

REPORT TO THE SIXTH WORLD CONGRESS OF  
THE YOUNG COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

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**YOUTH**

**MARCHES**

**TOWARDS**

**SOCIALISM**

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by WOLF MICHAL

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WOLF MICHAL

# Youth Marches Toward Socialism

REPORT MADE SEPT. 26, 1935,  
TO THE SIXTH WORLD CONGRESS  
OF THE YOUNG COMMUNIST  
INTERNATIONAL

FOR A UNITED NON-PARTY YOUTH ORGANIZATION  
FOR SOCIALISM

15

III.

FOR THE UNITY OF THE WORKING CLASS YOUTH

26

IV.

FOR THE UNIFICATION OF THE FORCES OF  
THE YOUNG GENERATION

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*The Sixth World Congress of the Young Communist International  
was held in Moscow from September 25 to October 10, 1935.*



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## I. THE PLIGHT OF THE YOUNG GENERATION

**T**HAT fearless fighter and great hero in the struggle against fascism, the man whose name inspired the youth of all nations in the dark dungeons and concentration camps, the man whose valiant stand won the love and respect of the Communist, Socialist and non-party youth. Comrade Georgi Dimitroff, the renowned helmsman of the Communist International, unfolded a program at the World Congress of the Comintern which can free mankind from fascism, from the danger of war, from starvation and misery.

He unfolded a program which points the way toward the reestablishment of a *united front* and the unity of the working class, towards the rallying of all the forces of the toiling people in one mighty *anti-fascist people's front*.

Comrade Dimitroff showed the younger generation the way toward unification of all the forces of the *non-fascist* mass organization of the youth for the struggle against fascism, against unparalleled oppression and militarization of the youth, for the economic and cultural rights of the younger generation in all capitalist countries.

It is with pride that we undertake the duty of fulfilling the tasks pointed out by Comrade Dimitroff for the youth because we are convinced that these coincide with the interests and desires of the younger generation.

We are a congress of the youth. It is the youth itself which speaks here about its fate and sufferings; which devises here the ways through which the millions of toilers of all countries will work for their emancipation.

A cry of suffering, of hopelessness and indignation is heard in all countries where capitalist exploitation dominates. It is the cry of the younger generation.

It was but yesterday that the poets, writers and the people themselves sang the songs of a happy youth. A picture of the

beauty of labor and of a rosy future was painted for the youth. That was at the time when capitalism was prosperous. Although exploitation of man by man existed, although there were hard times for the workers even then, there were still large sections of the youth engaged in production. There was work. New factories were being opened. Schools were being established and there were openings for teachers. There was an urge to learn. The youth had certain access to and freedom in athletic and cultural activities. Youth organizations were being set up. Technique and science drew the youth.

The younger generation dreamed of a happy future and was sure of a place in life. The youth learned trades, became skilled workers, technicians, engineers, doctors, scientists.

But what is the situation today?

### *Dreams Destroyed*

Those days of yore are becoming no more than memories in the capitalist world.

The doors of many factories remain closed for the youth. Mines are at a standstill. Many ports have been converted into "grave-yards" for ships. Inventions are not being accepted. The number of schools is diminishing. Foodstuffs are being destroyed. We live in a world which stands on its head, in which abundance causes starvation.

*The younger generation of the present day, with the exception of the pampered children of the millionaires and manufacturers, are experiencing a painful tragedy.* Young men and women, full of creative energy and the desire to do things, are condemned to idleness. They want to work, they want to learn, to develop technique, to advance culture, to serve their people and place all their energy at the service of progress. But all of these aspirations and hopes are reduced to nought by grim reality.

The youth are being forced out of the process of production more and more in many of the highly developed capitalist countries. The unemployed and homeless army of the youth is running into the millions. In America alone over five million young men



and women under the age of twenty-four are jobless. A new section of the youth is arising which in this age of highly advanced technique has never worked, has never seen the inside of a factory, and has no hopes of ever finding employment. In Great Britain, out of 51,834 unemployed youth between the ages of sixteen and seventeen, 44,455 have never worked anywhere. Even bourgeois politicians have to admit that there are districts in England, one-third of whose young people never had a job. Unemployment has frightful consequences for the vast majority of the younger generation.

"I have literally nothing. The coat and trousers I daily wear have to be worn also on Sundays. It is the clothes that my father still has left that I am wearing. Now and then they buy me a pair of second-hand shoes. As to food, we never eat fresh bread. Mother says old bread is cheaper."

These few words are the indictment of one of the many millions of unemployed youth, who suffer the same fate.

The desire to learn a trade remains unfulfilled for an ever-larger section of the youth. Vocational schools are closing. *A trade, the worker's pride, is denied the youth.* Youth are being turned into regular slaves of the machine in the rationalized factories, left without a trade, without any self-respect.

### *Ravaged by Sickness*

Talented and gifted youth capable of rendering great service to mankind are ruined and cast aside without compunction. That, however, is only one side of the tragedy of the younger generation. Unemployment has a dreadful effect also on their health and physical development. Why are there so many youth affected by epidemics, tuberculosis and other diseases? Why is the mortality rate so high among them? Because their bodies are emaciated and starved and cannot withstand the attack of disease.

Hundreds of thousands of them walk the streets without any rest, in quest of bread and the means of livelihood. Others live in unhealthy basements, spend their nights under bridges. Young

girls are the victims of prostitution. In Tokyo alone, 70 per cent of the unregistered prostitutes are, according to police records, former factory workers. According to the Salvation Army figures, there are about *one million* such prostitutes in Japan. These youth are deprived of the opportunity to lead a cultural life, to enjoy pleasure, to get an education.

In many countries, the libraries, where the youth might get access to the treasures of science, are closed to them. The only literature they have access to is the vulgar literature of the street. Teachers are being dismissed. The quality of teaching is deteriorating. The number of students is being restricted. The charges for schooling are increasing.

Destitution and despair are pitilessly stifling the youth. The fate of the youth has become one of the most burning issues of our times and upon it depends the fate of the people.

*What is to be done, how is life to go on?* This is the great riddle for millions of the youth. Here is what a discharged soldier tells us:

"I am twenty-four years old. In 1931, I was unemployed after having served one year in the army. They know how to draft people into the army, but no one cares about finding work again for them later. One loses all courage. I thought of leaving this place. I wanted to sign up for colonial service in Indonesia. But soon I detested myself for it."

### *Youth Desert Capitalist Ship*

But desperate though young people may be, and no matter how miserable their living conditions, the younger generation does not want to be a dying generation. The youth want to live, to work and fight, they want to advance, to make the world more beautiful and to satisfy their thirst for knowledge. The youth regard the old world with distrust. They doubt more and more the "eternal" wisdom of the old bourgeois parties. They cease to believe in them. The bourgeoisie sees and understands this very well.

In place of the old rotten parties new and more reactionary



bourgeois parties are appearing, whose agents parade in new glittering uniforms. Corrupt windbags, phrasemongers, eloquent speakers prattle about vital questions of the youth. They are trying to show that they are the *new* and the *only* saviors of the youth. They widely advertise their program, make big promises and demagogically condemn the old world. Who are they? They are the *fascists*.

### *Fascism Tries to Deceive the Youth*

What is fascism? Fascism parades *hypocritically* behind the *mask of the youth*. It introduces itself as a movement created by and for the youth. It advances seductive slogans:

"We are a state of the youth! We are a government of the youth! We are a party of the youth! We build socialism for the youth! We are the youth in awakening!"

With reckless cynicism and chicanery the fascists utilize the noblest and most beautiful feelings of the youth for their own ends. The love for their home, their language and culture, their urge for action, their spirit of comradeship, their desire for freedom, their respect for the traditions of their forefathers, their anxiety to work and serve their people, these are all skillfully manipulated by the fascists who want to place them at the service of the bourgeoisie. "We alone bring you social emancipation," say the fascists.

They promise work to *young unemployed*. They promise higher wages to the *young workers*. To the *young peasants* they promise land. They promise a nice home and family happiness to the *young girls* and offer promises of advancement and a happy future to all youth. But grim and unrelenting reality gives the lie to all these promises. Never in history was the youth so shamelessly deceived, never were their hopes shattered so, as by the fascists.

Fascism is a movement of the moribund *old* world. Fascism is trying to eradicate all that is youthful and revolutionary and rep-



resents and defends by most brutal means of terror everything that drives the youth into misery and despair. Fascism is a blood-stained tool of the big bankers, of the manufacturers, war profiteers and feudal barons. Wherever fascism takes power it relentlessly deprives the youth of its vital rights and tries to convert them into docile slaves of the old world.

### *Hitler Fascism Tramples the Youth*

Germany shows how fascism fulfills its promises, how in the course of two years the life of the younger generation has changed and how the German youth has become the most downtrodden youth of the world. Hundreds of thousands of young boys and girls are forcefully ousted from the factories. The youth are driven out of the cities, out of the cultural centers. Hundreds of thousands are snatched away from their trades while an even larger section is denied the opportunity to learn a trade. Young mechanics, locksmiths, printers, turners, doctors, engineers, machinists, teachers, including girls, are torn away from their work by fascism and turned into slaves in the labor camps.

Away from the machines, away from technique, away from science, into the morass of the labor camps, into the cattle barns and the fields of the junkers and the feudal barons! That is what fascism does with the youth.

Large sections of the peasantry have been made propertyless and homeless by the fascist inheritance law. This inheritance law gives the first-born son the house and land of his father, while his brothers and sisters are left with nothing. *Hatred and discord are thus brought into the peasant family.*

Diapers and washing have been proclaimed by Hitler at the Nuremberg fascist congress as the highest ideal for German girls. Women and girls in-Hitlerite Germany have no right to a career. They are thrust back into the position of dependence upon the man, which existed in the dark ages. They are regarded as second-rate people. Girls are equal with boys only in one respect: they are driven in the same way out of the cities, into labor service

camps or else sent to slave for big farmers. That is not all. They are forced to work in the kitchens of the upper classes as ordinary servants and are left unprotected and exposed to the lusts of their masters. This fascist "calling" assigned to women leads to prostitution and moral decay.

### *A Quota for Culture*

Students who regarded themselves as the champions of national-socialism and hoped Nazi socialism would give them government positions, would enable them to become teachers, lawyers, doctors, professors, have become thoroughly disillusioned. Their diplomas are mere documents entitling them to be registered in the unemployed army. It is only the youth of the rich who can study. The maximum number of students has been fixed by government regulations at 15,000 a year. We shall let the fascist periodical *Truth* speak for itself. The number of students in 1933-34 was reduced by 50.5 per cent in Kiel, 50.1 per cent in Erlangen and 49.6 per cent in Leipzig. The average throughout the country was reduced by over 50 per cent.

The German youth, who inherited respect and love for culture, science, and technique from their fathers, are taught to hate all knowledge or skill. It is typical that the feeble-minded aristocrat, Baldur von Schrach, who has been made the leader of German youth, is ranting against knowledge and culture. In his book *The Hitlerite Youth, Its Idea and Countenance*, which he, by his own admission, dictated from the first to the last page directly to a typist, he had the audacity to slander the German youth and declare: "The German youth cherishes no respect for knowledge. It respects only the bully."

The fascist idea of culture found still more barbarous expression in the words of one of the fascist guardians of culture, a certain Johat, the head of the German state theatre. In his drama, *Schlagster*, he had one of his fascist heroes exclaim: "When I hear the word culture, I reach for my revolver." And this savage was recently publicly rewarded by Goering, the Reichstag incendiary.



This is not surprising, for in Germany, the country famous for its poets and thinkers, the fascists make bonfires out of the literary and scientific works produced by the greatest minds of the German people. By employing the most bloody instruments of terror, the executioner's ax, prison and concentration camps, fascism tries to exterminate physically the best sections of the youth who did not and do not believe the false ideas of the fascist hangmen. This is the condition of Germany after two years of fascist domination and horror. The situation of the youth is essentially the same in all countries where fascism is in power—in Italy, Poland, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia. The same fate awaits the youth of all countries if fascism comes to power.

### *Fascism Is War*

Such is the "today" which fascism gives the youth. But still more frightful is the "tomorrow", which fascism is seeking to bring the youth—*imperialist war*. Fascism places everything at the service of preparation for war. Industry, science, technique, art, literature, the people, young and old, women and children—all and everything are subordinated to this one aim. The entire nation, from the children to the aged, are being militarized.

German fascism educates the youth in the spirit of boundless enmity and chauvinist hatred against all other peoples and races. It nurtures the vilest instincts of the youth and preaches an insane race theory.

The horror and death of the last World War are glorified by the German, Italian, and Japanese fascists and militarists as the highest ideal of youth.

Hitler fascism is building an impassable barrier between itself and all other civilized peoples. It plays its bloody, atrocious game against all countries bordering on Germany. From the platform of the Nuremberg Congress of his party, Hitler openly threatened the Lithuanian people with war and urged the occupation of the Memel territory. The irresponsible and adventurist Reichstag incendiaries will not hesitate to kindle the fire of war in Europe and the whole world.



*Mussolini recklessly stakes the life and future of the young generation of Italy and drives it into a catastrophic war. He wants to subjugate Ethiopia, the only independent country in Africa, and to deprive it of its freedom.*

The fascists, the most reactionary forces of the world, cannot bear the fact that one-sixth of the globe, the Soviet Union, is peacefully engaged in the work of building socialism, that there, under the wise leadership of our great and beloved Stalin, the people, the workers and peasants, govern themselves and the youth are the freest and the happiest in the world. The Soviet Union, the only country where the well-being of the masses is growing, where new cultural treasures are created and wonders of technique brought into being, where the youth have learned a new kind of heroism, the heroism of labor, where they are educated to respect and love all peoples of the earth, as well as their cultural treasures, *the Soviet Union is the mightiest bulwark of peace.* It is against this country that the fascists hope to turn their weapons in order to throw the world into darkest reaction.

### *The Soviet Union—Bulwark of Peace*

What indescribable misery and suffering will fall upon the people if the fascist warmongers succeed in carrying out their shameful plans! No, that must never be! We are inseparably bound up with the peoples of the Soviet Union and their youth. If the fascists dare to start war against the Soviet Union, the younger generation of the world will be on the side of the latter, in order to protect its best champion, the Soviet Union.

We, and with us the younger generation of all nations, want peace. *Fascism wants war.* Fascism is the deadly enemy of the overwhelming majority of the younger generation. Fascism and war, social and cultural decline, menace the younger generation of the capitalist countries.

Millions of youth are asking whether we can prevent fascism, whether we can do away with fascism wherever it is already in power, whether we can hinder the outbreak of imperialist war.

The Congress of the Young Communist International answers: *Do not despair! Do not lose courage! We can! But one thing is necessary for this, that is, the amalgamation and unity of all forces of the young toiling generation against fascism, for freedom; against war, for peace; against slavery, for our rights.*

If the young generation will traverse this road, alongside of the toiling people as a whole, it will become an unconquerable power in the fight against all its foes.

## II. BUILD A UNITED NON-PARTY YOUTH ORGANIZATION FOR SOCIALISM

**A** YOUTH organization, uniting all the forces of the youth in the struggle against fascism and imperialist war and in defense of all their essential rights, for socialism—that is what the generation of working class, farming and student youth in capitalist countries requires.

The question arises: are the Young Communist Leagues capable of accelerating the broad united front of all the forces of the youth if they retain their former character, if they work as they formerly did? Our answer to this question can only be in the negative.

If we do not change the content, form and method of our work, we shall not be in a position successfully to serve the cause of uniting the forces of the younger generation of youth. Therefore, the most important of our tasks is the reorganization of our entire work and the transformation of the character of the organizations affiliated to the Young Communist International. As regards the youth, we have no interests apart from or contradictory to their interests, requirements and aims. Their interests are our interests, their demands are our demands, their aims are our aims.

The interests of the vast majority of the young generation urgently require the creation of a non-party, truly mass organization of the youth, uniting within their ranks not only the Communists, but also the Socialists and non-party youth, and training its members in the spirit of the class struggle, of proletarian internationalism, of the struggle for socialism, in the spirit of Marxism-Leninism.

In his report to the Seventh Congress of the Comintern, Comrade Dimitroff clearly and accurately pointed out the principal weaknesses of the Young Communist League. He said:



"In a number of capitalist countries, our Young Communist Leagues are still largely sectarian organizations divorced from the masses. *Their fundamental weakness is that they are still trying to copy the Communist Parties, their forms and methods of work, forgetting that the Y.C.L. is not a Communist Party of the youth.* They do not sufficiently take into consideration the fact that this is an organization having its own specific tasks. Its methods and forms of work, of education, and of struggle, must be adapted to the specific level and needs of the youth.

"Our Young Communists have given memorable examples of heroism in the fight against fascist violence and bourgeois reaction. But they still lack the ability to win the masses of youth away from hostile influences by dint of stubborn, concrete work."

In his greeting to our Congress Comrade Dimitroff said:

"The entire anti-fascist youth is interested in uniting and organizing its force. Therefore you, comrades, must find such ways, such forms and methods of work as will assure the formation, in the capitalist countries, of a *new type* of mass youth organizations, to which no vital interest of the toiling youth will be alien, organizations which without copying the Party, will fight for *all* the interests of the youth, will bring up the youth in the spirit of the class struggle, of proletarian internationalism, in the spirit of Marxism-Leninism."

### *Broaden the Content of Y.C.L. Work*

Consider these words seriously. Examine more closely the life of our organizations and you will understand that it is not possible to go on working for long in the way many of our organizations are now working.

We are attempting to achieve a radical transformation of all the work of our Leagues.

The first thing we must transform is the *content* of the work of the Young Communist Leagues. The desire to copy the Parties and, more than that, in all activities to orientate ourselves *only* on abstract politics is characteristic of all our Leagues. The weak side of the policy and life of our Leagues consists of the fact that they are not adapted to the tasks which face youth organizations and to the concrete level and demands of the youth. It is

a very great evil that our Leagues have been given to Left phraseology; that they have thus cut themselves off from the life of the youth without realizing it. They attempted to create a Communist youth party and schematically to copy the work of the Party. The majority of the Leagues have unfortunately not yet understood or grasped the fact that the *Youth League is an educational organization of the youth.*

What does that mean? Look at the youth!

One of its most characteristic features consists in the fact that it wants to learn and develop, that it wants to receive a clear and simple answer to the questions which agitate it and confront it. The youth wants to form itself ideologically. It comes to our organizations with much unclarity and mistakes, ideologically immature. After heavy daily work it wants to relax, it seeks rest and comradely community.

*We, comrades, must accept this youth just as it is, with all its living diversification, and not academically; we must educate it as teachers do. We must not try to make everyone conform to one pattern, for we are dealing with different strata of youth.*

As a rule those political questions which are discussed in the Party, in the Central Committee and in the local organizations, are likewise discussed in the local and especially in the leading organizations of the Young Communist Leagues.

Usually the Young Communist Leagues attempt to conduct the same political campaigns and to carry out the same actions which are organized and conducted by the Communist Parties, not taking into account the special interests and desires of the youth.

Many Young Communist Leagues have become peculiar, politically sectarian youth organizations. Their internal life is filled with endless political discussions and conferences. They often deprive their members of the possibility of studying, amusing themselves, and living the way the youth normally live. Their language abounds with memorized and stereotyped Communist formulas and slogans. That is why our organizations live a life separate from that of the broad masses of youth.

The unemployed youth is interested in questions of relief.



lodgings, meals, of how to get a pair of shoes or a shirt. Both the working and the unemployed youth are interested in regular athletic activities and the question of how to utilize free time, in the improvement of their living conditions, in helping their families. But in many of our organizations the entire attention of our members is focused on how the latest circular or resolution of the Central Committee should be understood, and if there is no such circular or resolution our lower organizations do not know what to do. "Enough has already been said of politics; no new campaign is being sponsored, consequently there is nothing to do." None of this is an exaggeration, for our local organizations in almost all countries are formed on the same pattern and bear the same character—the character of narrow circles which in most cases occupy themselves with abstract politics.

The objection may be made against me—"We have street units, local groups, and factory units." All that is true, but the fact remains that the internal life of the different local groups, the street and factory units, is always the same.

These political circles bear different names, but essentially they are one and the same.

As a rule they are very narrow and the members of these organizations meet to discuss the latest political problems. Only seldom do they meet in order to work out and adopt measures which would help them to organize the cultural life of the youth.

Some of our comrades ask themselves these disturbing questions: We are more revolutionary than all other youth organizations, we are for the interests of the laboring youth, we are against capitalism and for socialism, we are for the general line of the Comintern, we wage a constant struggle against opportunism; nevertheless the youth do not come to us. Why? But so far it has never occurred to anyone to ask the youth itself what it thinks of the work of the Young Communist League, why it does not join the League, under what conditions it would join the League. At the same time, our comrades approach the youth with ready-made schemes or adopt resolutions where they speak of relentless struggle on the Right and Left against sectarianism, expecting that after that a change will start. The situation will



not change, comrades, if in the future, as up till now, we concern ourselves *only with abstract politics*, if we copy the Party and place before the youth who are drawn to us the very same demands that are placed before Party members.

### *Demands Made Upon Youth Are Too Great*

What do we require today of a young worker entering the Youth League, or of an unemployed youth or a young peasant or girl in Germany, South America, Africa or Australia? They are required to accept the dictatorship of the proletariat, to accept Soviet Power, to accept the necessity for transforming imperialist war into civil war, to accept the correctness of the general line, the relentless struggle against opportunism. It may be protested that this is not so. The fact is, however, that of those youth who come to us ready for struggle, we make demands which are so high that they are completely out of keeping with their level of political development and maturity.

If we ask a Y.C.L.'er, "What is the difference between you and a Party member", he will be unable to answer. The leading comrades who head the district, section, and local organizations are not Party members. But if you ask these comrades why they do not join the Party, they will answer you that they are carrying out Party work, that they consider themselves Party members, and that sooner or later they will be transferred to the Party. It is true that the overwhelming majority of our leading cadres of youth sooner or later go over to Party work. But it is already high time to realize the *specific character* of youth organizations and not place the Youth Leagues on the same level as the Party. Our comrades who head the youth organizations must clearly understand that through the efforts to create a Communist Party of the youth, *they are cutting themselves off* from the youth.

### *Reconstruction*

The Young Communist League is not yet a mass organization in a single capitalist country. Even in countries like France or

America, although the Youth Leagues there take an active part in the united front movement and increase their prestige among the youth, they have nevertheless remained small organizations up to the present. All this raises in the keenest manner before us the task of changing the character of our Leagues in capitalist countries and of bringing about their radical reconstruction.

This reconstruction will only be successful when all the members of our League are drawn into this work, when the widest democracy is applied and the most extensive initiative developed, when this work is conducted in such a way that the actual demands of life itself are considered.

It would be a mistake to think that the Leagues are capable of changing their nature, of proceeding to some new forms of work by themselves, without the participation of the youth. The youth *themselves* must build up their organizations, the members of the youth organizations *themselves* must determine the nature, tasks, forms and methods of their work on the basis of the widest democracy, because this is their organization. Only under such conditions can the youth organization become strong and successfully develop.

In places where the youth receive commands from above, where the democratic solution of all questions is done away with in this manner, in places where it is forgotten that *example and conviction* play a tremendous role in the education of the youth, in such places the organizations are doomed to isolation from the masses, to a sectarian existence. Does this mean that we abandon politics? No. We abandon *sectarian* politics and we want to do away with that. But we are in favor of forming Leagues in which the youth "*learn, organize and fight* for the vital interests of the working class, where they *educate* themselves in the spirit of struggle for freedom, against reaction, against fascism and imperialist war, and for socialism" as our draft resolution says.



## *The Needs and Desires of the Youth*

All the work of the Youth Leagues must correspond to the specific features, to the vital interests and traditions of the younger generation of toilers in each country. The next task, then, is to build up the work of each organizational unit and of the League as a whole in such a way that it will correspond to the various healthy needs and desires of the youth. The cultural, economic, political, professional interests, in short all the interests of the youth must determine the content of the work and the life of the youth organizations. This means that we must give a *youth* character to the life of the Leagues, that the youth must regard the Young Communist Leagues as organizations which are close to them and which understand them.

This is only possible if we inspire the youth to study the principles of revolutionary proletarian theory, the theory which is already in practice in one-sixth of the globe, in the Soviet Union, the theory which arms the young toilers in their fight against capitalism. This assists the youth and makes it possible for them to carry on a successful fight for their interests, for freedom, against fascism.

Since the basic task of the League is to *educate* the youth in the spirit of proletarian internationalism, to draw them into the struggle for freedom, for socialism, since the work must not be limited to politics alone, but allow for all the vital interests of the youth, then this League must be a *mass* league, the *doors of which are wide open for all the youth who honestly and loyally wish to take part in its work.*

Honest and loyal cooperation is the fundamental demand which must be presented to all the youth who join the League. This means that there is no place in these organizations for the enemies of freedom, for the agents of fascism, for the enemies of the toiling youth and the opponents of unity.



## *Varied Forms of Organization*

But can the Youth Leagues become mass organizations of the toiling youth, can they really educate it if they maintain their present organizational structure as political circles under the name of "units"? No. These organizational forms cannot bring the desired result. All members of the youth organization must be given the possibility of carrying on their activity in accordance with their wishes; this calls for varied organizational forms, clubs, branches, groups, circles, courses for political education, economic organizations, groups of unemployed and farm youth, of young women and students.

Such organizations and groups should not be regarded as something subsidiary and of minor importance in the life of our Leagues, as was the case up to the present.

They must not be simply "subsidiary" and "auxiliary organizations" or "transmission belts" as they have been hitherto, but they must be the *forms* of our Youth Leagues themselves.

It follows from this that the forms of organization cannot be the same for all countries, regions, towns, factories, villages and schools.

Organizational reconstruction is one of the prerequisites for changing the content of our work. Thus, the questions of the system of leadership and the question of cadres, leading people, present themselves in a new manner. It is impossible to lead a youth league which contains various kinds of clubs, circles, rural groups, groups of women and unemployed, by means of standard circulars. We must make a concrete approach to such organizations and give them practical assistance in their work. In this connection we must develop leaders who are popular among the youth and are capable of organizing them. Every support must be given to such leading comrades. The reorganization of our work requires that we keenly understand the questions which affect the youth, that we take an attentive and solicitous attitude to the development of new leading comrades.

In other words, we must once and for all root out the soulless

bureaucracy which has such a harmful influence on the youth movement.

### *Connections With the Communist Parties*

The Youth Leagues can only carry out their tasks successfully if they are linked up with the revolutionary proletariat, because the older comrades in the struggle have valuable experience. The youth must learn by this experience. The Communist Parties and the Communist International unite in themselves this extremely rich experience, these lessons which make the liberation of the toiling people possible, embodied in the theory of Marx-Engels-Lenin-Stalin.

*This theory has shown its correctness in the face of the chaos and anarchy pervading the old dying capitalist world. This theory ensured victory on one-sixth of the globe. Under the leadership of the immortal Lenin and the great Stalin, the poverty-stricken and backward tsarist Russia has been converted into a highly developed country, a country of advanced culture, the freest country in the world, with a happy people and a fortunate youth.*

In the interests of the youth and of the Youth Leagues, the closest contacts must therefore be set up with the Communist Parties. It is, hence, a most important task for all the Party members who work in the Youth Leagues to make clear day by day the role and significance of the Party, its basic aims and tasks. It is their work to convince all Y.C.L.'ers of the necessity to maintain constant connections with the Communist Party, because the Communist Party is the revolutionary vanguard of the proletariat. Young Party members must convince all the members of the youth organization that it is necessary to give active support to all measures which the Party advances and conducts. Support for these measures means participation in the struggle of the working class. The Communist Parties should give the *best* possible cadres for work among the youth, and work untiringly for uniting the youth on the basis of their interests and for educating them in a revolutionary spirit.



## Reconstruction of International

The reconstruction of the Youth Leagues therefore means the reconstruction of the Young Communist International as a whole and its system of leadership.

*At this Sixth World Congress, we must seriously consider the question of the program and statutes of the Young Communist International. This does not mean that we want to open a discussion at our Congress on the principles governing our aims and tasks. There are no grounds for us to revise and alter the principles in our program. The basis of our program was and remains revolutionary Marxist-Leninist theory.*

This program was worked out and adopted at the Fifth World Congress of the Young Communist International in 1928. The international situation, the relationship of class forces in various countries and throughout the world have changed since then. Moreover, the final and unshakable victory of the Soviet Union plays a decisive role in this changed situation. During this period the economic and political situation of the broad masses of youth in capitalist countries has changed greatly. Actually, the Socialist youth are breaking with reformism. Owing to experiences in joint struggle, the question of uniting the Socialist and Communist youth has been put on the order of the day in many countries. The urge for unity among anti-fascist youth grows daily. Taking this into account, we must make suitable changes in our program. It seems to me that we must thus widen the conditions of acceptance into the Young Communist International so that not only Communist youth organizations can join it, but Socialist, national emancipatory, national revolutionary and anti-fascist youth organizations which base themselves on international cooperation.

*The widest democracy must prevail in all the work and in the character of the Young Communist International and the Youth Leagues affiliated to it.*

Thus, we must reorganize the internal life of the Young Communist International so that the youth organizations affiliated to it will have the greatest independence in solving all their inter-



nal, organizational and political questions. This makes great demands on the leaders of the Y.C.I. They must give assistance and advice to the Leagues, pass on the experience of individual Leagues to all the other Leagues and work untiringly to strengthen and widen international cooperation with the youth organizations. This also means that the leading Young Communist cadres of the Leagues must display considerably greater initiative and independence in their work, not forgetting, however, that the *Leagues are organizationally independent youth organizations.*

... We and the young Socialists are alike because we are the sons of one class because we have a common doctrine—Marxism because we have a common foe—feudalism and because we have a great inalienable ideal in common, socialism.

We welcome the fraternal relations and cooperation which have arisen between Communist and Socialist youth organizations. Our conviction that the unity of the working class youth must be established grew in our joint struggles in Paris, Moscow, London and Toulouse in March and Asturias, Lyons and Paris. These struggles teach us all that the further joint action of the youth of the working class youth cannot be justified.

The interests of working class youth demand the unification of the Socialist and Communist youth in one united organization. The united organization of Communist and Socialist youth will enable us to be in the struggle and to activate the hidden forces of the working class youth. This will be a task that will require the greatest force of attraction for the leadership of the working and toiling youth will draw them together into a single mighty, invincible force.

### III. FOR THE UNITY OF THE WORKING CLASS YOUTH

**C**OMRADES, in setting ourselves the task of unifying the forces of the working class youth, it stands to reason that our first call must be directed to the Socialist youth organizations, to their members and leading committees. From the rostrum of the World Congress of the Young Communist International, we declare that we consider the Socialist youth as our *closest allies*. *We say to the young Socialists, our class brothers: We want to work in common with you, shoulder to shoulder in a comradely way, for the interests of the youth and in the spirit of struggle against our common enemy—fascism—in order to hinder the outbreak of imperialist war and to wrest the workers and the toiling youth from the clutches of hunger, want and lack of rights.*

We and the young Socialists are allies because we are the *sons of one class, because we have a common doctrine—Marxism, because we have a common foe—fascism, and because we have a great, invincible ideal in common, socialism.*

We welcome the fraternal relations and cooperation which have arisen between Communist and Socialist youth organizations.

Our conviction that the unity of the working class youth must be established grew in our joint struggles in Paris, Marseilles, and Toulouse, in Madrid and Asturias, Vienna and Graz. These struggles teach us all that the *further maintenance of the split of the working class youth cannot be justified.*

The interests of working class youth demand the unification of the Socialist and Communist youth in one united organization. This united organization of Communist and Socialist youth will awaken to life, to the struggle and to activity, the hitherto slumbering forces in the working class youth. This will be a magnet that will exercise the greatest force of attraction for the broadest sections of the working and toiling youth, will draw them together into a single, mighty, invincible force.

Hence, we are convinced that the organic unity of our organizations represents *a common and immediate task for us*. Hence, together with the Socialist youth we are interested in strengthening and extending still more the united front between our organizations.

*The united front is advancing!* Communist and Socialist Youth Leagues are already working together in France, Spain, Austria, Italy, Poland, Switzerland, Bulgaria, Rumania, and Latvia. We can already draw many lessons from the experiences of the united front of these countries. First, united front between the two Youth Leagues can be set up even if only *one question*, which really stirs and unites the youth, serves as a basis for cooperation.

In Switzerland, for example, the united front on a national scale could not be established for a long time, despite the efforts of the Young Communist League and the Left wing of the Socialist youth. But at the moment when the most reactionary section of the Swiss bourgeoisie attempted to amend the Constitution in a fascist spirit, and to eliminate the democratic rights which had been won by the Swiss people, both organizations correctly recognized the necessity of joining their forces on the basis of a united front, in order to bring all the youth into movement against the insolent fascist attempt.

Second, experience shows that a united front on a national scale can likewise be formed on *several questions*. After the fascist coup in Bulgaria, the last remnants of democratic rights were taken away from the people. The government enacted a law regarding the formation of a unified government youth organization. These were the most burning questions of the youth in Bulgaria and it was precisely on the basis of these questions that a united front could be and was formed.

Third, the experience in France, Spain and Austria shows that a united front between the Socialist and Communist Youth Leagues can be set up on *all questions* which concern the vital interests of the youth, on the basis of a common platform.

The manner in which the united front developed between the Socialist and Communist youth in France was highly instructive.



Before the February battles, there were only very weak contacts and in some places there even existed hostility between the Socialist and Communist youth organizations. It can be said without exaggeration that the Communist and Socialist youth comrades really got to know each other only in the anti-fascist offensive of the proletariat last February. They recognized that they are not enemies but allies in the struggle and that only the *unity* of their forces could render the proletariat great service demanded by the struggle against fascism. We are proud that in these exceedingly important moments in the struggle of the working class our French comrades found the correct road. They went to the Young Socialist organizations and their leading committees and made proposals regarding joint struggle which were acceptable to the Young Socialist comrades.

Thus we see how in France the united front has developed from agreements on *individual questions on a local scale* to the conclusion of a united front pact between organizations on a *national scale*. This joint work and common struggle of the Socialist and Communist youth in France opens the way to uniting both organizations.

### *Organizational Unity Near in Spain*

The Communist and Socialist Youth Leagues of Spain are about to carry through organic unity. The best and most vivid example of this is the fact that not only delegates from the Young Communist Leagues participate in our Congress, but also an official delegation from the Young Socialist League of Spain.

One year has passed since the first mighty unity meetings of the Spanish youth and since our beloved leader and hero, Comrade Dimitroff, called to you directly on the eve of October: "Unite in the struggle against fascism!" One year has passed since you fought heroically together, shoulder to shoulder, in Asturias and throughout Spain in the October battles.

But there have been certain waverings in the ranks of the Young Socialist comrades before, during and after the October

events on the question of unity. There is no ground, however, for vacillations on this question any longer.

It is in the interests of the young Spanish workers, it is in your interests and ours and in the interests of successful struggle against fascism to put an end to all hesitation and obstacles. Young Socialist comrades of Spain! Get over your waverings! We hope that you who fought together with us on the barricades will continue to follow this path of unity to the end. There is a full possibility now of working out a common program with the Young Communist League of Spain for an amalgamation of both organizations, for the establishment of the unity of the young workers of Spain.

The members of the Young Communist League and of the revolutionary Socialist youth fought shoulder to shoulder in the glorious battles of the Austrian proletariat in February, 1934. Since that time there are a number of splendid examples of joint struggle carried through by both organizations. The May celebrations of 1934-35 proved that fascism is unable to destroy the class forces of the proletariat and the youth if these are united. The old distrust and misunderstandings are gradually being overcome in the fire of common struggle. We can proudly assert that both youth organizations are at present conducting concrete negotiations regarding their amalgamation. We are firmly convinced that in Austria, too, the day is not far distant when the Communist and Socialist youth organizations will put an end to their separation forever and will create a united youth organization of the working class youth in Austria.

Comrades, thousands and tens of thousands of Socialist young workers can themselves, on the basis of their experience, refute the slander that the united front is a maneuver on our part. *The united front is the power which can rescue the youth from fascism.* A comradely and brotherly attitude to the Socialist youth is one of the most important preliminary conditions for the establishment of common action between the two organizations in defense of the interests of the toiling youth.

We should not force upon the Socialist youth any demands



with which they do not agree. We have confidence in the Socialist youth and that is why the problems of the basis for the united front, of what forms the joint work should take, must absolutely be discussed and prepared jointly with the organizations of the Socialist youth. All the obligations which we and the Young Socialist League members assume voluntarily, *must absolutely be adhered to.*

### *The Content of the United Front Varies*

It must be made clear to every one of our youth organizations that the content of the united front cannot be the same in the *different countries*. The success of the united front in various countries, to date, has only been possible because the Communist and Socialist youth organizations took into consideration the peculiar conditions of their own country, the sentiments of their members, as well as the demands and desires of the youth.

The Scandinavian Young Communists must especially take into consideration these important preliminary conditions for the united front. The Socialist Parties are the governing parties in the Scandinavian countries. We cannot, of course, approve the class collaboration of Social-Democracy with the bourgeoisie. But at the same time it would be wrong not to see and not to understand that the working class and the working class youth have certain possibilities of maintaining and defending their democratic rights under these governments, to fight against the fascist offensive and to achieve a number of improvements in the situation of the working and unemployed youth. We, therefore, recommend to the organizations affiliated to the Young Communist International, jointly with the Socialist youth, to approach the Socialist ministers with concrete proposals, and to press for the improvement of the situation of the youth and for the fulfillment of the promises made to them. Unfortunately, many of our comrades still do not understand this. In Belgium, for a long time we carried on discussions with the Young Socialist Guard with regard to the de Man plan. The Young Communist League was



correct when it showed that no such improvement in the situation of the youth as held out by the de Man plan can be achieved in the framework of the capitalist system, that fundamental improvements could be insured only by socialism. In this connection, however, we overlooked the fact that this plan and similar plans in a number of other countries contain such proposals as could lead to bettering somewhat the situation of the youth, if they were earnestly fought for. These proposals can serve as a basis for cooperation with the Socialist youth in such countries.

*We declare that we not only support all the demands of the Socialist youth which are in accord with the interests of the youth, but shall work with all our energy, together with these youth, to have them carried through.*

Our Czechoslovakian comrades acted quite correctly when they replied in the affirmative to the proposal made by the national Socialist youth organization, which belongs to Benes' party, to support the following demands, and declared themselves ready to fight jointly with them for these demands:

1. Reduction of the working day without a cut in wages.
2. The fixing of minimum wages for all employees.
3. Reduction of the price on sugar and coal.
4. Reduction of the price of flour on condition that there are graded prices on grain.
5. A 10 per cent reduction of all rents on condition that the interest payments and mortgage debts are reduced.

While striving to bring about the unity of the Communist and Socialist youth as rapidly as possible, *constant* cooperation with the Socialist youth organizations must be achieved. We must patiently convince our comrades from the Socialist youth that this is necessary.

*Comrade Dimitroff called upon the Young Communist and Young Socialist Leagues at the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International to set up anti-fascist associations based on the platform of the class struggle.* We are firmly convinced that Comrade Dimitroff's call will meet with great enthusiasm not only in our own ranks but also in the ranks of the young Social-

ists, and will contribute towards the establishment of the indestructable unity of the two organizations.

It is difficult to state here what aspect these associations will assume in the various countries. It is clear that both Youth Leagues, forming anti-fascist associations, can fully preserve their independence and retain contact with their respective parties and Internationals. In all cases both Youth Leagues have so to organize their work as to act together in the struggle against fascism, in the struggle for the interests and rights of the young workers to act as a *united* force.

That the possibility of establishing such associations exists has been demonstrated by the experience of the worker-peasant alliance in Spain where the Young Communists and the Young Socialist organizations are together with the parties solving all problems of the struggle against Spanish fascism and for the emancipation of the Spanish working class and the peasantry. That these possibilities exist is also evident from the more than one hundred coordination committees in France in which the leading bodies of the Communist and Socialist youth discuss in a comradely spirit all measures taken by the united front.

### *Socialist Youth Responds to Unity Appeal*

We have reports showing that the organizations of the Communist and Socialist youth of one of the districts of Paris have decided to hold all their meetings together, following the appeal of Comrade Dimitroff made at the Seventh Congress of the Communist International. They also decided to retain contact with the Central Committee of the Young Communist League and the Young Socialist organization, and to receive instructions from both of these bodies. Both organizations resolved, however, to carry out only such of these instructions which would serve the interests of the united front and unity of the young workers. Well done, comrades! Let the whole international youth movement learn from your example! The young workers would have already been much more successful in establishing unity if all proposals of the Young Communist International and its sections



along these lines would have had the support of the Young Socialist Leagues. Many Young Socialist organizations hesitated for a long time before they realized that joint struggle was necessary. Even today, when the united front has become a strong bulwark against fascism, some Young Socialist organizations are, to our regret, still hesitant in accepting the fraternal hand extended to them.

We do not deny that our organizations have made certain sectarian errors in various countries which have created difficulties for the establishment of the united front. But we have learned. We have corrected and are correcting our mistakes. The best proof of this is the manner in which we deal with the united front question at this Congress.

Unfortunately, the same is not the case in the Executive Committee of the Young Socialist International and some of its Sections. Some of the leading officials of the Young Socialist International, for example, Ollenhauer, Hansen, and in his time Wallenthein of Sweden, are still using their untenable arguments to restrain the Socialist youth from forming a united front. These are the people who to this day retard the united front in such countries as Sweden, Denmark and Holland.

We hoped that the decisions of the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International, at which the problems of the united front were raised in a new way, would be favorably received by the Young Socialist International. We cherished this hope although we knew that the Second International and some of its parties *suppress* all initiative of the members and of the Young Socialist organizations on the question of establishing a united front and that in this they have the support of a number of prominent functionaries of the Young Socialist International.

*We have followed with the greatest attention the proceedings of the congress of the Young Socialist International.* We, and many young Socialists as well, are therefore disappointed with the decisions and proceedings of the Congress of the Young Socialist International. The report of the Executive Committee at the Congress of the Young Socialist International, dealing with the attitude towards the Communists states that:



"... the desire to combat fascism in the ranks of the working class and the working youth can be successfully fulfilled only if the Socialist youth organizations of all countries give more attention to the cause of solidarity with the Leagues of their own international rather than to negotiations or agreements with the Communists."

We do not in the least underestimate the importance of close contact among the Sections of the Young Socialist International themselves. But this should by no means stand in the way of a united front between both youth internationals and the organizations affiliated to them.

Experience shows in a number of countries (France, Spain, Austria) that wherever agreements have been reached by the two Leagues a fruitful struggle is being waged against fascism for the vital interests of the youth, and international solidarity increases.

We are convinced that the decisions of the Congress of the Young Socialist International on the questions of the united front will by no means be the last word of the Young Socialist International. The number of adherents of the united front is growing in the ranks of the Young Socialist International. The Young Socialist Leagues of France, Spain, Austria, Switzerland, Belgium and Latvia are becoming ever more clamorous, insisting upon the establishment of the united front and unity with the Communist youth not only in separate countries, but on an international scale. We wholeheartedly greet this fight of the Young Socialists. We hope that the united front idea will soon be triumphant in the Young Socialist International.

### *Organizational Unity Is Possible At Once In Some Countries*

Comrades, we are fully aware that the young workers throughout the world urgently need unity. We therefore call upon the Socialist and Communist youth the world over to *amalgamate* their organizations. In some countries, such as France, where the idea of working class unity has already taken strong root, such as

Spain and Austria, where the young workers have felt on their own skins the evil effects of a divided working class and a divided working youth, the organizations have in the course of nine months of collaboration come so close together that the establishment of organic unity has already become an immediate issue. In these countries there is the immediate possibility of doing away with the cleavage within the working youth.

Our Lettish comrades of both the Young Communist and Young Socialist organizations have already expressed themselves in favor of unity and have already taken concrete steps towards amalgamation. In a joint declaration of the Central Committees of the two Leagues on the question of unity we read:

“For a year immediately after the fascist coup d’etat we began to seek a way of joint struggle. Dozens of joint appeals, programs and friendly gatherings between our representatives, as well as joint actions, show that our aim has been achieved. We have brought about united action and mutual confidence. Simultaneously we have come to the conclusion that the road of the toiling youth of Latvia will remain a single one, until final victory is achieved. *We have one aim and therefore we must follow one road.*”

“In order to become a force strong enough to repulse fascist reaction and to win the confidence of the large masses of the youth, we must *march shoulder to shoulder* and bring about an amalgamation of the two youth leagues in one united organization.”

The harsh blows of fascism have taught the Communist and Socialist youth of Latvia that the young workers must fight together in one organization. All honor to the advanced fighters of the united organization of the working youth in Latvia!

We are convinced that all obstacles in the way of unity can be eliminated if the members are given *full democratic rights to decide on all questions in respect to the amalgamation of the two organizations*. The members of both organizations should freely decide on questions of the program of the amalgamated organization. The question may be asked: How can we unite if our organizations have different programs?

Our reply is that the basis of a joint program is the struggle against fascism and imperialist war, for the vital interests of the

youth, for socialism. This serves the aims and interests of both organizations and of their members.

The question may be asked: How can we unite when we are led by two different parties and are affiliated with two different Internationals? To this we reply: the members of both organizations should freely decide the organizational forms and the name of the amalgamated organization as well as its connections with parties and affiliation with the Internationals.

The Young Communist International considers its main task to be to help in the establishment of united Young Communist and Young Socialist Leagues in every country. In raising the banner of unity of the working class youth at our Congress today we tell the youth that it is also in its interest to establish one Youth International. *We are firmly determined to put all our forces at the service of amalgamating the revolutionary youth of the world and to fight for the setting up of one Youth International.* Our battle cry is: Down with the split in the ranks of the working class youth! Long live the amalgamated organization of revolutionary young workers and toilers!



#### IV. FOR THE UNIFICATION OF THE FORCES OF THE YOUNG GENERATION!

**C**OMRADES, we need not be silent spectators in the world drama of the young generation of toilers which is taking place before our very eyes. We have a positive and important role to play. Upon our shoulders lies the difficult and responsible task of *uniting all forces of the younger generation for the struggle for their right to live and be free!* This means the achievement of unity with the Socialist youth and of the *collaboration of all non-fascist youth organizations.*

With the exception of the Young Communist League in France and the United States our comrades have been all too slow in reacting to the changes which have transpired in the ranks of the youth and in their organizations. Five years of crisis and depression have not passed in vain for the youth in these organizations. Despite all organizational and ideological shortcomings these youth have taken part in numerous hard and protracted class struggles. This resulted in their rapid political development. Simultaneously with the process of political differentiation within all the sections of the toiling youth their common need and desire to gather their forces together have been constantly gaining ground. The bourgeoisie realized this much more quickly than most of our Leagues and quickly took steps to group the youth organizations under fascist flags in the various countries. The French bourgeoisie, for example, organized the *Etats Generaux de la Jeunesse.*

The coming into power of fascism in some countries and the threatening menace of fascism in others is the second important factor affecting these organizations. Wherever fascism takes power, especially in Germany, it tries to secure a monopoly over the youth by dissolving their organizations or by "coordinating" them. The struggle of the youth organizations for independence

places the youth inevitably into a position of hostility to the fascist dictatorship. In connection with these changes, in the countries under fascist dictatorship as well as in countries under bourgeois democracy, the winning over of the non-fascist youth organizations becomes of enormous significance in our work. We do not deceive ourselves as to the differences of principle and world outlook existing between these organizations and ourselves. But in the struggle against fascism, and for the material needs of youth, for freedom and peace, they can be our allies. If in spite of the fundamental differences of opinion between ourselves and the other non-fascist youth organizations, we work for bringing them together, we do so because we are prompted by one thought, one desire—to save the younger generation of the whole of mankind from fascism, and to prevent their decimation in another butchery of the people, a new imperialist war.

### *Non-Fascist Youth Organizations Are Our Allies*

Comrade Dimitroff in his report pointed out to us the way, as follows:

“The Young Communist League must strive in every way to rally the forces of all non-fascist mass organizations for the struggle against fascism, for the struggle against unparalleled oppression and militarization of the youth, for the economic and cultural rights of the younger generation, for drawing these young workers into the anti-fascist front, no matter where they happen to be, in the factories, in the labor service camps, the labor exchanges, barracks, the navy, the mines or the different athletic, cultural and other organizations.”

It is precisely this task that our comrades in France and the United States helped us to realize in time and to work for carrying out successfully. Had our comrades under the leadership of the Communist Party of France not understood in time the problem of the younger generation, had they not realized quickly enough the necessity for cooperation between all *non-fascist* organizations in the struggle for freedom, peace, and the rights of the toiling youth, fascism in France would not have suffered the heavy blow



it did suffer in its effort to win the youth. The younger generation of France has not become the main reservoir of fascism and is today, in the main, taking part in the struggle against fascism and war. *In the struggle for peace, freedom and the rights of the younger generation all non-fascist youth organizations can become our sincere allies, provided our initiative becomes sufficiently great to prevent fascism from utilizing the youth for its criminal purposes.*

The youth stands in the front ranks of the struggle in the great anti-fascist people's front in France. Thirty-five large youth organizations are already cooperating in an effort to vanquish fascism and fight for the rights of the younger generation of France. Comrades of France, you have scored great successes in your struggle against fascism. We are proud of you. But do not forget for a single moment that *fascism has not yet been vanquished* in your country. Continue your struggle with even greater enthusiasm and skill and with better organization!

#### *The American Youth Congress*

Thanks to the joint participation and work of the young American comrades with the Socialist and other non-fascist youth at the Youth Congress, originally called by a reactionary group desirous of fascist honors, our Young Communist League of the United States helped to bring about the unity of several non-fascist organizations with a membership of over a million. Jointly with these organizations our comrades energetically set to work and a second Youth Congress was called, the only one of its kind in the history of the American youth movement. Eight hundred and forty-six organizations with a membership of 1,350,000 were represented at this convention and cooperated in finding a path to be taken by the American youth to free itself from want and oppression. The bond of cooperation with all non-fascist youth organizations is becoming still stronger on account of that. This is the guarantee for further successes.

The achievements of the Young Communist Leagues of France and of the United States, which, together with the Socialist youth



and other groups have contributed to creating a broad front of non-fascist organizations in their countries, are not only due to their courage and initiative. They likewise arise from the fact that our comrades did not try to force upon the youth any ready-made organizational schemes or previously elaborated programs. At every stage of the development of this mass movement and its program, the youth of all organizations themselves took a most intimate part. This is an example of how to *influence* the masses of youth instead of commanding them in a bureaucratic way. Not all our Leagues have understood how to employ such forms of mass work in practice. The experiences of our German and Czech Leagues prove this. The fact that the "anti-Goering plan", which was thought out from above, did not meet with any response among the mass of the German youth should not surprise us, for we know that this plan was elaborated without a knowledge of the real feelings of the youth. Even after it was drawn up, the plan was not brought to the attention of the youth.

It is also not surprising that the "Declaration of the Rights of the Young Generation" in Czechoslovakia met with a similar fate, when we learn that it had a similar origin. Such methods lead to naught, comrades. If the Y.C.L. comrades in France and the United States were now to resort to such methods, they would be isolated from the mass movement which already exists.

A second and no less important lesson which can be drawn from the experience in the mass work of the French and American Leagues is the necessity of allowing for a great deal of elasticity in the content and the organizational forms of cooperation with the non-fascist organizations. I want to state a few examples in connection with this.

While in France the questions of the economic, cultural and political rights of youth formed the basis for cooperation, in England it was the question of peace. There is no recipe that would be valid for *all countries* and all times in building up the common front of the young generation. In each individual case that organizational form is selected which is best adapted to the peculiarities of the country in question and to the circumstances

in which the mass movement develops. We must not try to fit the millions of youth into an organizational strait-jacket; if we attempt to do this, we will only succeed in strangling the developing movement. Therefore, we must not demand that these non-fascist organizations "go the whole hog". We must be ready to enter into cooperation with *all* organizations that are to fight together with us even if only on *one* question, as in France. There, for example, the Catholic youth organizations with millions of members are making the first steps towards taking up the struggle jointly with other progressive youth organizations for the support of the Christian youth of Germany.

A third very important characteristic of the work of the French and American Leagues is their ability to speak the fresh, vivid language of the youth; to appropriate and not to steer clear of the fine sentiment and noble ideals which have always inspired the youth, ideals which the fascists try to utilize for their piratical aims; to take into account the revolutionary and democratic traditions of the people, as well as the national feelings of the youth, at the same time conducting a firm struggle against nationalism and chauvinism, for *proletarian internationalism*.

We say to all young Communists, to all our friends and comrades: Let us once and for all banish any sectarian fear, which may still exist, of initiating the struggle for the lofty aims and ideals of the great masses of youth—for peace, for freedom, for happiness, for progress, for the sum total of rights of the young generation.

*Is not peace between nations something worth fighting for?* Peace between nations means that the youth will not be mangled and torn on the battlefields of finance capital; it means that husbands, wives, sweethearts, mothers, fathers will not be ruthlessly torn from each others' arms; it means that millions will be spent on the needs of the people and not on battleships and armies; it means that the victorious proletariat of the Soviet Union can proceed with its building of socialism; it means that the world proletariat is given still more time to rally its forces for the final overthrow of capitalism.



*Is not freedom something worth fighting for?* Freedom means freedom to work and to earn a living, to study a profession, to follow one's cultural inclinations; it means the right and the opportunity to participate in government; it means the ability to grow and expand in whatever direction the interest of the toiling masses of youth dictates; it means the exact opposite of fascist rule. We Communists have always fought for the freedom of the masses, we have always fought for the freedom of the working class. "Liberty, needless to say, is a very vital slogan for any revolution, be it Socialist or democratic." This is what Lenin had to say concerning the struggle for freedom.

What is it, then, that hinders some comrades from vigorously fighting for the lofty ideals of youth, from speaking the fresh vivid language of youth? Sometimes it is nothing but their inability to understand that slogans are living, breathing things and not museum pieces.

The slogan of the fight for peace has acquired new content capable of moving the many millions of youth into action against the fascist warmongers.

### *We Claim the Revolutionary and Democratic Traditions*

An especially important phase of our work to unite the non-fascist youth organizations on a platform of struggle for the rights of the young generation is the proper utilization of the revolutionary and democratic traditions of the people of each country. We must draw upon the rich heritage which we have in common with the masses of youth. Every movement in the history of the different nations, against repression, every revolt against slavery, every rebellious spokesman for the people, should be studied and learned. In this way we will, in advance, help cut the ground from under the very feet of the fascists who go to great lengths to distort this heritage of the peoples of all countries for their own sinister aims.

Youth of France, recall your great, immortal forbears! The



Jacobins of 1789, and the Communards of 1871 call you to action! We are confident that you will not prove unworthy of your revolutionary forefathers!

Young German people who suffer horrible tortures in the Nazi concentration camps! Your forefathers left their fields with the emblem of a tattered shoe and an oak leaf on their banners, left their plows and scythes, in a peasant revolt whose thunders shook the furthestmost corners of Germany. Your people gave the world the greatest thinkers of all time—Marx and Engels! Their theory is now not only the guiding line of a nation of one hundred and sixty million people, covering one-sixth of the globe, but also the guiding line for all the exploited and oppressed throughout the world. Be true to the end to these traditions of your people and to the teachings of Marx and Engels!

Comrades, let us now ask ourselves how matters stand with the youth in countries other than France and the United States of America? Are their living conditions much different? Do the experiences which our French and American comrades have had apply to these comrades alone?

It is true that the first steps in this direction have already been undertaken in Canada, Great Britain, Switzerland and Czechoslovakia. But how do matters stand with Sweden, Norway, Holland and Belgium? We believe that one of the causes for the lagging behind of these and many other Leagues lies in their inability to shake off their old sectarian standpoint with regard to the non-fascist bourgeois youth organizations.

It is high time that our comrades should regard the pacifist, Republican or Democratic youth and their organizations as their friends and not as their opponents. It must be understood that these youth, no matter to what organizations they belong, likewise suffer hunger and want, that they do not desire fascism any more than we do, that they want to fight against war and for peace, just as we do. All the non-fascist youth organizations can become our honest allies in the fight for peace, freedom and for the rights of the younger generation. If we will develop the greatest initiative in unifying the forces of these organizations,

fascism will not succeed in utilizing the youth for its criminal aims. We want to wage a big struggle to rescue the young generation from physical and moral disintegration, shoulder to shoulder with all those organizations and young people who retain the ideals of freedom, peace, and human progress. We know that they are still not clear on many things. But examples in many countries show us that they are *ready* to fight. We see that the sons and daughters of our own class, belonging to these organizations, are victims of the same fate as we are. Just as we do, they too, suffer from the consequence of the disastrous economic crisis. Hunger does not differentiate among us. Fascism menaces their freedom and their organization, just as it does ours. They, too, are threatened by war, just as we are. They, just as we, do not want to turn back the wheel of history, but, on the contrary, want to turn it ahead. Let us march forward together! *We, therefore, regard them as our allies.* From the rostrum of this Congress we want to vow, in the name of the entire Young Communist International, that with all our enthusiasm, with all our energy, we shall support every organization, every national and international movement which sets itself the aim of coordinating all its forces for the defense of peace and freedom and to help the young generation to be victorious. Let reaction and fascism tremble before the spirit which they themselves have brought into life—the young generation, united, will rush past them toward a happy and joyous future.

### *The Tasks of the Youth in the Trade Union Movement*

The trade unions are of decisive importance in the amalgamation of the working youth and in training them for the struggle. The trade unions protect the proletarian youth against attacks of the employers. There is reason to be concerned, therefore, over the fact that official data of the British Metal Workers Union show that only an insignificant section of apprentices of four of the most important industrial centers of England are organized in the trade unions.



These figures are unfortunately typical for other industries and many other countries. The German Trade Union Federation in Czechoslovakia has only two per cent of the youth organized. In France the Red and the Amsterdam Unions taken together have only 50 per cent of the youth in their midst.

Inadequate trade union organization of the young workers constitutes a great danger to their education in the spirit of the class struggle, to making them fighters in the cause of the working class.

We therefore greet the fact that the great majority of the working youth of Spain are organized into trade unions, that in several countries, especially in Belgium and Great Britain, the trade unions are beginning to take measures to win over the youth. Our Congress calls upon the adherents of the Young Communist International who work for wages, to join their trade unions. This is not merely a question of joining a union. It is necessary to be active and cooperate with all members of the trade unions in winning the young workers. Any effort on the part of the trade unions, irrespective of whether they belong to the Amsterdam or to the Red International, to win over the youth must be supported to the utmost by our comrades.

We are obliged not only to recruit members for the unions but to actively support and protect the trade unions against the class enemy in his effort to destroy them. That is how we can and will win the respect of our fellow trade unionists. The struggle for the economic interests of the youth and against the penetration of fascist influence among them cannot be successful without the aid of the trade unions. Together with the trade union youth we must work for the organization of public works and projects for the unemployed youth, for the organization of all kinds of vocational courses, lodging houses and other forms of concrete aid to the unemployed youth, especially to the girls. We must see that the unemployed youth are given the opportunity to join the unions and enjoy all rights as trade union members. It is our task also to see to the training of the youth in the spirit of the class struggle along trade union lines through special youth



forms of organization and educational activity, as well as sports and cultural activity.

We should advocate the trade union idea among the youth, to explain to those belonging to the trade unions the significance of trade union unity for the defense of their rights and for the improvement of their living conditions. We must show the youth what power united trade unions will have.

### *For the Establishment of One International Independent Student Movement*

Comrades, we must devote a good deal of attention at this Congress to the problem of the students. Practically in all countries fascism found its mass basis among the students. The impossibility of finding employment and a means of livelihood when finishing school, the so-called "over-production" of young intellectuals and the fierce competition resulting, give rise to great bitterness among this section of the youth.

In the United States of America, the center of world imperialism, 184,000 students left their class-rooms one day at a given hour, demonstrating the might of unity. What fear and horror came over the bourgeoisie and its press. American imperialism can no longer rely on its own students! Masses of students demonstrated their partisanship to the side of the anti-fascists and peace-loving people.

When, a year ago, at the time of the parliamentary elections, the fascist party of Czechoslovakia used the students for three days to make the streets of Prague unsafe for transit, and succeeded, by whipping up national hatred and by means of social demagogy, in misusing the students for their pogrom purposes, *who would have believed that these same student masses would within a short time turn their backs on fascism?* But it was possible! Hardly a year has passed and the correct work of our Czechoslovakian Youth League has resulted in the fact that a big students' front for peace, freedom and progress exists in Czechoslovakia comprising fifty non-fascist student organizations. The

success of some of the Leagues is the result, first of all, of the fact that our comrades understood the great importance of the students in the struggle against imperialist war and fascism; *second*, of the fact that they were able to grasp the ideals and issues which really interested the mass of students; *third*, that they succeeded in directing the growing desire for unity along the channels of rallying together all the progressive forces among student youth. It is necessary to make clear to the students the reactionary character of fascism and its hostility to progress, especially in the sphere of science. The students must be mobilized against university fascism and cultural reaction, against the reactionary professors and reactionary methods of teaching. We must fight for a democratic system of study and for a progressive school.

We must fight against existing economic, national, religious and racial discrimination and to open the doors to education and knowledge to *all* sections of the toiling youth. We know, and today a considerable section of the students the world over already know, that their future does *not* lie on the side of reaction, *not* on the side of fascism. Their future lies in the victorious struggle for peace, freedom and progress. It lies on the side of the working class and its youth, on the side of socialism.

### *For the Rights of the Girls*

While the last five years of crisis and depression have left indelible traces on an entire generation of the youth, these traces are much more visible on the bodies, spirits and the hearts of the girls than of the boys. Girls are subject to twofold exploitation and oppression. Everybody knows the brutality of the bourgeoisie and their cynicism in relation to women and girls. Their chances of learning a trade are restricted, their freedom entirely or partly curtailed, and they are deprived of the possibility of participation in public life.

Even under so-called normal capitalist conditions the home life of the girls was always poisoned by the constant fear of mis-



fortune and want. Poverty and low wages have ruined the family, separated people from their loved ones, and broken up homes. The sanctity of the home and the virtues of women were never so desecrated in the history of mankind as they are at present by the bourgeoisie, which introduced the custom of glorifying women in literature, but of driving them into the street in actual life. The hard lot of girls and young women has become even worse in the recent years of the crisis. The position of the younger generation, the tragedy of the youth, is nowhere expressed in bolder relief and more dramatically than in the shocking fate of the girls and young women.

The capitalists take pitiless advantage of the enormous unemployment existing to make the young working girls work above their physical capacity. The bourgeoisie drives the daughters of the toiling masses to the shame of prostitution and white slavery.

Still more shameful and base is the treatment of our working class sisters by the fascist beasts in the countries under fascist dictatorship. The fascists have trampled underfoot the natural ties between human beings, the family. They have substituted "compulsory selection" for love and "racial improvement" for paternal care.

It would, however, be absolutely wrong to assume that the young girls of our generation patiently accept all these insults. Many girls in the non-fascist organizations are beginning to take enthusiastic part in the general struggle against fascism. Members of the Young Women's Christian Association in the United States have displayed splendid militancy. They supported the fight against fascism, for peace and freedom, in scores of peace conferences and at many meetings.

We must once and for all cease to underestimate the importance of work among the girls, and seriously fulfill our duties in this field. We must wage an energetic struggle for all the specific demands arising from the desperate position of the girls, for their social and economic requirements, their cultural demands and rights. Our Leagues must quickly change their policy of ignoring the question of developing strong cadres of girls in the leading bodies of the Young Communist Leagues in every



country. This is not a question of drawing girls formally into executive committees. We must give serious and comradely assistance to our girl comrades, to help them educate themselves and to study in order to be able to perform important work.

### *The Tasks of Work Among Children*

Comrades, we must seriously consider at our Congress our work among the children. Capitalism militarizes the schools and conducts them along fascist lines in order to bring up obedient slaves for the bourgeoisie. The children of the toilers are taught in all schools in the spirit of bourgeois ideology. Millions of children whose parents are unable to support them cannot study and must try to earn a living for themselves. One of the most outstanding tasks of the united front is to save the children of the toilers from extinction!

All forces of the *non-fascist* organizations must be mobilized in order to save the children from the destructive influences of the street. We must not give reaction a chance to get the upper hand in bringing up the younger generation. The growing movement of the anti-fascist people's front in France, and the rising united front in many other countries create *new* possibilities for uniting, organizing and educating the children. Our purpose should not be the creation of narrow, and what is still worse, "political" Pioneer organizations. We must work together with the young Socialists, together with other non-fascist organizations, for the creation of *people's* children's organizations adapted to the conditions and peculiarities of each given country, and especially to the needs and peculiarities of the children themselves. We are convinced that wherever the peculiarities of the children are really taken into account, wherever an effort will be made to make the work of the children's organizations attractive and more interesting, wherever these organizations will be built on a united basis, we will be able to render greater assistance in bringing up the younger generation on the side of the people.

## *For the Unity of the Sport Movement*

One of the gravest consequences of the crisis is that the health of the youth has been undermined. Enforced idleness and years of undernourishment have lowered their ability to resist disease. The terrible speed-up in the factories imposes a great strain on the young workers. The health of women and young girls is speedily destroyed. The youth resort to sport as a means of recreation. But sport activities require establishments which are often very expensive. The bourgeoisie has monopolized the best sport grounds, gymnasiums, and swimming pools, as well as the best instructors, trainers and professional sportsmen for their own sport associations.

The reactionary circles of the bourgeoisie and the military authorities pursue their political aims in the field of sport as well. They directly and indirectly subject the masses of toilers who are organized in the sport associations to the influence of their general staffs in order to obtain trained military reserves out of the young sportsmen. The militarization of youth through the medium of sport is in a very flourishing condition in such countries as Germany, Poland, Italy, etc., where the sport organizations are subordinated to the military authorities. The fascists also try to force the unification of sport organizations under their absolute sway and to disband all organizations that resist this attack upon their freedom.

One of the most important measures for reviving bourgeois sports, at present, is the preparation to hold the Olympic games in Berlin, the capital of world reaction, in 1936. Hitler is converting the Olympiad into a widespread fascist political propaganda drive and is utilizing it for the extension of his international influence. But not all of the members of sport organizations are in agreement with the fascist, militarist tendencies of bourgeois sports. The bourgeois sport movement embraces millions of workers and toilers in general in town and country. With the exception of a small reactionary section, the overwhelming majority of sportsmen are non-fascist and have anti-fascist views.



Even in the fascist sport organizations there are workers who have been forcefully drawn into these organizations through "co-ordination". Feeling is growing against the reactionary course taken by the militarist fascist leaders of the bourgeois sport movement. In the same way there are strong currents against the conversion of the Olympic games of 1936 into a fascist sport demonstration. Hence it is necessary to establish close relationship and a friendly attitude toward sportsmen and the non-fascist bourgeois sport organizations and to support them in all their sporting interests and activities.

At the head of the struggle against militarization and fascism in the field of sports stand the workers' sport associations of the countries where their existence is permitted and the workers' sport groups in the fascist countries. The workers' sport societies, however, still embrace an extremely insignificant section of working sportsmen. Their power is also weakened because there is no unity in their ranks. In a number of countries (France, Norway, Spain, etc.) united workers' sport societies have been formed.

### *Boycott the Hitler Olympics*

A struggle is being waged in all countries for the international unity of all working class sportsmen into one labor sport international. Such unity would be the first step on the way to transforming the workers' sport societies, still weak as they are, into a real strong force which will be able to mobilize all the non-fascist youth engaged in sport for the fight against fascism. The understanding which has recently been reached between the Red and the Lucerne Sport Internationals on unity of action in the struggle against the Hitler Olympiad can be regarded as the first step towards the bringing about of complete unity of working class sportsmen.

We declare our readiness to support every kind of measure which will halt the decline in the health of the young generation. We are ready to cooperate with all those who favor and will work towards giving every young person the chance to engage



in healthy sport and games. Together with all young sportsmen we demand more and better athletic fields from the municipalities and the various governments. Together with all young campers and hikers we demand free access to the mountains and beautiful points on the countryside. We support all the efforts to unite sportsmen for the defense of the freedom of the sport movement, against military and fascist tutelage, and we favor uniting the sport movement with the forces that fight for peace, freedom and progress. For this reason we call upon all our adherents to vigorously support the movement initiated by the sportsmen of different countries for the transfer of the Olympic games from Berlin in 1936. Hence we welcome the unification of the workers' sport movement in France and Norway. We shall support all measures for the establishment of unity on an international scale. Unity will be the first real step towards transforming the small workers' sport organizations of the present into a mass sport movement.

### *Tasks of the Mass Movement of the Youth in the Fascist Countries*

Comrades, if we wish to rally the youth in the struggle against their worst enemy, fascism, the task is particularly important and responsible in the *fascist countries*. In these countries legal mass work must be carried through on an extensive scale and in an elastic form. Instead of this being the case today, however, *we ourselves* have confined our activity to narrow groups. We must take an interest in all phases of the life and existence of the youth. But instead of this, many of our organizations have *engaged themselves only in questions of high politics*.

The vital and clearly understood demands, which are of greatest concern to the youth at the *given moment*, must be formulated in harmony with their actual requirements. But instead of this we have been advancing slogans which the youth could not comprehend, which they could not regard as their own. Circumstances call for an understanding and skillful *utilization of every*

*means of legal and semi-legal agitation and mass contact.* But we possess in our arsenal only such means as the illegal circular and impromptu demonstrations. Instead of establishing a *wide front of all the discontented youth* by means of work in the mass organizations in opposition to the fascist chiefs we have been trying to set our weak forces alone against the colossal fascist state machinery of violence and coercion.

Five million German youths are organized in the Hitler Youth organizations. Six to seven million Italian youths belong to the Fascist Youth Leagues, the Balilla, or the Dopo Lavoro. Over one million Polish youths belong to the "Defense Society", the "Peasant", and other organizations. It would be wrong to assume that all of these millions of youths have been forcefully driven into the fascist organizations. In fact, masses of young people, not only of bourgeois and peasant, but also of unemployed and even working youth, have joined the fascist organizations because they actually believe the demagogic and deceptive promises of the fascists.

The fascists sustain a large section of the youth, clothe them, provide some of them with work, and with these means they bolster up the belief of the great masses of the youth in fascism. But the youth are beginning to feel the hardships, the terror and the exploitation of the fascist regime more and more keenly. Even if the bulk of them still believe in fascism, in Mussolini and Hitler, these youths, both organized and unorganized, are already considering the idea of resistance, and some of them are spontaneously fighting in order to satisfy their elementary economic and cultural demands.

#### *Work Inside Fascist Mass Organizations*

Symptomatic of what is transpiring in the ranks of the fascist mass organizations are the spontaneous youth strikes in the labor service camps in Germany and Poland, the mass resistance of the youth to the Schacht decree, as well as the support of the struggle of the Polish peasants given by several branches of the "Defense Society".



We have to help the youth in the fascist countries organize the struggle in their interests, to mobilize them against fascism. But our comrades must understand that when the bulk of the youth put forward minor, elementary demands, even if the demands are not directed against fascism as such, this leads to a conflict with fascism.

By helping the youth to organize the struggle for relief, for a plate of hot soup, for work, against lay-offs, against military drills, for vacations, for equal rights for the girls in the factories, for schooling, for participation in public and political life, for their democratic rights and liberties, we help the youth to find the path of conscious struggle against fascism.

It is absolutely necessary for all our comrades to understand the *importance of work in the fascist mass organizations* where millions of youth are to be found. Without working inside these organizations we shall never be able to reach their members and spur them on to proceed from spontaneous protest to active struggle against fascism. Working jointly with all anti-fascists, especially with the young Socialists, our brothers in the revolutionary struggle, *utilizing the weapons of our enemy*, his organizations, his meetings, his measures and laws, *we shall be in a position to tear away the masses of the youth from fascism*. Experience has taught us that some of our comrades, who had become the factory spokesmen of the youth in Germany, have been able to hold successful legal youth meetings against lay-offs, for vacations and for free education. The anti-fascists *must not isolate themselves in underground circles*. It is their foremost task to work inside the fascist mass organizations and to do their utmost to carry out measures which serve the interests of the youth. In order to utilize the youth for their reactionary aims, the fascists are compelled to advance demands of interest to the youth, demands which they are neither able nor willing to fulfill. The youth in the mass organizations must be convinced and induced to insist upon the fulfillment of the promises made by the fascists. Only in this way will it be possible to utilize the social demagoguery of the fascists for the purpose of influencing the young workers to turn



against fascism, isolating it from the masses of the youth and vanquishing it.

Aside from the fascists, there is a number of non-fascist youth organizations in Poland and Germany, Italy and Bulgaria. In Germany, for example, the Catholic youth organizations have more than a half million members who, in the course of over two years, have been bravely fighting for their independence as organizations.

*The fascists are trying to cause discord in these non-fascist youth organizations, and to destroy them. We must actively support and defend the struggle of the youth of these organizations for their independence. We must not only establish contacts with the youth of these organizations from the outside, but join these organizations in order, together with them, the better to combat fascism. It is our task to unite the youth of these organizations for a united front of the young toiling generation for peace, liberty, culture, and independence from fascism.*

Commensurate with these fundamental tasks, we must alter the language of our press, our organizational structure, our methods of work and leadership in the fascist countries. The chief point is to create a broad movement of the entire discontented youth in the mass organizations.

Why do we put the question in this form? Because the toiling youth, regardless of their affiliation to various organizations, their nationality, race, religion, or sex, are beginning to seek more and more a way to improve their conditions and restore their rights.

Comrades, our Leagues have demonstrated heroism, loyalty, steadfastness, and unbounded devotion to the cause of the working class in the fascist countries. This heroism can only then become a mighty factor if it is linked up with the ability to carry on skillful mass work. We hope that particularly our German and Italian comrades will use these two qualities well.

### *Participation of the Youth in the Anti-Imperialist Peoples' Front*

Comrades, the youth in the colonial and semi-colonial coun-

tries are subject to twofold oppression: they are oppressed by the imperialists as well as by the feudal lords and the bourgeoisie of their own country. Under the most difficult of working conditions, receiving starvation wages which are often reduced by the widely practiced system of fines, the youth in these countries is also subjected to corporal punishment. Doomed to a miserable, slave-like existence, the young person is deprived of the possibility of acquiring an independent existence, of studying and founding a family.

The young generation of toilers in the colonial countries is the victim of rickets, tuberculosis, typhus, venereal diseases and malaria—victim of the "cultural" blessings of imperialist civilization. In India, where the death rate is the highest in the world, sixty-five million people died in the decade from 1920 to 1930, forty-five million of these died from malaria and similar diseases. In this country also the average span of life is 24 years, in Chile it is 22 years, while in England it is 55.6 years. In the town of Asagan (Algiers) out of 1,058 youths called for military service, only 117 were found fit. In China, human markets are organized in towns like Peiping and Tientsin, where husbands offer their wives for sale and parents their children.

The youth in the colonial and semi-colonial countries are deprived of the most elementary conditions of a cultured and civilized life. This particularly applies to the mass of the peasant, Negro and Indian youth. In Brazil the elementary schools are attended by only 1,614,000 children, and of this number, only 127,438 children complete school. In India only 3.6 per cent of the children of school age attend school and only 3 per cent of the entire population can read and write.

These serious material privations of youth are accompanied by unbearable suffering which the youth feels on seeing its people enslaved and oppressed by the imperialist powers that be. Oppression and ruthless exploitation by foreign capitalists and feudal lords make the life of these young people unbearable. In these countries joy and happiness are alien to the youth. At the same time universal and incredible suffering make the mass of the



youth a mighty revolutionary factor in the struggle for national and social liberation.

The youth want to speak, read and write in their native languages. They do not want to die prematurely, but want to become a strong, healthy and happy generation. The youth want to get rid of foreign oppression and the feudal yoke and they want to obtain democratic rights and liberties. The youth curse imperialist war. They are indignant over the needless death of 150,000 young people in Bolivia and Paraguay who lost their lives in a war thrust upon them by United States and British imperialist oil trusts in their scramble for the Chaco oil fields.

The colonial youth hates and curses the Japanese and Italian imperialists for their wars of piracy and oppression against the peoples of China and Ethiopia. The youth deeply sympathizes with these people who are fighting for their freedom, and supports their struggle with all its youthful fervor.

Have we the right to disregard all these problems which so deeply stir the young generation in the colonial countries? Is it possible to achieve any substantial successes if we maintain the old contents, forms, and methods of our work? No! We come to this conclusion when we analyze the development of the Communist youth movement in the colonial and semi-colonial countries in the period from the Fifth to the Sixth World Congress of the Young Communist International.

New Leagues and groups of the Communist youth sprang up in Latin America and in some of the eastern countries during this period. At the time of the Fifth Congress we had very weak Young Communist Leagues in Argentina, Brazil, Mexico and Uruguay, numbering approximately 1,000 members. At present we have ten Leagues and, in addition, groups of Communist youth in a number of countries, with a membership of over 14,000. But despite these successes of the Communist youth movement, we have nowhere, with the exception of the Soviet Districts of China, been able to form genuine mass youth organizations. In many countries there are no Young Communist Leagues whatever and in the rest of them there are sectarian Leagues and groups



which are isolated from the broad masses despite the fact that they have already been in existence for many years.

In our work we must take into account the special character of the problems of the young generation in the colonial and semi-colonial countries, where, in consequence of the fact that capitalist development began late, class relations are different than in the imperialist countries. Besides, national oppression and the struggle for national liberation is a further factor tending to unite the youth. That is why we are confronted with the problem of uniting the young generation in the colonial and semi-colonial countries.

Bearing in mind the specific features of the situation in these countries, and also basing ourselves upon the necessity of defending the most elementary interests of the youth, upon the struggle for their health, for the elementary education of the young generation as a whole, for the well-being and the happiness of youth, we must merge the entire young generation into a mighty national movement, the aim of which should be the training of the many millions of youth in the spirit of hatred towards the enemies of youth and the enemies of the people, in the spirit of devotion to the cause of liberating their country and its youth from oppression and slavery of every kind.

### *Did Not Consider Liberation Struggle Sufficiently*

In order to fulfill these tasks it is necessary to correct our sectarian line and our evaluation of the various existing youth organizations, including the various organizations of a national-revolutionary and national-reformist nature, and to establish the closest of contact and friendly relations with these organizations, seeking their unification and the inclusion of the unorganized mass of the youth into a common front with them. The establishment of the unity of the young generation necessitates that we should take into account the characteristic peculiarities existing in each separate country, but our entire activity and our struggle along this line should have national liberation as its aim. I have

already said what the character of the Young Communist Leagues in capitalist countries should be. Now I want to speak about the fact that, ignoring the peculiarities of the colonial and semi-colonial countries, we tried to form leagues of youth by observing the same scheme which we used in the Young Communist Leagues in the imperialist countries. First and foremost we underrated the struggle for national liberation, for the defense of the oppressed people; we did not consider the actual level of the development of the class struggle nor the role which the petty-bourgeois and bourgeois youth can play in the various stages of the revolution. We also failed to take into account the small numbers of the proletariat and the fact that it is not highly concentrated, the predominance of the peasant population, the lack of political traditions and political organization among the toiling youth, the fact that class consciousness was in an embryonic stage, and the low level of cultural development. If we really want to form mass youth organizations in these countries we must begin by studying the actual realities, and form organizations to accord with the real situation, and not simply to copy Europe.

National liberation, anti-imperialist organizations should be the new type of youth organization in the colonial and semi-colonial countries. The special features of their programs, the specific nature of their social composition and organizational structure should be determined by the above-mentioned specific peculiarities of the different countries.

In Argentina, for instance, it is necessary to unite the Young Communist League with the Young Socialist League, with the anarchist, radical, progressive, democratic and other youth organizations. In Mexico it is necessary to have unity with the Socialist Youth and with the youth sections of the National Revolutionary Party. In countries and districts where the population is predominantly peasant or indigenous, the Young Communist League must above all be a peasant or indigenous organization. In the Indian districts of Peru, Mexico, Bolivia, Chile, Ecuador, etc., Leagues of Indian youth must be formed, in whose activity a prominent place must be taken by a struggle to improve the con-



ditions of social life, to improve the cultural level, promote popular hygiene and to develop sport. In countries with a Negro population, organizations of the Negro youth must be formed.

In view of the organizational and political backwardness of the youth, the raising of the cultural level, the defense of the elementary demands of the youth, such as demands dealing with social health services and prophylactic measures must take a more prominent place in the activities of these organizations than they would in highly developed capitalist countries.

In countries like Argentina, where the level of economic development is comparatively higher, and where the class struggle is more developed, the class element and the struggle of the working class must play an important role in the content and character of the activity of this united youth organization. In Latin America and in the Arab countries, we must strive to create united leagues of the anti-imperialist youth, and to form a confederation of these leagues which would coordinate the activity of the entire movement of these young people.

### *Organization of the Chinese Youth and the Organization of Their People*

The rich Chinese culture is being suppressed with blood and iron in China. Millions of youth have been murdered. Their life is considered nothing more than a living commodity, an object of speculation for brokers. The last bit of energy is being squeezed out of the youth in the factories and mills. The endless militarist wars fostered by the imperialists have cost tens of thousands of their lives. Homeless and downtrodden, boys and girls lead a miserable life of slavery. Japanese imperialism, occupying a vast section of China, brings even greater slavery to the Chinese youth. It robs them of their home, culture and the right to a human existence.

But the great Chinese people are a people "who not only weep over their century-old slavery, who not only dream of freedom and happiness, but who can also fight against the age-old

oppressors of China," said Lenin. Tens of thousands of youth in partisan detachments in Manchuria are fighting with arms in hand against Japanese imperialism. Hundreds of thousands of brave and courageous fighters hold high the banner of national emancipation of the Chinese youth in the ranks of the Chinese Red Army and the Red Partisans. We send our fervent greetings to the Chinese youth who are valiantly fighting for their liberation and for saving their beloved homeland.

The Communist Party of China has courageously adopted a new course for the establishment of a broad anti-imperialist people's front on the basis of organized armed resistance to Japan, and for saving their country from destruction. The Young Communist League of China must also readjust itself to work in the same way for unity. The Young Communist League of China has contributed a splendid example of heroism to the history of the youth movement. But the old methods and forms of work are no longer effective in China. The experience gained must be utilized, our work must be done critically, the organization and its activity must be revised in order to overcome our sectarian isolation from the masses, and organize and unite the entire Chinese youth for the defense of the country. That must be the slogan of the entire Chinese youth and of all those who want to save their home and their people and do not want to be downtrodden slaves. All the work of our organizations must be carried on under this slogan. The organization of the Young Communist League must be adapted to the new policy of the Communist Party of China in the Soviet areas also.

We are firmly convinced that the Chinese comrades will be able skillfully to choose the path which will enable them to rally the millions of Chinese youths and lead them in the struggle for emancipation in the areas under Kuomintang domination.

*We Steer A Bold Course Toward Victory!*

Comrades, we young fighters, trained in the spirit and the teachings of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, propose a bold and



dauntless road at this World Congress. The great problems of the fate of the young toiling generation of the capitalist world stand in the center of our Congress. We are drawing lessons from seven years of hard struggle and labor, of big battles of the proletariat, the toiling people and its youth. We are forging our weapons which will arm the younger generation and enable it to stand up victorious against its enemies. We are uniting the forces of the youth; we place all our courage, our heroism, our youthful fervor, our abilities and strength in the service of the cause of the young toiling generation. We spur the waverers and discouraged on to action and struggle. Our highest aspiration is to put an end to the split in the ranks of the young workers and toilers, to bring them together.

We want *one* mass organization of the young workers which will weld them together, and which will not only be able to rally all sections of the youth, but also courageously lead them in the struggle. We shall forge an inseparable unity with our class brothers, with the Socialist youth of the world, which will forever put an end to the split in the ranks of the working class youth.

Let the youthful toiling generation of all lands unite! In close militant alliance with the proletariat and the toiling people, we shall fell fascism to the ground.

We extend our hand to all non-fascist youth organizations. Together with them we want to build a mighty front of the younger generation in the capitalist countries embracing millions of youth. We have inscribed on our banners: Democratic liberties and rights of the people and their youth, against fascism and imperialist war, for peace. We march together with all enemies of reaction and friends of freedom, with all enemies of imperialist war and friends of peace, with all who are prepared to fight for a place under the sun for the younger generation. That is the path we wish to follow.

Comrades, this path is not an easy one. But our strength will overcome all difficulties, all obstacles. We are not alone in this great fight. The liberated people, a hundred and sixty million

people, of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics, are with us. The happiest youth in the world, the Soviet youth, the youth which does not speak any more of freedom as an unfulfilled dream, but which is growing in the freedom of socialist creation and is being reared as socialist beings, this youth is with us. The Soviet youth can enjoy these fruits because their fathers fought great heroic and victorious battles against the oppressors, because the peoples of tsarist Russia, the workers, peasants, and oppressed national minorities, under the leadership of the immortal Lenin and the great Stalin, united at the moment when the fate of their country was at stake, and formed one united front against slavery and despotism; because they are led by the greatest man of our age, the best friend and teacher not only of the Soviet Union, but of exploited youth of all countries, the great *Stalin*.



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