

# New issue of World Socialist Web Site Review now available

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*The April-June 2001 issue of the World Socialist Web Site Review is now available. Produced by the World Socialist Web Site Editorial Board, the quarterly journal contains selected articles, reviews and commentary from the site, and is published in an attractive and durable magazine format.*

*The World Socialist Web Site Review assists our audience in retaining significant articles for future reference and discussion, and also serves to introduce new readers to the WSWS.*

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*Below, we reprint the editorial of the new issue.*

During the extraordinary events of November and December 2000, when the entire world witnessed the subversion of democratic rights in the United States and the theft of the office of US president, the *World Socialist Web Site* presented an unparalleled daily analysis of the unfolding political crisis. For reasons of space, it is impossible to include here even a representative sample of the WSWS articles written at the time. Instead, we publish in this issue of the *World Socialist Web Site Review* two major reports that provide a powerful summation of the US election crisis, and probe its profound international and historical significance.

WSWS International Editorial Board member Barry Grey, in a report delivered to a conference in Sydney, Australia in January 2001, argues that the US election was a historical watershed, marking “an irrevocable break with the forms and traditions of American

democracy”. Nothing, he writes, “will ever be the same in the United States, or, for that matter, the world.”

Grey reviews the means through which the Republican Party systematically denied Jewish, African-American and Haitian-American voters in the state of Florida the right to have their votes counted, the unprecedented majority Supreme Court ruling that endorsed the suppression of these votes and handed the presidency to George W. Bush, and the craven complicity of the Democratic Party, the trade unions, the liberal establishment and the corporate-controlled media. He contends that the fundamental question posed throughout was: how far was the ruling elite prepared to go in breaking with democratic norms? The answer, writes Grey, was “Very far indeed!”

It is not that the United States has been turned overnight into a dictatorship, Grey explains, but that “its ruling elite has embarked on a course that must lead either to authoritarian rule of a fascist type or social revolution.”

This transformation of the traditional methods of rule in the heart of world capitalism is primarily, Grey argues, not an American, but an international issue. In the short-term, it has direct consequences for global geopolitical relations. More fundamentally, it is itself the “most advanced expression of the crisis of world capitalism.”

In reviewing the role of America in the course of the twentieth century, Grey demonstrates both the necessity for and strength of an historical analysis. Basing himself on the insights and analysis of the great twentieth century Marxist, Leon Trotsky, he establishes irrefutably a direct correlation between the breakup of American global hegemony and the decay of bourgeois democracy in the US itself.

In the second report, delivered to a public meeting in

Australia last December, David North, chairman of the WSWS International Editorial Board and national secretary of the Socialist Equality Party of the US, warns that the US Supreme Court's rulings raise the spectre of the infamous Dred Scott decision of 1857, which accelerated the processes that led to the American Civil War.

North draws a potent analogy between the crisis of pre-Civil War America and the situation in the US today. Prior to the 1860s, he argues, an “irrepressible conflict” existed between slavery and free labour that ultimately generated a complete breakdown of the political system. Today, the most critical factor in American society is the greatest social polarisation in the capitalist world.

The program of the Republican Party has become the removal of any restraints on the exploitation of labour, the realisation of corporate profits and the accumulation of personal wealth. In this situation, the attack on voting rights was an “inevitable political manifestation of the underlying tendency to systematically exclude the working class from any form of independent participation in political life.” Under the weight of enormous social contradictions, the political structures that have existed for the past 150 years are breaking apart.

North roots the immense changes in the social structure of American society in economic processes associated with globalisation and the development of revolutionary new technologies. He demonstrates that the 2000 elections mark the onset of a revolutionary crisis in the heartland of world capitalism, with incalculable global implications.

On the 2000 US elections, we also present a small selection of the dozens of letters sent to the WSWS, with replies by David North, and an incisive exposé of the continuing prostration of the Democratic Party to the illegitimate government in Washington, written two months after the US Supreme Court's intervention.

Also included in this issue is a broad range of material dealing with the mounting economic and political crisis of world capitalism: the global economic downturn and growing signs of recession; the deepening conflict in the Middle East and the legacy of Zionism; the moves by the British government to crack down on asylum seekers; a new round of mass sackings by US auto giant, Chrysler.

Several articles address historical, philosophical and cultural issues; among them, an examination of the ideas and influence of German thinker Friedrich Nietzsche; an appraisal of the recent movie *Thirteen Days*, and its subject matter, the Cuban missile crisis; and a review of John Le Carré's latest novel, *The Constant Gardener*.

Presented in this issue of the *WSWS Review* is just a small selection of the material published every day on the *World Socialist Web Site*. We invite all our readers and subscribers to visit the WSWS regularly and welcome comments, correspondence and contributions.



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