Film showings and lectures by David North

The historical significance and enduring political relevance of the 1917 Russian Revolution

10 September 2012

In a series of meetings in the US, David North, national chairman of the Socialist Equality Party and chairman of the editorial board of the *World Socialist Web Site*, will introduce the showing of the great historical documentary *Tsar to Lenin* with a concise assessment of "The Historical Significance and Enduring Political Relevance of the 1917 Russian Revolution."

In February 1917, in the midst of World War I, a mass uprising in Petrograd, the capital city of Russia, led within five days to the overthrow of the Tsar Nicholas II and the 300-year-old Romanov dynasty. This momentous event proved, however, to be only the beginning of the Russian Revolution. During the eight months that followed, Russia was the scene of intense conflict between political parties representing distinct and irreconcilable social interests.

The bourgeois class and its political allies among the moderate socialists (Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries) sought to bring the revolution to an end, preserve the capitalist system and safeguard Russia's interests as an imperialist power. The Bolshevik Party, under the leadership of Lenin and Trotsky, advanced a Marxist revolutionary program for the overthrow of capitalism that gained mass support from the Russian working class. In October 1917, the Bolshevik Party organized a victorious popular insurrection that established the first socialist workers' state in history.

The Russian Revolution ranks among the seminal events of the twentieth century. The victory of the Bolshevik Party and the establishment of the Soviet Union not only abolished capitalism in the largest country on earth. The example of a victorious socialist revolution politically radicalized the working class throughout the world, inspiring the masses with the possibility of an alternative to capitalism and imperialism.

In the aftermath of the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, the propagandists of the ruling class declared that this represented the decisive triumph of capitalism, the so-called End of History. However, as capitalism confronts its greatest crisis since the 1930s, the events of 1917 once again acquire immense relevance. As class conflict intensifies in the United States and internationally, the need for renewed study of the greatest revolution of the twentieth century becomes ever more urgent.

Tsar to Lenin, first shown in 1937, is one of the twentieth century's greatest film documentaries. The film is based on archival footage assembled over more than a decade by the legendary Herman Axelbank, with a narration by pioneer American radical Max Eastman.

David North, author of *In Defense of Leon Trotsky*, is a leading expert on the Russian Revolution.

Meeting times:

Chicago, Illinois
Saturday, September 15, 6:00 pm
Powell's Bookstore
1218 South Halsted Street
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Ann Arbor, Michigan
Tuesday, September 18, 6:00 pm
University of Michigan
Rackham Amphitheater, 4th floor
915 East Washington Street

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New York, New York

Saturday, September 22, 4:00 pm

University Settlement at the Houston Street Center

273 Bowery, Manhattan

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