

Socialism and the environment

22 September 1998

To the Socialist Equality Party, Australia

I am interested in how long your party has been around and in what your policies are, outside of a quest toward a socialist Australia. In particular, I am very concerned with the environment and I would like to know how the SEP believes socialism can help improve the treatment, and state of, our environment.

I have full faith in the SEP that socialism will help in this respect.

Thanking you muchly. EARTH FIRST!

O.F.

21 September 1998

Dear O.F.,

Thanks for your inquiry. The Socialist Equality Party was founded in 1996. Its forerunner, the Socialist Labour League was established in 1972. We are the Australian section of the International Committee of the Fourth International.

To answer your second question, we believe that none of the burning issues facing the working people can be resolved outside the complete reorganisation of society along socialist lines. This can only be achieved on an international scale.

Vast resources must be applied in a planned way to tackle the environmental and social catastrophes threatening the health and lives of millions of people. This is only possible by freeing the immense productive potential of humanity from the dictates of corporate profit.

As we say in our election statement: 'The domination of profit over social needs is evident in a growing list of disasters--the spread of cancers in the steel towns of Wollongong and Newcastle, the infestation of the Sydney water supply with potentially fatal parasites, the increasing damage caused by floods, the growing incidence of land degradation in rural areas, to name but a few.'

In recent years our international movement convened two important inquiries that helped to highlight the way

in which the present structure of society increasingly compromises public health.

In Britain, the SEP organised the Workers Inquiry into the Human BSE ('mad cow') crisis. With the help of conscientious scientists and victims' families, it revealed the role of both Tory and Labour governments in facilitating and covering up the catastrophic reduction of health standards in the beef industry.

In Australia, we convened the Workers Inquiry into the Wollongong Leukaemia and Cancer Crisis. Through the participation of steelworkers, residents, concerned professionals and victims, we proved a geographic link between cancer and industrial pollution and exposed the state Labor government's whitewash of the alarming death rate among young people in the suburbs near the steelworks.

Details of the work and findings of these inquiries are available on the *World Socialist Web Site*, where you will also find a section devoted to health and medicine.

We fundamentally disagree with the Greens and others in the so-called environmental movement who blame technology and alleged over-population for the industrial pollution, land degradation and other health hazards created by the private profit system. They insist that solutions can be found within the parliamentary framework of capitalism. Noticeably they gave no support to the Wollongong Workers Inquiry.

A lot more could be said, but I hope that this begins to answer your questions. We welcome further discussion.

Regards,

Mike Head

For the SEP

See Also:

Industry link to leukaemia and cancer confirmed
Australian Workers Inquiry answers government challenge

[7 April 1998]



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Socialist Equality Party visit:

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