

# Second Open Letter to Socialist Aotearoa (December 2008)

(from the Workers Party website: <http://workersparty.org.nz>)

Dear Socialist Aotearoa,

We are disappointed by your decision to take us off the speaking list for your up and coming public meeting. Joe C had previously invited Workers Party member John Moore to speak at your post-election meeting. Joe has now informed us that, because of the 'tone' of an [article by WP member Philip Ferguson](#), we will now not be part of the speaking panel at your next public meeting.

The WP article in question was centred on an analysis of the incoming National government and its likely trajectory. Within the article, some comradely criticism were made of Socialist Aotearoa's view on the present elected government. We know SA value debate and discussion on the left, and so have been surprised by your sensitive reaction to some polemical comments in our article on the post-election situation.

The left and workers movement has had a particularly poor record of openness to debate and dialogue. The WP has aimed to open up democratic discussion on the left. There is not a hegemony of ideas on the left. Different view should be aired and discussed out, whether between individuals or groups. Your public meetings have been lively events, where democratic debate has been valued. We have appreciated being invited and given the opportunity to speak at your meetings. We are therefore somewhat perplexed by your latest decision to exclude us from your speakers' list.

We intend to continue working with your group, and look forward to united front work. Our two groups certainly have areas we agree on and therefore will be able to work together in areas of class struggle. We welcomed Joe's indication that post-election our two groups should look at opportunities to work together. Joe has now informed us that because of the article, Much of the left crying wolf over Nats, united front work between our two

organisations will be difficult. The left is too small in New Zealand to let disagreements get in the way of joint work. The WP and SA will continue to disagree on some key issues. But we believe it is vital for groups of the left, while be open about their differences, to work together where they do agree.

Again, we are disappointed by your response to healthy debate around areas of difference between yourselves and us.

Socialist Aotearoa is an important addition to the left in New Zealand. Your organisation was formed from a left-split from the opportunistic Socialist Worker. We acknowledge your sound decision to pull out of this organization, which is clearly moving in a rightward trajectory and giving up on class politics. Socialist Worker clearly is a group that does not value debate and its leadership can show a hostile and sectarian attitude to other left groups. We hope SA does not develop a similar attitude to other groups on the small New Zealand left.

In solidarity

John Moore on behalf of the Workers Party.