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English Political Websites

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I'm writing this article for Anglophone French speakers who would like to know about current political events from what I consider 'progressive' political websites.

Though I belong to some list serves, (that is I receive in my email mailbox an article from a specific organization), in general I prefer to learn about current events through visiting various political websites.

These are the websites that I check daily. We can call most of these websites 'aggregators': that is they bring together diverse political editorials, news articles, videos, interviews from various writers and organizations. Some of the writing is 'original': it appears for the first time on the aggregator website, but typically the majority is reposted from other sites, sometimes including the corporate media, but also other websites, blogs, non-corporate media, etc.

I feel that I have a pretty good view, after reading through these websites, of what is happening politically and how, if I want to, I can get involved as an activist. Most of these sites are funded by donations, so keep that in mind if you partake of their content.

www.CommonDreams.org is a website I check daily. It typically posts around eight 'editorial type' articles a day, in addition to the same number of 'news' articles. The 'editorial' articles come from a range of political writers, some very well known such as Noam Chomsky, some from completely unknown writers. In addition CommonDreams posts videos (very often from the independent TV/radio news show www.DemocracyNow.org) and activist alerts. It currently has a special sub-section dedicated to the 'Occupy' movement. One valuable aspect of CommonDreams is that comments are allowed for all the articles, and the comments are often just as interesting and informative as the original. Politically we could say that CommonDreams hosts views from the most progressive wing of the Democrat Party and many views (including anti-Democrat Party views) to the left of this wing. The majority of those who comment seem hostile to the current 'two-party' system in the US. CommonDreams does NOT post views which support the '911-Truth' movement.

Another 'aggregator' website I check daily is www.Counterpunch.org. The editors of Counterpunch are long-time political journalist Alexander Cockburn and environmental writer Jeffrey Saint-Clair. The strength of Counterpunch is their original content, which often goes outside the 'political' spectrum and deals with film and music. The original content is sometimes more than half of the ten or so articles they post each day, and the editors have a good eye for provocative and intellectually profound articles. Their articles are generally radical, anti-capitalist, anti-war, and anti-Zionist (pro Palestinian) and pro-environment. Cockburn is (famously) hostile to both the 911-Truth movement and to the theory of human-caused Global Warming. This latter position does not seem to be shared by his co-editor Saint-Clair, nor by many of the writers hosted on the site. Counterpunch does not allow comments on their articles. Counterpunch publishes a subscription only twice-a-month newsletter of original writing that often includes scoops, and writing that breaks new ground, and helps fund the website.

Moving to another side of the political spectrum is another website I check daily, www.AntiWar.com. Editorially, this website represents the 'libertarian' political viewpoint which is very typical in the U.S. But the focus of the website is 'anti-war', in fact against U.S. military and political intervention around the world, an opposition rooted in their view that 'Big Government', including especially the 'Military-Industrial Complex' (sometimes known as the 'Pentagon System'), must be dismantled. AntiWar.com's stance can thus be viewed as 'isolationist' as well as 'anti-imperialist', from a pro-capitalist (generally 'small c' capitalism) perspective. The Libertarian hero is US Representative from Texas Ron Paul, a former physician, Paul regularly is one of the few nationally known politicians to denounce US military involvement overseas. However Paul also denounces ANY big government program, including Medicare (national health insurance for retired people). AntiWar.com is very critical of the US relationship with Israel, and does not support the '9-11 Truth Movement'. The editor of the site is longtime libertarian activist and writer Justin Raimondo, who writes an editorial three days a week.

A fourth site I check daily is NOT an aggregator site: the Media Lens Message Board

<http://members5.boardhost.com/medialens/> which is hosted at www.MediaLens.org . Media Lens is a site based in the UK who critiques the 'Liberal Media' in the UK (basically the BBC, the Guardian and the Independent) using Noam Chomsky and Ed Herman's classic work Manufacturing Consent as their theoretical basis. MediaLens sends out a 'MediaLens' alert on a regular basis, pointing out that the 'liberal media', while seen by many as anti-war and progressive, are in fact cheerleaders of war and capitalism more dangerous, because they are more subtle and more respected, than the more rabid war mongers of the other corporate media. The value of the message board is that the various users are constantly posting interesting articles from all over the web and discussing the current issues.

A fifth aggregator site I often consult is called www.InformationClearinghouse.info . This site daily posts a wide variety of good articles on current events. The site is pro-Palestinian, anti-imperialist, and is sympathetic to the '911-Truth' movement, which questions the official narrative of the events of September 11, 2001. Comments are allowed for all articles.

Finally, one of the most famous sites on the left I check regularly is <http://www.zcommunications.org/znet> which is based in Massachusetts. Znet hosts a huge range of political and activist resources. It began as Z Magazine, one of the best radical magazines in the United States, strongly associated with famous U.S. dissident Noam Chomsky. The editor Michael Albert is a long time activist and promoter of an anarchist economic model called 'Parecon', which stands for Participatory Economics. Znet is anti-zionist, anti-capitalist, and associated with the historical anarchist critique of Marxism, that is the critique includes hierarchy as well as capitalist relationships.

There are of course other great English-language websites, but these are the ones I consult on a regular basis. I think by checking these sites anyone can have a rather accurate non-corporate view of what is happening in the political and to some lesser degree the cultural world, from the perspective of writers from all over the world.