

THROW OUT THE PREMADASA DICTATORSHIP

The resolution in parliament seeking to impeach President Premadasa and to remove him from office is an important step in the struggle to end the Premadasa dictatorship and for the restoration of the democratic rights of the people.

The Premadasa dictatorship is the continuation of the Jayawardena dictatorship following the illegal 1978 Constitution adopted by the UNP regime after its election to office in 1977.

It was under the Jayawardena dictatorship supported by Premadasa and the rest of the UNP members of Parliament that the democratic rights of the workers and the toilers were withdrawn over a wide range. By the illegal referendum of 1982 the life of the UNP dominated parliament was extended for a further period of 6 years. More specifically, under this dictatorship the right of public meeting, the rights of trade-unions to function, right of picketing and the right to strike were virtually made illegal.

It was under this Jayawardena dictatorship that there was the unprecedented 7-year State of Emergency. It is through the use of dictatorial powers that Jayawardena carried out military operations against the Tamils when their militants launched struggle against national oppression. These operations continuing now for eight years has led to the killing of over 50,000 Tamils. It is again through the dictatorial powers that Jayawardena crushed the movement of the people in the Sinhala speaking areas for democratic rights, killing over 40,000 young persons and others during the last three years of the Jayawardena regime.

The continuation of this dictatorship by Premadasa has intensified and increased the oppression of the workers and toilers while the imperialists, multi-nationals and local capitalists amassed enormous wealth. It was through the use of dictatorial powers that further privatisation of state enterprises were carried under the name of populisation at the dictates of the IMF.

It is through the use of dictatorial powers that Premadasa has practised nepotism and favouritism leading to unprecedented corruption.

Premadasa's attempt to intimidate the Parliamentary opposition that has sponsored the impeachment resolution must be strongly condemned.

Proroguing parliament when a impeachment resolution is with the Speaker is abuse of power. Premadasa is seeking to obstruct the process in parliament in regard to this resolution. He is using state-owned media to abuse and vilify the Joint Parliamentary Opposition for exercising whatever is left of the rights of parliamentarians. It was a shocking misuse of power and a direct act of intimidation when he permitted the "Service Chiefs" of armed forces to pledge support for him through a Press Release.

While proclaiming loud about his commitment to democracy and his principles (empty of content) of "consent, compromise and consensus", Premadasa is misusing his power to weaken the Parliamentary Opposition and to strengthen his support.

All those interested in the struggle against capitalist dictatorship in this country, and for the restoration of the rights of workers and toilers, can do no less than give critical support to the efforts of the Joint Opposition in Parliament to successfully steer the impeachment resolution to get Premadasa removed from office, as a first step in ending the on-going dictatorship and bourgeois class-rule.

Bourgeois dictatorship emerges as a result of the bankruptcy of bourgeois governments to solve the problems of the people and to maintain their class-rule in the face of mounting mass opposition rule.

The alternative to bourgeois dictatorship is not "parliamentary democracy" which is an illusion when bourgeois class-rule is endangered. The only real alternative to bourgeois dictatorship in such a context, is the setting up of a workers state in the perspective of achieving socialism.

REVOLUTIONARY WORKERS PARTY

15, Siripala road
Mount Lavinia
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Edward Sumanabathy