

Letters from our readers

27 April 2001

Below we are posting a selection of letters sent to the WSWS this week.

Hello WSWS,

I have been meaning to write you for a long time now. Since I'm off work and it looks rainy outside, I thought I would just sit down at the PC and do that. I visit your web site every day! Forgive me if my letter rambles, I never was very good at composition.

In the '80s, I subscribed to several leftist publications (*The Militant, People's Daily World, Workers Vanguard, Workers World, The Worker's Advocate, Frontline*, etc.). I embraced leftism-socialism because the course of US politics was reaching a state of mindlessness and dangerous reaction under the Reagan regime. However, when the USSR dissolved and the former Warsaw Pact regimes collapsed, I became very disillusioned (but should one have had "illusions"?) I felt that communism inevitably leads to oppression (or "Stalinism") and that the working class was just not ready or enlightened enough to make it happen. I even felt contempt for the working class ... (and I am working-class myself!)

I went online in July 2000. I noticed that just about all of the leftists had web sites now. Most of the Stalinist-Maoist type outfits are just like they always were ... little more than cults. Your web site seems to be more sober-minded and consistent in political analysis of news events.

It would be very hard for me to say what articles are quite distinct on the WSWS, but the five-part series on the US corporate media comes to mind just now. Devastating! Also, the recent insight into Timothy McVeigh and school shootings were also somewhere near the core. The prostitute media seems not to have a clue, but the seed of right-wing fanaticism seems to be bearing its fruit.

Thinking on this matter, I actually feel that the ruling elite in this country feels it useful to have militia groups, the KKK, neo-nazis, etc., around; just in case civil rights groups, students, workers or the poor get out of hand. Who needs the National Guard when you have these idiots to do your dirty work? If the left were organized in such a matter, with weapons, etc. you can bet the whole weight of super-power league repression would be brought down on us. But Marxists are opposed to terrorism (I read an article by

Trotsky on the subject).

Speaking of Marxist writings, I noticed the whole collection is available on-line. The library in the small town where I live is quite limited and I had to get Marxist books through the inter-library loan before I went on-line. Also, Marx is a hard read! This is because I am not familiar with the historical events of his time, the philosophical style of debate and polemic in his day, etc. I enjoy reading. I would appreciate your advice as to web sites with classic and contemporary socialist literature. What articles on your site would be good introductions?

In solidarity,

DL

24 April 2001

Dear Sir,

The facts and figures given by WSWS are of enormous value in attacking the Tories and New Labour and I try to put them to good use by doing just that.

JB

25 April 2001

I recently read the article by Chris Marsden entitled "Milosevic's arrest dictated by the US" on April 3, 2001, and was wondering if he was a Serbian Nationalist because of all the pro-Serbian rhetoric in the article. If your web site is supposed to be legitimate, then taking a more neutral approach would be better.

Thanks.

CW

24 April 2001

Hi,

I've been reading your stories about war in the Balkans. I just want to say that no matter who was our leader at the time, the people of Yugoslavia didn't deserve bombs and everything that happened to us.

Yugoslavia was one of the most tortured countries in World War II and our former president—Comrade Tito—fought for freedom. We won that freedom and again some dark power wants to take it away.

This is the message for all people over the world to be strong and to try to survive. The Roman Empire fell ... so shall the US. In these dark times, stand with us so then together we can find a little light to survive.

VV

One of many Belgrade citizens

23 April 2001

Dear Comrade,

I am an Israeli citizen from Russia. I am a reader of your site for about a year and I am very fond of it, because it is one of my main sources of information of a modern world (I am a leftist). Your articles about cinema are my favorite. In Israel I met two former cinema critics from the former Soviet Union and often discuss with them new and classic films (one of them is a little video rent shopkeeper). They are very nice and cultured men, but have quite right-wing views from their experience in the USSR (one of them was a political prisoner) and, naturally, they do not like Trotskyists. They also have a very strong prejudice about the ability of American film critics. But they both admire Iranian cinema and I gave them your articles about it (in my very poor translation). Now they are admitting the high quality of your work and asking me to give you acknowledgment of it. I am glad to do it. Keep up the quality of your work.

Thank you.

AN

24 April 2001

I enjoy your commentary very much. I found the story on the power of the church to guide government policy both interesting and disturbing. I'm referring to the story on the movie *Live Show* and its banning in the Philippines. It's hard to believe that in this day and age the church still holds such power. What I'd like to know is if world socialism is established how would we protect free expression. Would the church be barred from having any power in government? To me the idea of separation of church and state is paramount, plus in a socialist society hopefully religion will wither away as scientific and rational ideas take hold.

OI

23 April 2001

Jean Shaoul's coverage of the Maxwell report was very well done. Thank her for her excellent reportage and analysis, and thank you for letting me have free access to her work (and everybody else's at wsws.org) via your daily email news updates.

With all regards,

JWVC

23 April 2001

To the editors:

As you probably know, since Wednesday, 18 April 2001, members of Harvard University's Progressive Student Labor Movement have occupied Massachusetts Hall, an administration building housing the offices of Harvard President and Provost. Simultaneously, and continuously, a

protest has been going on in front of the building. The protesters, calling for a living wage for Harvard's workers, the implementation of a comprehensive benefits package, and demanding that the University stops outsourcing jobs to private companies, characterize the sit-in as indefinite. The last time a sit-in occurred at Harvard was in 1969.

Among those voicing their support for the action are Senators Ted Kennedy and Paul Wellstone. *Perspective*, Harvard's liberal monthly magazine, has been covering the issue, as has the centrist *Crimson* daily, which has attempted to present the action as one lacking the support of Harvard's students. *Perspective* has posted updates of the situation, and its web site is www.digitas.harvard.edu/~perspy.

I hope that you do not pass up reporting on and analyzing this action, especially in the context of a possible revival of university activism.

Sincerely,

Ved Lekic

Senior Editor, *Perspective*, Harvard's Liberal Monthly

23 April 2001

Jerry White's article about Ralph Nader's politics was wonderful! Nader's silence about the massive, race-based voter disenfranchisement in this election is absolutely inexcusable. I have been researching this evidence in Tennessee since the election and have formed a citizen action group to publicize it. In fact, the US Department of Justice has actually begun to investigate here, and the attorney handling the case believes that it will end up in exactly the same type of hearings as Florida had. Every state in the South experienced vote irregularities, and so did 16 Northern states (at last count!) The NAACP leaders who have been in the fray of things in this election agree that nothing like this has happened in many years—perhaps not since post-Reconstruction (1890 or so). This was and is a massive attack on the entire idea of democracy. I can't believe that Nader doesn't even have any interest in finding out more about it, but that seems to be the case.

CD

23 April 2001



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