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Why I read the WSWS

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About four and a half years ago, I discovered the *World Socialist Web Site*. It was towards the end of 2008, just after the outbreak of the economic crisis, and I was a student at the Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM). By chance, in one of my classes, I met a member of the IYSSE (International Youth & Students for Social Equality), an organization I had not previously heard of. My friend told me that he was part of a student group fighting for socialism, and as I was becoming seriously interested in political and social issues, we immediately started discussing the IYSSE and its perspective.

I was in my early twenties at the time, and trying as best I could to find solutions to the big existential questions of humanity and our unequal society. However, my university courses in social sciences—highly tinged with an idealist and petty-bourgeois outlook—had never been able to meet my expectations. Over time, I realized that if I wanted to “change things,” I had to take an interest in political questions.

I had become a member of Québec Solidaire (QS)—a nationalist party that serves as a left cover to the big business Parti Québécois. The chauvinism of the QS—concealed by its social policies which initially attracted me—irritated me greatly, but I did not know of any more left-wing alternative.

It took the intervention of the Socialist Equality Party (SEP) and its youth organization for me to understand the true petty-bourgeois nature of the QS. Once I understood that the SEP truly defends the interests of the international working class, of which I was and still am a part, I never set foot in QS again. I began to read the *World Socialist Web Site*: occasionally at the beginning; then more and more frequently.

I still remember the intellectual effort required to read the articles and participate in discussions, due to my

low level of historical and political knowledge (especially since English is not my mother tongue). But with each reading, the dialectical relationship between the development of consciousness and the will—and then necessity—to deepen my knowledge became clearer. I gradually realized that only the Marxist approach, based on the class struggle, allowed me to understand objective reality and provided a truly progressive orientation. The *World Socialist Web Site* not only provides workers with the political program for their own emancipation, it also makes clear the historical role which the working class must play in the liberation of all humanity from exploitation, economic crises and wars.

Several series of articles appearing on the WSWS contributed enormously to the development of my class consciousness. Like many young Trotskyists of my generation, I began to read the site in 2008, following the collapse of Lehman Brothers and the economic crisis. Objectively this was not a coincidence, considering that this event marked a qualitative shift in class relations.

The huge bailouts of the banks and financial institutions—exposed and explained with great clarity by the site—helped me to grasp the magnitude of the wealth owned by the financial oligarchy that runs our world. In 2008-2009, the WSWS predicted that the financial crisis would be used to transform class relations in a more right-wing direction in order to make the working class pay for the crisis of global capitalism.

At this point I grasped the principal ideas, but it is only with the articles about austerity measures in the US and Europe, and especially on the looting of Greece, that I really understood the class war that is developing. At the same time, I deepened my understanding of the functioning of the bourgeois state and the capitalist interests it defends.

I could write hundreds of lines about articles that have influenced me and furthered my political consciousness. I only have to think about articles on the developments in Egypt, or articles on Quebec and Canada to which I myself contributed, including on last year's Quebec student strike. The intervention of the WSWS in these important strategic experiences of the international working class has helped to raise the theoretical level of the whole party, to demarcate the Trotskyist perspective from that of the various pseudo-left organizations, and to offer a genuine political alternative for workers, youth and oppressed masses.

The anniversary of the *World Socialist Web Site* represents, on the one hand, years of intense political work to provide workers with a Marxist analysis of major global developments. On the other hand, the 15-year existence of the WSWS, and the years that will follow, embody the historical legacy of Leon Trotsky, his struggle against the Stalinist bureaucracy and the political struggle of the Trotskyist movement against all the revisionist trends which have sought to liquidate the International Committee of the Fourth International.

Just seven years after the fall of the USSR—at the same time the bourgeoisie was declaring that socialism was dead and the pseudo-left was adapting to the pressures of imperialism and renouncing the class struggle—the ICFI founded the *World Socialist Web Site* in order to continue and intensify the struggle for the independent political mobilization of the working class and for international socialism.



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