

Max Newman

Why I read the WSWS

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I was born and raised in the city of Newcastle Australia, and my family have always been Labor voters, believing the Labor Party to be the lesser of two evils. In this vein I followed suit and voted for Kevin Rudd in 2007, my first experience voting in an election. My main concern was for the gross levels of inequality facing Aboriginal people and refugees across Australia, and it was on these platforms that I cast my vote.

The months and years rolled on from when Kevin Rudd was elected and not only did his government continue the attack on these oppressed people, it sharpened the assault. This illustrated clearly to me the hypocrisy of Rudd's apology to the Aboriginal people and the complete contempt the government had towards those in the lowest socio-economic levels in society.

This mentality was confirmed internationally in the response of governments in the developed countries around the world to the global financial crisis. The detest I witnessed by governments for the most oppressed levels of society, through the bailing out of those responsible for the crisis on the backs of the people who were most deeply affected by it, revealed to me the repugnant nature of the system we were living in. I began to search for alternatives.

I heard on the radio a shock-jock calling Australia a "socialist" country and this sparked my interest. What was socialism and how was Australia a socialist country? I looked up the definition of the political ideology of socialism and found an outline of what socialism was, which concluded that it "only works in theory". This frustrated me. I thought "how can it be that society can be crumbling and the poor are getting poorer and the rich richer and the one progressive political ideology, whose foundations are based in social equality, be but a theory to be forgotten"? "There must be," I concluded "a party that fights for this social change."

I had previously met the Socialist Alliance at the University of Newcastle. I had signed up to their mailing list in 2008, but had found them deplorable. I could not fathom their lack of organisation and complete jumping from protest to protest with no clear line. This, I concluded, is no way to form a system of reorganising society.

Within this context I encountered the Socialist Equality Party (SEP) at the University of Newcastle campus in 2010. Far from stating that socialism was merely a failed "theory", the party explained to me that socialism is in fact the only option for the working class. The party outlined to me that Aboriginal people and refugees were part of the working class and their struggle was bound up in the class struggle, not the road of "identity politics". Far from the disorganisation I witnessed in the Socialist Alliance, the SEP was a disciplined organ of the International Committee of the Fourth International. This discipline and organisation was made most evident to me in the premier journalistic calibre of articles I read on the World Socialist Web Site.

The website provided me with clarification on the topics that troubled me the most. I read some articles on the election of Rudd, such as "Australian media uses Aurukun Aboriginal child rape case to push right-wing agenda". This gave me clarification over the historic class character of the Labor government and the agenda behind the Rudd government. I also read articles clarifying the necessity of minority groups to understand their class character and take up the struggle of the working class such as "Australia: Inquest evidence shows Rudd government policies caused refugee deaths" and "Australian government sets new precedent in Aboriginal land grab". I also read many articles on the role of the pseudo-left groups and began to understand them as the enemies of the working class,

who work consciously and perniciously to destroy the socialist movement.

Now, as we enter a period of wars and revolutions; while all governments internationally and domestically turn ever rightward in anticipation of the emerging social tensions; while the pseudo-left groups and unions unite with these governments against any proletarian movement, and military tensions escalate, the WSWS continues to provide the only voice for the working class and the essential lessons of the twentieth century, which the working class must study to break the shackles of capitalism and reshape the world on a socialist basis.



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