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Why I read the WSWS

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I am a new reader of the WSWS. I first contacted the Socialist Equality Party and the WSWS by attending a meeting on the situation in Greece. I knew nothing of socialist internationalism until I met the SEP.

The meeting addressed questions I had been asking myself about the present situation compared to what I saw when I first came to the UK in 1990. It also gave me a chance to read the WSWS and find answers to other questions that had not been answered before, such as what is socialism and where will it take us?

I arrived here from Tanzania, where I had been for nine years as an African National Congress refugee from South Africa. I came on a Walter Sisulu scholarship.

I have always been interested in Marxism which I was exposed to by the ANC. I was taught that Tanzania was what was called “African Socialism”.

The ANC didn’t live up to our expectations and confused people like me because they were talking about socialism on the one hand and the National Democratic Revolution on the other as if they were the same thing. But they are not.

The ANC leadership claimed that they would build a system to suit African conditions, taking what is good from all systems, accepting moral and political support from all over the world, especially the west.

They also talked about “non-antagonistic contradictions” that would exist during the reconstruction of the country. This is why I say they confused me. They justified themselves by trying to say that when we take over, things will change, but very slowly.

There were great hopes when Mandela became president. But now the majority in South Africa are terribly disillusioned, because the living conditions for the masses have not improved. Nothing has changed since the end of Apartheid.

There have been three black presidents, Mandela, Mbeki and Zuma and everyone in the country knows that the situation is getting worse. People are suffering terribly. The gap between rich and poor is widening daily. I realise from the WSWS that the working class all over the world is suffering as a result of the crisis.

When I arrived in this country in 1990, I met many people who were politically active, including South Africans. I asked them, “How many socialisms are there?” There was Chinese socialism, Russian socialism and socialism in Tanzania. I saw the poverty in Tanzania and thought, “How is socialism operating here?”

So what does the term socialism mean?

I went to a Socialist Workers Party meeting at the university and came away very disappointed because it was all slogans. I never went back. But I still didn’t lose interest in politics and I wanted some answers.

Through reading the WSWS I have learnt what the word socialism means and how the crisis of capitalism affects us globally and how socialism can address these problems. To me, international socialism is the only socialism to overcome this capitalist crisis. I just don’t see any other way.

We need a revolution, a revolutionary party and a complete change of the system.

I love my country but don’t like what is happening there. So I may as well stay here and learn.

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