

# A reply to Edward Luce of the *Financial Times* on youth radicalization

David North  
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The following was originally on X in reply to Edward Luce of the *Financial Times*.

The radicalism of the youth of the 1960s was not “drug inspired.” It was a response to Vietnam, the struggle for civil rights, and, even more fundamentally, the fresh and not-forgotten horrors of the two World Wars. The 1917 October Revolution had not disappeared from memory, capitalism and anti-communism were in bad odor, Stalinism was increasingly discredited, and there was a revival of interest in Trotsky, whose extraordinary books were recognized as political and literary masterworks. This resurgence was suppressed by the reactionary political climate of the Reagan-Thatcher years to which Mr. Luce was exposed, to his own misfortune, during his intellectually formative years.

But Mr. Luce correctly detects a process of radicalization among the world’s youth. The question is, at what point will this radicalization break beyond the bounds of the media-vetted pseudo-leftism of people like Sanders and Mamdani and reestablish contact with the genuine Marxian-socialist political perspective and culture that was exemplified in the October Revolution and figures like Lenin, Trotsky and Luxemburg. This break must and will occur, and the rediscovery of Trotsky’s extraordinary political legacy and writings will be a critical element of the reemergence of Marxism as a mass socialist movement based on the working class.

The *World Socialist Web Site* has posted a preface I have written to a new edition of Trotsky’s autobiography, *My Life*.



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