

INTERNAL BULLETIN NO.22

JANUARY 1982

Resolution on the Ballykelly bombing from Glasgow WSL

"The Crisis of the FI and our tasks" - text as amended by  
OC.

Summary minutes and resolutions from November 1981 NC.

(A number of other items have already been submitted for the Internal Bulletin. The present contents are being got out earlier for the January NC, and a further Internal Bulletin will follow shortly.

Please send articles for the Internal Bulletin to the centre, typed if possible ~~xxx~~ A4 on Roneo stencils.)

To be distributed with the present Internal Bulletin -  
"The Crisis in the British Section", by Evington.

"Glasgow WSL unreservedly condemns the shameless editorial on the Ballykelly bombing which appeared in [REDACTED]"

The editorial represented a gross betrayal of some of the most fundamental principles of revolutionary socialism: there was not a word of defence of, and support for the struggle of, the Irish Republican movement; there was not a word of the need for immediate British withdrawal; instead, the bombing is described as "carnage" and "indiscriminate slaughter" with the emphasis placed on the civilian casualties caused by the bombing; and the 'solution' to the war in Ireland is posed in terms of a vacuous liberalism ("... a just solution ...", "... a democratic solution ...") as opposed to the defeat of British imperialism.

The editorial was a close parallel to that which appeared in the 'Militant' the same week, the only basic difference being that 'Militant' took the anti-socialist arguments in its editorial to their logical conclusion.

The NC must therefore:

- ensure that the full text of this motion is circulated to all branches in the next branch circular/IB, whichever appears the first,
- ensure that an attempted justification of the contents of the editorial by its author is contained in the next branch circular/IB,
- ensure that the next branch circular/IB contains a report from the convenor of the Irish commission on what, if any, work it has carried out in the last twelve months,
- provide an explanation in the next branch circular/IB of how it came about that the editorial's author was permitted to write such an editorial for publication in the first place,
- ensure that either a special aggregate is called on the question of Ireland for the immediate future, or that extended time at the national conference is allotted to the question of Ireland,
- ensure that all future editorials/articles on Ireland which appear in the paper are in line with revolutionary socialist politics, not the scab politics of the 'Militant' tendency,
- ensure that a meeting of the Irish commission is held early in the New Year for the purpose of restoring a revolutionary socialist position on Ireland to the organisation's political programme and publications, and for the purpose of discussing the solidarity work which needs to be carried out in the period ahead to build support for such a position."

from Glasgow WSL branch (one vote against)

# CRISIS OF THE FI. AND OUR TASKS

1. From guerillaist adventures in Latin America and ultra-left excesses in Europe, to the tail-ending of a witch-hunting Socialist Party in the Portuguese events of 1975-6; from abstentionism over the Angolan war for liberation to a grovelling political endorsement of the petty bourgeois Sandinista regime in Nicaragua; from 'orthodox' calls for Leninist party-building to the most grotesque political capitulation to Fidel Castro's brand of Stalinist populism; from grandiose proclamations of tendencies 'more orthodox than ever' and historic strides forward for the FI, to hasty, confusing and embarrassing splits which leave Trotskyist forces further divided and demoralised: the concrete experiences of the political chaos that has reigned in the Trotskyist movement over the last ten years alone (1972-82) show better than any abstract argument over history or theory the burning need for serious steps to regenerate the Fourth International politically and reconstruct it organisationally.

2. Not one of the major international currents has been able to offer a coherent or consistent programme and perspective for the key struggles of the international working class. Instead, the repeated twists, turns, belated shifts and abrupt about-faces of their leaderships have provided unmistakable evidence that what characterises their method above all is empiricism and adaptation — neither of which offer the necessary way forward for the oppressed masses of the world in their struggle for emancipation.

The stubborn refusal of these same leaders to examine or permit serious discussion of their own mistakes and the lessons of the recent past of the Trotskyist movement indicates a sectarian fixation on preserving their own narrow group interests rather than any grasp of the necessity to develop a Marxist leadership for the international workers' movement which can and must learn from its mistakes. This same sectarianism, coupled with the development in some of the larger groupings (and even in some quite small ones) of a fixed hierarchy of quasi-bureaucratic 'leaders', explains the increasingly frequent resort to extreme organisational means to muzzle discussion and tendency struggles within organisations which present themselves as 'Bolshevik'. This in itself has heavily contributed to the scattering and to the theoretical poverty of the cadres and groupings of today's 'Trotskyist movement'.

3. Despite — or rather because of — such profound political weaknesses and organisational dictatorship, the Trotskyist movement today, like a shattered mirror, presents itself to the world as a chaotic mass of fragments, each of which may in the right light glint with at least a fraction of the former brilliance, but none of which in themselves can ever constitute or reconstruct a viable and

authoritative Fourth International. Never before have there been so many substantial currents jockeying for the limelight as 'the' Fourth International: and yet never before have those groupings themselves appeared so internally unstable or politically bankrupt.

4. If the process of disintegration and decay is not countered by a sharp struggle for programmatic clarification and reconstruction, there is a real danger of a substantial loss of cadres, which would inflict a substantial reverse upon the struggle for a revolutionary international. Our international tendency pledges itself to play the fullest possible role in such a struggle, and to seek the means to promote the maximum international debate on the central problems facing Trotskyists in the 1980s.

5. The twin starting points for such a political development are:

a) the recognition that the essential principles and method mapped out by the Theses of the first four congresses of the Comintern and by the first three conferences of the FI (1936 Conference of the Movement for the FI; 1938 Founding Conference; and 1940 Emergency Conference) retain validity and potency today.

But also:

b) That the many rich and varied events and experiences of the international workers' movement — and within that of the sections of the FI — in the post-war period mean that the 1938 Programme in itself is no longer an adequate basis to secure the fighting unity of a revolutionary international. A fuller and broader programme must be developed as a guide to action in the class struggle of today and as a test of the revolutionary practice of organisations which would wish to play a role in reconstructing the FI.

6. Since the drafting of the basic theses on which the FI was formed, there have been the varied processes of the emergence of deformed workers' states in Eastern Europe, Asia and Cuba; there have been the successful liberation of much of the colonial world from the direct grip of imperialist rule — and the emergence in such struggles of new types of populist petty bourgeois leaderships posing new problems to the working class; the development of capitalism in the 'boom' period brought an increase in the size, strength and militancy of the proletariat, not least in the exploited countries of Latin America, Africa and Asia; and while the Kremlin bureaucracy has gained in military strength relative to imperialism, and in world-political weight (enabling it to act as an alternative patron to Third World regimes in conflict with the imperialist powers), the post-war period has seen the same bureaucracy assailed by repeated struggles for political revolution



and suffer its own internal splits arising from conflicts of national interest.

The sum total of these changes is a world substantially different in many respects from the world of 1938 — so different as to make the Transitional Programme a crucial starting point, but inadequate on its own, and inappropriate as a Bible.

7. On each one of these questions the post-war Trotskyist movement has failed to develop a coherent and consistent response — falling back on the one hand upon 'orthodox' repetition by rote of quotations from Trotsky's pre-war analysis, or, on the other hand, lightmindedly 'junking the old Trotskyism' in a wanton capitulation to empiricist and opportunist politics in a complex and hostile political environment.

It is confusion on how to approach these new and challenging problems which has provided the framework for the splits and fusions which have produced the chaotic, chronically divided Trotskyist movement of the 1980s. A failure to grasp and explain the forms taken by the counter-revolutionary politics of Stalinism in overturning capitalism in Eastern Europe opened wide the door to adaptation to Titoism and illusions in mass CPs. This in turn laid the political basis for the split of 1953 and subsequent confusion over China, then Cuba, etc. Unanswered, the same political problem still lies behind the political accommodation by some currents to the Vietnamese Stalinists today.

A failure to comprehend the processes of petty bourgeois nationalist struggles, and a lack of any coherent programme for proletarian independence from such leaderships, formed the background to the false positions on the Castro leadership in Cuba which split the International Committee and stored up perpetually-recurring problems for the 'United' Secretariat in the 1960s and 1970s.

The muddled and idealist notions of Mandel's 'new vanguardism' on the one hand and a lapse by the SWP(US) into reformist-style electoralism on the other, ensured that neither main wing of the USFI was politically equipped to offer a lead to the Portuguese working class in the revolutionary events of 1974-6. The SWP(US) tail-ending of the Portuguese Socialist Party was echoed in possibly even more crass form by the 'anti-Pabloite' OCI — proving once again that anti-Pabloism is no guarantee of correct politics. The uncorrected blunders and adventures of the past had thoroughly disorientated the majority of the Trotskyist movement.

By 1979 it was not so much new problems which wreaked havoc on the Trotskyist groups — it was the re-emergence of the old, but still unresolved, problem of orientation to petty bourgeois nationalist leaderships, this time in Nicaragua. History repeated itself, this time as farce, with the SWP(US) boldly endorsing the expulsion of their own Morenist 'comrades' from Nicaragua by the 'revolutionary' Sandinistas. The USFI, with the departure of Moreno's Bolshevik Faction, found itself split not into two but in effect into three since the political divisions between the European leadership and the SWP have grown relentlessly in scope and scale as the SWP are sucked further into the politics and method of Castroism, jetti-

soning the (barely understood) theoretical baggage of Trotskyism en route.

And in 1981 the theoretical, programmatic and practical bankruptcy of the self-styled 'orthodox' regroupment, the FIIC, was underlined when the simple election of a social democratic government in France blew asunder the diplomatic agreements laboriously constructed in compendious documents.

8. We emphasise our view that **none** of the vast array of organisations now proclaiming themselves Trotskyist can claim any exclusive role as the political continuity of Trotskyism. The organisational fragmentation of Trotskyist currents has helped worsen the political disarray, by generating mutually reinforcing one-sidednesses. And sectarian self-proclamation has made it worse again.

The Trotskyist spectrum has enormous and obvious weaknesses. But it also has important strengths. Only within the forces that have struggled to develop as Trotskyists is there to be found — however imperfect — an attempt consciously to combat the counter-revolutionary politics of Stalinism, or to further the strategy — however ill-comprehended — of permanent revolution. Numerically, these forces have grown since the mid '60s and especially since 1968 as an expression of the crisis of Stalinism and the increasing militancy and self-confidence of the working class internationally.

Our tendency fights for the reconstruction and political regeneration of the FI, by which we sum up:

a) our **rejection** of any notion that we alone as a tendency can proclaim ourselves to be the sole continuity of the Trotskyist programme or 'the' FI;

b) our insistence that the steps needed to lay a firm basis for unity and common discipline among Trotskyist forces are not organisational negotiations and rearrangements between existing currents, but a programmatic clarification of the movement on the main issues confronting the proletariat in its struggles. The FI must be more than simply an assembly of people who have not (yet!) betrayed the working class; it must be the living and conscious organised form through which revolutionaries confront problems and hammer out a programme adequate to the tasks of today's class struggle.

9. In raising our call for international discussion, we are aware that the 'Trotskyist movement' is today totally — perhaps irreparably — divided.

The Lutte Ouvriere current broke from the mainstream organisationally in 1940, sharpened its political division after 1946, and ceased to regard itself as a faction of an existing Fourth International from the time of its reconstitution in 1956. The other would-be Trotskyist currents of today are all essentially rooted in the political crisis which shook the Trotskyist movement in the late 1940s.

In that period the Trotskyist movement declined drastically. (The French section, for example, which was central, suffered an almost complete halt in activity in summer 1948, and by 1952 was only 150 strong, probably less than one-tenth of



its peak numbers). At the same time gigantic revolutionary events unrolled on a world scale.

Striving to understand this, the leaders of the movement essentially lost faith in the centrality of Trotskyism as a struggle for a **leadership** to develop and defend the independent interests of the working class, in particular against the counter-revolutionary betrayals of Stalinism. In the aftermath of Tito's surprise 'break' with Stalin and populist measures designed to rally mass support against any Kremlin moves to remove him, and in the midst of the drive to power by Mao's Stalinist forces in China, Pablo and the FI leaders increasingly looked to some 'objective process' which would repeat such political developments and take them further, transforming the counter-revolutionary parties of the Comintern into 'centrist' parties which might even, under 'mass pressure' 'project a revolutionary orientation'. From seeking to mobilise the conscious activity of the working class through the construction of consistent revolutionary leadership, the Trotskyists began increasingly to look for external events and processes which would inevitably rally the masses and overcome the enormous crisis of leadership. The job of Trotskyists was to become part of this 'objective process' and to speed on the healthy evolution of the Stalinist parties. After the outbreak of the Korean war, the conviction that World War 3 was imminent simply lent fuel to this fire, and the schema of the 'war-revolution' which would automatically line up the forces of Stalinism in the 'camp' of the revolution made its appearance.

This conception led to serious political adaptation: primarily to Stalinist and petty bourgeois movements in struggle (Tito, MNR, etc), but also (by way of logical conclusion) to established Stalinist bureaucracies (as with the refusal of Pablo's faction to call for withdrawal of USSR troops from East Germany unless the call was linked to withdrawal of imperialist troops from West Germany).

The independent role of the working class and Trotskyists was submerged in a conception of global 'class camps' in which the Stalinist bureaucracy, petty bourgeois leaders and sections of reformism were included in the 'proletarian' class camp, in which the Trotskyists merely became respectful advisers and camp-followers.

Without breaking from the fundamental 'objectivist' conception, some Trotskyists emphasised the role of the 'subjective' additive. They thus placed great stress on 'the party' as an organisational form, as a 'magic ingredient' to add to the objective process.

The two sides of tailist 'objectivism' and sectarian arbitrariness into which Trotskyism was thus decomposed were present, in various combinations, in all the currents after 1948-50. In 1953, however, the movement split — essentially over the tactical conclusions drawn by Michel Pablo and the then leadership of the movement, from their 'objectivist' analysis, without questioning the analysis itself. To some extent, then, the two sides of the split reflected the two sides of post-crisis Trotskyism.

The theoretical chaos and organisational disarray also opened the way for the rise to leadership of militants who had never previously figured as theoreticians, but who were gifted organisers with a talent for quick-fix solutions: Pierre Lambert in France and Gerry Healy in Britain. Strongly emphasising 'theory', they were in fact

the most empiricist of all (though Healy for a time accepted the theoretical guidance of the SWP-USA).

Both sides of the Trotskyist spectrum have generated further mutations. Those who have developed the 'tailist' side further have, however, generally concluded by more or less openly repudiating Trotskyism: Cochrane-Clarke, Mestre, Lawrence, the LSSP, Posadas, Pablo... Those who have developed the 'sectarian' side continue to proclaim Trotskyism — indeed, to proclaim themselves the only true Trotskyists.

Other currents have generally operated by tacking and turning eclectically, adapting and re-coiling. They differ by the extent to which they have seriously analysed the world around them, sought through such analysis to reintegrate the two 'sides', and learned from their mistakes.

Several currents broke from the mainstream in the late '40s, radically rejecting the analysis made of the Stalinist-led revolutions and instead adopting varied 'new class' theories of Stalinism. None of these theories, however, was satisfactory, stable, or rigorously worked through to conclusions. Most of the 'new class' currents sooner or later repudiated Trotskyism. After repudiating Trotskyism in the 1950s, however, one current — that led by the SWP-Britain — readopted it eclectically in the late '60s.

10. Some currents calling themselves Trotskyist have hardened into positions and practices which make them definitively lost to revolutionary politics. Gerry Healy's withered, witch-hunting 'International Committee' is now reduced to the role of a prostituted political appendage of bourgeois and petty bourgeois Middle Eastern demagogues. The Posadist and now the Spartacist organisations, adapting wholesale to Stalinism, have now lined up as apologists and advocates to Stalinist counter-revolution in Poland.

Other currents, however, even if in most cases their wholesale political reform is hardly to be imagined, have sufficient political vitality to require us to pay attention to them, seek discussions when appropriate, and relate tactically.

a) The most tense and significant of the struggles now under way is currently being fought out within the **American SWP**, where some veteran forces have taken up the battle against the wholesale liquidationist Castroite turn by the Barnes-Waters leadership. This turn has led SWP leaders to speculate publicly on the prospects of a break from the politics of the USFI in order to link up with the Cuban, Nicaraguan, Grenadan and other 'revolutionists of action'. But the heavy loss and demoralisation of SWP cadres brought about by the present orientation, coupled with the heavy bureaucratic response of the leadership to its opponents, must indicate that their prospects of reversing the political degeneration are slim. Recently the SWP has tacitly abandoned Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution and embraced instead Lenin's discarded theory of the 'democratic dictatorship of proletariat and peasantry'. Unless the leaders are stopped, it can only be a matter of time before the SWP — the one-time bedrock of world Trotskyism — breaks more or all of its remaining links with the Trotskyist movement, precipitating a new round of crisis in the USFI.

b) The USFI leadership finds itself caught between conflicting pressures. On the one hand there has been a leftward evolution both on the



question of political revolution and in the practical work of some USFI sections (France, Italy). In addition, the aftermath of the 1977 'self-criticism' of the guerilla turn of 1969 had brought a more critical appraisal of the Cuban leadership and of the Stalinist leaders in Vietnam.

Yet on the other hand, the pressure of the SWP, with its relentless drive towards Castroism, has served to counter this and expose the confusion in the USFI's empirical adjustments. Frightened above all by the thought of a further split, the USFI leaders have limited the scope of their fight back — with damaging consequences.

In essence the Mandel leadership remains a political descendant of Pablo's impressionist opportunism, and has in no way analysed or broken from the liquidationism of the past. Their unstable and eclectic method has currently made the Mandelites appear as the 'orthodox' wing of the USFI: but a further turn in events could well once again open the door to new blunders. Only a struggle to sharpen and broaden their counter-offensive against the SWP into a full-scale programmatic development can offer a stable way forward for the USFI and its sections.

c) The International Workers' League (LIT), Moreno's surviving portion of the ill-starred 1980 FIIC, continues to rock from the crisis caused by its premature and unprincipled fusion and its hasty split. Despite its public bravado — depicting the entire process as simply a minor step on the road to the triumphant reconstruction of the FI — the subsequent loss of the Italian section leaves Moreno's current largely isolated in Latin America, where it is rumoured that there have been expulsions in a number of sections. Having emerged as an independent political force through a combination of 'orthodox' but eclectic criticism of other tendencies and ruthless organisational manoeuvring, Moreno now finds himself forced to set the pace for his whole tendency, with his cadre plainly made sceptical by the recent disastrous escapade with Lambert.

From all indications Moreno fits into the pattern of 'organisation men' gaining the leadership of sections of the movement in periods of political crisis, and directing them with some organisational flair and little political scruple.

Without any coherent or stable political analysis to offer, the LIT can only be expected to progress through fits and starts — crises and coups, blunders and successes, characterised by abrupt leaps from opportunism to ultra-leftism and vice versa. According to apparently reliable accounts from the Lambertists and others, the major Morenist organisation, in Argentina, followed a plainly class-collaborationist and nationalist line in the later stages of the Malvinas war.]

A political struggle on such issues must be waged hand-in-hand with a detailed critique of the evasive Theses on the FI drawn up by Moreno for the FIIC, and now claimed as their political patrimony by both the LIT and Lambert's FICIR.

d) Lambert's international grouping appears to have best survived the latest round of splits and fusions, largely as a result of its heavily bureaucratised national and international regime, which has meant that the national sections have in practice been little other than satellites of the French OCI (now PCI). The politics of the FICIR remain consistent with those evolved by the PCI since 1958 — capitulation to international social democracy; acute stalinophobia; transformation of the tactic of the united front into a strategic principle;

and a combination of adaptation to the existing level of the workers' movement with blustering revolutionary proclamations which leads to a classical minimum-maximum division between the PCI's agitation and their propaganda.

The OCRFI's 1979 split with most of its Latin American forces (subsequently to form the FIT) and its brazenly bureaucratic response to the Morenist forces in the 1981 split in the FIIC underline the notorious role of the Lambert leadership, who have an evil reputation for slander and violence against political opponents inside and outside their own organisation.

The prospects of such a leadership entering any serious dialogue with other tendencies, in which their own past record would be open to serious examination, is minimal. And the chances of any substantial opposition current gaining the elbow-room to wage a tendency struggle must be lower in the FICIR than any other international grouping.

e) The French organisation Lutte Ouvriere has allied groups in the US and other countries. Lutte Ouvriere's political evolution has been almost completely isolated from the main stream of Trotskyist organisations, and while they are ready to discuss and cooperate (cf. their current joint monthly supplement with the LCR), they do so from a position of profound alienation from other Trotskyist groups and determined opposition to quick-fix 'reconstructions of the Fourth International'. Their politics are heavily economist and informed by a perspective which is somewhat quietist and sectarian — and catastrophist, only the catastrophe is always a long way off in the future — (cf. their line on May 1968, Portugal 1975, etc.) Their leadership, aided by a structure and a semi-clandestine method of operation which ensures a rigorous selection of recruits and a top-down functioning, have a situation where while internal discussion is quite extensive and formally free, and LO comrades are positively encouraged to study the ideas of other tendencies, there is an almost total block to any serious questioning of LO's fundamental ideas, which are matters of moral commitment.

LO's position on the deformed workers' states is quite distinct in motivation and analysis from the state-capitalist views, but recognises only the USSR as a degenerated workers' state, and regards the subsequent Stalinist states as bourgeois in nature.

f) The Fourth Internationalist Tendency, formed in 1979 following the split from the OCRFI of groups including its two most important Latin American sections, the POR (Lora) of Bolivia and Politica Obrera of Argentina, also includes smaller groups in Latin America, as well as the Workers League of Palestine. The FIT proclaimed itself at its formation as democratic centralist yet in practice it has retained a federalist structure, complicated still further by the profound 'national Trotskyist' positions of the POR, which has failed to play any serious role in constructing or leading the FIT.

The FIT has yet to conduct a systematic evaluation of its organisational experience in the OCRFI or the basis of their split from it, and retains some Lambertist positions in relation to the 'anti-imperialist united front' in Latin America. In addition its extreme characterisation of the USFI as counter-revolutionary — also a legacy of its Lambertist history — and its dismissal of other currents of world Trotskyism cast doubts on the



FIT's willingness to participate seriously in a struggle for the reconstruction of the FI.

g) The Vargaite 'Fourth International' is characterised above all by an extravagant lust for self-proclamation, coupled with ultra-left adventurism and extremes of Stalinophobia. But the Vargaite grouping in Poland succeeded in the heat of events in producing respectable programmatic positions and reportedly in Spain, too, they are evolving in a healthy direction. Whether or not this will continue is unlikely to be much affected by the external intervention of Trotskyist forces.

h) In addition there remain a number of smaller non-affiliated groups — some left over from the splits and fusions of the 1970s, some seeking a way out of prolonged national isolation, others contentedly accepting such isolation. Yet the proliferation of smaller splinters which took place in the mid-1970s now appears to have been reduced in number through a process of assimilation of some into the larger formations, and the piecemeal disintegration of others in the ideological and programmatic chaos of the period. Among the most notable survivors of this process are the Chilean Communist League (LC), the RWP of Sri Lanka, the Freedom Socialist Party (USA) and some groupings remaining from the former USFI Leninist Trotskyist Tendency.

i) The Grant ('Militant') group in Britain and its political co-thinkers have subordinated their erstwhile Trotskyist positions to their long-term adaptation to reformist parties and their leaderships. Their combination of sectarianism and 'objectivism' places them squarely in the post-1950 mainstream, though they add a distinctive political element derived from the 'right wing' in the FI in 1944-48 (whose only other descendant is the SWP-Britain). Their attitudes make discussions with them improbable, though their ranks probably include many militants worth winning.

j) The SWP-Britain and its international co-thinkers have recently hardened their sectarian line on the basis of economism and 'mini-max' politics. Probably the SWP itself has purged its ranks sufficiently to make it impossible to win more than small groups from it in future political crises: but time will tell, and some of the co-thinker groups may be more open.

(k) It is in this general context of disarray and organisational chaos that our tendency wages its struggle for the reconstruction of the FI.

11) The Fourth International today lives on in the form of different factions. Their politics are generally centrist in nature, but with special features, in reality these positions still do not reflect a complete break from the programmatic basis of Bolshevism. Although the SWP-USA currently functions pretty much as an appendage of the Havana bureaucracy, and may definitely and openly adopt such a role (depending on the results of the current struggles), on the whole the positions of the would-be Trotskyist factions do not reflect directly the influence of social forces alien to the proletariat. This makes them unlike the Stalinist, social democratic and also the centrist parties of the 1930s.

We reject as schematic those conceptions which, starting from the reality of the centrist degeneration of most factions of the FI, draw the conclusion that all politically degenerated organisations are irreparably lost to Trotskyism, and which extrapolate from theoretical, historical or analytical differences instead of basing judgement on living political and class struggle actions.

The task facing serious Trotskyists is to build a Bolshevik Leninist faction based on the political lines of the Theses and Resolutions of the 1936, 1938 and 1940 conferences and on programmatic answers to major tests of the class struggle since 1940, expressed in a platform responding adequately to the current class-struggle problems posed to Trotskyists and the international proletariat.

But while rejecting the sectarian position that considers every politically degenerated Trotskyist organisation as lost for Trotskyism, Bolshevik Leninists must at the same time reject as delusory any hypothesis of a spontaneous evolution of the revisionist factions towards orthodox Trotskyism.

Instead it is necessary to engage in a struggle for the regeneration and Bolshevik reorganisation of the FI. It is necessary to promote the formation of Bolshevik-Leninist factions linked both to each other and to independent Trotskyist organisations within the framework of an international Bolshevik-Leninist Faction, which must itself be based on democratic centralist methods, both nationally and internationally.

Such factions should in general avoid engaging in splits. Instead they should make the centrist leaderships responsible for any administrative measures — such as expulsions — which might occur. Only a flexible, dialectical strategy for its regeneration, combining independent work in the labour movement with factional intervention within the other organisations, whether formally Trotskyist or leftward-moving centrist, will allow us to accomplish the complex process which — through splits, fusions, partial regeneration and the growth of independent work — will enable us to reconstruct a genuinely authoritative FI.

For this reason we must — under the sole condition of maintaining the political independence of the orthodox Trotskyist faction — be ready to adjust our tactics to concrete developments in the situation of the Trotskyist movement.

12) We declare ourselves fundamentally opposed to all those forces — empty sectarian ultimatumists on the one hand, barren opportunist charlatans on the other — who attempt to erect organisational or spurious political barriers to a process of discussion and programmatic clarification which alone can lay a principled basis for the reconstruction of the FI. We call upon the memberships and the leaderships of the organisations of the world Trotskyist movement to participate now in the long-overdue struggle to confront and resolve the political problems that have divided and rendered impotent the FI built by Leon Trotsky.

We have already tabled for discussion the document "The Transitional Programme in Today's Class Struggle", as an attempt to enlarge upon the principles and method of the 1938 Programme. We remain open to alternative suggestions as to the form and basis of discussions.

Our one clear and inflexible precondition is that we will in no way commit ourselves to recognition of any grouping as an exclusive continuity of Trotskyism or as 'the' FI. In today's manifest and deepening crisis of the world Trotskyist movement for any grouping to adopt such a stance is nothing more than sectarian arrogance.