

Letters to the WSWS

20 July 2002

On “Big business backing Labour to win New Zealand election”

Hi there,

The Labour government has done nothing for the lower socioeconomic groups even though living costs have gone up horrendously in the last year. Also they are shortsighted in developing a rural economy with tourism and computer technology so that Auckland is not our main economic driver—each could compensate the other instead of Auckland affecting the whole country in both good and bad times. Poor economic conditions for more than 50 percent of the population is due to successive government policies from which they still blame the beneficiaries for being lazy. Also of importance is the health of the people who are not eating and exercising properly (reports on this)—note the government set part of the benefits on a food regime that is poor in dietary requirements and this is unethical.

I will vote against Labour to keep them from doing what they like which the two main parties have done for a couple of decades now. They care more about business than the welfare of the people they were and are elected to look after. We need a proper constitution and laws that reflect today and not the upper-socioeconomic class of 200-400 years ago.

JH

13 July 2002

A letter from a Russian reader

Dear Editors,

It is not so long since I started identifying myself as a Marxist, without any reservations. Let me tell you some perceptions of an “inexperienced” Marxist.

When reading Trotsky’s “My Life” or Rogovin’s “Was There an Alternative?” I recognize and support the author’s logic and political culture, so I can predict his line in general. Marxism has been widely criticized in all its aspects, from the economic theory to the history of pre-modern societies. Of course, today’s

research groups in social sciences, given their funding, technical means and time available, may collect more information as far as particular areas are concerned. Thus they have lots of cases for “disproving” Marxism. But their so-called scientific knowledge hardly gives them a new outlook. These people still tend to think using either forms borrowed from the past or current templates that simplify perceptions and decision-making. It was Marx who brought man to a higher level of thinking, and none of those who tried to take his place have succeeded so far. With this understanding, it is quite possible to develop Marx’s basic theory for the present day.

So I tend not to look at the past from the present-day conditions, but to look at the turbulent and unclear present day from that past. Do any of today’s decision-makers know what the world of 2050 or 2100 will be like? The aim of mass media is not to help in understanding the future, but to present a troublesome development as progressive, clouding the hardest issues. One of these issues is the way in which the productive forces, human organizations and people themselves will be formed and reproduced. In 1950, most people were sure that humanity would exist for thousands of years and had some certainty as for the human features of that future. In 2002, nobody will promise this.

I hope there will be enough people enlightened by the most advanced vision of human society. Marxism was developed by people who lived at the very beginning of today’s technological society; those who drew a complete description of their times and considered the most appropriate way forward. Unfortunately they were not given enough time to give the same complete description of their project. One has to finish it, both in theory and in practice. Only then will humanity once again step on a road leading to the future.

Sincerely,

AK

Moscow

11 July 2002

On “Millions of poor US families face utility shutoffs”

I don't know which I feel more; heartbreak or anger. Thank you for publishing such things. Most press would feel that this is a mundane issue.

SD

Tampa, Florida

12 July 2002

You were talking about utility rates being bad for poor people, the same thing goes on with the insurance rates charged to the working poor. It is a known fact that insurance companies don't want to insure the working poor. Most of them have a rate system that is against the poor working people in favor of the wealthier middle class and rich families. You need to check in to this and write an article in regard to this subject. It is time for somebody to step up to the plate and address this issue.

I am a social democrat who votes for the Democratic Party, but I am a very loyal reader of your web site.

Keep up your work,

AO

12 July 2002

Thanks to John Andrews for the fitting appreciation of Ray Brown and his genius [“Ray Brown, jazz bass virtuoso, dies”]. This article really captured the essence of Brown's contribution to the bass and to jazz as a whole. With tone, taste, a monstrous pulse and a sophisticated linear concept, Brown's innovations built upon (as opposed to abandoning) the grand traditions of the jazz rhythm section. That such a man survived for five decades as an active exponent of the music, and that he left a magnificent recorded legacy, is to be cherished. At the same time, one can't help feeling melancholy in the knowledge that he was among the very last of his kind.

AR

12 July 2002

Congratulations on your vital information, critical to people of this distorted world; those of us who still hold remnants of hope for the future of our youth. Go for it! Best wishes

IB

3 July 2002

Thanks so much for providing excellent teaching

examples for my course on critical thinking. I find a wealth of examples in your articles upon which to examine fallacies of logic. Keep up the good work!

TD

15 July 2002



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Socialist Equality Party visit:

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