

David North to refute falsifications of Trotsky's life at lectures in Scotland and Wales

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The widespread and systemic falsification of Leon Trotsky's political biography by contemporary historians will be the subject of two lectures to be delivered later this month in Scotland and Wales by David North, editorial board chairman of the *World Socialist Web Site*.

The two lectures are entitled, "In Defense of Leon Trotsky: A Reply to the Post-Soviet School of Falsification."

The first lecture will be delivered on April 25 at the University of Glasgow. The second will be held on April 27 at the University of Cardiff. *See below for full details.*

In a brochure announcing the lectures, the Socialist Equality Party in Britain notes that the anti-Trotsky "campaign of historical deception" did not end with the dissolution of the Stalinist regime in the former USSR. "Indeed," writes the SEP, "it has recently grown more intense." The SEP calls particular attention to recent Trotsky biographies authored by two British historians, Ian Thatcher and Geoffrey Swain, which it describes as "travesties of serious and objective research."

North, according to the SEP brochure, "will explain the political motivations underlying the falsifications of Trotsky's life and ideas, and more generally examine the function and contemporary implications of the lie in historical writing."

Interviewed in Detroit, North stated that Leon Trotsky remains, nearly 70 years after his assassination, the target of an unrelenting campaign of historical falsification.

North said that he was "appalled" by the "abysmal level" of the biographies written by Swain and Thatcher. "Neither of these works pays any respect to even the most basic requirements of objective

scholarship. The issue here is not merely that I do not agree with their interpretations of Trotsky's career. Rather, what I find particularly objectionable is their provocative and cynical attitude toward the historical record.

"They make statements that are flatly contradicted by well-known historical facts. Their interpretations are constructed on a foundation of misrepresentations and distortions. I intend to cite specific passages from both biographies that grossly misrepresent Trotsky's ideas and actions in a manner that is quite obviously intended to diminish and falsify his historical role, while justifying his persecution by the Stalinist regime."

North insists that the falsification of history must be seen as a very grave matter. "The falsification of history played an immense role in preparing the catastrophes of the twentieth century." He added that "the political decisions that people will make about the future depends to no small extent on how they understand the past. In this sense, they require that historians carry out their labors with unflinching intellectual integrity."

The April 25 lecture at the University of Glasgow will begin at 2 p.m. in the Mathematics Building (adjacent to the Boyd Orr), Room 515.

The April 27 lecture at the University of Cardiff will begin at 2 p.m. in the Main Building, Lecture Theatre 125.



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