

Readers comment on WSWS coverage of the US 2000 presidential campaign

25 January 2000

This article ["The class divide in America and the 2000 presidential campaign"] was really informative. It points out one of our biggest problems—social inequality—and it's true, no candidate talks about it! There were some things I was completely oblivious to. I didn't know about that 15 percent rule. That's so capitalist of them! They gotta shush any threats to their party interests, though I wouldn't mind seeing Pat Buchanan suck up some extreme-conservative votes.

The media should beat up on candidates more who are avoiding the Confederate flag issue. I myself am a wargamer who likes the Confederate generals, but come on! Today the Confederate flag is a racist symbol and flying above state buildings is completely out of line!

I must admit, I didn't realize Al Gore was opposed to sending Elian Gonzalez back. I would bet that most of the candidates are supporting keeping him in the States just to avoid losing votes or getting bashed by the media, political opposition, or Cuban Americans.

I think the media is such an important thing in this election. Look at how Gore was forced to reverse his position on gays in the military because of the media. Also, it is completely unfair to give different candidates different amounts of time on television. I think it's well-known enough that Republican candidates, especially front-runners, have more money to spend than Democrats. But I think the big problem is other minority groups, such as Socialists. Imagine how different elections would be if Socialists had as much television time as Democrats and Republicans. Imagine if they were at every debate. Also, a extreme conservative group, too, to balance things out.

That would be good. The Socialist Party would not only become bigger, it would bring attention to social issues ignored by candidates and the media.

Thanks for the article,

PD

23 January 2000

Thank you for your frank and honest article. I believe that many people can see the economic differences, but without a voice, you do not typically see this in the media.

C

Richmond VA

23 January 2000

Thank you for Patrick Martin's excellent article, "The class divide in America and the 2000 presidential campaign", on the sorry state of "democracy" in American. There is one statement I would like to challenge, however. He said, "The Democratic and Republican parties have for more than a century constituted a closed political system ..."

This is not completely accurate. At the beginning of the twentieth century there was a large and influential socialist party in America. At its height in 1912 it had 118,045 dues paying members, 1,039 members held public office at the local and state level, and it's presidential candidate, Eugene Debs, received 897,011 votes. While this party had all of the weaknesses of social democratic parties in other countries at the time, its origins, evolution and demise have important lessons for the American working class.

The media and educational system have created a collective amnesia about the history of the socialist movement in the United States. The future depends on our taking every opportunity to correct this so we can learn from this history.

TB

23 January 2000





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