

# Letters from our readers

8 March 2007

*The following is a selection of recent letters sent to the World Socialist Web Site.*

*On “US severe poverty highest in three decades”*

I was recently in Roanoke, Virginia on a Sunday and left Monday morning. I had to drive into town, and passed through some of the worst housing conditions I have seen for a supposedly prosperous county. I did some research and found that data from 2000 and 2002 showed a drop in median income there from \$31,000 to \$27,000 in two years. (The national median income respectively was \$41,000 to \$31,000 in same period.) Those are phenomenal numbers in each case, and merits more research. I haven't had a chance yet to do more with this, but for an area touted as “Virginia's Technology Corridor,” I was shocked.

Immediately I was reminded of the article about the house fire in Petersburg.

LS

Detroit, Michigan, USA

5 March 2007

When you invade other countries, spend your national wealth on manufacturing weapons, borrow billions of money from the Banks of Japan, China, Taiwan and other countries, what do you expect? The result: poverty and misery for your citizens.

PR

Ontario, Canada

5 March 2007

Thank you very much for writing about this crisis that mainstream media can't seem to see.

That “failed welfare system” we had actually enabled millions to obtain the security for their families, medical care, and the means to obtain education/training vital to enable them to work their way out of poverty. Now, there is no way out for most, and the impact of “reform,” combined with all the other factors (moving jobs to other nations, increasing the pool of super-cheap US labor, smashing unions, etc.) has been devastating.

DHF

Fort Atkinson, Wisconsin, USA

5 March 2007

*On a letter on the ethnic question in Sri Lanka*

Dear RM,

The ethnic question is not only relevant to Sri Lanka, although Sri Lanka is perhaps the worst example of a bourgeois government deliberately fomenting ethnic violence to split the working class, resulting in the tragedy of civil war. In Sri Lanka, the Muslims are being almost universally vilified for political expediency as well.

It's not a question of whether or not the left—and I will qualify that by saying the only progressive political party, left or otherwise is the Socialist Equality Party—is addressing these individual issues regarding ethnicity as you put it. Socialism addresses all issues of society equally, by addressing the contradictions that are the root cause of the myriad problems that face society: the private ownership of the means of production and the antagonisms of the nation-state system. What needs to be addressed above all is raising the level of the political consciousness of the working class and students worldwide, so as to build a new political party that will not only completely break from and challenge capitalism, but will emerge victorious over it, and replace its vile barbarism with a genuine, progressive, scientific and humane socialist society.

Once again we find ourselves embroiled in a capitalist war for profit, which threatens to explode into a worldwide conflagration. And once again the fight for world socialism will confront the many obstacles of ignorance, treachery and propaganda designed to discredit it. But just as in 1917 there is a party steeped in Marxist tradition and history, that by dint of concrete conditions will once again shine like a beacon—and not just across Russia—but across the world, uniting the masses everywhere. History, and the contradictions of capitalism will bring this about, as certain as night

follows day. The duty of a genuine socialist is to continue to learn and educate.

DD

Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

7 March 2007

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Socialist Equality Party visit:

**<http://www.wsws.org>**