

Young Communist International Appeals to the Young Socialists

ANSWERING the arbitrary refusal of a small group within the Executive Committee of the Young Socialist International to coordinate the energy and activity of the working class youth for the support of the persecuted and fighting Spanish proletariat, the Presidium of the Young Communist International, certain that this refusal could not express the sentiment of the E. C. of the Y.S.I. as a whole in the following letter again makes an appeal for united action:

Comrades:

The white terror is raging in Spain. Thousands of bold and courageous fighters have perished in the heroic revolutionary struggle against the unbearable oppression of capitalism, against starvation and want. Many thousands of workers and peasants have been wounded. Tens of thousands, including an enormous number of youth, who fought for the cause of the working class, have been thrown into prison.

The soldiers, the dregs of human society—the fascists—are wreaking bloody vengeance in Asturias and throughout the country.

The wounded men, old and young, workers and peasants, are in danger of execution. Tens of thousands of prisoners and their families are living through hours of suffering in expectation of savage vengeance.

The bourgeoisie, the manufacturers and the landlords, are preparing to fetter the working class and the peasantry of Spain in the slavish chains of fascism.

In many factories the entire working force has been dismissed. The young workers are being driven out of the training schools. The employers are dooming to death from starvation those who dared to insist on their right to live.

The Spanish Communist and Socialist youth fought shoulder to shoulder on the barricades against the common class enemy.

The French Communist and Socialist youth, on the basis of the united front, are jointly mobilizing all the forces of the youth in defense of the Spanish workers and peasants against fascist reaction.

In Great Britain, Belgium, Austria, Switzerland, and other countries, the Communist and Socialist youth have formed a united front striving to carry out their international duty together.

It is becoming plainer and plainer for the broadest masses of the youth that the struggle of the Spanish proletariat is the struggle of the entire international proletariat against capitalism, and that any delay in defending our Spanish class comrades, any delay in the struggle will mean new sacrifices and will allow the executioners unharmed to wreak their vengeance on the defenseless prisoners, the wounded and their families.

In the struggle against fascist reaction, in defense of the Spanish proletariat, nothing divides the workers, peasants, the employed and the unemployed.

A powerful international anti-fascist movement at one time forced the German fascists to give way when they were preparing their vengeance against Comrade Dimitroff.

THERE cannot be the slightest doubt that the slaughters of the Spanish working class and peasants will also give way and capitulate like the German fascists if they feel the force of the indignation of millions of people.

For this very reason, in the interests of the struggle against fascist reaction and the defense of the Spanish toilers and the youth, we once more make an open appeal to the Executive Committee of the Socialist International of Youth.

Olenhauer, with the agreement of the president of the Young Socialist International, Koos Foring, on October 16, 1934, on formal grounds, rejected the proposal of the Executive Committee of the Y.C.I. to hold a joint struggle against fascist reaction and in defense of the Spanish toilers, without submitting it to the bureau and the plenary session of the Executive Committee of the Young Socialist International.

Following this example of Olenhauer, which it is difficult to properly describe, the leading organs of the League of Socialist Youth in Sweden and Czechoslovakia, also rejected the corresponding proposals of the Communist Youth.

The presidium of the Executive Committee of the Young Communist International cannot reconcile itself with the reply of Olenhauer and Foring and with the position of the leaders of the Socialist youth in Sweden and Czechoslovakia, in the matter of the establishment of the united front in the interests of the working class and the struggle against fascism.

Every day fascist reaction is mercilessly shooting down and executing without trial the workers and peasants, the Communist and Socialist youth. For this reason, we once more propose that the Executive Committee of the Socialist International of Youth should immediately discuss our proposal for joint actions in the struggle against fascist reaction and in defense of the Spanish youth, their fathers and mothers.

We are absolutely convinced that if there is a genuine wish to establish the united front of the toiling youth in the struggle against fascist reaction, the Executive Committee of the Young Socialist International has every reason to decide the question independently and in the positive sense regarding the joint defense of the Spanish toilers, thus taking the initiative in bringing up this question at the forthcoming Plenary Session of the Socialist and Labor International.

IN VIEW of these sincere motives, the President of the Executive Committee of the Y. C. I. requests you to allow its delegation to present at the forthcoming Plenary Session of the Executive Committee of the Socialist International of Youth and to present its point of view and concrete proposals for a joint struggle against fascist reaction and in defense of the Spanish workers and peasants.

With the aim of reaching a more rapid agreement on this important question and in order to make it possible for the Bureau of the Executive Committee of the Young Socialist International and the Socialist Youth to discuss this question beforehand, the Executive Committee of the Y.C.I. makes the following proposals:

(1) During the period of the joint struggle against fascist reaction, to establish a united front between the Internationals and between the Communist and Socialist Youth organizations in all capitalist countries without exception, in defense of the Spanish workers and peasants and their young generation.

(2) The basis of the agreement must be one single condition—a joint struggle and the mobilization of the broad masses of the youth against fascism and the brutal terror in Spain. It is understood that as soon as agreement is reached, mutual attacks will cease during the period of the joint struggle.

(3) With the aim of better organizing an international campaign and directing it, an international youth committee for the defense of the Spanish youth and their families should immediately be formed on conditions of parity.

(4) To make an immediate appeal to all the non-reactionary mass youth organizations to send their representatives to the International Youth Committee and to form corresponding national and local committees in each country, in town and village, in mills and factories, mines and universities, and to carry on an international campaign.

(5) It will be the duty of the International Committee and of the national and local committees to mobilize the millions of the youth for a struggle against fascist reaction and to conduct an international campaign:

For the stoppage of the brutal white terror in Spain.

For the revocation of death sentences and the liberation of the prisoners.

For the cessation of the persecution of the families of the killed and wounded workers, and the stoppage of dismissals from the factories, estates and trade schools.

For the defense of the workers and peasants who have fled from brutality, for affording them the right of asylum and against surrendering them to the executioners.

Against the military-fascist dictatorship.

For political rights for the workers and peasants.

For the right to legal existence for the Communist, Socialist and other organizations of the toiling youth.

For the prohibition and disarming of all fascist reactionary organizations.

It will also be a duty of the International Committee and also of the national and local committees to organize the collection of funds for assisting the families of the killed and prisoners and the organization of an International Fund for the assistance of the Spanish workers and peasants; to organize mass meetings, demonstrations and protest strikes; to expose the slanderous statements of the bourgeois papers in justification of the brutal terror exercised by the military fascist reaction in Spain.

The presidium of the Executive Committee of the Y. C. I. is firmly convinced that these proposals will arouse the warmest response among the Communists, Socialists and toiling youth of the whole world, because these demands mobilize and rally together the youth at the present moment for the struggle against fascist reaction.

The Presidium of the Executive Committee of the Y. C. I. awaits a prompt reply from the Executive Committee of the Socialist International of Youth, and expresses its hope that the decision arrived at will correspond to the interests of the struggle against fascist reaction and the defense of the heroic youth of Spain.

The Presidium of the Executive Committee of the Y. C. I. recommends all Communist Youth Leagues to make a suitable proposal once more to the Socialist Youth and together with them, to carry out their international duty and obligations to the Spanish proletariat.

The Spanish proletariat have retreated, but their revolutionary forces have not been broken and

and dead together.

"In Oviedo, in one afternoon, in the courtyard of the Convent of Santo Domingo, the legionnaires and Riffians shot more than 700 prisoners, the most horrible thing being that among them were women and children.

There is a photograph of this which will be published in a book already prepared by the Socialist International in Paris.

"Altogether, in Asturias, the government's mercenary troops have executed nearly 2,000 workers and they have put more than 5,000 in prison.

"One detail: To advance, Lopez Ochoa put prisoners in front of the troops to paralyze the miners' action and once the advance was accomplished, he shot them all.

"Today in Spain there are 38,000 prisoners who are being killed by hunger and brutal treatment. It is more terrible to be a prisoner than to be shot.

"Nineteen Socialist members of Parliament representing Asturias are in prison.

"Youths, revolver in hand, run through the streets setting fire to everything and killing whoever seems to be a Socialist.

"We look for help in the foreign press, so that the 'clandestine' murder in Spain should cease.

"They go on with the comedy of trying to dispute with death the 23 men condemned by the tribunals when, without tribunals, they have killed more than 5,000 persons in the peninsula."

AND should it ever be the lot of this Socialist woman in Spain, whose message cannot fail to arouse the anger and desire for action against fascism in the breast of any worker, to read the same issue of the New Leader in which her letter appears she will not find one single word of answer to her appeal. She can earnestly look for help for her imprisoned comrades, she can wait until hundreds have died or have been killed, but not one word up to date will she find in the Socialist New Leader answering her plea for defensive action, for a concrete proof of international solidarity.

She can, on the other hand, learn that on a score of occasions the Daily Worker, central organ of the Communist Party, directed fervent appeals to the National Executive Committee of the Socialist Party, urging just such international action as every imprisoned Asturias worker would want in the United States. She will learn that there never was one word of reply.

ESPECIALLY in Asturias, with which this letter most concerns itself, will the workers feel the bitter disappointment of the failure of the American Socialist leaders to take immediate steps for a united front in their defense. For it was in Asturias where the united front of Socialists and Communists was established before it was throughout Spain. It was in Asturias where the Workers' and Peasants' government was set up jointly by Socialists and Communists. It was in Asturias where the workers heroically held power, Socialists and Communists shedding their blood as the shock troops of the Spanish revolution, holding out so that the workers in the rest of Spain could defeat the fascist butchers.

It is to the heroic Asturias toilers that the Socialist leaders will have to account for their silence on the united front.

Every Socialist must ask his leaders: What answer are you going to give this Socialist woman? Five thousand have been slaughtered, she says. Thirty-eight thousand face death or worse. Socialists and Communists are concerned here; the whole working class of Spain is concerned. Why can't joint demonstrations be arranged now, immediately, for defense of these heroic fighters in the front trenches against fascism?

their revolutionary energy and activity have not been smashed. The hour is not far distant when the workers and peasants, with the support of the international proletariat, will deliver a smashing blow at capitalism, and the victorious banner of socialism will wave proudly over Spain.

PRESIDIUM OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE Y.C.I.