

A Strategic Approach to the Acquisition of State Power

Filling the Vacuum

The core argument is clear: the JVP, once a leftist force that led armed struggles, now openly supports a neoliberal capitalist path, abandoning its socialist ideology. As a result, the leftist space it once occupied is vacant, creating a major gap and raising an urgent question. Can a militant group like the Frontline Socialist Party fill this vacuum as it is, or does filling it require a major ideological and political transformation on the Left?

Despite past fluctuations, the JVP long claimed the leading role on the Left until its leftist identity eroded in the 2000s, creating space for neoliberal ideas and leaving its position unchallenged until recently.

The JVP's embrace of neoliberalism and loss of leadership have left a real vacuum on the Left. Substitution by another group is insufficient. A new, visionary approach with clear direction is now essential to fill this leadership void.

Addressing this vacuum demands greater organisational ability, especially given the JVP's shift and five decades of neoliberalism that have transformed Sri Lanka's Class and social structure. In pursuit of state power, the JVP increasingly adopted neoliberal models. It aligned with the interests of the broad middle Class and framed this shift in modernisation. Pragmatism and an abandonment of earlier struggles led them to seek a share of capitalist power. This shift made their historic role one of partnership with capital.

Leadership for the Left cannot be created simply through calculation or by staking out militant positions. Neoliberalism has altered Class and social dynamics for nearly 50 years. For example, parents affected by neoliberal policies compete for jobs for their children, and Electricity Board employees focus more on compensation than on broader social impacts.

Many parents and children now prefer quick entry into jobs via foreign university courses—students who benefited from free university now support privatisation. The JVP and NPP reflect this neoliberal thinking.

A Modern Leftist Program

It is for this reason—given these shifts in social forces—that we face the urgent need for a **modern leftist political program**. We urge all supporters, activists, and concerned citizens to come together to organise class forces against capital's current operations and ensure victory over its hegemony. To occupy this alternative leftist space, we must collectively present a new political program for the Class and social forces that have undergone profound changes,

introducing a new political agenda and new slogans to counter capital and its supporting ideologies. We call on you to join this effort today.

We have recently observed how many leftist movements, though prepared to present new programs, falter in the face of the bourgeoisie's ideological manoeuvres. We saw this in Europe with the **Syriza** project in Greece and **Podemos** in Spain. In South Asia, we saw a different, more striking form through the JVP's enthusiastic descent into right-wing politics in Sri Lanka. To build a modern Left, the core requirement is to maintain revolutionary politics while scientifically analysing contemporary capital. The sharpened argument is that a Left program must move from critique to concrete, technical, and political solutions.

A "technical Left" refers to a leftist movement that not only criticises capitalism but also provides concrete, technically sound alternatives. It uses precise and scientific analysis of capitalist systems and highlights the need for expertise in designing feasible solutions. This approach ensures that leftist politics are grounded in well-researched proposals rather than abstract ideals.

To achieve this, the program must necessarily cover every single sector:

- **The Economy:** The program must address all aspects of the economy and propose alternatives to current financial **capitalism**.
- **The Political Sphere:** Make concrete proposals on the **National Constitution** and **Foreign Policy**.

An Alternative Development Model

The JVP's 1982 presidential program was socialist and included steps toward moving from capitalism to socialism. Today, there is a massive ideological offensive against socialism, and socio-political awareness is much broader; therefore, the narrative context changes entirely.

We will present a comprehensive program covering all areas. We call on supporters and potential allies to help us build on the transitional program of the **People's Struggle Alliance**. These principles are the foundation for our current and future socialist programs. Stand with us as we advance this agenda:

- **From Inequality to Equity:** A fair economy instead of one based on disparity.
- **From Profit to People:** A socially based economy instead of a profit-driven one.
- **From Monopolies to Participation:** A participatory economy instead of one controlled by monopolies.
- **From Anarchy to Planning:** A planned economy instead of an anarchic one driven by excess profit.
- **From Financial Bubbles to Real Value:** An economy that generates real value instead of inflating bubbles through financial services.

- **From Puppet States to Sovereignty:** A sovereign economy instead of a puppet economy danced by "imperialist octopuses" like the IMF.
- **From Destruction to Sustainability:** A sustainable development economy that protects the environment instead of destroying the planet.

Restructuring the State

We aim to reorganise the state structure toward a **participatory democratic model** that goes beyond the current representative democratic framework. Join us in preparing the ground for a new constitution that increases people's power within the social contract between the state and citizens. Priority will be given to resolving the **National Question** on equality, democracy, and dignity. Be part of shaping a foreign policy based on anti-imperialism, equality, and internationalism.

Path to Power and Its Practical Implementation

We need state power to enact and implement this program; then again, it raises urgent and critical questions:

- How do we build a pro-people socio-economic political program with full public participation?
- Where has the NPP (NJP) government gone wrong?
- How can a collapsed economy be managed without surrendering to the influence of the **IMF** or bowing to global superpowers?
- How can a program be simultaneously scientific and practical, corresponding to the socio-political realities brought forth by history?
- How do we build the **militant approach** necessary for implementation?
- Is the required power a "bourgeois government power" or a "people's power" led by the proletariat?

What does "Leftist Governance" mean? How can people's power be exercised continuously, beyond elections? How can an organisation organise "external power"—power outside the formal state—into an organised, continuous form? This discussion has created a situation where social dialogue must now be collectively reimagined.

This last section tackles political strategy and the revolution's model, shifting the focus to a modern method of people's power.

What is Our Strategy?

What strategy do we propose for gaining power? In the political lexicon, the words **strategy** and **model** are often used interchangeably, but they have distinct meanings.

Strategy vs. Model

- **Model** refers to the specific form or totality of forms in which the proletariat ultimately seizes political power. In history, this took one form in the Russian Revolution and another in the Chinese Revolution. Models vary by country and geopolitical conditions. They cannot be predetermined.
- **Strategy** is the long-term program a political party develops to organise forces. It unifies them under a "collective imagination" to contribute to social transformation.

Our party does not reject any past models. We believe the decision to use them must be based on a comprehensive review of historical, objective, and geopolitical conditions. A proletarian party must stay open to any new revolutionary model.

The "New Path": Beyond Elections and Armed Struggle

People often ask: "If the FSP says *socialism cannot be built through elections*, does that mean you only favour armed struggle?"

We do not propose a "Third Way" that sits between electioneering and militancy. Instead, we propose a **New Path**. This path rests on several pillars:

1. **Structural People's Power:** Bringing public power into a structural form rather than leaving it as a vague sentiment. Organised **and Active Structures:** Developing structures that remain continuously active so that people's power becomes a real force that can be exercised daily.
2. **Proletarian Leadership:** Ensuring the broad participation and leadership of the working class and labouring masses.
3. **The Revolutionary Mass Movement:** Giving the leadership of the proletarian party to this burgeoning mass movement.

While this approach is not new worldwide, we urge everyone committed to progressive change to work together to ensure it gains a unique Sri Lankan identity, fully aligned with our specific socio-economic conditions. Now is the time for collective action.

Our strategy is a direct response to the present historical and objective conditions. We aim to build a disciplined **revolutionary party** that can lead a mass movement for true people's power—a form of organised power that exists outside the limits of the formal state, is continuous, practical, and rooted in collective action, rather than mere 'bourgeois government power' won in elections.

Further on Our Strategy

As the Frontline Socialist Party (FSP), what strategic program do we propose to seize power from the proletariat and other oppressed classes? This is directly interconnected with our overall political agenda.

Accordingly, the political program of the Frontline Socialist Party consists of the following integrated practices to achieve state power for the proletariat:

- **Building a Revolutionary Party:** Establishing a party composed of "professional revolutionaries."
- **Collective Imagination:** Bringing together all classes and social forces oppressed by the imperialist neoliberal agenda under the leadership of the working class.
- **Ideological Struggle:** Strengthening the fight against opportunist tendencies like revisionism within the proletarian movement, and against bourgeois prejudices and social backwardness within society at large.
- **Unified Leadership:** Bringing struggles against racism, anti-democratic trends, and environmental destruction under the ideological organisational leadership of the proletariat.
- **Class Consciousness:** Activating the working class politically to heighten their class consciousness.

The Unified Struggle

Our party's struggle, which continues until the point of revolution, is holistic. It integrates the fight against imperialism and its neoliberal agenda with the opposition to the capitalist system, social backwardness, and environmental destruction.

All oppressed classes and social forces must be organised to contribute to this inseparable struggle in various ways under the leadership of the proletarian movement. Alliances must be built between various forces, but these must be brought under the leadership of the working class and guided by the proletarian party. This, in essence, is our party's strategy **for the People**. To bring people's power into a structural form, we propose forming **People's Struggle Councils** and creating space for the public to organise through these alternative structures.

The People's Struggle Councils were a structure we planned to build well before the 2022 Aragalaya (Uprising). In October 2021, through a series of public meetings and discussions titled "*The Next Power*", the panel emphasised the importance of creating such frameworks. Again, in January 2022, during the awareness campaign from Colombo to Galle under the theme "*A Real Hope – A People's Movement*," our central proposal was this structural arrangement. The **People's Struggle Movement** was eventually established in Nugegoda during the last week of March 2022 to provide leadership to this vision.

The People's Struggle Movement is essentially a mass collective agreed upon for unified action based on five fundamental pillars:

1. Against Imperialism.
2. Against the Neoliberal Capitalist path.
3. For Democracy.
4. Seeking a solution to Racism and National Oppression.
5. Against Social Backwardness.

During the 2022 Uprising, people's organisations were formed practically at the local level. Initially, temporary organisations emerged for daily evening protests. Later, with the

establishment of *GotaGoGama* at Galle Face and subsequent sites across the country, people and organisations were formed to maintain those operations. However, these became temporary mobilisations limited to the period of the uprising and gradually became inactive. Long-term, only the **Colombo People's Council** and councils in a few other limited areas remained.

The Dual-Power Proposal

The "Dual-Power Proposal" introduced by the Frontline Socialist Party on May Day 2023 is a strategic initiative directly linked to our concept of people's power. It is essentially a proposal for radical bourgeois reform. It aimed to prevent the then Ranil-Rajapaksa administration from continuing its course by forcing an immediate change, substituting the existing power vacuum with people's power to the maximum extent possible within the bourgeois democratic framework. This was a short-term proposal with the ultimate goal of holding a referendum on a new constitution that would include radical democratic reforms.

While acknowledging parliamentary power, this proposal sought a radical shift by simultaneously mobilising people's power. It concluded with a proposal for a general election, marking a temporary end to the "dual power" state within bourgeois democratic limits. This process aimed to overcome the challenge of maintaining the continuity of the people's power through "People's Councils." Since the general public was expected to become disillusioned with electoral ideology even after such a short-term process, the leadership of the proletarian party was required to keep these forces politically active through the medium of struggle.

Challenges and Political Resistance

This proposal was not presented as a guaranteed course of action because it required the cooperation of other opposition parties. The political struggle had to be pushed to a point where these parties could not refuse to support it. However, at the time, the opposition parties were far from such a position. None of them was acting outside the agenda of the national and international political alliance led by Ranil Wickremesinghe.

- **The SJB** was preoccupied with preserving its own party.
- **The JVP-led NPP** was biding its time, relying on the public resentment generated by the crisis, hoping to send a large number of representatives to governing bodies in a future election.

We assumed that only by subordinating these bourgeois and petty-bourgeois opposition forces to such a program through an intensified struggle could the proposal be implemented. As expected, the bourgeois opposition was not ready for such radical democratic measures. Similarly, the JVP, focused on its own agenda of forming a government or achieving a massive electoral victory, showed no effort to turn the anti-democratic situation of the time into a definitive victory for the people.

Moving Forward: Power Outside Parliament

Our view was that the background for this struggle should be created by opposing the socio-economic structural changes being carried out by the IMF and the upper bourgeoisie, and particularly through a program against "Indo-Ameri Colonization." The party believed that the struggle should not be limited to economics but should keep democratic and regional political issues within a leftist, anti-imperialist framework rather than letting them fall into the hands of nationalists.

Even if the Dual-Power Proposal could not be fully implemented, it served as a program to mobilise and consolidate forces against the status quo. Subsequently, in the 2024–2025 period, several People's Struggle Councils were established across various regions. However, their social impact remains weak, and their continuity is unsatisfactory. As the wave of the 2022 uprising receded, public interest in common organisational structures waned, further weakened by the dominant ideology that the crisis could be solved simply by changing governments through elections.

Despite these difficulties, it is essential to establish a structural framework for an "**: Power Outside Parliament** " in which people participate directly outside Parliament and representative institutions. Our path involves three stages:

1. **Creation:** Establishing organisational structure.
2. **Influence:** Increasing its social impact and bargaining power.
3. **Parallel Power:** Building it as a power parallel to representative institutions and ultimately elevating it to a level where it exercises the power of the state structure itself.

This final segment addresses the strategic approach toward ethnic minorities and the National Question within the framework of People's Councils. Here is the English translation:

Approach in Areas Inhabited by National Minorities

When considering the **People's Council** structure as the primary political vehicle for building people's power, we must operate with a predefined set of proposals that can integrate into the common agenda of these councils, especially in areas with high concentrations of diverse national communities.

In these regions, proposals stemming from national and religious oppression will inevitably emerge alongside or even above class oppression. This situation is expected due to several factors:

- The rural nature of these areas.
- The specific political character of the class forces present.
- The current level of working-class consciousness.
- The war disrupted the slow transition from traditional agrarian lifestyles.

The revolutionary mass movement and the proletarian party leading it must confront this reality with both prior understanding and a concrete proposal. Our party accepts the **Leninist position on the right of nations to self-determination**, emphasising that a political program grounded in this principle must be built within the Sri Lankan context.

The Party's Stand on Self-Determination

While the Frontline Socialist Party generally accepts the principles of the right to self-determination, it recognises that the objective conditions for establishing independent, separate states do not currently exist in the Sri Lankan context. However, the party has proposed a set of **bourgeois reforms** to abolish national oppression before a full socialist revolution.

This proposal is based on:

1. **Autonomous Regions:** Establishing self-governing areas corresponding to the national question.
2. **Bicameral Legislature:** A constitutional framework consisting of two parliamentary chambers.

(The party has published a separate, comprehensive work on this subject.)

Integration with People's Councils

When establishing People's Councils in the North, East, or the Hill Country—where there are high concentrations of minority communities—the process must integrate democratic proposals regarding the national question with the broader struggle. The revolutionary mass movement and the party must implement the People's Council program on this very basis.

Exist Organisations and People's Councils

On a theoretical level, we have correctly defined politics as fundamentally a matter of state power for a specific class. Because it is a question of a class's political power, we understand how different classes operate in relation to their own political interests. Our primary objective is to build a characterised by the power of the oppressed classes, with the proletariat providing the necessary leadership. In this regard, we must strongly emphasise that in defining the scope of proletarian political power, that power must remain organically connected to class forces. This means that organisation of class forces and the exercise of power are inextricably linked. Currently, various primary class forces—such as workers, farmers, and fishers—are organised according to their economic bases. Similarly, social forces such as students, youth, and workers, who share common grievances and mindsets in the face of various crises, are organised in different ways. There are organisational structures created by the current system, such as:

- Trade Unions
- Farm Organisations
- Fisher Organisations
- Student Unions
- Youth Clubs and Women's Societies

These are parts of the existing system itself, established by state policies and laws. Unlike new structures such as "People's Struggle Councils," these traditional entities possess historically established social ideologies.

Moving Beyond Systemic Limits

Within our political scope, we intend to organise these forces for a political struggle through concrete action. Organising these forces is our priority for understanding the question of political power. However, this does not mean limiting ourselves to existing trade unions or farm organisations. There is no debate that the system designed those structures to maintain the system and ideologically protect it.

For the labour force, we must practice organisational structures that exist beyond the limits of trade unions. Our primary proposal is the establishment of **Worker Struggle Committees** at the institutional level, where members of all unions, as well as non-unionised workers, organise together. We have proposed several alternative measures for organising workers, such as:

- Creating **Joint Struggle Fronts** that unite all trade unions.
- Establishing **Common Labour Centres** that integrate all grades and sectors within a single field.

Regarding farmers, we propose establishing **Farmer Struggle Committees** outside the official farm organisations mandated by government acts. We also consider proposals such as a **National Farmers' Convention** to integrate all agricultural organisations. To build a "Power of the People Outside" (Eliye Balaya) led by proletarian organisations, we must transcend traditional organisational boundaries.

Challenges of the People's Councils

How do we bring the leadership of the working class and labouring forces into the mechanism of these **People's Struggle Councils**? When establishing these councils on a rural or urban basis, we must pay close attention to the danger of them falling under the grip of petty-bourgeois forces. There is a high possibility that they may remain confined within the limits of mere democratic reforms and welfare demands.

To prevent this, a comprehensive, practical plan is required to link these councils with structures such as the **Worker Struggle Committees** mentioned earlier—structures that transcend the traditional trade union movement. While the labour and farmer struggle movements (including trade unions) must exist independently as organic parts of the **Revolutionary Mass Movement**, a strategy is needed to integrate the "Worker Struggle Councils" or "People's Council" structures into the broader revolutionary movement.

Overcoming Petty-Bourgeois Limits

Using these structures to transform non-proletarian forces into stakeholders of the class struggle—rather than letting them fall prey to nationalism or the capitalist "consumption mania"—is an unavoidable political necessity. However, it will be a significant challenge to

connect these forces to the socio-economic struggle while simultaneously overcoming their petty-bourgeois limitations.

This final section of the text provides a robust defence of the Marxist view of the working class (the proletariat) against contemporary "post-Marxist" and "populist" criticisms.

Overdetermining the Proletariat?

Whenever we raise this point, proponents of **Left-wing Populism criticise** Marxists, claiming we "overdetermine" the working class. Drawing on post-Marxist thinkers such as **Ernesto Laclau** and **Chantal Mouffe**, they discard the revolutionary potential of the working class and argue that no single class should be privileged in the power struggle.

Not Essentialism, but Strategic Position

Marxism does not view the proletariat through **essentialism**—the idea that workers possess some mystical "inner essence" or are the "chosen people" of history. Instead, the emphasis on the working class is based on the **structural mechanics of capital**:

- **Inside the Machine:** Unlike other oppressed groups, the working class exists *within* the very machinery of capital. While attacks can be launched from the outside, the most lethal blow to capital's dominance can be struck from within its own heart.
- **Historical Science:** The analysis of the proletariat as a "driving force" (motor) of revolution is an empirical conclusion of historical science, not a romanticised hunch.
- **Created through Action:** As Engels noted in *The Condition of the Working Class in England*, the English working class was not merely created by the Industrial Revolution, but by the rise of the trade union movement. A class is defined by its revolutionary activity and its relation to the organisation of capital.

The Petty-Bourgeoisie and the "Middle Class"

The debate often centres on how to approach the "middle class" (the petty bourgeoisie). There are two distinct political approaches to their discontent:

1. **The Populist Path:** Giving a political face to the frustration, dissatisfaction, and defeat that the petty bourgeoisie feels in the face of monopoly capital, and simply echoing that dissatisfaction to gain popularity. This serves to maintain the status quo.
2. **The Revolutionary Path:** Connecting that dissatisfaction to an **anti-capitalist program** and integrating it into a revolutionary movement for social transformation.

Marxists do not ignore the middle Class; they organise all forces oppressed by capitalism. However, we reject basing a political program on the "grievances" of the middle Class or the national bourgeoisie. These grievances alone are insufficient to solve the systemic crisis.

Lessons from 2022

Beyond theoretical debate, we saw the practical impact of this during the **2022 Aragalaya (Uprising)**. The absence of a leadership role for the organised labour movement was a significant disadvantage that affected the outcome of the struggle. We acknowledge the leadership of the proletariat not because of "essentialism," but because it is the only force with the potential to terminate the mechanism of capital historically.

Is it Dual Power?

It is essential to discuss this proposal in relation to the "Dual Power" that emerged during the Russian Revolution, as various misconceptions are currently being circulated. We analyse the relationship and the differences between our concept of : **Power Outside Parliament** and the Dual Power mentioned in Leninist literature.

Historical and Objective Differences

There is a massive historical and objective difference between Russia in 1905 and Sri Lanka today.

- **The Context of Revolution:** In 1905, the Russian Social Democratic Party operated under the Tsarist autocracy. Even until April 1917, their program was one of "Social Democracy." It was only after the April Theses and the February Revolution that the socialist revolution became the explicit party program.
- **The Nature of the State:** Russia was a blend of feudalism and capitalism with imperialist roots. The quality and size of the working class then were vastly different from the globalised working class of today.
- **Representative Democracy:** Today, representative democracy is much more developed than it was under Tsarist Russia. Back then, the novelty of the "Soviets" (Councils) was a unique magnet for public participation, competing with a collapsing monarchy.

Similarities: The Proletarian Core

Despite the differences, there are fundamental similarities between the two concepts:

- **Structure of Counter-Power:** Emphasizes building a power structure with a proletarian core that opposes bourgeois power.
- **Alternative Organisation:** Both advocate for the Class that should hold future social power to organise itself outside of bourgeois representative institutions (like Parliament).
- **Active Citizenship:** Both aim to pull the masses beyond the limits of mere "voters" and call them into daily political activity. This creates a "counter-power" to the state.

Key Differences: Armed Power vs. Mass Structure

The most significant differences lie in the political execution and the role of violence:

Duration	Short-lived/Temporary.	Can be maintained long-term.
Nature	Emerged as an embryo of a new state, often an armed counter-power.	A structural mobilisation, primarily non-armed organisational.
The Conflict	Lenin argued that two powers cannot coexist long because one must eventually suppress the other through force.	Designed as a structural "People's Council" that challenges the state's legitimacy without necessarily initiating armed conflict.
Response to Repression	Met with immediate military/state violence.	Uses non-armed mass presence (like the July 9, 2022, Aragalaya) to make state repression politically "expensive" and difficult to justify.

The Lesson of July 9

The 2022 struggle provides a modern example. Because the movement was non-armed, the bourgeois state found it difficult to trigger a massive, violent crackdown initially. If the proletarian party uses the correct tactical manoeuvres to keep the **People's Council** structures active, it can employ a wide range of diverse tactics to face and survive state repression.

Thus, while the political "essence" of building power outside the state remains the same as in the Leninist tradition, the **political form** and **strategic application** have been radically adapted to fit modern Sri Lankan reality.

The Continuity of the Struggle

When we translate the political program of "**Power Outside Parliament**" into an organisational structure, it takes the form of **People's Struggle Councils** or **People's Councils**. The ability to maintain these structures is naturally high during "hot" periods of socio-economic and political upheaval. However, that intensity does not remain the same during ordinary times. A central political necessity of our model is the continuous and active maintenance of these forms. Therefore, the greatest challenge we face is defining the scope of these People's Councils and identifying them with the **daily socio-economic and political lives** of the general public.

Beyond Spontaneous Crisis

While the declining capitalist system inevitably creates specific crises, controversial anti-people policies, and moments of intense oppression, these "eruptions" do not happen constantly. We must seriously consider how to keep the councils active during the "quiet" periods in between.

The reality is that even without sensational headlines or massive protests, the public falls victim to the capitalist crisis every single day through the **continuous deterioration of their living and social conditions**.

The Core Strategic Challenge

The primary challenge is twofold:

1. **Daily Relief and Consciousness:** Engaging in the struggle to liberate the public from the ongoing, daily pressures of the crisis (even when there is no "controversial" event) and, through that, bringing political activism and class consciousness to the masses.
2. **Long-term Strategic Class** and social forces on the foundations of **participatory democracy** outside of bourgeois representative institutions.

Whether our long-term strategic necessity succeeds depends entirely on our ability to overcome the challenge of continuity. We must transform the council from a "protest body" into a permanent "community structure" that handles the daily survival and political education of the working class.

Scope and Welfare: The Dual Challenge

The first major issue is the **continuity** of these council structures. Our experience during the 2022 Aragalaya showed that while people join struggles instantaneously, they return to their routine lives just as quickly. Consequent organisations born in the heat of the moment remain temporary, and their political momentum is broken.

Building organisations without an active "struggle backdrop" is extremely difficult. We have already discussed the risk that, in the absence of the working class, these structures might be filled by social groups with strong political interests but lacking revolutionary potential.

1. Integrating Daily Life and Welfare

To sustain People's Struggle Councils in the long term, they must engage in activities that touch multiple facets of life, including **welfare processes**. We must deeply examine how to link these councils with:

- **Production Cooperatives:** Collective farming or manufacturing.
- **Consumer Societies:** Cooperative purchasing to combat high living costs.
- **Collective Service Support:** Mutual aid in healthcare or labour.
- **Cultural Spheres:** Collective engagement in art, sports, and culture.

However, this must be done while carefully calculating the **political risk** involved—the risk that the revolutionary goal gets buried under the weight of managing these services.

2. Maintaining the Political Scope

The second problem is maintaining a **specific political scope**. Even current council structures struggle with this due to their class roots. When the composition of a council is drawn from the rural proletariat, the rural petty-bourgeoisie, or urban liberal spaces, two things often happen:

1. They drift toward becoming **purely welfare-oriented**.
2. They become **trapped within limited democratic demands** (such as legal reforms).

While we should not reject welfare or democratic demands, we must address how to activate these structures within a **political-economic program of class struggle**. The council must be a tool to fight the capitalist system, not a cushion to make life under capitalism more bearable.

"The People" and the Class

The medium for exercising : **Power Outside Parliament** is the struggle itself, which must take a multifaceted form. Under the initiative of proletarian forces, the so-called "middle class"—as well as the urban and rural petty-bourgeoisie currently facing economic decline—must be integrated into this struggle. Using the medium of struggle, these classes and strata, centred on the proletarian forces we call "the general public," must be brought into political activism.

While we do not need precise predictions of this process's duration, it is clear that this cannot be a sudden, short-term program. As we already know, this multifaceted struggle comprises **economic, ideological, and political** dimensions. Within the political struggle, it is mandatory to integrate:

- The anti-capitalist struggles.
- The anti-imperialist struggle and the fight against regional hegemony.
- The struggle against social backwardness.

The Continuous Struggle

It is correct to understand this as a **continuous or uninterrupted struggle**. Only through such continuity can the class consciousness of social and Class forces be maintained at a higher level.

As we pointed out in our work, *The Struggle that Shook the Mansions*, consciousness is determined by life. To counter the "bourgeois consciousness" created by a capitalist lifestyle, a "proletarian consciousness" can be introduced and sustained within society only through this continuous, uninterrupted struggle.

Are Elections an Obstacle?

A significant challenge arises in balancing the ideology of electoral campaigns with a political program centred on people's power. We have already correctly defined our stance on bourgeois elections; however, the electoral ideology—as a core component of bourgeois ideology—cannot be easily suppressed.

As a party, we must be conscious of how participating in selected elections might obstruct our political program of continuous struggle. Consequently, our tactics must be designed to address this. There is a **dialectical interconnection** between the revolutionary mass movement and the electoral process, where each can nourish the other. The people's power built outside representative institutions (like Parliament) must have some form of representation within those institutions. We must integrate "External Power" with "Internal Power," which necessitates an active role on the electoral front.

The Ruling Class Trap

History shows that, from armed struggles to mass uprisings like the 2022 Aragalaya, the ruling Class frequently uses elections as a tactic to weaken movements and isolate them from the masses. As soon as an election is called:

1. Forces tend to split along party lines.
2. The "struggle mindset" is pushed aside.
3. Electoral ideology is reinvigorated.

Strategic Response

To overcome this, the people's movement needs a strong and active presence on the electoral stage. We must provide an **electoral expression** for the struggle and its aspirations. This expression does not always mean simply running for office; it covers a broad range of actions depending on the specific context:

- Contesting elections directly.
- Engaging in the propaganda process without contesting.
- Boycotting elections.

The choice of action must be considered concretely in relation to the specific historical moment.

A Counter-Hegemonic Power

Capitalism is maintained not only through state coercion (police, military) but also through the "voluntary consent" of society. The ruling Class has built a **hegemony**—a dominant leadership over social thought. To establish working-class power, we must create a **counter-hegemonic power** against it. This involves building new political leadership within social forces and positioning an alternative political current against neoliberal hegemony.

Breaking the Ideological Grip

The primary task is to liberate social forces from the bourgeois ideology that currently traps them. This cannot be achieved through theoretical debate alone; it requires the masses to engage in **political activism**. Ideology is defeated when people move through the medium of struggle.

The Role of the Working Class

Because of its direct relationship to the economic base, the working class must be the driving force (motor) of this program. However, we must consider several modern obstacles:

- **Neoliberal Victimhood:** Many sectors of the working class have fallen prey to neoliberal ideology.
- **Identity Fragmentation:** Differences in wage levels across the public and private sectors have created fractured social identities.
- **Grade Divisions:** Internal conflicts and grade hierarchies within trade unions hinder the development of a "collective imagination."

Building a new counter-hegemony requires the proletarian movement to overcome these five decades of neoliberal conditioning and establish **moral and political authority** over the working people.

Integrating Democratic Struggles

Given Sri Lanka's historical and socio-economic backwardness, many "unfinished tasks of bourgeois democracy" remain. The proletarian party must bring these vertical social struggles under the leadership of the revolutionary mass movement. These include:

- **The National Question** and ethnic rights.
- **Caste-based oppression.**
- **Agrarian issues** and farmers' rights.
- **Women's liberation** and the fight against patriarchy.
- **Artistic and Cultural Struggles Against Neoliberal Commercialisation.**

Historically, the JVP wielded moral and militant power to lead these struggles, but it has now forfeited that position. We must establish a new hegemonic power that corresponds to current realities.

Fighting Social Backwardness

Our struggle against backwardness must be at the forefront. This includes:

- **Practical Anti-Racism:** Moving beyond slogans to a concrete struggle against communalism and nationalism.
- **Challenging Patriarchy:** Leading a practice that goes beyond language to dismantle patriarchal thinking and structures.
- **Eradicating Caste Oppression:** Active intervention against all forms of caste-based discrimination.
- **Educational Reform:** In the student movement, we must fight against practices and mindsets that create "oppressor and oppressed" dynamics within the student body itself.

By replacing the backward mindset of the current system with an attitude focused on the power of the oppressed, the movement establishes the moral high ground necessary for total social transformation.

This section addresses the party's interorganizational strength and the vital necessity of leadership, drawing on the lessons of the 2022 Aragalaya and emphasising why a structured revolutionary vanguard is indispensable.

Political Guidance and Leadership

The concrete example of the 2022 uprising is vital for understanding the dynamics of a mass movement. As we have previously analysed, among other limitations, we must make a correct political assessment of the organisational **boundaries** of such movements. People's power in the streets does not transform into actual political power unless it is **structured and organised** under the leadership of a revolutionary mass movement.

The experience of the 2022 struggle was clearly a crisis of organisational limits—both of the mass struggle itself and, accurately speaking, of the **proletarian party's organisational reach**.

The Necessity of the Leninist Party

It is necessary to re-emphasise the concept of the proletarian organisational process, especially given recent political trends that have repeatedly criticised the Leninist party model. While experiences with authoritarian centralism or bureaucratic decay in some leftist parties are real, the organisational weight of a proletarian revolutionary party cannot be undervalued. We cannot repeat often enough Lenin's emphasis: "**The proletariat has no other weapon in the fight for power, organisation.**"

Internal Discipline as Political Power

The party's task of organising forces within a specific program and its own interorganisational structure is directly linked to the question of political power. Everything within the organisational **principles, discipline, consensus, and culture** is directly relevant to the Class's ability to wield political power.

The Dialectic of Individual and Mass Growth

There is often a misconception that developing individual cadres (individual building) is less valuable than organising broad mass forces. However, we must correctly understand the **dialectic** between these two:

- **Broad Mass Organising:** Creates the social force and the "external power" necessary to challenge the state.
- **Individual Cadre Building:** Creates the professional revolutionaries who provide the direction, discipline, and "internal" backbone to ensure the mass movement does not dissipate or get misled.

Without high-quality individual buildings, broad organisations remain directionless and prone to the spontaneous "cooling down" we saw after 2022. Conversely, without organising, individual cadres remain isolated. The party must master both simultaneously to secure a victory for the working class.

What Kind of Party?

What is the nature of the party suited for this task? A clear, practical solution is needed for how a proletarian revolutionary party should function in the current political realities.

While the proletarian party emerged with Marx and Engels and reached a qualitative peak in the Leninist era of 1903—further enriched by the Bolshevik experience in building the USSR—we must now determine its evolution within the **global context of the 21st century**. Today, the capitalist camp uses the cumulative advances of history, technology, and ideology to maintain its expansion. It trains and maintains the general public through highly organised, professional systems. Therefore, the professional nature of the proletarian movement must indisputably surpass that level.

The Professional Revolutionary

To achieve this, the movement must consist of **professional revolutionaries**. Elevating revolutionary politics to a professional level is a massive challenge within a capitalist reality. We must simultaneously fight against:

1. **Physical Realities:** The material constraints imposed by capitalism.
2. **Ideological Warfare:** The daily imposition of bourgeois values and worldviews.

This is not a victory achieved simply by adhering to Marxist-Leninist principles in theory; it is a state that must be continuously developed and maintained through **practical exercise**. True counter-hegemonic power becomes real only when every party member engages in a continuous effort to master this professional revolutionary character.

Alternative Values and Culture

To build this professional standard, the party cadre requires an **alternative value system** and a **cultural tradition** that directly challenges bourgeois ideology. It is impossible to build professional revolutionaries without a lifestyle that actively resists:

- **Neoliberal Consumption Mania:** The obsession with consumerism.
- **Backward Cultural Traits:** Feudal or regressive social habits.
- **Patriarchal Prejudices:** Entrenched male-dominant biases.

Without this internal cultural transformation, we merely produce "capitalist-style politicians wearing red clothes." We have long-term experience with this failure within the JVP. Therefore, building a party with professional standards requires:

- Strategic organisational **principles**.
- High levels of **theoretical education**.
- Disciplined **mass activism**.
- A distinct **value system and cultural tradition**.

Only through such an exercise can a modern Left movement be successfully constructed.

The Future: Opportunities and Challenges

Today, the entire world is providing evidence of the failure of the capitalist system. The seemingly erratic behaviour of leaders in the US and other imperialist nations—manifested as trade wars and bloody imperialist conflicts—is rooted in a deep-seated global crisis of capitalism.

Following the Cold War, the temporary unipolar world order has shifted into a **multipolar political conflict**. New powers like China, Russia, and India are rising, challenging the traditional dominance of the US and European imperialist powers. As part of this global crisis, Sri Lanka has been hit by a severe economic collapse. While the crisis has been temporarily suppressed by burdening the masses, it periodically resurfaces—like a rubber ball pushed underwater—reaching new heights of intensity.

The Domestic Political Landscape

In the coming years, we anticipate a serious collapse and a renewed political crisis. The expectations the public placed in the National People's Power (NPP/JVP), hoping they would lead the country on a "new path," are likely to be shattered, potentially leading to the rejection of the current government.

While defeated right-wing groups and racists are attempting to sniff out a return to power, they remain profoundly rejected by the people. In this vacuum, a true solution must be forged through a **Socialist Program** and a short-term **Transitional Program**.

" Empower the Class –Empower the Party"

To make this solution a reality, the: **Power Outside Parliament** of the people must be integrated into State Power. This must not be a "salad" of various class interests but a definitive **Power of the Working Class**.

- To achieve power for the Class, the **Party for the Class** must be built.
- This requires a modern Leftist party that has absorbed and updated itself according to all contemporary changes.

The Frontline Socialist Party comes forward to build this modern revolutionary party and mass movement under the theme: " **Empower the Class –Empower the Party** "

Conclusion

We have formulated this work to present a concrete workable plan for building a revolutionary mass movement and a revolutionary party, while outlining our strategy for power. Let us join hands to make this strategy a reality—let us strive—and let us bring about a total social victory!