

World Socialism

THE LIQUIDATION OF THE YCI

By HERBERT ZAM

The Young Communist International will be liquidated. That obviously is the sole decision of its last congress which requires any comment. The first inkling of this decision was contained in an "interview" with Gil Green, the permanent secretary of the American Y. C. L. and published in the Daily Worker of Nov. 2. The policy was further elaborated in a similar "interview" in the Young Worker dated Nov. 12. And now final confirmation of the universal character of this "new turn" is provided by a dispatch from Moscow dated Nov. 9 in which it is reported that the decision to liquidate the Young Communist International was contained in the resolution adopted at its Sixth Congress.

What is the purpose of this liquidation and what forms will it adopt? The Young Workers "interview" contains all the necessary information.

"Q.—In your interview with the Daily Worker, you also speak of reconstructing the Y. C. L. into a 'non-Party' mass youth organization.' Can you elaborate on this statement?"

"A.—The Y. C. I. Congress called for the broadening of the youth leagues in all capitalist countries into youth organizations which unite all youth who wish to stand on a working class program, who wish to work for the transformation of society. The organizational structure of the League should be broadened to include any group of youth who wish to join such an organization.

"Q.—Does the non-Party character of the League imply no connection with the Communist Party.."

"A.—It implies that the League will not be a youth section of the Communist Party or any other party for that matter."

There is little reason to shed tears over the liquidation of the Young Communist International, which has done sufficient damage to the youth movement in the last seven years. But it is important for the revolutionary movement to stand guard against the ideology which is expressed in this liquidation.

Must Stress Class

The struggle for the youth is now more important than ever. Fascism has made big inroads among the youth. The new generation, which is unacquainted with the horrors of war, and to whom war is still being presented as a romantic and glorious adventure can, however, be won to the side of the working class only by a firm and clear-cut proletarian organization, not by an amorphous, colorless, "non-Party youth organization" in which will be found all "non-fascists." If anything is to be learned from the events in Europe, it is the futility of relying upon "non-partisan" organizations either among the youth, or among the workers in general. They either blow up at the first fascist onslaught, or go over to fascism. In order to fight fascism, the working class needs a strong, revolutionary class organization which can place itself at the head of all the exploited masses. It needs a similar organization among the youth.

This talk of a "non-Party" youth organization is worse than nonsense. It is extremely dangerous. The revolutionary Party cannot deprive itself of its arm among the youth, any more than it can give up its own existence. What is needed is to destroy the ideology of the youth as a uniform group, and bring the class

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struggle into its ranks. There can be salvation for the youth only through participation in the class struggle, not through aloofness from it. And aloofness will be the inevitable result from a "non-Party" mass organization, for in order to retain its "non-Party" character, it will have to abstain from all action having a "Party" character, in the long run from all action having a class character.

Must Have Autonomy

It is true that various excesses have been committed from time to time in relation to the youth movement. There is a general tendency on the part of the adult organization to limit the freedom and organizational independence of the youth movement. Against such attempts the youth have fought fiercely, and justifiably so. The revolutionary youth movement has a bigger task than to distribute leaflets for the Party and to carry the platform in election campaigns, important as this work is. It has the task of winning the working class youth to the side of the revolutionary proletariat, and to accomplish this task, it must have organizational autonomy, the right to elect its own leaders, the right to decide on its own structure and methods of work. But this organizational autonomy is of value only so long as it is politically tied up with the revolutionary Party, so that there is a guarantee against departing from its class basis. This is the type of relationship we should strive to establish in the Socialist movement.

The liquidation of the YCL is important for us. The YCL is inviting the Young Peoples' Socialist League to join it in a "suicide pact." From what we know of the YPSL we are firmly convinced that their answer will be: "No, thank you." The YPSL will continue as the youth organization of the Socialist movement, trying to win the youth to Socialism and at the same time, trying to improve both itself and the Socialist Party. The exit of the YCL will leave the field clear to the YPSL, which should continue its activity with renewed vigor, and with the whole-hearted support of the entire Socialist movement. The YPSL should not hesitate to take into its ranks those members and followers of the YCL who will be left homeless and who sincerely desire to build a revolutionary youth organization in this country allied with a revolutionary Socialist Party. But it must slam the door in the faces of those who want to come into the YPSL in order to work for its liquidation.

The decision of the YCI once more serves to show how utterly dependent the contemporary Communist movement is upon everything that takes place in Soviet Russia, and how impossible it is to build an international proletarian movement upon that basis. Some time prior to the Congress of the YCI, the Russian youth organization was reorganized along the new lines. There is undoubtedly

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Unemployment

The people of the United States are entering into the seventh year of their greatest economic and social crisis in the history of this country and in fact the world. All sorts of estimates have been made of the number of unemployed. One thing is sure. The number is not getting smaller, but instead, it has become larger as each year passes by. The question no longer is, "will unemployment ever end?" but "what will happen next?"

It is plain now, after three years of Roosevelt that prosperity will not return to America by the "New Deal."

To save bankrupt private industries the "New Deal" has poured billions of dollars into banks, the railroads, insurance companies, and other big corporations. Its purpose, we are told, was "to increase the purchasing power" of the fortunate who were still employed, and in this manner return the millions of jobless to gainful employment. But instead of returning the jobless to employment in factories and workshops of the nation, this "New Deal" has made big business boom. The government itself admits that there are still more than ten million persons unemployed and that, no matter how successful its relief program, five million persons now unemployed will never again get jobs.

THE FORGOTTEN UNEMPLOYED

After a great deal of noise by Roosevelt and his "Man Friday," Hopkins of the Federal Relief Administration, about putting three and a half million jobless to work under the Work Relief Administration by November 1, we find that today, in November, only 1,000,000 men and women have been given jobs. This complete inability of the "New Deal" to fulfill its own prescription, would be enough to cause organized labor and workers to unite. But there is a greater menace arising out of this failure. The Relief Administration has ruled that on December 1, persons not employed under the

justification for such a reorganization in Russia. But can one compare the situation in Russia with that in capitalist countries? And yet, reorganization in Russia led to immediate reorganization on an international scale. This is inevitable from the present structure and methods of functioning of the Communist movement.