Jake

Why I read the WSWS

21 June 2013

I first started reading the WSWS in university. An IYSSE member (at the time ISSE) who was my floor mate introduced me to the website. I had no prior knowledge of Marxism or socialism outside of a superficial impression that uncritically identified it with the legacy of Stalinism. I had no idea about the philosophical and historical conceptions of Marxism, the actual history of the Russian Revolution, or the struggle waged by genuine Marxists, chiefly Trotsky, against Stalin's betrayal and the degeneration of the Soviet Union into a totalitarian state. The democratic origins and progressiveness of the Soviet project had been entirely concealed from view by the crimes of Stalinism, which played so well into the hands of bourgeois ideology, i.e. capitalism=democracy=freedom, communism=dictatorship=oppression.

As I became more and more interested and began to learn more about the history of the workers' movement and Marxism, I began to understand on a much deeper level the interconnection of world events and the immense importance of history in the cognition of political reality. It also became clearer why I had not heard of these things before: such powerful ideas in the hands of masses of people would pose a mortal danger to the status quo of the political establishment and the entire capitalist order. This was the reason such seminal historical events and the philosophical and scientific conceptions that guided them were nowhere to be found in my high school history textbooks or even mainstream media at large, except in the most obfuscated and distorted form.

Starting out as a philosophy major in university, I had big hopes in the power of critical thinking to change the world. I found myself very disenchanted with what university philosophy turned out to be: a series of academic exercises and regurgitation of arguments onto exam papers without any significant regard to the context from which these ideas sprung or their relevance for today. But I always thought, with all of our intimate knowledge of the workings of nature and the universe, why hasn't the world changed yet? The monumental achievements in science-technology and economic productive capacity were, for me, proof of the boundless potential of human creativity, understanding and consciously directed thought. I wanted to know why philosophy hadn't become reality.

The WSWS opened my eyes to a whole new world of thought. It not only offered, and continues to offer, a consistent, critical and systematic approach to philosophical, historical and scientific questions, but brings these questions in direct relation to today—the processes taking place before our very eyes and which ultimately extend into the future. The coverage and analysis of the WSWS is unparalleled. Nowhere else can one find such intelligent and uncompromising insight into the philosophical, cultural and scientific achievements of humanity or the world historical crisis of the capitalist system.

This is why I read the WSWS.

To contact the WSWS and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact

© World Socialist Web Site