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Why I read the WSWWS

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I wanted to write this quick letter to hopefully help highlight the importance of the WSWWS in the fight for socialism, by sharing my experience in the International Socialist Organization (ISO), one of many pseudo-left groups that one can find today lining up behind US imperialism in Syria. The ISO has played, and continues to play, a key role in torpedoing any working class struggle by building up the authority of the unions, and it propels a perspective according to which the working class could pressure the Democrats to make change through sufficient protest. It is important the working class knows that groups like the ISO are an obstacle in the struggle for socialism.

I joined the ISO simply because they were the first group utilizing socialist rhetoric that happened to cross my path. But as my time and experience in the ISO went on and I started independently reading some of Trotsky's and James P. Cannon's writings, it was becoming clear that I had some political differences with the ISO. For instance, I was against affirmative action (a position that, it seemed to me, divides the working class) and I was strongly against support of the Green Party. The relationship with the Greens the ISO called a "united front." It seemed to me that far from the united front that Trotsky had called to establish in specific historic circumstances, the ISO's type of united front was more like the Stalinist "popular front." If I stayed in this group it was only because the only other group around at the time was the Party for Socialism and Liberation (PSL) and I couldn't stomach the idea of being around open Stalinists.

I came in contact with the WSWWS around 2008 while looking for stuff to read on the civil war in Sudan; then read the SEP (US) Statement of Principles and the SEP program that moved me and finally led me to break with the ISO. The SEP program rejected positions that I myself rejected in the ISO, while at the same time the

program powerfully showed me the way forward for the working class. Like many workers at the time, I had doubts about, and was confused by the destructive role of the unions. I couldn't get my head around the uncritical support the ISO continued to give the unions and their leadership. The ISO argued that we must stand with the union leadership because "to be against the unions is to be against the working class." However, this argument didn't seem to fit with what was happening all around the world. The unions and their leadership were playing a part in the attack on the working class. One case in particular in Los Angeles, where I live: the UTLA fought to convince teachers to accept furloughs by claiming that they will save teachers' jobs. The ISO, along with the union leadership, supported and pushed to get teachers to accept furloughs.

It's not the case that the ISO made a mistake—the ISO is fully integrated with the same union leaders who are helping with the destruction of teachers' jobs. A.J. Duffy, the UTLA's former president is a good friend of the ISO. The ISO presented A.J. Duffy as a fighter for the working class, and invited Duffy to speak to workers at immigrant rights rallies. Today, A.J. Duffy, supposedly a "fighter" for the working class, is starting his own charter school. He even wants to make it harder for teachers to keep tenure protection, by requiring that teachers demonstrate that they remain effective in the classroom.

For anyone who wants to get a fundamental understanding of what is happening in the world, and decides they'd like to change it, then reading the WSWWS is essential.



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Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact