"We are turning the floodlights on the history of the Fourth International"

Ten highlights from "Sylvia Ageloff and the Assassination of Leon Trotsky"

Our reporters
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On Sunday, February 14, the *World Socialist Web Site* hosted a live Q&A discussion with David North and Eric London reviewing the recent four-part series by Eric London exposing the role of Sylvia Ageloff in the assassination of Leon Trotsky in Mexico City on August 20, 1940.

Below are 10 key moments from the discussion.

1. Who was Leon Trotsky, and why did Stalin seek his death? (0:24)

Socialist Equality Party National Secretary Joseph Kishore opened the event by providing a review of Trotsky's struggle against the Stalinist bureaucracy.

2. Why was Trotsky's assassination the "most consequential political assassination of the 20th century?" (12:30)

David North reviewed the background of *Security and the Fourth International* and why the Trotskyist movement in the 1970s had to uncover the circumstances surrounding Trotsky's death 35 years prior.

3. What was the political purpose of *Security and the Fourth International*? (20:26)

North explained the historical significance of the investigation launched by the International Committee and the response of the pro-Stalinist Pabloite organizations.

4. Eric London introduces his series detailing the role of Sylvia Ageloff. (26:16)

The Socialist Workers Party hid from its membership the fact that Ageloff had been charged by Mexican authorities with murder. Now it is possible to paint a much clearer picture of her true role.

5. London speaks on the significance of Trotsky's death and the effort to expose those involved in the assassination and its coverup. (30:35)

London said, "When one begins to peel away the layer after layer of lies of the Stalinists, one gains a clearer understanding of the events and the fight for historical truth today."

6. North explains the political array of forces at the time the investigation began which accounts for the hostility to it. (40:12)

7. London reviews how Ramon Mercader received the assignment to kill Trotsky. (1:13:10)

London said, "From the record it looks more like Ageloff is the one handling Mercader than the other way around."

8. North notes that the article series shows we are now in a different period, with powerful forces opening the way for social revolution. (1:33:04)

The state will seek to infiltrate the revolutionary workers movement today. At the same time, the working class has its own resources and a younger generation of workers who will make use of *Security and the Fourth International* to protect the movement from agents of the state.

9. London explains why *Security and Fourth International* and the fight for historical truth is so critical to the development of the working class movement today. (1:44:10)

10. North concludes by explaining that the most powerful political weapon the working class has is understanding its history. (1:49:03)

The event represented a major step forward in the

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decades-long struggle by the International Committee of the Fourth International to investigate the circumstances surrounding Trotsky's death and expose the network of GPU agents who carried out the great crime.

The event underscored the significance of Trotsky's assassination, addressed key aspects of the Ageloff article series and explained the series' roots in the *Security and the Fourth International* investigation . It reviewed the role played by GPU agents and their apologists within the SWP and the Pabloite movement and addressed audience questions as to how anyone could have opposed the fight to expose GPU and imperialist agents within the socialist movement.

The discussion also addressed the historical lessons of this experience for the revolutionary movement today.

The assassination of Trotsky was the high point of the counterrevolution represented by Stalinism. The revolutionary movement forgets nothing. It carries its history on its back and uses it to prepare the working class for the present day struggles. This history will enter into the consciousness of those fighting for socialism all around the world.

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