

David North delivers address on Russian Revolution at University of St Andrews, Scotland

Our reporter
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A well-attended and well-received lecture was delivered by *World Socialist Web Site* chairman David North on October 18 at the University of St Andrews in Scotland.

North was invited to speak on the historical and contemporary significance of the October 1917 Russian Revolution by the Socialist Society, which wanted to mark the centenary year of this world-changing event.

St Andrews is Scotland's oldest university, founded in 1413, and the third oldest university in the English-speaking world. Its alumni include James Wilson (signatory to the US Declaration of Independence), John Knox and Jean-Paul Marat.

Seventy students studying a wide range of disciplines, from undergraduate to post-graduate level, attended the event. The audience included students from France, Italy, Germany, Denmark, Norway, the United States, Canada and Russia, as well as Britain.

At the conclusion, many stayed behind for discussions lasting almost one hour.

Socialist Society member Jacob, who had organised the event, said: "The lecture had the highest attendance we've gathered in the series of meetings. I think one of the great accomplishments of the lecture was that many of the students I spoke to afterwards expressed a new-found interest in learning about the October Revolution. It shows that the political climate is changing, and more and more youth are interested in finding a solution to the crisis of our era."

Jason, another student, said: "I did find Mr North humanised Trotsky in a way I hadn't really heard before, and I found that very compelling."

Anna said: "I enjoyed the talk very much. I have attended at least one other meeting on the Russian

Revolution in the past.

"What fascinated me in the talk was the analysis of the falsification of history, and the shift of narrative between the times before and after the fall of the USSR. From the Russian Revolution, I think that young people can learn both the reasons that led to its success, but also why, ultimately, the bureaucracy took control and betrayed the ideals that the revolution has defended."

Leyla said of the lecture, "I absolutely loved it, and I say this from a Russian perspective!"

"I think that David North is a very passionate speaker whose speeches are not tempered by so-called 'political correctness'. It is likely that his speech shocked a number of students, but I am certainly very glad that someone delivered the other side of the story to them in such a passionate and exuberant manner. I honestly was considering not going to that lecture, thinking I would be presented with a boring outline of events that I had learned in history lessons. I did not expect to be revolutionised or made into a socialist!"

"The lecture honestly made me look at my own long-held beliefs in a different light. Being a Russian patriot has been the defining feature of my character, but the lecture made me think if there was a cause higher than national identity to be loyal to."



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