

Globalisation: The Socialist Perspective

Nick Beams to deliver lecture at six Australian universities

2 May 2000

Nick Beams, a member of the International Editorial Board of the World Socialist Web Site and National Secretary of the Socialist Equality Party of Australia, will lecture on Globalisation: The Socialist Perspective at six Australian universities during May.

Beams will be speaking in Melbourne, Sydney, Newcastle and Canberra. We encourage all WSWs readers in Victoria, New South Wales and the ACT to make plans to attend. Each lecture will be followed by questions and discussion and a large selection of socialist literature from Mehring Books will be available for purchase.

Below is the text of a leaflet being distributed by the SEP to students, academics, workers and professional people and the dates and venues for each lecture.

Last December's protests at the World Trade Organisation talks in Seattle focused attention on the deep suspicion and alarm felt by intellectuals, workers and youth towards the domination of the global economy by a few hundred transnational giants. The protests highlighted what has become a deeply-felt opposition to the destruction of living standards, working conditions and democratic rights taking place around the world as economic life is reorganised to meet the demands of global capital for lower wages and taxes and unrestricted access to markets.

But how to address the economic insecurity gripping millions of ordinary working people, the growing gulf between rich and poor and the disastrous plight of developing countries?

Defenders of capitalism argue that these are the inevitable price of progress. Some opponents of the "free market" insist, on the other hand, that society should turn its back on the revolutionary advances in technology and communications that have facilitated

the global organisation of production. Many call for a retreat to a mythical past when, they claim, national governments regulated and controlled the economy in the interests of all.

Globalisation: The Socialist Perspective, will challenge all of these positions.

The lecture will be delivered at campuses in Melbourne, Sydney, Canberra and Newcastle by Nick Beams, National Secretary of the Socialist Equality Party of Australia and member of the International Editorial Board of the *World Socialist Web Site*.

Beams, a world authority on Marxist political economy, has made a detailed study over the past 10 years of the globalisation of production. He is the author of numerous articles, lectures and essays on the subject, including *Marxism and the Globalisation of Production*, *The Significance and Implications of Globalisation: A Marxist Assessment* and *The Asian Economic Meltdown: A Crisis of Global Capitalism*.

Recently Beams authored a polemical reply to a critique of globalisation and the WTO talks in Seattle by Canadian professor Michel Chossudovsky. Entitled *Marxist internationalism versus radical protest*, the reply exposes the futility of neo-Keynesian demands for a return to national economic regulation.

Beams subjects globalisation to a detailed historical and theoretical examination, establishing the necessity of distinguishing between the increasingly global character of production—a progressive development fuelled by astonishing leaps in computer technology, transport and telecommunications—and the socially destructive consequences that flow from the subordination of economic activity to the profit requirements of global capital and the old, outmoded, nation-state system.

As Leon Trotsky wrote in the midst of the 1930s, another period of turbulence and upheaval in world economy: “The progressive task of how to adapt the arena of economic and social relations to the new technology is turned upside down and is made to seem a problem of how to restrain and cut down the productive forces so as to fit them to the old national arena and to the old social relations.”

Beams elaborates the socialist alternative: not the rejection of globalisation, but the liberation of the world's productive forces from the barriers imposed upon them by the social relations of the capitalist system. The very technologies wielded today against the working masses can and must become the basis for a planned global economy, organised rationally to meet the needs of the entire world's population.

Globalisation: The Socialist Perspective will afford the opportunity to all those concerned with the implications of globalisation to participate in a discussion with one of the world's foremost Marxists.

All welcome.

Lecture dates and venues

Latrobe University

Tuesday May 16, 1pm
East Lecture Theatre (ELT6)
Near Agora
No Charge

University of Melbourne

Wednesday May 17, 7pm
Laby Lecture Theatre
Physics Building
Enter through Gate 2 on Swanston St
\$3/\$2 students

Macquarie University

Tuesday May 23, 1pm
Room 3, Level 3
SAM Building (Student Union)
No Charge

University of NSW

Wednesday May 24, 7pm
Bio-Med Theatre B
Building Number E27
(Enter through Gate 11 on Botany St, parking available)
\$3/\$2 students

Newcastle University

Thursday May 25, 1 pm

Shortland Building
Level 3
The Treehouse Room
No Charge

Australian National University

Tuesday May 30, 7pm
HA Tank
No Charge

For Further Information:

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To contact the WSWS and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

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