principles and convictions, we must strive to build the broadest possible coalition of forces that stand against the fascist tyranny of the Rajapakse Regime. This is even though they reinforce the deadly illusion of placing faith in the foul game of bourgeois elections and on the system of neo-colonial subjugation enforced by the Comprador Capitalist State and the ruling class as a whole. The Left Platform spearheaded by the Frontline Socialist Party and the platform spearheaded by Comrade Siritunga Jayasuriya of the United Socialist Party have decided to contest the election with the aim of presenting an independent left alternative. We have pledged our critical support to both these platforms. In the common fight to overthrow the theocratic-fascist rule of the MRR, we must learn to tactically “win over the many, neutralize the middle forces and isolate the immediate threat to freedom and democracy, and clearly target the Regime.

However, we must be alerted that the Maithripala Sirisena common candidate is severely compromised from within. It is composed of extreme chauvinist reactionary forces and genuine progressive bourgeois liberals. The bourgeois liberal agenda for constitutional reform is hedged in and effectively circumvented by the reactionary chauvinist forces, such as the JHU, who command the hard core Sinhala-Buddhist constituency in the MS coalition. In the effort to win over this vital constituency, the Maitripala coalition will have to compete and contend for the banner of ‘patriotism’ (read Sinhala-Buddhist chauvinism). Maithripala Sirisena is a foremost champion of the war of conquest over the Tamil Nation and who celebrated its blood feast at victory parades. For this reason, this coalition has pledged to protect the Rajapakse Regime from the international war crimes investigation. Already, it has pledged to protect the foremost place of Buddhism accorded in the Constitution. It will have to defend and even advance the hegemonic-chauvinist comprador character of the unitary state, while adorning it with ‘bourgeois liberal’ ribbons and trinkets. Besides, whoever wins the election, the gates will be opened wide to even more imperialist-driven, neo-liberal Capitalist exploitation and plunder. The vast majority of workers, peasants, fishermen and toiling masses – whether Sinhala, Tamil or Moslem or any other- will be driven to even more poverty, indebtedness, misery and degradation. Whoever wins, we shall remain a beggar nation, a dependent colony. Therefore, it is necessary that we organize and mobilize the masses as an independent force to take responsibility for the future- however long it takes. In their hunger to see the MRR overthrown, some people do not wish any critique of the MS coalition. They prefer to conceal the bitter realities and the fatal consequences. If the MS coalition defeats the MRR, all well and good. But let us not be blind to the contending political ideologies and agendas within the MS coalition. The progressive content of the bourgeois-liberal agenda remains fatally vulnerable to the neo-fascist chauvinist agenda. Instead of being an ostrich with your head buried in the sand, rise up to organize and empower the independent political power of the people to ensure the final and complete eradication of neo-fascist dictatorship and the politics of terror from the Land.

The prospects for a radical restructuring of the State and a profound democratization of the Political Order through this election remains fatally illusory. The prospect of constructing a democratic, pluralist, secular state based on the principles of truth, justice, fairness and genuine reconciliation honoring the dignity, equality, security, autonomy and democratic freedom of the nations, nationalities and communities who make up the People of Lanka recede into the misty haze of delusion. Inter-imperialist rivalry will continue to slice up the country and create political instability and anarchy. Whoever wins will play the game of imperialist chess, with the people of Lanka as expendable pawns. The Tamil Nation, and the National Question itself, will be played and pawned, while the oppressed Sinhala masses will be duped, drugged and played in a new round of global imperialist chess. What is the way out of this spiral of political crisis, national disintegration and moral decomposition?

It is clear that we cannot rely on the game of bourgeois elections which have been rigged up to legitimize and perpetuate the system. Every successive government has intensified imperialist domination and neo-colonial exploitation and plunder, while reinforcing national oppression. The MRR has only crowned this process of neo-colonial slavery and national betrayal. If we are to fight and *win*, we must transcend the bounds of imperialist property relations and the structure of neo-colonial subjugation. We must raise the power and scope of our philosophical vision of human emancipation and act as the vanguard of humanity, irrespective of our nationality, religion, language or caste. Most of all we must place our infinite faith in the people and in their indomitable will and power to fight and win their freedom. All genuine progressive forces from across the barricades – North-South-East-Hill Country- who stand for democracy, freedom and civilized decency, who yearn for unity and solidarity among the people and who wish for a rational, equitable and integrated path of economic development based on strategic independence and self-reliance must learn to cast aside all secondary differences and unite their forces. This is to give expression and concentrate the indomitable independent people’s political power and build up a powerful people’s movement that could effectively challenge and overcome the forces of imperialism, feudal reaction and neo-colonial/ neo-fascist domination. We must work towards a unified mass uprising to overthrow all tin-pot despots and tyrants and their entire system and machinery of domination and place the cry for freedom and democracy on the agenda of history. We must learn from the lessons of the “Arab Spring”. This was a truly inspiring mass uprising that toppled the hated tyrant from power. Yet, due to the lack of an universal scientific vision of human emancipation and a theory, line and strategy that relied on uniting, mobilizing and organizing the exploited classes and oppressed masses to seize and exercise state power, the social revolution was hijacked by US imperialism and its local reactionary-fascist agents. The mass uprising can only be a focal point and a springboard for waging the protracted revolutionary struggle of the masses to overthrow imperialism and neo-colonial subjugation targeting the feudal-colonial State, its System and its reactionary ruling class. This message is not for those who see no other option but to inject oxygen to this foul system of neo-colonial domination and, like infested fleas feed on the spoils of imperialist profit and plunder. They can rot in the gloom of political slavery. This message is for those who love the country and cherish the freedom of the people and who have the power of vision to envisage a glorious future beyond imperialism, neo-colonial subjugation and feudal reaction.

The presidential election provides the focal point of a decisive battle for State power between the rival fractions of the ruling class. We must turn the proxy war between equally reactionary class forces into a revolutionary struggle for freedom. We must not be co-opted by petty cosmetic reforms and be imprisoned within the system, voting our slave-masters into power. We must change the terms of struggle into a decisive showdown between the forces of the darkest reaction and the whole of progressive humanity. We must ensure that the lines of demarcation and the battle lines are being drawn not as an intra-class grab for state power, but as a process of mass mobilization aimed at the mass revolutionary seizure of State power. We need to identify and build the line, leadership and organization and the forms of struggle that can guide the people of Lanka to wage their own conscious revolutionary class struggle and achieve their liberation in a common front of struggle against imperialism, neo-colonialism and feudal reaction. This is in the context of the universal struggle of the workers and oppressed people of the world for a New World Order without imperialism, domination, exploitation, oppression and war! Dare to dream and build the collective political will and the invincible courage to fight and win our Freedom! As Mao said; “ The Path is Tortuous: The Future is Bright”; “ Nothing is Impossible, if You Dare to Scale the Heights”.

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