

# UK showings of *Tsar to Lenin*

13 October 2012

The Socialist Equality Party (UK) and the International Youth and Students for Social Equality are to host film showings of the remarkable film documentary, *Tsar to Lenin* this month.

*Tsar to Lenin*, first released in 1937, ranks among the twentieth century's greatest film documentaries.

It presents an extraordinary cinematic account of the Russian Revolution—from the mass uprising which overthrew the centuries-old Tsarist regime in February 1917, to the Bolshevik-led insurrection eight months later that established the first socialist workers' state, and the final victory in 1921 of the new Soviet regime over counter-revolutionary forces after a three-year-long civil war.

Based on archival footage assembled over more than a decade by the legendary Herman Axelbank (1900-1979), *Tsar to Lenin* provides an unparalleled film record of a revolutionary movement, embracing millions, which shook the world and changed the course of history.

The narration by Max Eastman (1883-1969), the pioneer American radical, conveys with emotion and humanity the drama and pathos of the revolution. Hailed by film critics as a masterpiece upon its premier, *Tsar to Lenin* aroused fierce opposition from those who feared the consequences of its truthful portrayal of events.

First, the Stalinist organizations—which could not abide the documentary's depiction of the leading role played by Leon Trotsky in the revolution and civil war—threatened a boycott of theatres that showed the film. Later, during the McCarthyite era and the Cold War, public showings of *Tsar to Lenin* were all but impossible.

Seventy-five years after its premier, the importance of *Tsar to Lenin* remains undiminished. Indeed, the fresh wave of historical falsification provoked by the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991 lends to this

film exceptional relevance.

In a new period of global capitalist crisis, *Tsar to Lenin* bears witness to a moment in history when socialist ideals inspired the greatest revolutionary movement in world history.

## Sheffield

Tues 16 October, 6.30pm

St Matthews Meeting Rooms, Omanney Room  
Carver Street  
Sheffield, S1 4FE

## London

Thursday 18 October, 7.15pm

University Of London Union, Room 2a  
Malet Street (nearest tube Goodge St)  
London, WC1E 7HY

## Leeds

Tuesday 23 October, 6.30pm

Headingley Enterprise & Arts Centre (HEART), The  
Ridge room  
Bennet Road  
Leeds, LS6 3HN

## Manchester

Wednesday 24 October, 7pm

St Peters House  
Precinct Centre (opposite Blackwells)  
Oxford Road  
Manchester, M13 9GH

## Oxford

Wednesday 24 October, 7pm

Oxford Town Hall  
St Aldate's Room  
Oxford, OX1 1BX

## Bristol

Wednesday October 24, 7.30pm

Cafe Leila  
88 Stokes Croft  
Bristol BS1 3RJ



To contact the WSWS and the  
Socialist Equality Party visit:

**[wsws.org/contact](https://wsws.org/contact)**