

More letters on the Tampa refugee crisis

7 September 2001

Dear Editor,

I have been following the above issue [*Tampa* refugees], initially through local commercial television and radio news; and then a friend was kind enough to email me a url for your web site. I have read your articles and feel nothing but disgust and contempt for the Howard regime. I have always felt proud and lucky to be Australian, but now I feel ashamed of the image, which little Johnny Howard is sending of us to the world.

I feel that it's ironic that Australia is holding the "Goodwill Games" in which athletes from many different countries are competing. The Howard regime doesn't know the meaning of international "Goodwill". I wish to denounce my country's government and state that his actions and political ideas are in no way mine nor many other Australians'; even the ones who voted for him. He is a right-wing racist who can't even say one word—"Sorry" to the Australian Aborigines for 200 years of persecution and genocide. I only wish I could express to him myself about how I feel, but if I sent him an email he would never read it.

I wish to publicise that I would be willing to billet some of the *Tampa* refugees in my own house until their fate is determined. I feel I would like to help them in some way, but because of the way they are being handled currently I feel completely helpless.

I beg of you John Howard, economics and policies must be waylaid when the fate and life of humans, families, men, women and children are at risk. I wonder how he'd feel to be in their shoes.

I wonder if he cares about the repercussions this incident will cause to Australia and its people. I think he refuses to consider these points. He's not a man and he's not a human being.

Regards,

LB

Bunbury, Western Australia

1 September 2001

Right on the money. The more I think about this, the more disgusted with our government's action I become. People in distress should always be helped—end of story. When you consider that the *Tampa* was directed to pick the refugees up by Australian Search & Rescue and the authorities on Christmas Island were ready for them, all the more reason that they should have been taken in.

There is also a double standard here—it is acceptable for us to globalise our economy but not our population. Australia, the US and Canada would be nothing without immigration.

Finally, was the First Fleet in 1788 a bunch of "illegal immigrants"?

CV

Australian and NOT Proud of it at the moment

31 August 2001

To whom it may concern:

I am very glad to know that there are such altruistic people as the author of "Why the *Tampa* refugees should be free to live in Australia" in the world. I enjoy reading articles such as these at your web site, and although I never seem to come across like-minded people, it's a comfort to know you are out there.

Coming from an economically depressed (i.e., impoverished) background and never having been able to make much more than minimum wage, I have often felt very alone. This is particularly so because of where I've ended up living (a suburb of Washington DC), where most people I encounter do very well financially. I recently became much more interested in politics after the "election" in the US (which has also precipitated my upcoming divorce, since I unfortunately and ignorantly married a Republican).

I have loved the philosophy of Karl Marx since I first heard about it, and I feel it's an enormous shame that his vision for the world will never become a reality—at least, not in my lifetime. It's quite sad to me that so many poor Americans don't care about politics. But

that's a reality that is not easily changed.

At any rate, I'm so glad I subscribed to the *WSWS*
—keep the great articles coming!

Sincerely,

RS

1 September 2001



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