

THE YOUTH MOVEMENT

Marching Forwards

By *R. Schüller* (Moscow).

After ten days conference, the IV. Bureau Session of the Y. C. I. (Enlarged Executive) has now ended. It has dealt with the political situation and the tasks of the Y. C. I., the struggle against war danger and militarism, factory nuclei work, the combatting of Fascism, work among the rural youth, the program, trade union work, educational work, and the proletarian sport movement. Ed.

The IV. Bureau Session of the Y. C. I. is a clear proof of the progress made by the Y. C. I. during the past year. The time is past when the slogan "mass organization" was still an object of theoretical principle under discussion in the Y. C. I., and its practical application accompanied by internal crises. Now a great living world organization is at work, one which has already made a long stride forward on the road to the conquest of the masses of working youth for communism, and is today bending all its energies to complete this task. The time of 1921/22 is past, when the depression in the ranks of the working class reached its climax, and was expressed among the youth by a wide-spread indifference to all political struggle, and by a considerable growth of social democratic influence and of the social democratic youth organizations. The influence exercised by the social democratic youth organizations on the unorganized youth is beginning to diminish in the most important countries, and despite, or rather on account of, the Hamburg amalgamation, these organizations suffer greatly from increasing antagonisms and acute disagreements between the ever more numerous adherents of the united front and the ever more reactionary right. But the Young Communist International, despite the heavy blows dealt by the reaction in cooperation with the social democracy, is today sounder and stronger than ever, its influence on the masses of working youth increases steadily, and the number of its organizations multiply.

The basis of our activity as Young Communist Leagues is the most active participation in all the questions and struggles of the working class, under the leadership of the CP's and the CI, and we do not simply endeavor to support the struggle of the CP's but at the same time formulate the slogans of the working class struggle in a manner specially adapted to the requirements of the working youth, so as to induce the masses of the latter to take part as active champions in the cause of the whole proletariat. (Thus, for instance, the united front slogan has taken the form, not only of supporting the formation of the united front of the whole working class, but also of a struggle for the united front between young and adult workers against capital, and for the united front of the working youth itself inside the whole proletariat.) This political activity has been much improved and

vitalized during the period just past, especially since the III. Congress. The participation in the struggle and in party life has become much greater everywhere. "Youth is the salt of the party" is a saying which we now hear on all sides. Where the lines laid down by the CI have been discussed, and the majority of the party has taken sides against the CI, as in Norway and Sweden, there the YCI may regard its sections with justifiable pride, for these have stood for the CI with unwavering loyalty.

The struggle against war danger and Fascism, and for the united front, for which the III. Congress of the YCI. appealed, found its expression in various successful enterprises. The anti-military work in the Ruhr district was carried out with success. An effectual international propaganda campaign was conducted against war danger and Fascism. The united front tactics, indefatigably applied in connection with the Ruhr occupation and the Hamburg Congress, have resulted in important successes among the social democratic youth.

It hardly requires to be said that political activity again formed the chief business of the Bureau Session, whose work may be regarded as a continuation of that of the Enlarged Executive of the CI. in its application to youth. The YCI. is now faced with the task of carrying its political activity further, and of rendering it more concrete. The mighty masses of proletarian and peasant youth must also be won for the slogan of the workers' and peasants' government, and brought into the YCL's. The support given the party, and cooperation in its work, must be increased. It is unnecessary to emphasize the fact that the YCL and the YCL's belong everywhere to the most faithful champions of the Communist International, and will so continue, refusing to be led astray by any differences with or agitation against the CI., and maintaining their right to stand for the CI. wherever its initiatives are discussed. The fight against militarism and war danger is being based more and more on careful anti-military work in the army and among the masses of workers and peasants, and on international cooperation, and was debated accordingly. Fascism, especially in its effects on youth, was exhaustively dealt with, and the forms of combatting it, as well as the methods of participation of working youth and YCL's in the struggle against it, were laid down from every point of view—political, propagandist, educational, and with reference to defence organizations of the working youth. Even the blows previously dealt us by the reaction have proved useful, and the dissolution and persecution of our organizations will not find us so unprepared in the future. The struggle for the united front will continue to be one of the main objects of our activity, although, after the shameful Hamburg Congress, we are now obliged to carry on this work above all among the masses, in local organizations, in the workshops and factories, in the trade unions, and in the country.

Our political activity has increased our influence of late on the masses of working youth, but in future we must strengthen and improve our work in this direction, if it is to strike firm roots.

The chief importance of the Bureau Session lies in the fact that it dealt with this question in a practical and detailed way, and issued concrete directions to the Leagues for actual work.

The greatest store is thus to be set today on the energetic execution of the resolutions passed by the III. Congress of the YCI., which demand the strengthening of mass work by the creation of factory nuclei and the reorganization of the YCL's on this principle. At the present stage of our work, this question has become a leading one for the YCL's, and it is only its correct and energetic solution which will enable us to continue on the road to a mass organization, and to combine all our efforts—political, economic, educational and propagandist—into a mass work closely bound up with the life and labor of the working classes. In Germany, where the resolutions passed by the III. Congress with regard to the formation of factory nuclei and the reorganization of the Leagues were energetically applied, and where we have already 160 nuclei with 300 members, we can report great and even wonderful success. For instance, 6000 new members were gained within 7 months (20%). The Bureau Session told the other Leagues that it was time for them to follow the German example.

At the same time, the Bureau Session dealt with the equally urgent necessity of strengthening and systematically organizing the work in the trade unions, in the whole sphere of the economic struggle, and in the domain of education. The first of these tasks have been forced into the background since the Congress, by the necessity of concentrating our main forces on the fight against war danger and militarism, against Fascism, and against the persecutions of the reaction, as well as on the position in the different parties. The last of these tasks, owing to our defective powers and almost complete lack of material for

communist youth education, still counts among our weakest points. On the three questions the Bureau Session, after thorough discussion, passed detailed resolutions and directions which will result in a marked improvement of our work in these departments.

For the first time at an international conference of the YCI. the question of work among the rural youth was concretely discussed. A large amount of material and experience has already been got together with regard to this still new line of work, so that the Bureau Session was in a position to draw up a list of actual economic and cultural demands for the rural youth, thus giving us a basis for our propaganda and the possibility of mobilizing the youth of the villages to aid us in the struggle for the workers' and peasants' government. It was entirely in keeping with the spirit of practical mass work that the Bureau Session of the YCI. should also have dealt with the workers' gymnastic and sport movement.

Thus the YCL, conjointly with the CI., has drawn up comprehensive plans for its tasks of the near future, and has at the same time given us a certain basis for the fulfilment of these tasks in a series of resolutions worthy of the attention of the whole communist movement.

We have also a guarantee for their fulfilment in the international organization of the CYI., which is becoming steadily stronger, larger, and more active in its capacity of a world organization. The youthful communists everywhere are to be counted among the most enthusiastic champions of the Communist International as a World Party, and among the staunchest opponents of all federal and decentralizing tendencies, for their own laborious work in the YCI. has brought them the certain knowledge that today a Workers' International is either a World Party or it is nothing.

Review of the Young Guard of the German Proletariat

By Käthe Pohl (Gotha).

The national conference of the Communist Children's Groups held its session at Gotha at a time when the very existence of the German working class is threatened both by unbridled exploitation and by the armaments of the reaction. 250 girls and boys from every part of Germany met together here, in order to discuss the misery of the children of the working people, the school struggle, the communist children's press, and the entire work of the communist children's groups. The conference was conducted by a presidium of three boys and three girls. With the exception of the report of the central, all the speeches on the questions on the agenda were made by children. The independence, and the political and organizational schooling of the children, were here clearly apparent. The conference was a true reflex of the present situation of the working class, of its revolutionary maturity and readiness to fight. The majority of the children were under-nourished, cleanly but poorly clad. But revolutionary determination and fighting courage characterized their speeches. The address and the discussion on the school struggle again showed that the German bourgeois republic, and the socialist governments of Saxony and Thuringia, have not even succeeded in protecting the children in the schools from punishment by flogging, or from monarchist infection. Although flogging is prohibited, it goes on energetically in Saxony and Thuringia. The proletarian children have to protect themselves physically and mentally against the black-white-red heroes and their blows. This fact has created a revolutionary situation in the German primary schools. The children have to carry on a class struggle in its most involved form. Punishment by thrashing, the monarchist and nationalist propaganda in the schools, the dirty work of the police which the children selling the *Young Comrade* have to put up with—all this plays in the lives of the children the same rôle which the antisocialist law once played in the lives of the adult workers, and which misery and reactionary provocation are playing today. The school struggle requires from the children a large amount of courage, physical strength, and mental development. It is characteristic that, during the discussion on the press, a twelve year old boy from South Bavaria moved that the *Young Comrade* should publish the truth about Charles and Frederick the Great, Napoleon, and other nationalist heroes, so that the children might have at their disposal incontestable evidence of the monarchism of the teachers. Various speakers in the debate stated with much satisfaction that the teachers are frequently unable to controvert the children's arguments, and break off the discussion on some pretext. The main task of the Communist Party—the winning over of the masses—is held by the children to be their most