

# INTERNATIONAL OF YOUTH



**Defeat Hitler in the Saar!**

**The Y.C.L. in the United States**

By EARL BROWDER  
Secretary of Communist Party, U.S.A.

**Struggle or Capitulation?**

By V. CHEMODANOV  
Secretary of the Young Communist  
International

**N.R.A. Reform to Further  
Exploit Youth**

By MAX WEISS

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## On the VIth World Congress of the Young Communist International

**T**HE SIXTH WORLD Congress of the Young Communist International is scheduled to take place in the first half of 1935.

A world congress is the highest body of the entire Y.C.I., and consists of delegates from all sections of the Y.C.I. throughout the world. The World Congress of the Y.C.I., under the leadership of the Communist International, reviews and estimates the work of the Leagues since the last congress and from its discussion decides upon the line and tasks for the Y.C.I. for the next period. Thus the World Congress is an event of the greatest importance for all revolutionary youth, for all young workers. The Fifth World Congress of the Y.C.I. was held in 1928.

The coming Sixth Congress will hear a report of the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International, followed by the report of the Executive Committee of the Y.C.I. dealing with the work of its sections in sixty different countries throughout the world.

The agenda of the World Congress will be arranged so as to include discussion of the most urgent problems facing the Young Communists and the working class and farming youth of all countries.

The fight against war, how to crush fascism, how to build the widest united front of youth, how to organize and lead the young workers in successful action against the employers, how to build up the Y.C.I.s into powerful mass organizations—all such questions will be thoroughly discussed and decided upon.

It is the right and duty of all Young Communists to take a really active part in the discussion of all these problems and to interest other young workers in them.

From now on the "International of Youth" will contain in each number discussion mate-

rial on the various problems which the Congress will discuss. We ask all readers to contribute their opinions and suggestions.

The discussion articles should be discussed by all shop and street units, and collective opinions formed as a result of such discussions would be particularly welcome.

Since its last World Congress in 1928 the Young Communist International has achieved a great number of important victories in the fight against capitalism. It has initiated the truly mass World Movement of Youth Against War and Fascism and a fight for unity of Socialist and Communist Youth which is growing in all countries. Such sections as the German, Chinese, Japanese, Polish, and Bulgarian Leagues have provided inspiring examples of Bolshevik mass work under conditions of raging terror. Since its last Congress the Y.C.I. has grown and has become stronger.

But we cannot be satisfied! Our growth is too slow, too narrow. Comrades! All of us must do our best to prepare for the Congress by discussing our problems and in another way by preparing to come to the Congress with greater victories, with more members, with better organization, with improved work in the trade unions and factories, and in mass organizations of youth.

Which unit and which district will have the great honor of reporting to the World Congress that it has achieved the best results between now and the time of the Congress?

We invite all units, sections and district organizations to begin now to compete for this honor.

Before the Congress convenes a Thesis will be published for discussion by all Leagues.

Editorial Board.

# Defeat Hitler in the Saar!

## EDITORIAL

"The threatening catastrophe at home is driving financial capital to indulge in criminal war adventures. The whole Reich is one huge armaments works. The burden of armaments is crushing the masses. The Youth is compulsorily militarized in the Labor service and military camps. Fascism is whipping up chauvinism in the most unrestrained manner. The Hitler regime has become the chief war monger in Europe. . . . The Central Committee of the Communist Party of Germany declares to the whole of the German working class and to all toilers that the next battle to undermine, weaken and overthrow the bloody fascist dictatorship will be fought in the Saar district. The battle must become an international battle against fascism in general. . . . Hitler must suffer an annihilating defeat in the Saar." (From the Declaration of the Central Committee of Germany to the Saar Population.)

THE NEW YORK TIMES reports on Nov. 14th that the town of Dusseldorf, Germany has decided to postpone its annual festival until after the January plebiscite in the Saar has once more returned that area with its coal and iron mines and 800,000 people to the loving arms of the "Fatherland." The report does not hint at the possibility that the inhabitants of fascist Dusseldorf may not be in a festive mood, nor does it breathe a word of the possibility that on January 13, the people of the Saar basin may vote against surrendering themselves to Hitler Fascism and German finance-capital with their program of hunger, terror and war. And so discreet is this report of the N. Y. Times that it fails to inform us that more and more the Saar population is rallying behind the Communist Party of Germany when it declares to them that "There can be only one slogan: The Saar people must never be handed over to Hitler's bloody regime. . . . Reply to the demagogues and Pied Pipers: We do not want to come to Hitler, we are voting for the status quo. . . . The more annihilating the defeat of German fascism in the Saar district, the more rapidly you German Saar people will be united with us in a free Germany."

The correctness of the stand of the Communist Party, and the importance of the Saar in relation to the general offensive against Fascism and imperialist war can only be understood if we examine the history, the economic significance, and the present situation in the Saar district.

The forthcoming Saar plebiscite inevitably calls to mind the Treaty of Versailles, the Treaty which proved so completely the truth of Lenin's characterization of the imperialist war of 1914-18 as "a war between two coalitions of the imperialist bourgeoisie for the partition of the world, for the division of the booty, and for the plunder and strangulation of small and weak nations." The Saar Basin was one of the pieces of booty which France generously allotted to itself, although not outright, as it did with Alsace-Lorraine and the other territory it acquired.

"The Germans will pay for everything," wrote the French press on the eve of the Treaty of Versailles. And part of the payment, according to the terms of the treaty consisted in the transfer by Germany to France of the coal regions, along the Saar River. France was to assume full ownership of the mines, without payment and was alone to exploit them. The region was to be governed by a special commission appointed by, and responsible only to the League of Nations, although it is obvious from the economic provisions of the treaty that France was to be sole ruler. After 15 years (on Jan. 13, 1935) the population was to vote on what sovereignty they would prefer. They were to have three alternatives—a union with France, a return to Germany, or the maintenance of the status quo, i.e. the League of Nations.

It was not to bring to the Saar the cultural benefits of French enlightenment and "Le Petit Parisien" that France wanted, and still wants the Saar. Under the terms of the

Treaty of Versailles, Alsace-Lorraine was given to France, and for the working of the iron deposits of Alsace-Lorraine France needed the coal mines of the Saar. And with the coal and iron so acquired, France in 1929 achieved fourth place in world production of coal and iron.

Let us examine more closely this district whose resources and people Fascist Germany is now using all its pretty tricks of demagoguery, terror and deceit to acquire. The area of the Saar region is about 741 square miles. It contains somewhat more than 800,000 people. Of these about 560,000 are Catholics, 202,000 are Protestants and 4,000 are Jews. Except for short periods, when it was in the hands of France, the territory has been German since the ninth century. Fifteen years of French economic occupation of the Saar have resulted in the presence there of only three to four thousand French.

The estimated coal reserves of the Saar are 16,250,000,000 metric tons. This is no mean amount when we consider that those of France are only 18.6 billion tons, of which ten billion are difficult to mine. The average annual production of coal in the Saar before the war was 12,000,000 tons, about 8% of the total mined in Germany. The acquisition of the Saar meant that it freed France from its pre-war dependence on England and Germany as suppliers of coal for its blast furnaces. A rapid development of its heavy industry began as France started to increase the output of the coal and metal industries to their maximum. The following table shows the growth of coal mining:

### Production of Coal in the Saar

(Yearly total in thousands of metric tons.)

Year	1919	1920	1925	1927	1929
Tons	8,400	9,600	12,990	13,596	13,579

It can be seen that coal production was quickly raised from 8,400,000 tons in 1919 to 13,600,000 tons on the eve of the world economic crisis in 1929. The 1929 production represents 25% of the total mined by France itself that year (53.8 million tons), and an increase of 10% over the 1913 output of the Saar.

The increase in pig iron and steel production paralleled that of coal, as shown below:

### Production of Pig Iron and Steel in the Saar

(Yearly output in thousands of tons.)

Year	Pig Iron	Steel
1920	644	741
1921	1148	925
1924	1389	1447
1928	1936	2073
1929	2105	2209

In 1929, 10-15% more pig iron was produced than before the war. The 1929 pig iron output was 21% and steel 22% of the total turned out by France. It may be noted that by 1933 coal production had fallen to 10,600,000 tons and pig iron to 15,900,000, with disastrous effects on the living conditions of the Saar workers. The result of the acquisition and increased exploitation of Saar coal and Upper Silesian ores was that from a country whose heavy industry before the war was weak, France changed into a great industrial nation. Herein lies the economic significance of the Saar, the reason for France's

eagerness to retain it, and Germany's to regain it. Because of the conflict which has arisen out of the struggle of these two imperialist powers to capture it, the Saar may be the "powder keg" which will start the next imperialist war.

To regain this precious prize Germany has not been content to wait patiently until the plebiscite of 1935. Twice in 1929 she attempted to come to terms with France and twice she failed. On the first occasion she rejected the French proposals for the re-



German youth thrown out of the factories and herded into forced labor camps, shown marching to their barracks.

sale of the mines because the terms were too high. On the second trial she was flatly refused by the French who need the Saar coal for industry. So badly in need is France of the Saar coal that in 1929, as a proviso of safety in case the plebiscite went against her, she tried to make a deal with the German steel industry apportioning spheres of influence. Further evidence of French greed for the Saar can be found in the secret treaty of Feb. 12, 1917 between France and Czarist Russia, published by the Bolsheviks in 1917, whereby France was to get the Saar.

The struggle for the Saar took a new lease on life upon Hitler's coming to power. Fifty thousand Nazis demonstrated at Niederwald in August, 1933 under the slogan "The Saar must be German." The Nazi leader in the Saar declared that "The demonstration of August 27 is the first move of a struggle which will have to free the Saar and add it to the German fatherland." Later the "Berliner Tageblatt" echoed this with a call to all loyal Germans not to forget "the watch on the Saar." Not to be outdone, the organs of French heavy industry, "Information" and "Temps" began an intensive anti-German drive. "Temps" declared that compromise on the Saar question is impossible, although as shown below its tune soon changed. The battle for the Saar is excellent proof of the truth that the deeper the crisis, the more keenly, more openly, do the imperialists compete for sources of raw materials and for markets for their products.

In January, 1934 Von Papen negotiated for the return at once of the Saar to Germany. While Nazi radios blared and airplanes scattered Nazi literature over the Saar, Hitler told the French ambassador that the Saar should be returned immediately since it was sure to vote pro-Nazi. And at Zweibrücken on the edge of the Saar, Goebbels shouted, "There can be no compromise on the Saar question. Come what may, the Reich will stick to you."

France, anxious to keep the Saar out of the hands of her rival finance-capitalists in Germany, and fearing that the 800,000 Germans of the Saar would not vote for her, began to change her "no compromise" attitude. Barthou, before the League of Nations in September, announced concessions making the status quo more attractive, promised another plebiscite in the future, and mentioned the possibility of ceding the mines to local resi-

dents. The French press, including the adamant "Temps", began to boost the slogan of "Vote for the Status Quo."

What is the situation in the Saar as the plebiscite nears? French troops mass on the borders of the Saar, and Marshal Petain, echoing French finance-capital, declares that the French army must be prepared to act in case of a Nazi Putsch. Reports come that the already-assembled Nazi forces plan to march in after the vote and before the results are given out by the League. And within the Saar, the German Front (the Nazi organization recruited from the middle class, the civil servants, the police, the technical staff in the mines) aided by agents specially sent in by Hitler, conducts a campaign of the most brutal terror against those who fight the incorporation of the Saar in Germany. Nazi control of the councils in charge of registering voters for the plebiscite has resulted in the fraudulent addition of 70,000 names to the lists, making a total of 520,000 instead of, correctly, 450,000 names.

Both the intensified campaign of terror and falsification instituted by the Nazis, and the recent support by France of the status quo, are reactions to the direction in which the people of the Saar are moving. At the 1932 elections to the Saar Landesrat (advisory councils), the vote was as follows:

Communist .....	20%
Socialist .....	10%
Catholic Centre, about	50%
(now dissolved)	
Jewish vote .....	5%

Already Communists and Socialists have joined in a united front for the maintenance of the status quo and against fascist terror. The Catholic workers, aware of the attacks to which their brothers in Germany, both as workers and Catholics, are being subjected, are being rapidly drawn into this united action.

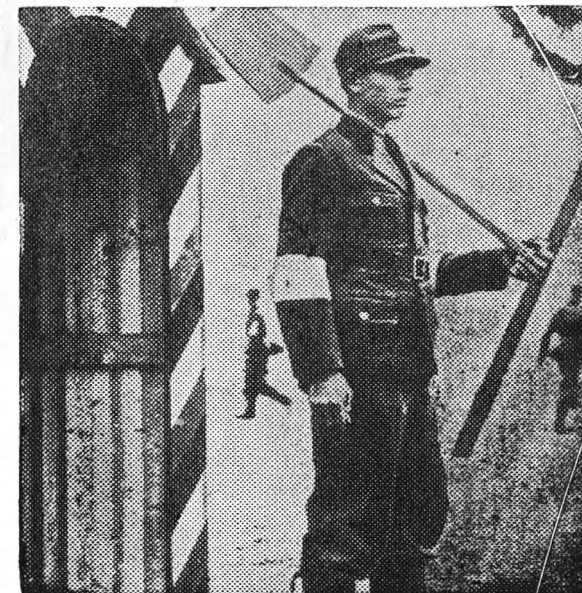
The workers of the Saar are more and more standing shoulder to shoulder behind the fight which the Communist Party of the Saar and Germany have consistently led against fascist encroachment in the Saar. The Communist Party has never called, as did the social-democrats for a "preventive war" of French imperialism against Germany. The Communist Party is against imperialist exploitation and national oppression, whether by France or Germany, or under the "benevolent" protection of the League of Nations.

The Communist Party sharply differentiates its fight for the status quo, from the same efforts of France. France's advocacy of the status quo is solely in the interest of French imperialism, as a means whereby she can continue to maintain her economic domination of the Saar, and finally to snatch it completely for herself. The Communist Party on the contrary raises the slogan of the status quo, organizes and leads the struggle of the workers, as a blow against fascism and finance-capital, whether French or German. The Communist Party stands for the maintenance of the status quo only until that time when the fascist dictatorship is overthrown, until the German proletariat comes to power. To unite with Germany now, to place themselves under the same open and violent dictatorship which oppresses the masses of Germany would mean a victory for fascism and war. Under such conditions the workers cannot select the path of "national unity." This path is not open. Hitler's slogan of "national unity" is nothing but chauvinism, a thin disguise for the tyranny of fascism and the horror of imperialist war. It is only the advent of the dictatorship of the proletariat, eliminating the basis of imperialist war and national oppression, which will open the path for the union of the people of the Saar with their brothers in a free Germany. But since the Communist Party in the Saar does not as yet have the full support of the majority of the working class, since the split by social-democracy of the working class is only now being overcome, an immediate struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat cannot be at once begun. And since the terms of the plebiscite allow only three alternatives, the Communist Party calls for a vote "for the status quo," as the only one permissible under the circumstances, as the only one which will allow for the broadening and sharpening of the struggle against Fascism by the workers of the Saar, and will, in itself, constitute a heavy blow against German fascism. The Communist Party points out, that the struggle against Fascism is at the same time a struggle against imperialist war. Fascism by its very nature means war. Not through love of peace does Germany assume more and more the aspect of an armed camp, the masses exploited to the breaking point so as to increase armaments, the youth "militarized in the Labor Camps and military service." With the Saar and its huge war

reserves of population and economic resources in its hands, Germany may feel strong enough to take the step which will once more involve the world in a new imperialist war.

Richard von Kuhlman, who helped Germany negotiate the infamous Brest-Litovsk Treaty, stated in April 1934, "Nobody doubts that the plebiscite will go overwhelmingly in favor of Germany. Some elements may vote against return to Germany, that is for continuing the present arrangement. If such votes are cast they may not be interpreted as being pro-French. They would be evidence of antagonisms against certain aspects of present Germany."

To Herr von Kuhlman, to Hitler, to the Krupps and the Thyssens, we declare that it is precisely these "certain aspects,"—the mad preparations for war, the smashing of workers' organizations, the national and religious oppression, the enslavement, the starvation, the torture of the German working class by fascism, which on January 13, must determine that the united population of the Saar, following the guidance of the Communist Party, must vote for the maintenance of the status quo as a vital blow against Fascism and imperialist war and, objectively, as a major blow struck for that which will make Fascism in Germany impossible once and for all—the dictatorship of the proletariat, a Soviet Germany!



German forced labor youth compelled to stand at attention like regular soldiers.

# The Y. C. L. in the United States

By EARL BROWDER,

General Secretary, Communist Party, U. S. A.

● From an address to the Seventh National Congress of the Y.C.L., U.S.A.

COMRADES, I want to speak about some of the features of the Seventh National Convention of the Young Communist League and of our next tasks in the revolutionary youth movement in the United States.

We Communists are confronted with the greatest historic task in organizing and leading the working class and all toilers in the struggle for their everyday demands and for the overthrow of capitalism in preparation for the establishment of a new, a higher form of society, a socialist society. We tell you that only through this unity of the toiling masses, of which the youth is an integral part, under the hegemony of the proletariat, can we achieve this goal. Because of this, because we are conscious of the responsibility we owe to the masses of toiling youth the Communist Party is always critical in analyzing the work of the Young Communist League, which is the closest co-worker of the Communist Party.

We can already characterize this convention—its main outlines are clear before us. We can already form a judgment of this convention as representing a healthy movement of the Young Communist League towards real mass work. It is a movement which can be strengthened by a real struggle against the deep rooted sectarianism that is manifested particularly at this time when the League is beginning to get down to its basic tasks of working in the trade unions, leading and helping to prepare the working youth for the forthcoming struggles in the basic industries of the country.

The political character of this change that is taking place in the Y.C.L. is the same as the change that took place in the Party dur-

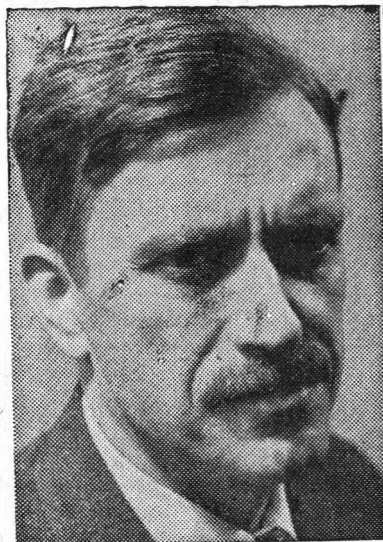
ing the past year. The strong sides and weak sides of the Y.C.L. today are approximately the same as those which were registered by the 8th National Convention of the Party. They are different in detail. Some of the strong points displayed by the Party find sharp expression in the development of the Y.C.L. as well.

The main political characterization we made in the Party stands for the League also—that is, that the Y.C.L. is beginning to make this turn toward basic mass work, a call for which was made a year ago in the Open Letter at our Extraordinary Party Conference.

It is necessary to say a word about this for the purpose of emphasizing the necessity for this basic change in the work of our organization. The necessity of this change is dictated by the world situation and by the situation in the United States.

Every one of you has heard the situation described as one of approaching revolution and wars. Perhaps sometimes we repeat the phrase so much that we forget what it means. It means that all of the condi-

tions exist for the outbreak of a war so that at any moment the world may be enveloped in a new world war and in new class battles. It is not the question of this taking place in some foreign country—these possibilities exist in the U. S. also. It means that the masses of workers are in motion, are in a sharp conflict with the forces of capitalism, are breaking loose from their domination, and that therefore they are ripe for our leadership, when we find the means of connecting ourselves with their daily lives and problems, showing them the revolutionary path of their daily struggles and the revolutionary way out of such struggles.



EARL BROWDER

That this is true can be proven by the definite forward movement of masses of employed and unemployed young workers in the struggle against misery, hunger and terror. This forward movement takes place through the united front. We are always for such united action. We speak of the united front with special emphasis to you, the young Communists, because you have the capacity and above all the task of involving in this one united struggle the widest strata of those young men and women who are the generation of the capitalist crisis, who have not been able to find work and who have no prospect of work or of education, in short, of earning a substantial living.

Instead, through chauvinism, patriotism, and jingoism this generation, of which you are a part, is being taught to become a reserve for the coming wars. The boss class, enemy of the toiling masses, is driving with haste and without rest to accomplish this, utilizing all of the cultural forces at its disposal to win over the youth, to use its fresh blood for the revival of decaying, dying capitalism. An example of this is their cry for the younger generation to support the "New Deal," the New Deal which has brought the C.C. Camps, and the Transient Camps and terror.

These are the conditions under which we work today. It is clear that under these conditions, to drift along with the old methods, the old forms of work, would mean to condemn ourselves to isolation and defeat. Today, as always, no organization can live and grow unless it links itself up with the mass movement and the problems of the masses and gives them a solution. This is the problem of our Party with regard to the whole working class. This is the special problem of the Y. C.L. with regard to the working youth.

It is the outstanding feature of this convention that it has registered a decisive beginning in that direction. We must recognize the fact that although this beginning has been made, there is plenty to do yet. We now have a situation in which the masses are in motion, our organization is moving, is taking an active and more leading part in their struggles, is winning some victories, is learning from these victories; a situation in which it becomes quite clear, when we study our daily work, who is contributing to the forward movement and who is becoming deadwood.

We are beginning to feel these problems,

but are not yet sufficiently conscious of them. Today there is no longer any room in the movement for a leader who doesn't lead toward the masses, and who doesn't link up with the masses and broaden the organizational aspect of our movement. That is leadership and not the occupying of an official position. That is not leadership. Merely to do this is the negation of leadership, and the Y.C.L. in the light of this, must very critically examine its work and set itself the task of transforming the work of the Y.C.L. in its weak points.

The Y.C.L. is beginning to transform itself. We are creating a Bolshevik youth organization. We are going through a process of change, changing the individuals in our organization, making them something they weren't before, and above all transforming the nature of these individuals by bringing them into organized work. This transformation of the League is the necessary pre-condition to transforming the working class—creating a conscious, organized working-class movement, which is capable of meeting and solving the historical tasks which are ours. The way to accomplish this process of bolshevization is to turn to mass work, to root the League among the youth in the basic sections of the working class.

That means getting the League established in the basic industries—coal, steel, marine, auto, heavy manufacturing; it means the concentration of the forces of organization upon these key points, the establishment of strongholds there; it means working in such a manner that we take the smallest items of the daily lives and struggles of the workers and develop them step by step, until we unfold the whole program of the transformation of society.

This means, first of all, daily and consistent work among the masses. It means the development of this daily work among the masses on the basis of a systematic study of the theoretical, programmatic basis of Communism. The theory of Marxism-Leninism, the program of the C.I., is the fruit of the study of all the accumulated experiences of the working class through all previous history. These fruits are available for us in the theories of Marxism-Leninism.

This treasure of ours is not something for the study room only, not something for books only. It is the material for the proper handling of the questions of everyday life. It is

not something that we can acquire automatically. It must be mastered by hard work and hard study. That study which is divorced from daily struggles is empty; participation in daily struggles that is not connected with study will also lose its value. It is especially important for the Y.C.L. to understand, for the youth, more than for anybody else, that systematic study, combined with work among the masses, is an essential feature of Bolshevik self development. This is the expression of the unity of theory and practice, which is the pre-requisite for a true perspective by the Y.C.L. of its task in the United States.

Among the young comrades in the League there is very often a contempt for theory, as a result of which we have the tendency to rely too much on spontaneity. I understand the enthusiasm of the comrades, and their impatience with theory, with everyday hum-drum organizational and educational work needed to prepare the masses for the coming decisive struggles. But we must fight against such tendencies with all our resources.

While we do not underestimate the role of spontaneous elements in the class struggle we must never underestimate the outstanding role played by conscious organization, the force on which depends the outcome of the struggle. By this we mean the role of practical and theoretical leadership in the unions, in the unemployed movement, in all mass organizations, including the bourgeois controlled youth organizations such as the Y.M.C.A., the Boy Scouts, etc. It means to bring forward to the masses the line of the Party and to educate the young generation against capitalism.

This convention shows serious beginning of trade union work among the youth. But, we must emphasize the tentative nature of this beginning. We only have promising beginnings. We must give the greatest attention to the study of all the experiences that have been brought to this convention. It is in these experiences, in the leadership of struggles, that you will find concrete forms for the mastery of the theories of Marxism—Leninism.

We haven't brought to this convention such concrete experiences of our activity in the unemployed movement, as in strike struggles. This is a serious weakness in the work, especially when we remember that it is just as true today as two years ago that a very large section of the working class youth hasn't had an opportunity to work in industry. A large section of the working class youth

is exposed to all the vicious influence of bourgeois ideology. The overcoming of this lack of fundamental class training of the unemployed youth can only be accomplished by making it up through their organized participation in the unemployed movement. This means that for this section of the working class youth even more attention must be paid to supply the organizing forms of activity in daily life which will bring to them the idea of organization, discipline, mass action, as opposed to those tendencies towards anarchism and disorganization, which are the fruits of the decomposition of capitalist society. We have to offset this by our organized work, and this problem is especially great among the unemployed youth.

I don't want to go down the line and list all the fields of activity of the Y.C.L. I only want to emphasize those few leading ideas which already have been discussed by the reports to this convention and which have to be emphasized as the center around which everything is organized. I want to connect these problems further with the whole program of the revolutionary way out of the crisis.

It is true of the working class generally, that it is beginning to ask for an answer to the question as to whether there is a way out and what is the way out. It is even more true of the youth. Especially for the masses of youth in the U. S. do we have to bring forth very thoroughly and consistently our program of struggle for power and the revolutionary transformation of capitalist society into a socialist system. This must not degenerate into slogan-shouting and phrasemongering.

Some comrades make speeches and at their conclusion call for a Soviet America. This is not the way to develop effectively an understanding of the revolutionary way out in America. The slogan is a very good one. But by itself it is not enough. It must come as the conclusion of the development of the understanding of the class struggle, the relation of class forces, the role of the state power, the necessity for the overthrow of the state power of the ruling class and the establishment of a new state as a means of taking the industries out of the hands of the capitalist class—that is the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. We must give it blood and bones and permeate the masses with a determination to realize it in life.

The youth are an inexhaustible reservoir

of boldness, daring, enthusiasm they desire to do big things. Sometimes they are stamped with some bourgeois characteristics, but in our struggle against these deviations, we must remember the surging spirit of the youth of this country. Remember, we are not combatting the boldness and enthusiasm of the youth. We are not against this desire to give dramatic expression to the revolutionary efforts of the youth. What we must do is to harness all of this spirit and enthusiasm into organized channels of mass activity and bring it into the organized class struggle, into the struggle against capitalism, for soviet power.

Without giving the youth the correct revolutionary perspective and a mastery of our revolutionary program, we will not be able to solve the problem of the working class. The youth is not the vanguard of the working class, but the youth, organized as an essential part of the working class, will be part of the vanguard and will furnish some of the essential features for victory in the struggle for power. We must encourage the eagerness of the youth to tackle hard and difficult tasks. We must try to permeate the youth with the ability to think clearly, to be able to dig behind appearances and find reality.

These qualities we can develop in our Y.C.L. These qualities we must develop. The development of these qualities, which are the essentials of bolshevization, must become the conscious task of each individual leader in the youth movement. This means a more critical examination of our work. We do not need to hand out any compliments on some of our achievements. We know they are very small. If we register achievements, it is only for the purpose of establishing how the bigger problems are to be solved, and establishing how we are going to solve bigger and bigger problems, until we have solved the biggest, the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat by the seizure of power. These are the big tasks we are confident we are going to solve because we are learning how to solve the small tasks. It is through mastering the small tasks in an organized fashion, it is through mastering the detailed connections between the smallest problems and the bigger problems and grasping them as a whole, that we find the guarantee of our ability to seize power. We know that we can take power; we know that we can transform society, because we are learning in our daily life to transform ourselves. We are learning to be more sure, more bold, more capable—

making ourselves stronger, more truly bolshevik; and because we can change ourselves in this way, we know that we can transform our organizations from their present weak, sectarian condition into broad mass organizations, that we can transform the present unorganized working class and its working youth into an organized power—a conscious power able and prepared to perform its historical tasks of destroying the stronghold of the forces of reaction and putting the American proletariat among the vanguard of the human race.

In the decisions of the 8th National Convention, our Party laid marked stress on its task with regard to work among the youth and in helping the Young Communist League. But I know that the mere adoption of a resolution, without fighting for it, will help us little.

This is not enough. Merely to do this is to make scrap paper out of a resolution. We must carry on real struggle to make every party unit, every fractions in the unions and mass organizations overcome such tendencies. I would ask you delegates, of whom I am sure many are simultaneously Party and Y.C.L. members, to help in making the entire Party really youth conscious in practice. Do not be afraid and do not hesitate to raise very loudly, in districts, in sections, units and fractions the problems of the youth. Convince the adult comrades of the importance of winning the masses of the youth so that they really buckle down to work with you.

This, however, does not mean that you are rely on the Party to do your work for you. It is the function of the Party to aid you, to guide you in your work, but your basic task, the rallying of the masses of youth, especially those in the key industries, to the support of our revolutionary program, and into the Young Communist League, that task can be carried to completion only by yourselves.

Armed with the theory of Marxism—Leninism, guided by the only Party in the U. S. which has a clear perspective, which understands the class relations, the Communist Party, you must begin your task with the transformation of the Y.C.L., of each unit of the Y.C.L. from weak into strong organizations, leading more and more workers, gaining momentum, gaining depth, gaining more power and assurance, until we win the final conquest—the seizure of power, the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat—a Soviet America.

# Militarization of Jobless Youth

By CHIN

A factual analysis of Roosevelt's attempt to harness the youth to the war machine. Contains valuable information on the role of the C.C.C. camps and its relation to the war department.

**T**HE WHOLE state apparatus of American capitalism is working on a scale never before witnessed to harness the youth to the war machine. The most important single point in Washington's plan for this drive has been the establishment and maintenance of the Civilian Conservation Corps (C.C.C.), which will be proposed as a permanent feature of the New Deal in the next session of Congress.

An average of 350,000 youth in each of the four enlistment periods since May, 1933, sons of unemployed workers and ruined petty-bourgeois and farmer families, have thus been put under the jurisdiction of the War Department. They have been sent to 1,500 work camps in the least populated areas to perform hard outdoor labor, and have been put under the immediate command of military officers.

We must not look at the C.C.C. as a thing by itself. Its true character is easily seen when we examine its roots. During 1931 and 1932 a number of proposals were brought up on the floor of Congress which provided for the militarization of the jobless youth—all similar in principle, and differing from each other only on the question of method. We may regard these two years as a period in which the executive committee of the American capitalist class was clarifying itself on how to rope the greatest section of the youth into their imperialist drive with the least possible resistance, for the creation of a mass auxiliary base to the regular armed forces.

## Background of the C.C.C.

Some comrades were misled as to the basic character of the C.C.C. by the fact that the recruits received little or no military training at the outset. It is true that in the beginning the Roosevelt bandwagon went to great lengths to cover up the military nature of this youth labor system, loudly insisting that it was a simon-pure, "voluntary," civilian, work-relief program, and that the War Department was only being used for its efficiency in "the technical questions."

The following statement, however, from an arm of the bourgeois state which does not

bother itself much with demagogy, ought to clear up any such illusions. It is from the yearly report of General Douglas K. McArthur, Army Chief-of-Staff, to the Secretary of War.

Speaking of the C.C.C., he states:

"Plans prepared for the emergency of war were applicable, after a rapid revision of some of their details, to every problem that arose. . . . To epitomize the military lessons of the 1933 mobilizations, it has given renewed evidence of the value of systematic preparation for emergency, including the maintenance of plans and policies applicable to a mobilization."

Why then, some may ask, was armed training not begun immediately in the work camps, and why was full military discipline not established? There are a number of reasons for this.

1. The widespread agitation in working class neighborhoods, and the stormy demonstrations organized by our League and Party in the spring of 1933 against the Couzens Bill (earlier plan), and the C.C.C. Together with this, pressure from wide masses of the population, (A.F. of L. unions, pacifist groups, etc.) was a serious factor. This reason for the partial concessions of the War Department is frankly admitted by them in the "Army and Navy Register," a national military gazette. In the editorial column they write:

"When the Civilian Conservation Corps was instituted by an act of Congress, organized labor joined with various pacifist groups in fighting against any provision that would make possible even the least degree of military training or military discipline within the organization."

2. Besides their fear of aroused anti-war sentiment, there were probably other reasons why the government preserved a civilian mask for the C.C.C. They wished,

through the C.C.C., to maintain to some extent, ties with the masses of people for the spreading of militarist propaganda. Only a semi-civilian auxiliary to the Army, and not a part of the Army itself could serve as a link between the regular armed forces and the toiling population. A definite organizational step in this direction was made in the attempt to form a "Conservation Corps Reserve" (a sort of junior American Legion) of ex-C.C.C. youth in their home towns. Hoping to skin the cat two different ways, Wall Street was also taking into account the national strike wave, and seriously contemplated planting through such an organization a pro-fascist reactionary island in the sea of widespread youth radicalization.

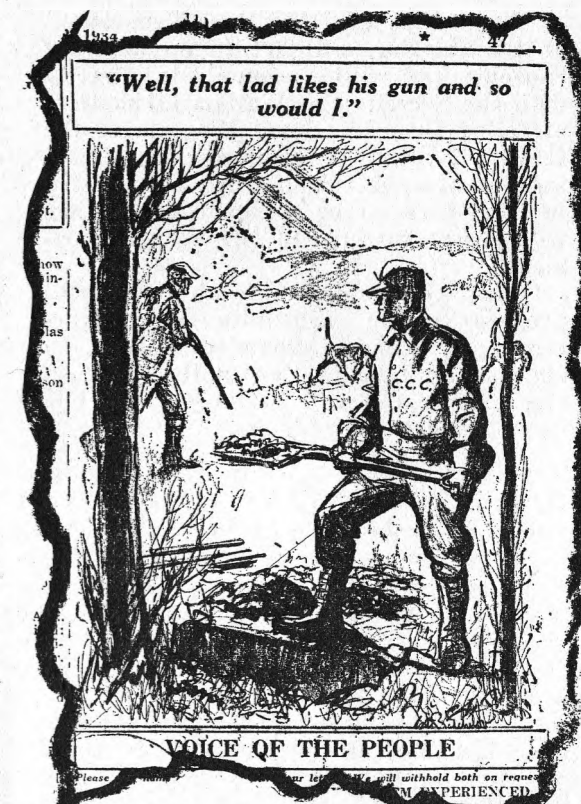
3. The international situation of American imperialism was also a factor in the early policy of camouflaging the military nature of the camps. Wall Street did not immediately wish to show its hand to other world powers, or give the latter an excuse for increasing their armies. On the other hand, 350,000 mobilized youth who could become soldiers in a week, was an excellent weapon for Washington to have in manoeuvring in the world imperialist arena.

These were the principal reasons for the New Deal's early tactic of creating a pacifist smokescreen around the C.C.C. But the Roosevelt Administration shared none of the illusions it created. While the New Deal politicians gushed about the "rebuilding of young America in the forests," the War Department quietly proceeded with its work of strengthening and improving the military skeleton of these "civilian" camps, and of intensifying its jingo-patriotic propaganda among the enlisted youth.

This whole military evolution of the C.C.C. coincided and was integrated with the development of the rest of the war machine.

How the Army and the C.C.C., for instance have been of mutual benefit to each other in furthering the New Deal war plans is shown in General McArthur's report:

"It is true that certain benefits have accrued to the Army through its administration of the Civilian Conservation Corps project. Junior officers in particular, have obtained valuable training to test in a practical way certain phases of theoretical plans. The procurement services have been afforded opportunity



Editorial Cartoon from the Daily News, N. Y.  
November 18, 1934

to meet and solve many problems incident to emergency expansion."

In actual figures, over 8,000 regular army officers have been returned from the C.C.C. to their old units and their places filled by reserve officers. This in effect meant that 8,000 officers for a war-time army have been trained.

## Education in the C.C.C.

In addition to drawing these hundreds of thousands of youth into the war machine physically, the American bourgeoisie has launched a gigantic drive to mobilize them ideologically. This drive took form as an "educational program," whose purpose, according to the official statement is "that of returning to the normal work-a-day world citizens better equipped mentally and morally for their duties as such."

But let us compare this seemingly innocent aim with the method of achieving it. The following excerpts from the official handbook of rules for the camp educational advisers, is very illuminating:

"The Office of Education, Department of the Interior, will act in an advisory capacity and will communicate directly with the Secretary of War on all matters affecting the educational program of the C.C.C. . . . Responsibility for the carrying out of educational program is vested in the corps area commanders. They will report directly to the War Department."

"Camp commanders of work camps will prepare routine schedules of instruction. . . . Camp commanders will be in charge of all instruction in their respective camps, and will be assisted by one camp educational adviser."

The instructions go on to emphasize that there will be no "division of authority in camp," and that the advisers take their orders from the commanding officers always.

If the purpose of this educational program is merely to make "better citizens for the work-a-day world," then why this elaborate system of guidance and checkup of the civilian educational apparatus by the military staff? The obvious answer is that this program constitutes basically, a network for disseminating militarist propaganda among the C.C.C. youth.

The U. S. War Department is waging this ideological campaign with the thoroughness of wartime. They have directed the establishment of scores of C.C.C. newspapers which are widely circulated inside the camps. The largest of these, "Happy Days," the national "authorized newspaper of the C.C.C." is deserving of special examination. It is a 16 page printed weekly of high technical quality, edited by professional journalists; although it is obviously not maintained by its advertisements, it appears regularly in thousands of copies, most of them distributed free of charge. Here certainly is to be smelled the U. S. War Department.

The following excerpt from the editorial page of one issue of "Happy Days" is thoroughly representative:

#### "Taking Orders

"Every one knows the value of military training, and who, recipient of Army discipline, should appreciate it more than the average C.C.C. member.

"An inability to secure employment conduces to an unruliness, a feeling of unrest, that prevalent among the minor-

ity, gradually pervades the entire company. No training can possibly be of more advantage to the reforestation man than military training."

In no respect, however, is the War Department's organizational thoroughness more clearly seen than in the local conditions of the camps themselves. All of the 1,500 camps are in isolated forest areas. Isolation of this type is itself a precondition for the tightening of military control. Within the camps an artificial ideology of cleavage from the youth "outside" is fostered. The officers try to make the recruits feel separated from home not only by space, but also separated from the problems of the city, from unemployment.

The whole atmosphere of the C.C.C. is military. Sleeping in barracks and tents, eating from soldiers' mess kits, trained to accept filth, accidents, lack of medical attention and an arbitrary working day, these youth come to regard themselves as enlisted soldiers. The 1,500 camps are further put into the same corps area divisions as the regular Army.

#### Wall Street Demands Militarization

During the first year and a half's existence of the C.C.C., for reasons mentioned earlier in this article, the "New Deal" Administration found it expedient not to establish military training or complete military discipline in the camps. But now the whole international situation has sharpened. Sparks are flying out of the political turmoil in Europe. Yankee imperialism is fighting Japan for domination of the Pacific, and Great Britain for the markets of Latin America. Provocative war moves against the Soviet Union are increasing.

At this time Wall Street finds its more necessary than ever before to build and strengthen its war machinery. And it is no accident that just at this time an open and vigorous campaign is being launched to arm and place under complete military control the 360,000 youth now in the C.C.C.

As if someone had sounded a prearranged signal, agitation suddenly began to appear in the capitalist press calling for military training in the camps. For the inspiration of this drive we must look to the "Army and Navy Register," semi-monthly mouthpiece of the War Department. Speaking of the C.C.C. and doubtless taking a lesson out

of fascist Germany or Italy they put forth the following:

"There is probably not another country in the world that would have undertaken this method of relief without instilling into the youths so enlisted the bare rudiments of military discipline, if nothing more. The greatest opportunity this nation has ever had to at least partially train a large body of youth at no additional cost to the nation has gone begging. . . .

"The maintenance of C.C.C. camps under Army discipline, and instruction of these youth in the rudiments of that discipline would . . . serve to put a backbone in the national defense program. . . .

"The next Congress can take . . . great steps of lasting benefit to the youth of this nation. It can order Army discipline and Army training for one or two hours a day instituted at all C.C.C. camps."

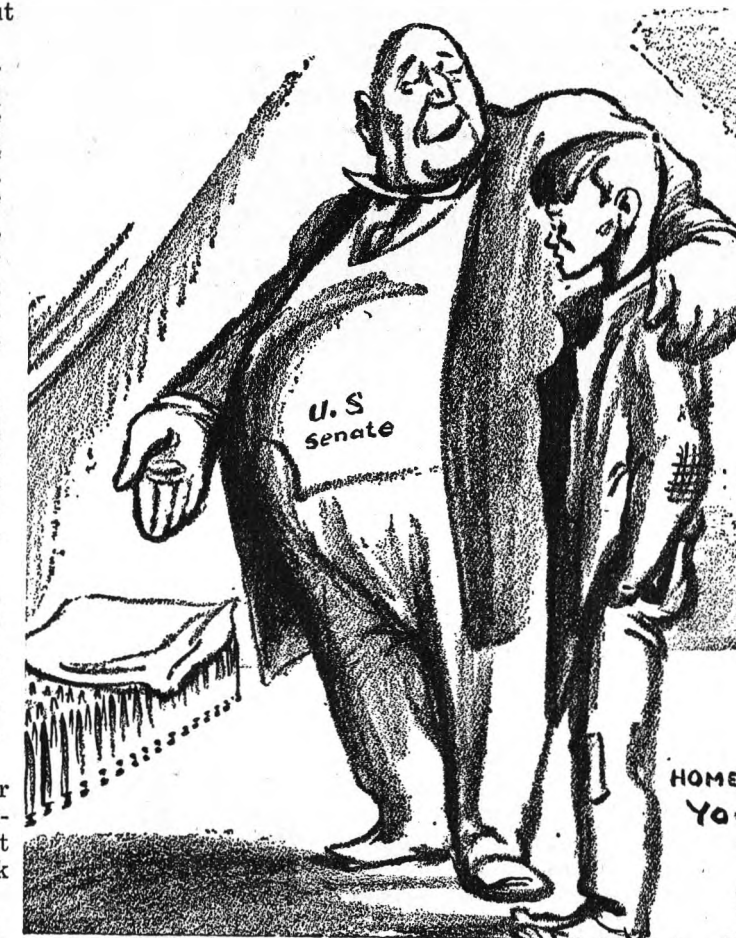
This was published on October 20. October 21, the following editorial appears in America's largest daily newspaper, the New York "Daily News":

"Normal Boys Like Guns—Let C.C.C. Boys Be Normal."

"We now have 300,000 young men in the C.C.C. It is a military organization except that it has no guns,—and all normal boys and young men like guns.

"Let's give the C.C.C. boys guns and let them learn how to shoot and take care of them. And let's list all of these men in the reserves."

Every since then the "Daily News" has been hammering away at this point, together with a number of other papers. Any and all opportunities are being utilized in this inspired agitation. It happened that 250 C.C.C. youth going through Worcester, Massachusetts enroute south, stopped their transport trains and beat their officers in protest against being shipped away from home and being fed rotten food. The next day the Worcester press came out blaming the "riot"



A bed of bayonets for the homeless youth is what the government offers in the guise of Civil Conservation Corps Camps.

on the lack of discipline and calling for military discipline for all recruits to prevent similar revolts in the future. ("Such a riot would not occur in any military organization"—Worcester Telegram).

As a part of this drive to further militarize the C.C.C. comes a move to make the camps permanent. A bill embodying this proposal is going before the winter session of Congress.

In proposing the permanence of the C.C.C., the American ruling class is confessing the permanence of unemployment. And for that social disease the capitalist cure is war. That is why proposals for the continuation of the C.C.C. and for the militarization of the

C.C.C. come at this time and are integral parts of the same drive towards imperialist war.

#### Militant Protests Force Improvement

What has been the reaction of these hundreds of thousands of youth to this military forced labor system? During the first two enlistments, the period from May 1933 to April 1934, a whole wave of strikes and protest actions against the miserable food and conditions broke out in the C.C.C., a strike wave which left hardly a single camp untouched. Although the great majority of these actions were spontaneous, on local issues, lacking any connection with one another, there is a remarkable uniformity in all of them.

Another characteristic of this first period was a series of mass desertions. Practically one third of the first recruitment, 100,000 out of 300,000 youth, left the work camps and Army bases. On the whole, these actions represented a fighting, spontaneous answer of masses of working class youth to the conditions of military, regimented labor.

The War Department was forced to grant concessions on minor conditions, on both a local and national scale, while at the same time it followed a ruthless policy of discharging and blacklisting from the camps thousands of the militants. (According to the official figures, 16,286 were discharged for disciplinary reasons during the first two enlistments). This to a certain extent, diminished the number of struggles, which still stubbornly continued to break out, however.

#### What About the Y.C.L.?

In the paragraph above we have called these struggles "spontaneous," and in all but a few cases this was quite true. This does not mean that our League did not participate in and give guidance to some of the early struggles; it does mean that we participated and guided to an insufficient extent.

However, to say that there have been no positive achievements in our C.C.C. work would not be correct. In three of our districts C.C.C. concentration is being carried on at the present writing. We will deal with one of these—the New York District.

Here, having been engaged in this work actively for nine months, we can report some amount of progress and a great deal of experience. The line of the New York District has been to encourage the building of

a mass organization within the camps. This organization, the C.C.C. Boys Protective League, has in the course of time established five camp committees, of which three remain today. It has conducted a number of camp struggles, issued leaflets and recruited members.

The following have been some of our experiences in this work.

In camp A, we developed a contact with a certain group of men. We concentrated on anti-war agitation. We started with an anti-war committee of three men, discussing anti-war and anti-fascist literature. In two weeks we had a functioning group of the C.C.C. Boys Protective League with six members. The next week three men joined the Y.C.L., the week after two more. There is now a Y.C.L. camp unit of 5 and a Protective League group of seven, both of which grow every week. These fellows are entirely new to the movement.

In camp B, we had a group of the Protective League, all the members of which were quite new to organization. Here we had an example of the results of failure to develop fresh cadres for leadership. In this camp we had some influence through one of our leaflets which guided the men in a certain strike action. One day, a strike of ninety men broke out with our people in the leadership. A committee of six was elected to negotiate with the commanding officer. They were immediately discharged, and the officers, with the help of some of the weaker elements were able to get most of the men back to work. Twelve more men refused to go to work unless the committee was reinstated and they too were discharged. Thus, all our people, eighteen in number, were discharged, as a result of our failure to teach them the tactic of orderly retreat and preparations for re-strike.

In camp C, where the CCC Boys Protective League conducted agitation, the captain was continually delivering tirades against the organization, provocative red-baiting speeches. One morning he attempted to provoke our people into revealing themselves by asking who read "The Camp Spark" (organ of the Protective League). Half of the 200 men in the line-up raised their hands.

A striking action took place in Camp D. During the Austrian Nazi fighting, when Italian troops were massed on the Austrian border, a rumor spread in this camp that war

had been declared. There was a spontaneous movement among the gangs at work in the woods. They quit work, returned to camp, and after an excited discussion refused to go back until a few hours later, during which time a captain frantically assured them that they would not be drafted into the army, and that war was not yet declared.

These are some examples of the work carried on more lately in the New York District. We must say, however, that our work here has had several limitations.

First and foremost, this district has failed to develop a permanent department for CCC work after nine months of concentration, the work being generally done by one comrade. This has inevitably resulted in our work being done on a pinched scale that is impermissible. A reflection of this serious error is to be seen in the fact that in the city of New York, with a Y.C.L. membership of 2,400, we have not led a single struggle to win adequate relief for unemployed youth who were scheduled to go away to the CCC.

#### What Next?

What is the immediate problem confronting the Y.C.L.? To involve thousands of employed, unemployed and student youth in united front struggles against this whole Wall Street militarization program; to conduct the broadest agitation and propaganda, sending out

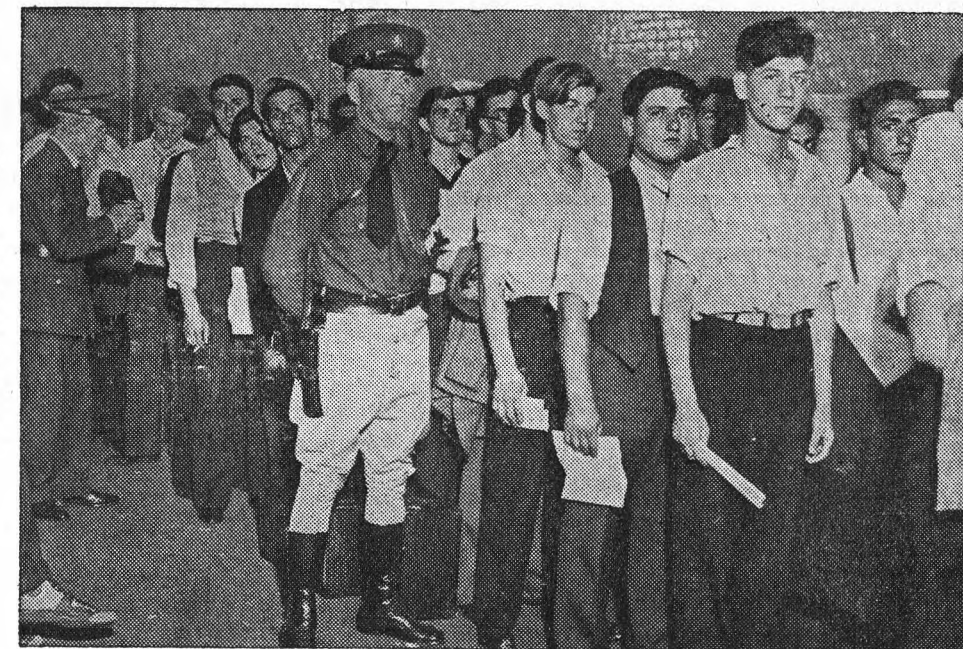
trained speakers, arranging forums and debates, putting out written material such as pamphlets, leaflets, stickers, in order to bring before the youth the program of the Y.C.L. on the C.C.C.; to penetrate A. F. of L. unions and bourgeois mass youth organizations with our resolutions demanding the replacement of the C.C.C. with jobs at regular wages or unemployment insurance.

We must now, more than ever in the past, send a great portion of our unemployed members into the C.C.C. There, on the basis of the broadest agitation and struggle for the immediate demands of the youth, we must organize the C.C.C. boys for the struggles against militarization and for our whole program.

Upon one point we must be clear. While we send as many comrades into the camps as possible, our everyday work among the unemployed youth, and particularly among those who are scheduled to go away to the camps from the relief lists must be directed along the line of mass refusal to enlist simultaneously with the mass demand for cash relief.

Demonstrations against the militarization of the C.C.C. must be organized in every important city between now and the opening of Congress. We must launch a counter-attack on the war mongers. Our League and Party must be roused and mobilized to vigorous action in the shortest possible time.

This Army officer with revolver on hip is supervising the registration of unemployed youth for the CCC camps. Military discipline from the start!



# Struggle or Capitulation?

By V. CHEMODANOV  
Secretary of the Y. C. I.

What is the essence of the disagreements between the young socialist organizations and many of the parties of the Second International? What is their fundamental cause?

A DISCUSSION is taking place in the Second International and the Young Socialist International at the present time on the question of the relations between the youth and the older generation.

This discussion has great political importance in principle and has an international character. The socialist newspapers, however, gloss over the real content and significance of this discussion; and what they write on this matter shows either that they have absolutely no understanding of the feelings and the developments taking place among the youth, or that they do not want to understand them.

In France, for instance, some of the socialists think that the dissensions between the young socialist organizations and the Socialist Party have arisen in conditions when the "closest solidarity" reigns between them.

Others are prone to imagine that the disagreements arose owing to a state of crisis in the Young Socialist organization. However, not only are they both mistaken in their analysis of the causes of the disagreements which exist, but both are deeply mistaken when they begin to invent methods for liquidating these disagreements. The former, for instance, think that it is only necessary to give the youth the "right to study and discuss political problems" and to give a certain "flexibility" to the organizational rules, and these disagreements will immediately disappear. The others, on the contrary, imagine that they can get rid of these disagreements if they manage "without coercion" but firmly "stick to the rules" and remind the youth more frequently that "there cannot be a policy especially for the youth."

## What Is the Basic Cause of the Disagreements?

In order to give a clear and correct reply on this question, we must remember on what basis, in what conditions and in what connection the question of the relations between the youth and the adults arose in the

Second International and in the Young Socialist International.

It is our conviction that this question did not arise by chance. It is not simply a matter of the youth demanding that certain amendments be made in the organizational rules and that certain concessions be made to them. These differences which have taken place in the past cannot be got rid of by amendments and concessions, nor can they be removed by a "rigid" application of the rules.

The discussion on the relations between the organizations of the youth and the party organizations in the Second International arose in conditions of the sharpening of the class struggle and of internal imperialist contradictions.

The discussion arose and is developing in conditions of the tremendous efforts of the toiling masses and therefore of the youth to unite their forces for a struggle against oppression and want, against fascism and the danger of imperialist war.

The discussion arose in connection with the fact that in the struggle against fascism and imperialist war considerable parts of the socialist youth were boldly approaching the Communist Youth, and were showing much greater activity than many of the parties of the Second International in the establishment of the united front.

It was precisely this which sharpened and laid bare the contradictions and the disagreements between the young socialist organizations and many of the parties in the Second International, and the disagreements in the Young Socialist International itself.

What is the essence of these contradictions and disagreements and what is their fundamental cause? The cause is that the policy of the leaders of the Second International and the majority in the Executive Committee of the Young Socialist International does not correspond to the growing political activity of the youth in the conditions of the class struggle on the chief political questions both in

respect to the united front and in the fixing of the role of the youth in the class struggle.

## The Revolutionary Youth Form a United Front

Day by day, actual practice is bringing forward ever new instances in which the united front of the working class is steadily being widened and strengthened in the struggle against fascism. But the thing which is most striking and which it is important to mention is that the youth is showing enormous initiative and activity in this matter. The initiative and activity shown by the Communist youth in the establishment of a united front with the socialist youth organizations meets with the fullest approval of the Comintern and the Y.C.L.

The Communist Parties, on the basis of the conditions of the class struggle in their countries, give every support to the Young Communist organizations which are trying to unite the youth in the struggle against capitalism. The Communist Parties and the Young Communist Leagues are together in this struggle. There are not and cannot be any differences between them on the question of the united front, because they are for the united front.

This is not the case in the Second International and in the Young Socialist International. The sharpening class struggle and the increasing political activity of the masses played a sorry trick on the leaders of the Second International and the Young Socialist International.

In the majority of the parties of the Second International, and in the leadership of this International, a discussion is now taking place on the united front, i.e., they are talking about whether there is to be a united front or not. But the working class and the toiling masses who are fighting against capitalism are already establishing the united front in practice.

The majority of the Executive Committee of the Young Socialist International decided to "await" the decision of the Second International on the united front, fearing to make an outright decision for or against. But the most active and revolutionary part of the socialist youth, without waiting for the decisions of the Executive Committee of the Young Socialist International, without waiting for permission from the party, are already establishing the united front in the struggle for their own economic and political interests, for

the interests of the working class against fascism.

This was obviously bound to raise the question of the relations existing between the youth organizations and the Socialist Parties. It is equally plain that the Socialist Parties could not remain indifferent to the growing political activity of the youth and to their organizations.

The first socialist organization of the youth which approached the Y.C.I. on the question of a joint struggle was the I.L.P. Guild of Youth in Great Britain. The Guild of Youth met with a warm response from the Y.C.I. Agreement was secured, and the Guild is carrying on a joint struggle with the British Y.C.L., for the widening and strengthening of the united front. But the leaders of the I.L.P. have not only failed to get closer to the British Communist Party but on the contrary they now demand that the Guild give up the united front, abandon the joint struggle with the Y.C.L. against capitalism.

In Argentina, in the fires of the class struggle, the Young Socialists understood that any delay in the establishment of the united front would only serve the purpose of the bourgeoisie. They warmly responded to the call of the Y.C.L. for a joint struggle. The Argentine Socialist Party, however, could find no better way of "persuading" the youth than to dissolve the socialist youth organization.

In France, as we know, an agreement on the united front was reached both with the Socialist Party and with the youth organizations. However, those socialist youth organizations which were most revolutionary went further than the leaders of the party in the establishment of unity. It is well known that the representatives of the French young socialists in the Executive Committee of the Y.S.I. actively supported the proposal at the Plenum to begin negotiations with the Y.C.I. on the united front. The question of the independence of the youth organizations became a very urgent one in France in direct connection with this, because the leaders of the Socialist Party, without showing the proper activity in the struggle for the united front, handicapped the initiative of the youth. These disagreements have found outward expression in the fact that the Socialist Youth are more and more beginning to demand independence, "autonomy." It is not impossible that the Socialist Party will adopt Louis Levy's proposal that the rules be "strictly"

applied, i. e., attempts will be made "without coercion" to throw out of the leadership and out of the Young Socialist organization some of those who struggle for the united front not in words but in deeds.

In Belgium an agreement was reached between the leaders of the Y.C.L. and the Socialist Young Guards on a joint struggle. We shall write separately of this agreement. However, we may now remark that a campaign was started in the Socialist press against the joint struggle of the Young Guards and the Young Communists. An unambiguous hint was given in the press that it was inadvisable to "dissolve" the Young Guard, but that "proper" measures should be taken in respect to those who have violated discipline.

In other words, those of the Young Guards who have dared to make the first timid and hesitating steps in the establishment of the united front and to express their opinion of those leaders of the Young Socialist International who hinder the establishment of the united front, are now being coerced by the Socialist Party of Belgium to consent to the disruption of the united front.

We can also give similar cases from Switzerland, and if we speak of the Labour youth who in London condemned the resolution of their party on national defense, then we may include England and some other countries. We will limit ourselves simply to quoting two facts which show how profound and how acute are the disagreements in the Young Socialist International on the question of the united front.

As we know, the Plenum of the Executive Committee of the Y.S.I. in Liege resolved to await the decision of the Second International on the united front, although the broad masses of the youth are not only voting for the united front but are even establishing it in the struggle against fascism. This has intensified the disagreements in the Young Socialist International.

In Spain, the united front is being forged in the fires of the class struggles, and, as we know, the young socialists raised the question of leaving the Young Socialist International. Many organizations of the young socialists, particularly that in Grenada, voted for leaving the Young Socialist International and joining the Y.C.I.

Walentheim, the president of the Young Socialist organization of Sweden, who is a

bitter enemy of the united front also raises the question of leaving the Y.S.I. But he raises this question in a different way from that in which it was raised by the leaders of the Spanish Young Socialists. In Spain the question of leaving the Y.S.I. was raised because the majority of the Executive Committee of the Y.S.I. were carrying out the policy of the leaders of the Second International against the united front. In Sweden, the question raised by Walentheim is a threat to leave the International in case negotiations are started with the Y.C.I. for a joint struggle.

These facts show that the discussion on the relations between the young and the old generation in the Second International is developing on the basis of different political principles than the socialist papers are trying to represent.

Differences exist and are becoming keener not so much on organizational questions as on the question of the principles behind the policy of the Second International and the majority of the members of the Executive Committee of the Young Socialist International.

By their actions, by their growing political activity, the youth are not asking for concessions but for a radical change from the policy of handicapping and disrupting the united front.

#### The Youth Have the Right to Political Life

The most revolutionary part of the socialist youth, who at the present time form the extreme Left wing of the Second International, are demanding the revision of the dogmas of the Second International and of its entire policy. One of their chief demands just now is the radical alteration of the reformist definition of the role of the youth in the class struggle and the attitude of the International towards it. In trying to strengthen their weakened influence on the youth, some socialist leaders write that the time has possibly arrived when the youth can be given the right to "examine and study political problems." Others think that those who put the question in that way are lagging behind real life, because the youth already have this right, but "there cannot be a special youth policy." Well, we can say to both of them that they are all 25 years behind real life!

This is not at all difficult to prove if we look at the history of the development of the international socialist youth movement.

In 1907 in Stuttgart there was an interna-

tional congress of the socialist youth. Karl Liebknecht played a big role in calling this congress. It was called in spite of the wishes of the socialist parties, and at it an attempt was made to unite the socialist youth organizations of various countries into an international of the youth. The formation of an international of the youth presupposed the independent organizational existence of the youth organizations. The reformists at the time considered that "there was no special youth policy" and that the youth had no business to go into politics. Therefore they did everything to cut down the right of the youth international. They saw to it that not a single socialist youth organization could have independent connections with the International Bureau of Youth. With the help of the opportunist elements inside the Youth movement, the reformists were able right from the start to prevent the proper development of these attempts of the youth to unite on an international scale.

Later, in 1908, German social democracy, which played a prominent role in the Second International, very definitely decided at its congress in Nuremberg against the formation of independent youth organizations. In the resolutions of the congress it said, "to carry out all these tasks without the formation of

special organizations, a commission must be formed for work among the youth."

As we know, these tasks were to prevent the youth from taking an active part in the economic struggle of the working class, on the grounds that this was the business of the trade unions and not of the youth. These tasks were to prevent the youth from taking an active part in politics, on the grounds that this was the business of the Party. These tasks were to give the youth the "right" to obtain cultural knowledge and to "study political problems."

It can be seen from this that when people do not understand the conditions in which the post-war generations of young toilers developed and took form, when they do not understand the role played by the youth in the class struggle, in the struggle against fascism and imperialist war, then their arguments are too old and out-of-date. But we are not concerned with the arguments used by those who oppose the independence of the youth who are now showing great activity in the struggle for the united front. The fact is that while the fascists are striving, by means of unprecedented demagoguery, by flattery, and also by means of brutal terror, to bring the youth under their influence and to train them in a slavish spirit, people can



Photo of mighty united front demonstration of Socialist and Communist workers in Paris, France.

still be found in the socialist camp who, instead of activizing the youth in the struggle against fascism, are trying to fetter their activity and restrain them from showing initiative in the class struggle, from establishing the united front.

The socialist youth, the most revolutionary part of the socialist youth, are now very urgently faced with the choice of either actively participating in the class struggle on the basis of the united front, and consequently of fighting for their independence, for their rights, or else of capitulating to those who are still occupying a waiting position on the question of mobilizing the toiling youth and uniting their forces in the struggle against fascism.

It is precisely for this reason we should remind the socialist youth of what was said many years ago by Lenin, the follower of Marx and Engels, whose work is a continuation of theirs.

During the war he wrote in the magazine "International Youth":

"It frequently happens that the representatives of the old generation are unable to make a proper approach to the youth, who by necessity approach socialism in a different way from their fathers, not by the same path, not in the same form and not in the same conditions. Therefore, among other things, we must undoubtedly support the organizational independence of the youth league, and not only because the opportunists are afraid of this independence but because of the facts of the case, for without complete independence, the youth can neither make themselves into good socialists nor

make preparations to carry socialism forward."

This is precisely what the socialist youth should understand and thoroughly master at the present moment. It will not be difficult for them to do so, for the question of the relations between the old and the young generation have already been solved in a Leninist manner in the practice of the Communist International. The Communist youth organizations are struggling and developing under the leadership of the Communist Parties. We know that the leaders of the Communist Parties do not put restrictions on the initiative of the Communist youth organizations, but on the contrary, require them to show the greatest possible initiative, activity, and Youth organizations, being organizationally independent, try with great credit to carry out these demands in the struggle for the united front, in the struggle for the economic and political rights and interests of the toiling youth, for the cause of the working class, and they are trying to justify this great Leninist confidence in the youth.

We are sure that the revolutionary part of the socialist youth, without hesitating at any obstacles and difficulties, will be able independently to understand those disagreements which have arisen in the Young Socialist International and in the Second International. In the class struggle, in the struggle for the united front and for their own independence, they will be able to find the path which will help them to become bold and firm fighters against fascism, for socialism, and to cast out of their ranks the Walentheids who try in behalf of the interests of the bourgeoisie to disrupt the establishment of the united front.

## N.R.A. Reform to Further Exploit Youth

By MAC WEISS

The New Deal Administration is invoking the old apprentice system of the guilds to aid the bosses' in their exploitation of the young workers in the factories. What bearing do these plans have to the fascist development of the New Deal? What will they mean to the youth?

THROUGH A SERIES of secret regional conferences, the NRA administration has set in motion the machinery of a vast apprenticeship scheme. Under cover of "protecting" the youth in industry, this apprenticeship scheme is designed to drive down the standards of work and life of the youth, and through the youth, of the entire working class.

The manner in which the Roosevelt administration hopes to accomplish this aim is significant in its own right. Seen in its complete relationship to two other phases of the Roosevelt program for the youth—the C.C.C. camps and seniority rights—the apprenticeship scheme of the NRA acquires outstanding importance as one of the basic issues confronting the youth today, an issue destined to assume increasing importance as the Roosevelt administration hastens its evolution towards fascism.

### A Step Towards Fascism

In fact, it is only from the point of view of the development of the Roosevelt administration towards fascism that the apprenticeship scheme can be properly understood; it is only from the point of view of the general development of capitalism, with the apprenticeship scheme seen in its historical perspective, that the full significance of the Roosevelt program for the youth can be grasped.

The very word "apprenticeship" brings up historical images. Nor can anyone be blamed for associating apprenticeship with the dead past. For apprenticeship is a definite earmark of pre-capitalist and early capitalist stages of development. Certainly not within the living memory of the working class today has apprenticeship played a role of any importance in production.

Why then is it being re-introduced? To answer this question, we must take into account the tendencies of development of capitalism in the imperialist era. Having reached

this stage, capitalism, at long last, gives up the remnants of its progressive character and brings to the surface everything that is reactionary and retrogressive. It was not at all for the sake of a picturesque phrase that Lenin called imperialism "moribund, i.e., dying capitalism." Everything which expanding, pre-imperialist, capitalism sloughed off as cumbersome and outmoded, comes up again for favorable consideration.

It is not merely that there is a stagnation of technique, that progress is checked under imperialism. There is actually, in the frenzied attempts of the capitalists to find a way out of the crisis at the expense of the masses, a tendency to turn the wheels of history backwards. Pre-capitalist and early capitalist modes of exploitation and life are re-introduced and fastened on the youth like a straight-jacket. Barter economy, forced labor, compulsory service to the state (ghosts of the corvee!), homeless and nomadic populations, etc.—are these not reminiscent of pre-capitalist levels of existence?

Fascism, as the open dictatorship of "the most reactionary, the most chauvinist and the most imperialist elements of finance capital," offers the most fertile grounds for the development of such reactionary tendencies. It becomes an historical ghoul decking itself out in the discarded raiment of medievalism, feudalism and the dead stages of capitalism. The barbarous practices of fascist Germany are the clearest indication of this tendency.

In the United States, where developing fascism competes on not unfavorable terms with the countries of fully developed fascism in this respect, an organized effort is now being made to introduce precisely such outmoded forms of exploitation. But while the forms of such exploitation may be rudimentary, or even primitive—like forced labor, the degree of this exploitation is highly advanced. The capitalists have learned well the art of exploitation in the epoch that has intervened between feudalism and imperialism.

This difference we must never forget—that while the forms of exploitation and life may be outmoded, they are grafted on a highly developed capitalist system. The horrors of work and life under such conditions are easily imaginable.

### NRA Deals Another Blow At Youth

The NRA system of apprenticeship put forward by Frances Perkins, Secretary of Labor in the Roosevelt cabinet must be viewed in the light of the foregoing—as an attempt to introduce an outmoded form of exploitation into industry. Its details worked out in advance by the Brain Trusters, the entire scheme is being rapidly unfolded, phase by phase.

The first stage in this concerted effort by employers and government to revitalize an historically outlived form of exploitation was carried through with the enactment of the NRA Codes for industry. This first stage completed itself by introducing and establishing on a firm basis the category of apprenticeship on a mass scale.

Presto and behold! An astonished mass of youth in the basic industries, struggling by the tens of thousands in a great and growing strike wave, finds that it has been carried back a hundred years through history by a stroke of the pen. Just so, and with just such disarming simplicity, were thousands of youth informed that they who had fed machines and tended the belt were in reality not machine feeders and belt tenders but apprentices!

To fully appreciate the significance of this new factor in the life of the youth we should be clear on what apprenticeship really is. Apprenticeship must be classed together with the pre-capitalist guild system and with the early capitalist highly skilled, small handicraft industry. It is essentially a form of exploitation of youth labor based on a system where personal skill plays a dominant role in production.

As soon as the combined series of skilled operations which constitutes a craft is split up by a minute division of labor, and as soon as each operation within this division of labor is reduced by the mechanization of industry to the simple act of machine tending and belt watching, and as soon as the paternal relationship between master craftsman and apprentice is replaced by the impersonal relationship of proletarian and factory owner,



F. D. R. Himself.

then apprenticeship may be said to have run its historical course. The skilled worker is replaced by the skilled machine. The apprentice becomes a machine tender. The knell of apprenticeship is sounded.

The continued existence in the early stages of capitalism of apprenticeship in the old form under these new conditions of developed capitalist production represented nothing but a cloak for the inhuman exploitation of apprentices, through which the small handicraftsmen tried to compete with the rising capitalist class. Waging a losing fight against extinction, handicraft industry did not hesitate to carry through this fight on the prostrate backs of the apprentices. The advantages of large scale factory production were challenged by the small handicraftsmen who tried to overcome the inequality of such a struggle with the profits of the super-exploitation of apprentices.

The brutal conditions of apprentice exploitation which came about as a result of this fight can hardly be equalled in the history of capitalism. Incidentally, many of the first working class youth organizations, particularly in North Germany, were formed as a direct result of the horrors of apprentice life.

Needless to say, handicraft industry lost this fight. As a result, the youth who formerly indentured themselves to master craftsmen, in order to learn a trade, swarmed into the factories. With the exception of a few trades in which skill still plays an important role (metal, printing, etc.) apprenticeship

slipped into the limbo of history alongside the guildmaster and master craftsman.

"The apprentice of olden times who had the expectation of himself becoming a master workman is gone beyond recall. Apprenticeship today is only a pretext for intensified exploitation of the youth, and is in a process of disappearance in the capitalist countries. Owing to the development of industrial technique, it has become possible for the capitalists to enroll masses of children and adolescents as unskilled workers in the reproductive process." Y.C.I. Program.

### Plan for Big Business

Now, however, as a result of the NRA codes, apprenticeship, which is in "a process of disappearance in the capitalist countries" from the historical point of view, is revived by governmental order and given a mass character and legal status in industry.

It is clear that the NRA apprenticeship system is fundamentally different from the previous system of apprenticeship. It is not the original apprenticeship of the guild competing with rising capitalist industry; nor is it the apprenticeship of small handicraft industry competing with developed capitalist production. Today, the system of apprenticeship is characterized by the fact that it is grafted on to huge industries of mass production, the basic industries, the very force which a few generations ago trampled apprenticeship out of existence! The cycle of development is complete! That which capitalist industry condemned to death in its period of progress, it revitalizes in its period of imperialist decay!

All this was accomplished in the first stage with the enactment of the NRA codes and the elevation of the category of apprenticeship to national prominence and legal existence.

### Minimum Wage Actually Maximum

The second stage begins now and is already indicated in the official statement of the United States Department of Labor:

"Miss Perkins has named the committee and approved rules and regulations affecting apprentice training programs and industry. This order establishes minimum standards which must be followed in apprentice agreements. These specify

that the apprenticeship period shall be not less than 2,000 hours or more than 10,000 hours; that 144 hours per year must be devoted to related general and technical instruction given by public authorities and that the beginning wage paid apprentices cannot be less than 25 percent of the basic wage rate for journeymen in the locality and the average wage rate for the apprentice training period shall not be less than 50 percent of the journeymen's rate."

The diabolic foresight exercised in unfolding these two phases of the apprentice program of the NRA in this manner can be appreciated when we consider that apprenticeship still continues to exist in a few highly skilled trades, such as printing, metal, etc. The apprenticeship systems in these industries employing comparatively few youth were elaborated long ago. It was not at all necessary for the government to develop new apprenticeship programs for these industries and crafts.

The purpose of the government was to introduce the system of apprenticeship in precisely those industries where it has been ousted by the very development of capitalism—in the industries of mass production where the role of skilled workers has been reduced to a minimum. Having assured itself of a plentiful supply of "apprentices" through the NRA Code provisions, the government is now



Miss FRANCES PERKINS,  
Secretary of Labor

proceeding to elaborate the terms under which the "apprentices" are to be exploited.

Previously, the youth as "apprentices" were excluded from the minimum wage. Now as "apprentices" they are to be confined to a maximum wage. Previously, as "apprentices", the youth were specifically excluded from any contractual relations set up through the NRA codes. Now, as "apprentices", they are specifically confined to the bondage of contractual relations, which will be set up through the signing of NRA Apprentice Indentures.

What, now, are the conditions of apprenticeship?

An examination of the "standards" set by the United States Department of Labor as quoted above shows, in the first place, that the period of apprenticeship, on the basis of an 8 hour day, runs from one to five years. Needless to state, the employers will avail themselves fully of the flexibility of the apprenticeship period in order to continue for as long a period as possible this highly profitable apprenticeship.

During this period, the apprentice will receive 2.8 hours of instruction per week. For every 40 hours of work in the shop or mill, the apprentice will receive less than 3 hours of instruction in the trade he is supposed to be learning. This caricature of vocational training is offered in the name of apprenticeship!

The experiences of the NRA codes have shown that the minimum wages set up by the codes are really the maximum paid by the bosses. The wages of the apprentice for the entire period will never be more than half of the "journeyman's" rate and "never lower" than 25% of the "journeyman's" rate. Since in the mass production industries there are no such classifications as journeymen and since the only "basic" rate in these industries is the NRA code minimum, it is a certainty that these percentages will apply to the code minimums. The average code minimum is \$14 per week. This means that an apprentice will on the average receive at most \$7 per week and as little as \$3.50 a week for his work—assuming he works a full week.

A committee named by Frances Perkins and answerable only to her has been set to work to establish "state agencies through state cooperation." These agencies will be empowered to issue exemptions, approve ap-

prentice contracts and carry on the administrative work connected with supervising apprentice training. These state agencies are composed of four appointed state officials. The fate of the apprentice is left in the hands of the state government.

#### No Regular Employment Guaranteed

There is, in addition, no guarantee that the apprentice will be kept on as a regular employee upon termination of the apprentice contract. On the contrary, it will be much more profitable for the employer to fire the old apprentice and hire new ones, thereby cutting his payroll in half permanently.

In most trades, which require any degree of skill at all, excepting only the highly skilled trades which do not employ masses of youth, a very short time is needed to train efficient workers. Under the terms of the contract, therefore, the employer will have at his disposal skilled workers receiving apprentice wages long past the time when skill has been acquired.

#### Adults Affected

The effect of this plan upon the adult workers can easily be foreseen. Applied on a mass scale, it will result in the displacement of thousands of adult workers or in the reduction of their wages to those of the apprentices. It will furthermore result in driving a wedge between the adult and youth in the struggles of the working class. The individual contracts which the apprentices will be compelled to sign with their employers, will result in the outlawing of youth participation in strikes. The traditional policy of the reformist bureaucracy of exempting apprentices from all strike calls and of insisting on their remaining at work during the course of a strike is now being applied by the federal government with a vengeance. This strike-breaking feature of the apprentice training program of the NRA Administration is one of its most sinister characteristics.

#### Lowest Wage Standards

It is obvious that the central aim of the entire apprentice program of the NRA is to cheapen labor, to carry through a sweeping lowering of wage standards even below the miserably low NRA code minimums. It is entirely in keeping with the demagoguery of Roosevelt that this should be done under the guise of "protection of youth labor," under

guise of creating a system of vocational training.

While it is clear that this is the central aim of the apprentice program, it is also clear that we must fight against it in a positive and not a negative manner. While it is clear that the introduction of apprenticeship represents an attempt to re-introduce an historically outlived method of exploitation, it is also clear that we cannot under any conditions disregard the question which is thereby pushed to the fore by the whole development of this program—the question of the vocational training of the youth.

#### Fight Bosses' Scheme

Our tasks are therefore set before us. It is necessary for the Young Communist League to take the initiative in developing the broadest united front movement, particularly in the A. F. of L. locals against the strike-breaking, slave features of the apprentice plan.

In place of the NRA plan, we must develop a movement for:

(1) Vocational training on a graduated scale for youth between the ages of 16 and 20 at the expense of the government and industry. This training to be under workers' control with the youth receiving full wages for the type of work performed. These wages are to be paid also for the time spent in studying at the same rate paid for the time of actual work. The wages for work done by apprentices which is the same as work done by qualified workers shall be paid for at the same rate as is paid to the qualified workers.

(2) The vocational training schools shall include: (a) apprentice departments or apprentice workshops in the factories; (b) theoretical training and physical culture; (c) work in the factory itself as part of the school program.

(3) Shortening of all periods of apprenticeship in line with the demands of the trade being learned. Workers' committees to determine the length of the period of apprenticeship in each trade.

(4) Progressive wage increases for apprentices during the period of apprenticeship. The starting wage and average rate of increase to be determined by workers' committees in each industry.

(5) Apprentices shall be included in all collective agreements between employers and trade unions. Apprentices to have full membership rights in all unions.

(6) Guarantees against the abuse of apprenticeship labor by exact definition of the right to employ apprentices (maximum number of apprentices to definite number of workers, prohibition of the use of apprentices for work not connected with the trade being learned), strict punishment of violation of such guarantees by heavy fines and imprisonment of employer.

(7) Right of student apprentices to share in drawing up syllabus, school administration, etc. by means of elected apprentice school councils.

(8) Number of hours of instruction of apprentices to be determined by workers committees in each trade.

(9) Against the artificial prolongation of apprentice training period; against dismissals of apprentices at the end of the training period; apprentices automatically to be qualified upon completion of fixed training period without waiting for the trade "to absorb."

(10) Apprentice training period to be counted in on seniority rights.

Around these basic demands, which must be concretized for the various industries, it is both necessary and possible to swing the young and adult members of the A. F. of L. and unorganized workers into action. The Young Communist League must play a leading role in building such a broad united front movement.

In the course of building this movement, the Y.C.L. must come forward boldly with its full program on the socialist education of the youth, popularizing the great achievement of the Soviet Union in the fields of polytechnical education and vocational training.

# The Heroic Y. C. L. of Asturia

By ALBERTO

**F**OR A PERIOD of many days the working class of Asturia, in Spain, and its youth carried on, and are still carrying on a heroic struggle. Surrounded on all sides by the forces of monarchist fascist reaction armed with the best modern arms, the proletarian fighters of Asturia forced back the attacks of the enemy.

They expropriated large capitalists, occupied military factories, disarmed the counter-revolutionary forces of the enemy, armed 100,000 toilers, opened the doors of the prisons for the revolutionary prisoners, and for the first time established complete justice—justice of the great majority of the population against a small group of exploiters.

The Young Communist League of Asturia, utilizing its mass influence amongst the toiling youth, played an important role in this historic struggle.

Asturia, the center of the armed struggle of the Spanish proletariat, is the most important coal region of the country, and has always been the bulwark of proletarian organizations and a strong bulwark and base of the Spanish Communist Party and Y.C.L.

The miners of Asturia are distinguished by extraordinary militancy and revolutionary traditions, having carried out a number of economic strikes which created alarm in the ranks of the employers and the entire bourgeoisie—especially because the Communists were able to win great influence in the trade union movement of the miners, leading mainly the Unitarian Federation of Labor (revolutionary trade union).

During the entire period of these struggles, the Y.C.L. of Asturia was always in the first ranks, leading the struggle of the mining youth.

In the large May strike of the miners, in 1932, the mining youth fought with extraordinary energy and heroism. Four strikers from the Red miners' basin, Taron, active Y.C.Lers of Asturia, were arrested during the struggle and placed on trial. The court sentenced them to death. But the untiring activity of the proletarian youth of Asturia and

the demonstrations of solidarity of the masses of youth all over Spain made the authorities retreat.

On the day when the trial was in session in Turos, a demonstration of the youth of the entire province took place in answer to the call of the Y.C.L. At the same time, in different localities of the country the workers and peasant youth, through meetings, letters and telegrams of protests supported this demonstration of the mining youth of Asturia. This even was a great victory for the Y.C.L. of Asturia, which showed to the youth masses what can be gained through organized struggle and a united front.

The Y.C.L. of Asturia took upon itself the initiative of calling the first national congress of mining youth, which took place in Asturcas, in October, 1932. At this congress, which gathered in the very heat of the attacks upon the proletariat and the development of the agrarian revolution, there were present about 100 delegates, representing more than 8,000 mining youth of the country.

The congress worked out a program of demands for the youth and issued an appeal to all the mining youth, proposing that they form united front committees for the struggle for their demands. Besides this, the congress elected a C. C. of the League of Mining Youth and heard a report of the C. C. of the Y.C.L. "On the Danger of War and Attack Upon the Soviet Union." The congress accepted the report in full and worked out a resolution of greetings to the 15th Anniversary of the Russian Revolution. In all this work, in the preparation and organization of the masses of mining youth, the Y.C.L. of Asturia played a very important role.

Last year, 1933, was also very rich in strikes and struggles of the young miners of Asturia. The mining youth took the first serious steps in the formation of the united front and mining committees. For the entire period of 1933, the employers carried on a very heavy attack upon the living standards of the mining youth. Many mines were closed, and thousands of workers, mostly youth, were laid off. In one mine alone, 700

young workers were thrown into the streets. The main purpose of the employers was "realization of economy" by strengthening the exploitation of the miners and by "cleaning" the mines of revolutionary workers. More than 73,000 young workers were laid off—Communists, members of Red Trade Unions, and organizations of the revolutionary youth. The best and most class-conscious fighters in the ranks of the mining youth were thrown into the streets. With especial hatred, the employers attacked members of the Y.C.L. For instance, in Valle de Turon, members of 6 Y.C.L. cells were laid off.

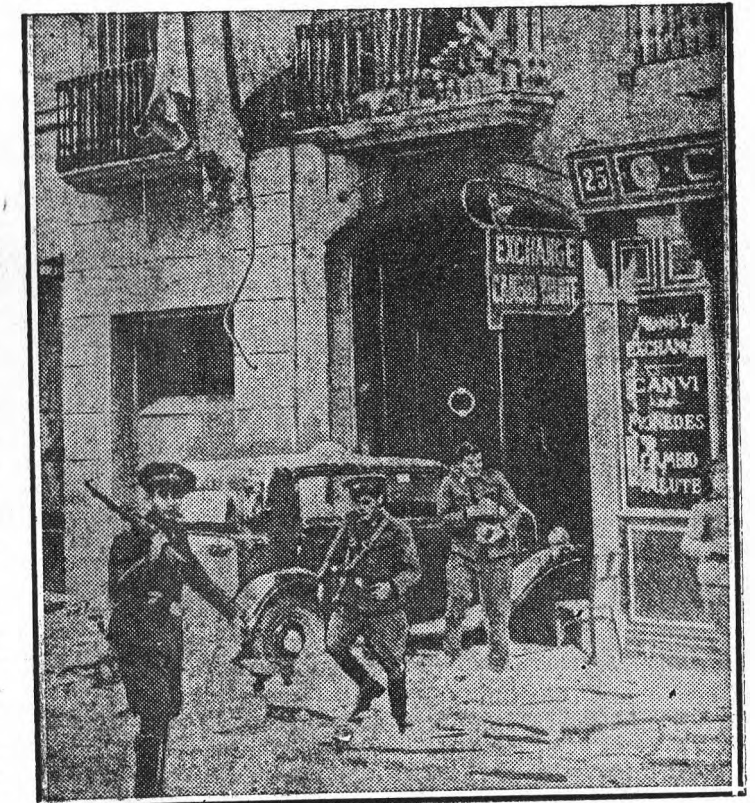
The Y.C.L. of Asturia answered this attack on the organized struggle of the mining youth. In the mines of Boo, La Josta, Mari ana, Vanguardia, Moredo, etc., that is in the very same place where the October struggles were especially strong, the Y.C.L. organized actions against the attack of the employers, and in many places this struggle ended in victory. United front committees were formed in Aller, in the mines of 'Socieda Hulara Espanola.' Here, at one of the youth meetings of the united front, organized by the Y.C.L., a program with the following basic points was accepted:

1. Demand the freedom of all arrested.
2. Joint struggle with the youth committees of other mines for the minimum wages.
3. Affiliation to the Central Committee of the mining youth.
4. Election of a mining committee of the united front.
5. Daily purchase of the "Juventud Roja"—organ of the Y.C.L.

In another answer to this the employer strengthened their systematic attack upon the mining youth. "Campania Minera" laid off 200 young workers. For the most trifling reason, for instance, eating underground, breaking an instrument, the employers laid off the youth. But they kept on showing resistance to the attacks of the coal capitalists. In a few

localities, for example, Santa Cruz the youth announced a strike and broke the fascist plans of the employers.

In the entire movement against fascism and war the greatest aid was rendered by the tremendous revolutionary activity and intense political work of the Y.C.L. In the struggle for the united front, in the mass demonstrations against fascism and imperialist war, against the militarization of youth in the military factories of Turbin, the Y. C. L. of Asturia took the most militant posts. International Youth Day was celebrated all over Asturia, a symbol of the growth of the militancy of the masses and the strengthening of the united front. In Oviedo, Jijon, Meres, Sema de Langrio, in the localities where the majority of the toiling youth are concentrated, the youth went out into the streets and under militant slogans of the Y.C.L., supported by the entire proletariat.



Spanish government troops leaving building after murdering workers who had barricaded themselves inside.

In Sama de Langrio the demonstrators endured a long battle with the police, a foreshadowing of the great battles to come. During these encounters one young Socialist was killed and in protest a general strike was called on the following day.

Throughout this whole period the district committee of the Y.C.L. of Asturia was able to put into effect the pact of joint action with the Socialist youth organization of Asturia. The basic aim of this agreement—to hinder the march which the fascists Gil Robles intended to carry out upon Cavadonga (Asturia). The Y.C.L. and Y.S.L. appealed to the masses, and called upon the youth to organize a struggle against these fascist provocations, against the order forbidding the youth to participate in political organizations, against the militarization of youth in military factories and in defense of the interests of the toiling youth.

The toilers of Asturia unanimously answered the call for a general strike of protest against this march. The general anti-fascist strike in Asturia, on September 8, like the general anti-fascist strike in Mad-

rid, was carried out under the banner of the united front. These two great strikes, which completely tied up Madrid and Asturia, was a death blow directed at the very heart of the bourgeoisie; and especially in Asturia the strike of September 8th already had in itself the elements of an armed uprising. The strikers seized arms and carried on a bitter fight against the police. They interrupted communications and occupied the railroad, so as to hinder the sending of armed forces. The role of the Y.C.L. and of all the toiling youth in this strike was very great. In the strike picketing, in the street fights, the toiling youth of Asturia showed the greatest bravery and enthusiasm, and were the shock-troopers of the proletariat. The Y.C.L. initiated and realized the united front with the Y.S.L. for the organization of a struggle against the provocations of the followers of Gil Robles. This fact generally strengthened the political authority of the Y.C.L. of Asturia in the eyes of all the exploited youth of the district, and prepared the youth for the October struggles, the greatest in the history of the working class of Spain.

## The Youth in the Recent Strike Wave

By LEO THOMPSON

**T**HE 1933-34 strike wave in the U. S. demands careful study by Young Communists. Its lessons must be absorbed for use in our practical tasks of leading future struggles.

Since the beginning of 1933 and especially since the beginning of Roosevelt's barrage of NRA demagogy in June, 1933—nearly three million workers have taken part in the largest strike wave since the 1919 wave. Though the latter still remains the largest wave of strikes in U. S. history, involving about four million workers, the 1933-34 strike wave is more important, because of its higher political character and deeper class content.

### Features of the Strike Wave

One of the outstanding new features of the strike wave of 1933-34 is the drawing into

the struggle, for the first time, of new strata of the masses, chiefly the youth, who played a decisive role in the actual leadership, spreading and developing of these strike struggles.

The main force behind the involving of these new masses of youth in strike struggles is the constant worsening of their living conditions. The cumulative effects of five years of severe crisis has led to a terrific impoverishment and increasing misery of the youth—five million unemployed youth, a half million of these homeless and aimlessly roaming about the country—the wages of the employed youth cut in half and their life-blood being sapped by the inhuman stretch-out system. The Roosevelt NRA is a decisive factor in aggravating the intolerable conditions of the toiling youth. The auto,

rubber, steel, textile, printing, electrical and radio NRA codes (to mention only a few) contain definitely anti-youth clauses which deprive the youth of even the insufficient \$13.50 weekly minimum wage. These clauses compel the factory youth to work for starvation wages. It is therefore correct to say that the effect of these anti-youth NRA codes has been to bring the conditions of the youth to a head, leading the youth to take an active role in these strike struggles.

No one who took part in, and closely observed the unfolding of these struggles could fail to see the predominant role of the youth in the most dangerous fronts of strike activity, their heroic determination and self-sacrifice when confronted with the brutal forces of the bosses and the state (Toledo Auto-Lite Strike, Minneapolis Truck Drivers' Strike, West Coast Marine and Frisco General Strike, General Textile Strike). The youth were to a large extent instrumental in organizing the flying squadrons which were the basic means, especially in the South, of carrying on strike activities.

What is still more important is the actual presence of youth in strike committees, relief and picket committees, union committees in locals and on the various Central Labor Trades of the A. F. of L.—participating in the leadership of the strikes. This was true not only in the South, where the strike locally was under the control not of the old-time, hard-boiled A. F. of L. bureaucrats, but the honest, young, though inexperienced, union leaders. This was also true in Connecticut, Western Massachusetts, and some parts of New Hampshire and Maine, where the strike was led by local Textile Labor Councils of the A. F. of L., consisting of rank and file elected delegates. Reports received from these various sections shows that youth not only played their customary militant role on the picket line, but in many places in the leading bodies of local A. F. of L. organizations.

However, notwithstanding what was said before, the masses of youth as a whole have not yet been attracted to and organized into unions. This is because 1) the A. F. of L. leaders have not developed any activities to attract and keep the youth within the unions, 2) they suppress all signs of militancy and self-expression of the youth, 3) the meetings and business sessions are long and monotonous, and 4) rank and file oppositions have

not yet become a sufficiently decisive factor to be able to force the bureaucrats to develop such youth activities (youth sections, lighter features, etc.) under union auspices.

This problem—that is, of actually organizing the youth into unions and winning them over to a rank and file program of struggle against the bureaucrats on the basis of their special youth grievances and needs—remains the basic task of the youth opposition groups within the reformist unions.

The Y.C.L. must develop independent political activity, and must not remain content merely to aid in the economic struggles of the masses. Economic struggle can by itself result only in temporary gains for the working class. But mass misery, unemployment, insecurity and war, which are at the very roots of capitalism, cannot be done away with unless capitalism itself is done away with once and for all. And it is only through the Y.C.L. politicalizing the struggles and increasing the class-consciousness of the working youth, that the youth will be prepared to perform their historic task of aiding in the overthrow of capitalism and the institution of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The higher political character and deeper class content of the 1933-34 strike wave express themselves in many other ways:

1) Tremendous fighting determination of the masses and their surging pressure for organization, expressed in an unparalleled willingness to struggle, and heroic stubbornness in offering resistance in the face of terrific odds. More than 1,500,000 workers have joined various unions, mainly those of the A. F. of L. This is accompanied by the formation of many so-called youth unions in certain youth industries, like radio, auto accessories, throwsters in textile, novelty, food, marine (cadets, mess-boys, cabin-boys, etc.).

At the 54 Annual Convention of the A. F. of L. in San Francisco and especially at the Rank and File A. F. of L. Conference in Pittsburgh there were strong indications that the youth have penetrated even into the older craft unions, which until now have practically barred youth because of their prohibitive initiations and dues and various qualifications. There are trends within the A. F. of L. which seem to move in the direction of special apprentices' and beginners' unions. While we cannot encourage such unions, which have the effect of dividing the youth from the

adult workers by the old craft-apprentice prejudices, we must take them into account.

2) Breaking down of nationalistic and chauvinistic prejudices among native and foreign born, Negro and white, youth and adults—resulting in a broader unity of action than ever seen in past strike struggles.

3) Greater national scope of strike struggles.

4) The role of the South becoming more decisive in character. Formerly the South, particularly up to 1928 (Gastonia), played a negligible role in the development of the American labor movement. The general textile strike placed the Southern workers in the forefront of the heroic and self-sacrificing. Without them the general strike of 500,000 workers would not have taken place.

5) Growing tendency for strikes to transform themselves from simple bread-and-butter economic struggles into political struggles, resulting in the growth of class consciousness and broader understanding of the role of the capitalist state by the masses.

6) A powerful trend towards local general strikes of a sympathy-solidarity character (San Francisco, Hazelton, Toledo, Minneapolis, Milwaukee, Seattle, Portland, Butte, Passaic, Patterson). These general strikes actually took place in the two cities first mentioned above.

When the 1933 strike movement began, the workers were strongly influenced by the illusion that Roosevelt was a "friend of the forgotten man," that he was on their side. So powerful was Roosevelt's demagoguery that the masses of workers actually believed that the NRA codes, for which they were striking, would improve their living conditions.

It is interesting to note that before the NRA (January-June, 1933) most of the strikes resulted in some victories for the workers. After the NRA, during the height of the 1933 strike movement, most of the strikes were betrayed and disrupted by the A. F. of L. leaders and NRA apparatus.

A series of such betrayals and unsatisfactory dealings with NRA boards inevitably disillusioned the workers. The strikes of 1934 began approximately in March-April with marine, auto, textile workers and others coming out on strike. Up to November 1st more than a million and half took part in this second strike wave. During July, August and September, no less than 800,000 struck (San Francisco general strike, general

textile strike, Minneapolis truck drivers, etc.). During 1934, unlike 1933, most of the strikes were of a definitely anti-NRA character. In many industries, workers repeatedly re-struck after the NRA arbitration boards gave them no satisfaction (auto, marine, textile, coal, etc.).

A new basic feature of the situation is that the A. F. of L. has become the main channel through which the mass strike struggles express themselves. This has been accompanied by important changes within the A. F. of L. rank and file, its organizational structure, and the tactics and maneuvers of the A. F. of L. leaders.

More than half of the more than a million new A. F. of L. members belong to Federal locals (auto, textile, garment, steel, rubber, etc.) organized more on an industrial union basis, as opposed to craft basis. These Federal locals consist of workers, mainly unskilled and semi-skilled, whom the A. F. of L. leaders refused to organize until now. Now they fear that these workers may come under the influence of the revolutionary trade unions. It is in these Federal locals that the masses of newly recruited youth are to be found in the A. F. of L. Thousands of such youth are joining unions for the first time in their lives, thoroughly unaccustomed to the tricks and maneuvers of the labor bureaucrats, to whom they will fall easy prey, if we Young Communists do not concentrate our efforts upon the Federal A. F. of L. locals.

This does not mean that the bureaucrats of the A. F. of L. have become honest and sincere overnight, and eager to organize the unskilled and semi-skilled so as to defend their interests. The pressure of events has forced this change in tactics upon the A. F. of L. officialdom. They were faced with the alternative of either accepting federal locals for these workers, or else losing them entirely—to the Communists, whom they fear. It is said that the A. F. of L. leaders intend gradually to dissolve these Federal locals into regular craft locals as soon as the militant strike wave subsides, because Federal local unions provide a mass basis for struggle against the sell-out policies of the leaders and against the employers' attacks on the workers' conditions. There is a deep-going sentiment among the rank and file of the A. F. of L. for genuine industrial unionism (not the Lewis brand), as was reflected by

rank and file delegates and resolutions even at the 54th annual A. F. of L. Convention. There are many cases on record of workers driving A. F. of L. organizers out of their meetings when they tried to compel the workers to split up their Federal unions on a craft union basis.

It should be clear to every clear-thinking revolutionary that these important changes in the situation require corresponding changes not in our basic policy—but in our tactics to meet the new situation. The betrayals of 75,000 miners in 1933 and 500,000 textile workers in September, 1934 by the A. F. of L. leaders are to a certain extent the result of our isolation from and underestimation of the A. F. of L.

### A Good Example

In the case of San Francisco, we have a notable example of correct application of new tactics to meet a new situation. Because we recognized the importance of work within the A. F. of L. International Longshoremen's Association, and did good work there, our Party and League was actually instrumental in organizing the Marine strike and the General Strike in Frisco. Without our preparatory work of rooting ourselves among the masses, the A. F. of L. leaders would have succeeded in beheading the general strike movement as they have in Toledo, Milwaukee, Minneapolis, Portland, Butte, Passaic, Patterson, and Seattle. Because we were inside the situation, not isolated but working daily among the A. F. of L. workers, we gained their confidence and placed ourselves in this favorable position.

How did the comrades gain the confidence of the workers? By actually leading the workers in building the I.L.A. which was their mass union. We showed them that we are the unifying force of the workers, not only in speeches, but in actual deeds. This is the main lesson of Frisco. It demonstrates the necessity for the correct application of correct tactics. Our opposition work within the A. F. of L. must not be narrowed down to the past methods of denunciations, name-calling and shouting. We Communists have no interests in breaking up the workers' unions and their organizations. On the contrary—we help to build them to defend their interests. Our main aim is to unite the working class. By remaining with the workers, with the masses, wherever they are

—by showing the workers in the A. F. of L. how to defeat the bosses' attacks and their misleaders' treachery, we will be able to drive out the bureaucrats from the local unions and develop rank and file control. This can be best done by actual participation in the building of the union, recruiting new members, and leading them in struggles.

In our work for the election of youth delegates to the 54th annual Convention of the A. F. of L., we can record certain achievements. Three Y.C.Lers were duly elected by their locals as official delegates to the Convention—for the first time in the history of our Y.C.L., can we say this. These comrades took a leading part in fighting for the rank and file program on the floor. They presented resolutions—so-called youth resolutions—calling for the organization of the unorganized youth, special youth activities through youth sections organized as part of the regular union organization, for lower initiation fees and dues for youth, against the use of National Guardsmen in strikes, against the C.C.C. (Civilian Conservation Camps) and for their replacement by workers' unemployment and social insurance (H. R. Bill 7598).

Our main task in trade union work is to turn towards the A. F. of L.—the main channel through which shop struggles are expressing themselves today. As Comrade Lenin says, in his "Left Wing Communism": "To refuse to work in the reactionary trade unions means leaving the insufficiently developed or backward working masses under the influence of reactionary leaders, agents of the bourgeoisie, labor aristocrats, or 'bourgeoisified workers'."

In every A. F. of L. union where we already have a certain base to work from (in U.M.W.A., I.L.A., U.T.W., auto, I.L.G.W.U., cleaners and dyers, etc.) the main immediate task of our comrades is to develop struggles for the endorsement of the youth resolutions mentioned above. These resolutions can be used as a means of rallying thousands of young A. F. of L. members to the support of our rank and file fighting program which they want and need. Our work within the A. F. of L. properly undertaken and carried out, can be the means of reaching thousands and tens of thousands of active young workers in the unions—the best means of putting our Y.C.L. on the way towards a mass political organization of working class youth in the United States.

# Y.C.L. BUILDER

## WHY DIVIDE THE UNITS INTO SQUADS?

**T**HE COMRADES from Pittsburgh have written: "At our District Committee meeting the question of working with squads in the units came up. Some comrades felt that squads should be used mainly as a means for safeguarding the unit, as a means of more safely conducting and mobilizing for unit meetings. It was the opinion of other comrades that squads should be used for reorganizing the work of the unit and developing squads for various fields of work, shop work squad, unemployed work and literature squads, etc. The latter form of squad was also to have conspirative features. What is the opinion of the National Office?"

In replying to Pittsburgh, the National Office wishes to bring the entire question of squads to the attention of the League. It was the decision of the Organization Commission of the 7th National Convention that squads be formed in the units. Until now most of the League has not been reorganized on this basis.

What is the purpose and tasks of squads?

Squads are formed by dividing the membership of the unit into compact groups of 4 to 6 comrades with a captain in charge of each squad. The squads are formed according to the residence of the comrades. The object is to bring the members who live closest together into one squad. The tasks of the squads will be:

1) To give closer personal attention to every member in the squad and especially to the newer members, and thus eliminate one of the main causes for the heavy turnover in the Y.C.L. The squads check up to see how much and what each comrade reads each week to develop a better political understanding. At regular intervals, or when occasion demands, they discuss the special problems of each member in carrying on work in his or her shop, union, club, etc. In this way the squad as a whole and the captain are in a position to solve some of the doubts and hesitations of any member in developing individual initiative and in carrying on work among the non-League youth.

2) To develop a more equal distribution of work among all members, remedying the situation where only a handful of members is active and far overburdened while the rest of the unit is not involved in mass work.

To activate every member in the unit to the maximum and in work that is suited to each individual. The squad captain is to know each member thoroughly, his background, his field of work, his development, whether he is unemployed or employed, what contact each member has with youth, which of his evenings are usually occupied, classes, union or club meetings, and what time each member has available for the general work of the unit.

The squad captain in turn is to check the carrying out of assignments that are made to each member. By means of the squads it is possible to develop the discipline and responsibility of each member to the utmost without wasting unnecessary time at unit meetings.

3) To assure the maximum attendance at unit meetings, and to visit any members of the squad who miss meetings or become lax in their work.

The squad captain is to memorize the address of each member in his squad and be in a position to mobilize his squad for any emergency on an hour's notice.

4) To check up on the dues payments of each comrade.

To visit any contacts that are established in the area of the squad and recruit them for the League.

5) To lay the basis for the formation of new units by involving the squad as a collective group in the sales of the **Young Worker** and literature, and in house-to-house canvassing on a particular block, or work at a particular settlement house or shop.

6) The squad develops new unit organizers and active cadres by placing upon the captain many of the responsibilities of the unit organizer.

The above are the main purposes and functions of unit squads. The entire aim is to

decentralize the work of a unit so that the smaller, compact groups can not only be a means for mobilizing the membership quickly, but will organize the League and make it possible for the unit to function more easily under conditions of terror, and repression. In addition the squad is a means for helping to educate the members of the League, for giving detailed guidance to every member in his mass work, to develop closer and more personal ties in the unit.

The squads as such should meet about once a month, to discuss the results of the sale of the **Young Worker**, to discuss methods of improving these sales and improving any particular activity the squad as such undertakes (work at a factory, at some 'Y,' etc.), to determine how each comrade is working

among the youth and what comrades are recruiting for the Y.C.L.

A flexible approach should be taken in the formation of all squads, depending on the particular problem of the unit. Experience has shown, though, that they should be organized on the main lines indicated above.

The entire Y.C.L. must now undertake to reorganize as many units as possible on a squad basis (those with 8 or more members). The first task of each squad will be to determine what connections each member has with non-League youth and to agree upon a recruiting plan for each member. During the recruiting drive the squads are the best means for helping each member to carry on maximum recruiting and for regularly checking up on the results

## THE FIGHT AGAINST FLUCTUATION

(Excerpt from report of John Marks at 7th National Convention.)

**W**HY IS there such a turnover in the League? It is not because we do not know what its causes are. The reasons for fluctuation can be listed by almost every delegate at our Convention. (Failure of some units to live up to a fighting policy in line with our program, lack of education in the League, callous impersonal method of handling new recruits, too many routine and technical unit meetings, etc.) But organized measures to change this situation are lacking.

Some of our people believe that paying attention to this problem manifests an inner approach and since they are good "Bolsheviks" they are concerned only with carrying on struggles and recruiting. It matters not if the turnover defeats the results of our hard work. It matters not that in solving the problem of fluctuation we can also improve our mass activities and our system and methods of work.

We must be clear at this Convention that the first condition for overcoming fluctuation depends on a fight on this question. Knowledge of our weaknesses must be converted into organized steps to cut down the tremendous turnover.

In fighting against fluctuation each District and unit should consider its own special causes for fluctuation. In Boston, for instance, there has been a steady growth in the center itself and a minimum of fluctua-

tion. The main losses are in the "out of town" units. These units get very little personal attention. In most cases, there is a one man leadership in these units, or sections. The result of a one man leadership and slow development of cadres and collective work produces such cases as the loss of tens of members in the Worcester Section when the leading comrade had to leave the territory. But our Boston comrades have not taken organized steps to correct this weakness which accounts for most of their membership turnover. Perhaps they have more "important" tasks and cannot bother with an organizational question like fluctuation, cadres, and loss of membership.

In the Buffalo District we have a similar problem. There Jim for a long time worked alone. A bureau and collective leadership did not exist. Our Atlas ran from place to place. He would work at a given point and improve the work. Then he saw a bad situation at another point and would dash over to give assistance. Thus the new front would be assisted. But the recently assisted point without Jim's support and aid would grow weak or collapse. The leading comrades in Buffalo are new and are not experienced. Instead of paying major attention to developing a collective leadership and entrusting newer comrades with responsibility, our good and willing D.O. worked by himself. The

result was not only losses of certain units and members, but the whole policy of concentration was not applied. In this sense organizational policy certainly decided the fate of the political line itself.

The problems of the Pittsburgh District are somewhat different. This District is one of our best recruiters. The comrades are active and carry on mass work. In one year, the League recruits three times their number of members. But the actual increase is slight. The main reason for fluctuation here is our inability to give each recruit an elementary understanding of the League. The recruit joins in the heat of action. He knows the League got him relief or led him in his fight, but he does not know that the League has a program and aims that are higher than that of an Unemployment Council or union. Upon joining, he is not given an understanding of the higher perspective and duties of a Young Communist. After the conclusion of a particular action he leaves the League. In the case of Pittsburgh, therefore, the inner question of organizing obligatory new members' classes is a question vitally connected with the future growth of the District.

In California there is still another special problem, the problem of migratory youth that is recruited in connection with the many agricultural strikes that take place. These youth earn their livelihood by going from one crop to another. After a short time the recruit pulls up his stakes and moves. This accounts for the greatest portion of the turnover of the California District. But have our California comrades worked out any method of keeping connections with every one of these youth through letters, through organized sending of literature to these youth. If this were the case the migratory youth could be a force in extending the League's base. They could spread Y.C.L. organization to new fields, instead of becoming victims of fluctuation due to our loose methods and lack of concern to vital organizational problems.

Following this Convention, every District has the immediate problem of systematically fighting against fluctuation. It must be done in the first place, through changing the work and system of our units. Leading committees must select units that through special atten-

tion be made into model units in doing independent mass work, that will overcome sloppiness and waste of time and energy.

It is necessary to emphasize also the need to fight for every recruit. At present, we consider our duty over when a youth is recruited into our League. The attentions that we shower upon him before he joins usually turns into cold indifference as soon as the technical act of receiving a membership book is completed. Every recruit in the first place, must be given an understanding of the Y.C.L. program through new members classes and by means of reading material that we must suggest for him and encourage to read. Care must be taken in assigning work to every member. First of all he must be given work that he is qualified for. In the first place, this must be mass work, work among non-Communist youth with whom the recruit has connections. An older and more experienced comrade must be assigned to give personal attention to the recruit through informal comradely discussions, etc. The recruit must be made to feel free to raise all questions that he has, all criticisms of the League methods, all suggestions for improving the work. From the start he must be made to feel that he is one of the owners of his unit, that he is part of it and that he is responsible for its advances or setbacks. In addition to this, the units should strive to organize social and cultural activities, that will involve all members of the unit, that will better establish warm friendly ties.

Our Y.C.L. units as compared to Party units must have the life that is typical of a youth organization. There must be more responsibility attached to joining the Y.C.L. Every recruit should be admitted with a small ceremony, the taking of the Y.C.L. pledge, etc. He must feel that he is taking an advanced step in joining the ranks of the youth who fight for Soviet power. Idealism and devotion should be instilled in each recruit from the start. After this Convention, we must strive to place our League in most Districts in uniform. The fascists utilize many methods that attract the youth and fill them with enthusiasm. Many of these methods have to be utilized by our League to develop the feeling of military organization, of strength.