

World Socialist Web Site Review: November issue out now

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The latest edition of the *World Socialist Web Site's* quarterly English language magazine is now available. The November 2001-January 2002 *WSWS Review* features a number of the articles and major statements presented on the *WSWS* following the September 11 terrorist attacks in the United States and the ensuing US war against Afghanistan.

"The political roots of the terror attack on New York and Washington", published on the site one day after the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, unequivocally condemns the terrorists' "indiscriminate and callous destruction of human life," explaining that it "play[ed] into the hands of those elements within the US establishment who seize on such events to justify and legitimise the resort to war in pursuit of the geopolitical and economic interests of the ruling elite."

In "Why the Bush Administration wants war" published two days later, the editorial board warned that the mass media and its allies in the Bush Administration were seeking to use public horror over the attacks to prosecute long-held political and military objectives. "Modern wars require a pretext, a casus belli that can be packaged to the public." The American people were being stampeded into accepting the unrestrained use of military power abroad as well as far-reaching attacks on democratic rights at home.

While the media networks have worked as an arm of the US government, to confuse and disorient public opinion, the *WSWS* has continued to analyse the historical and political roots of the unfolding crisis. The magazine also contains "Where is the Bush administration taking the American people?" published following President George W. Bush's speech to a joint session of Congress. This statement exposes the real motivations behind Bush's proclamation of a "war on terrorism" and examines how yesterday's "allies" in the form of the Taliban regime, have "become the latest in a long line of one-time American allies who ran afoul of the US and found themselves being denounced as war-lords and modern day

Hitlers".

"Democratic Rights in America: the first casualty of Bush's anti-terror war" reviews the sweeping legislative changes pushed through the US Senate, threatening basic civil and political rights. A separate article warns of threats to Internet privacy in the new "Combating Terrorism Act" which includes extensive email surveillance powers.

Many *WSWS* readers have sent appreciative correspondence to the site in response to the comment "Anti Americanism: The anti-imperialism of fools", by David North and David Walsh. The comment opposes the cynical and callous response to the events of September 11 from a section of ex-radicals who declared that America "got what it deserved". The authors expose the intellectual and political poverty of vulgar anti-Americanism which ignores the complexities and contradictions contained in the history of the US, and the fact that there really are "two Americas, the America of Bush, Clinton and the other scoundrels, and another America, of its working people."

"The political depravity of journalist Christopher Hitchens," also by Walsh, highlights another tendency among a layer of former liberals—tracing Hitchens' trajectory from left critic of American society to a rightwing supporter of the US war on Serbia and Afghanistan.

Two articles pinpoint disturbing aspects of the events prior to and immediately after September 11: unusual share trading pointing to advance knowledge by major share traders of the terrorist attacks, and the White House lies to cover up Bush's 10-hour absence from the capital on the day of the attacks.

Several articles examine the reaction in other countries, including Britain where British Prime Minister Tony Blair has been Bush's closest ally. "Tony Blair's bin Laden dossier: A pretext instead of proof" exposes the threadbare character of the evidence offered by the British

prime minister to demonstrate the culpability of Osama bin Laden.

Prior to September 11, the leaders of world capitalism were preoccupied with escalating indices of global recession and the growth of an anti-globalisation protest movement. In the article “Political issues arising from the Genoa summit,” WSWs Editorial Board member Nick Beams draws attention to the significance of the unprecedented police measures against protesters at the G8 summit. Incapable of answering the mounting criticisms of the prevailing social order, the G8 leaders, “ensconced in a walled enclave,” delivered their reply to demands for social justice “in the form of police baton charges, tear gassing, police raids and murder”.

In the accompanying article, “Globalisation, Jospin and the political program of Attac, Beams subjects the perspective of anti-globalisation organisations such as the French-based Attac to a Marxist critique. He makes a detailed examination of Attac’s proposals and concludes that, far being opponents of capitalism, the organisation winds up defending the present social order by seeking the impossible—to resurrect the nationally-regulated economic structures of the post-war boom.

This issue also focuses on a number of other crucial political developments around the world. Two articles examine the impact of Israel’s vicious repression of Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza, including its policy of political assassination. WSWs Editorial Board members Chris Marsden and Barry Grey expose the fraudulent character of the trial of former Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic in the Hague, and an article on the German Greens deals with their about face on the nuclear industry.

On the other side of the globe, the Australian government’s use of the navy to block asylum seekers from entering the country is the subject of a Socialist Equality Party statement “Why the Tampa refugees should be free to live in Australia,” calling for the abolition of all immigration restrictions. A statement by the Socialist Equality Party in Sri Lanka opposes the moves to more authoritarian forms of rule in that country. An article on the Bush administration’s decision on stem cell research and a reply to correspondence, explain how the US policy amounts to a fundamental attack on science and democratic rights.

One of the most critical contributions in this issue is the lecture delivered by WSWs Editorial Board chairman David North in January 2001 entitled “Toward a reconsideration of Trotsky’s legacy and his place in the

history of the 20th century”. North provides an overview of the life and astonishing intellectual contribution of a man who was, indisputably, one of the preeminent thinkers and writers of the century.

Central to North’s lecture is a reexamination of Trotsky’s great insight, the Theory of Permanent Revolution. As North explains, Trotsky’s remarkable theoretical achievement involved a paradigmatic shift—analogous in scope to that of Einstein in the realm of physics—from a national to an international framework that “made possible a realistic conception of world revolution.”

The other significant historical article is “Lionel Jospin and Trotskyism: The debate over the French prime minister’s past”. WSWs Editorial Board member Peter Schwarz details Jospin’s associations with the OCI, which was until 1971 the French section of the International Committee of the Fourth International, and explains how and why the French bourgeoisie are relying on a renegade from the Trotskyist movement.

Two articles from the widely read Arts Review section of the WSWs conclude the issue. In his commentary on this year’s Toronto Film Festival, Arts Review editor David Walsh critically examines the rather limited conceptions underlying the art-film genre associated most often with films from China, Taiwan and Iran. Walsh’s second review takes the opportunity provided by the release of the reedited version of *Apocalypse Now* to make an appreciation of Francis Ford Coppola’s classic on the Vietnam War.

The contents of the November issue of the WSWs *Review* provide a representative sample of the broad range of Marxist analyses presented daily on the *World Socialist Web Site*. We encourage all our readers to visit the WSWs regularly, take out a subscription to the *WSWS Review* and send comments and correspondence to the site.

Current and back issues of the *WSWS Review* can be ordered through Mehring Books at sales@mehring.com in the US for \$US5 per issue, sales@mehringbooks.co.uk in the UK for £2.50 per issue and mehring@ozemail.com.au in Australia for \$A6.50 per issue. Annual subscriptions (four issues) are available for \$US30 in the US, £12 in Britain and \$A30 in Australia.



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