

# New issue of World Socialist Web Site quarterly magazine now available

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The latest issue of the *World Socialist Web Site's* quarterly English-language magazine is now available. Containing selected articles, statements and commentary from the site, the June-August *World Socialist Web Site Review* focuses on several key political and economic developments, as well as important philosophical and historical issues.

The *Review* explores the historical roots of Sri Lanka's 17-year civil war, assesses the mounting political crisis of the Kumaratunga regime in Colombo and probes the strategic, geo-political concerns behind the recent visit of US envoy Thomas Pickering to the Indian sub-continent. Poignant interviews with injured soldiers in Colombo hospitals point to mounting popular hostility to the war. A statement issued by Socialist Equality Party national secretary, Wije Dias, outlines the opposition of the socialist movement to the government's racist agenda and demands the immediate withdrawal of troops from the north and east of the island.

In this issue we review the cases of two prominent victims of the United States political establishment: Mumia Abu-Jamal, a former Black Panther who has been on death row as a political prisoner for 18 years, and Elian Gonzalez, the little Cuban boy held hostage by the Cuban exile mafia in Florida. Both cases highlight the sharp right-wing shift in official US political circles and the advanced state of decay of democratic rights in the US. They raise fundamental political questions concerning the entire working class.

These questions are examined further in a detailed analysis, made by WSWs Editorial Board member Barry Grey, of the current US presidential elections and the lessons of the Clinton impeachment crisis. While the latter convulsed the entire political system during 1998, it has now remarkably all but vanished from public discussion.

"It is as though," Grey writes, "the political crisis that wracked Washington and came very close to toppling the president holds no lessons for today and has no bearing on the political landscape of the 2000 elections."

Grey demonstrates that the opposite is the case. "The highest levels of the state and the media were involved in a right-wing conspiracy to use a sex scandal to bring down an elected president." This conspiracy expressed the profound social malaise underlying American society, and the "deeply compromised and impotent character of American liberalism." Grey establishes that underlying the political crisis are profound economic and social changes, that will see, over the coming period, an explosive growth of social tensions and the development of political opposition on the part of millions of ordinary working people.

Other developments covered include: the new scramble for Africa on the part of Britain and other imperialist powers; the show trial of 13 Iranian Jews in Tehran and the indifference of the major powers towards it; the anti-IMF demonstration in Washington and its nationalist political perspective; the significance and implications of the Microsoft lawsuit in the United States.

A major feature of this issue of the *WSWS Review* is the critical assessment made by Alex Steiner of the life and thought of Martin Heidegger, one of the most influential philosophers of the twentieth century.

Entitled "The Case of Martin Heidegger, Philosopher and Nazi" Steiner begins his three-part article by citing incontrovertible evidence that has recently come to light establishing Heidegger's unwavering support for Nazism from the early 1930s right up until his death in 1976.

Steiner then turns to an examination of the extensive coverup organised by Heidegger's defenders, out of

which his postwar reputation was established. Part 3 surveys the nineteenth century philosophical trends out of which Heidegger's thought emerged, studies Heidegger's own positions and begins to examine that "curious philosophical trend" of the post-war period: "the embrace of Heidegger by many left-leaning intellectuals."

In this profoundly thought-provoking piece, Steiner raises that the attraction of Heidegger for contemporary postmodernism lies in the latter's overarching skepticism and pessimism, its rejection of historical progress, its abandonment of Marxism and any prospect of socialism.

As Steiner concludes: "Let us be clear. The defenders of Heidegger today are not, with a few notable exceptions such as Ernst Nolte, supporters of fascism. What they see in Heidegger is his attack on the history of rational thought."

Also included in the *Review* is a powerful obituary to the great classical historian Geoffrey de Ste Croix, and a stimulating exchange by the author, Ann Talbot, with a WSWs reader regarding de Ste Croix's analysis of the class struggle in Ancient Greece.

The issue concludes with an interview conducted by WSWs arts editor David Walsh with victimised Indian filmmaker Deepa Mehta, and an important contribution by Walsh to a panel discussion in the United States on censorship and the arts, entitled "On what basis should a movement in defense of artistic freedom be founded?"

The *World Socialist Web Site Review* is published in an attractive and durable format, and can be ordered through Mehring Books at [sales@mehring.com](mailto:sales@mehring.com) in the US, [sales@mehringbooks.co.uk](mailto:sales@mehringbooks.co.uk) in the UK, and [mehring@ozemail.com.au](mailto:mehring@ozemail.com.au) in Australia. Annual subscriptions (for four issues) are available for \$US30 in the US, 10 pounds in Britain and \$A30 in Australia. Online purchases can be made at Mehring Books Online.



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