
Who We Are

*Statement of the International Bolshevick Tendency,
excerpted from "For Trotskyism!" in the journal "1917," no. 3 (Spring 1987).*

The International Bolshevick Tendency (IBT) is a revolutionary socialist organization founded by former cadres of the international Spartacist tendency (today the International Communist League). The following text is excerpted from the document "For Trotskyism!," published in 1917 (No. 3, Spring 1987):

Trotskyism is the revolutionary Marxism of our time--the political theory derived from the distilled experience of over a century-and-a-half of working-class communism. It was verified in a positive sense in the October Revolution in 1917, the greatest event in modern history, and generally negatively since. After the bureaucratic strangulation of the Bolshevik Party and the Comintern by the Stalinists, the tradition of Leninism--the practice and program of the Russian Revolution--was carried forward by the Left Opposition and by it alone.

The Trotskyist movement was born in a struggle for revolutionary internationalism against the reactionary/utopian conception of "Socialism in One Country." The necessity of revolutionary organization on an international basis derives from the organization of capitalist production itself. Revolutionists on each national terrain must be guided by a strategy which is international in dimension--and that can only be elaborated by the construction of an international working-class leadership. To the patriotism of the bourgeoisie and its social-democratic and Stalinist lackeys, the Trotskyists counterpose Karl Liebknecht's immortal slogan: "The Main Enemy is At Home!" We stand on the basic programmatic positions adopted by the 1938 founding conference of the Fourth International, as well as the first four congresses of the Communist International and the revolutionary tradition of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Luxemburg and Trotsky.

The cadres of the Fourth International outside of North America were largely annihilated or dispersed in the course of the Second World War. The International was definitively politically destroyed by Pabloite revisionism in the early 1950's. We are not neutral in the 1951-53 split--we side with the International Committee (IC) against the Pabloite International Secretariat (IS). The IC's fight was profoundly flawed both in terms of political framework and execution. Nonetheless, in the final analysis, the impulse of the IC to resist the dissolution of the Trotskyist cadre into the Stalinist and social-democratic parties (as proposed by Pablo) and its defense of the necessity of the conscious factor in history, made it qualitatively superior to the liquidationist IS.

Within the IC the most important section was the American Socialist Workers Party (SWP). It had also been the strongest section at the time of the founding of the International. It had benefited by the most direct collaboration with Trotsky and had a leading cadre which went back to the early years of the Comintern. The political collapse of the SWP as a revolutionary organization, signalled by its uncritical enthusing over Castroism in the early 1960's, and culminating in its defection to the Pabloites in 1963, was therefore an enormous blow to world Trotskyism.

We solidarize with the struggle of the Revolutionary Tendency of the SWP (forerunner of the Spartacist League/US) to defend the revolutionary program against the centrist objectivism of the majority. We stand on the Trotskyist positions defended and elaborated by the revolutionary Spartacist League in the years that followed. However, under the pressure of two decades of isolation and frustration, the SL itself has qualitatively degenerated into a grotesquely bureaucratic and overtly cultist group of political bandits which, despite a residual capacity for cynical "orthodox" literary posturing, has shown a consistent impulse to flinch under pressure. The "international Spartacist tendency" today is in no important sense politically superior to any of the dozen or more fake-Trotskyist "internationals" which lay claim to the mantle of the Fourth International.

The splintering of several of the historic pretenders to Trotskyist continuity and the difficulties and generally rightward motion of the rest opens a potentially fertile period for political reassessment and realignment among those who do not believe that the road to socialism lies through the British Labour Party, Lech Walesa's capitalist-restorationist Solidarnosc or the Chilean popular front. We urgently seek to participate in a process of international regroupment of revolutionary cadres on the basis of the program of authentic Trotskyism, as a step toward the long overdue rebirth of the Fourth International, World Party of Socialist Revolution.

