

The Asian Tsunami Disaster: Causes and Consequences

WSWS & Socialist Equality Party Public Meetings in Sydney and Melbourne

14 January 2005

While the Asian tsunami was a natural disaster, the extent of its impact on the lives of millions of people was far from inevitable.

The victims were overwhelmingly the poor. Why did their governments leave them at the mercy of the waves? Why was there no warning system in place? Why were they living in such vulnerable circumstances? These are questions that can only be answered by delving beneath the sensational headlines to the deeper political, economic and social causes of the December 26 catastrophe.

The indifference and contempt of governments in the affected countries, and especially of the major powers, towards the victims of the tsunami, flows organically from the nature of the capitalist profit system itself.

Notwithstanding its professions of sympathy and promised financial “aid”, the Australian government’s concerns, like those of the US and the other major powers, are entirely selfish. It is seeking to utilise the impact of the tsunami as the pretext for realising long-held military, strategic and economic aims throughout the region—especially in Indonesia. Howard and Downer are no more moved by the plight of the people of Banda Aceh or Sri Lanka than they were by the plight of the people of East Timor, who remain among the most impoverished in the world.

The meetings in Sydney and Melbourne will review the historical and political background to this disaster and advance the socialist alternative to poverty, social inequality and war.

Speakers will include David North, Chairman of the WSWS international editorial board, Wije Dias, General Secretary of the Socialist Equality Party of Sri

Lanka and Nick Beams, National Secretary of the SEP (Australia).

Sydney

Friday, February 4, 7 p.m.

University of Technology, Sydney

The UTS Tower Building

Building 1, Level 4 (Broadway Street Level), Room 406

Broadway

Melbourne

Monday, February 7, 7 p.m.

North Melbourne Library

Large meeting room,

66 Errol Street,

North Melbourne

Tickets: \$3, \$2 concession



To contact the WSWS and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact