

**The Programs of  
the Young Communist  
International**

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**The Programs**  
of the  
**Young Communist International**



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# THE PROGRAMS

of the

## Y. C. I.

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CONTAINING THE FIRST PROGRAM,  
ADOPTED NOVEMBER 1919; THE  
TENTATIVE DRAFT FOR THE NEW  
PROGRAM AS ADOPTED BY THE  
THIRD CONGRESS OF THE Y. C. I.  
DECEMBER 1922, AND OTHER  
MATERIAL RELATING THERETO



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PUBLISHING HOUSE OF THE YOUNG INTERNATIONAL  
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# P R E F A C E

THE Fourth World Congress of the Communist International discussed and considered the question of a program for the Communist International. The final adoption of the program was postponed, however, until the Fifth World Congress. At the same time all the national sections of the Communist International were instructed to formulate programs for their own national communist movements.

This decision applies also to the Young Communist International. The program of the Young Communist International is of special importance because its work is carried on among a particular section of the working class, — the young proletariat. In its work of educating the young workers for the class struggle and for communism the Young Communist International faces problems and encounters difficulties and tasks of a sort which are scarcely touched upon by the party. This makes it necessary to formulate a concrete practical program for the activities of the Young Communist International and to connect this program closely with that of the Communist International so that they may be used as a common weapon in the struggles of the communist movement.

Up to the present the Young Communist International has used the program of its preliminary conference in Berlin in 1919. A new program was prepared for the Third World Congress of the Young Communist International but there was not sufficient time to submit it first to the Leagues for discussion. Its adoption, therefore, had to be postponed, but the congress came to the following decision:

The Third Congress of the Young Communist International resolves:

1. To adopt as a basis the new draft of the program proposed by the Executive Committee of the Young Communist International.



2. To instruct the next Bureau Session to decide upon the program in its definite and final form.

3. To carry on a thorough discussion regarding the program in the Leagues.

4. To instruct the Executive Committee to publish the Berlin program and the draft for the new program in the more important languages.

At the same time a special program commission was charged by the congress with the improvement and supplementing of the draft. A smaller commission was instructed to improve the style of the draft, and the Executive Committee was charged with carrying out this resolution.

This booklet, summing up the labors of the small commission is intended to comply with the decision of the congress. We print, herewith, the address that was delivered on the program question without abridgement, believing this to be the best way of presenting the form of the new program, its differences from the old one and from the programs of our Social Democratic opponents. We also print the new (temporary) form of the program and the special resolution upon which the economic demands of the program are based. Finally we reprint the Berlin program.

With these documents we present to the Leagues all the necessary material on the program question. It will then be the task of the national executive committees and the officials to inform the memberships on this new program and to stimulate a fruitful discussion. By fruitful we mean a discussion that will take the members more deeply into the problem of the young communist movement and the struggles of the Young Communist International; and a discussion that will rouse more activity in the leagues. This discussion of the program enables us to begin a campaign of systematic political education and also enables the membership to follow with more interest and intelligence the debates on the party program. The indifferent masses of the youth and the Social Democrats should also be approached in this work of enlightenment and induced to participate in the discussion on our program and our organization.

If we do this our success is inevitable. The Berlin program won over to the Young Communist International all the revolutionary

groups of the youth. The new program of the Young Communist International should win over to us the millions of unorganized young workers and peasants and transform the Young Communist International into a genuine mass organization of the young workers.

*THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
OF THE YOUNG COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL*

Moscow, February 20th, 1923.



REPORT  
on the  
PROGRAM OF THE YOUNG COMMUNIST  
INTERNATIONAL

Delivered at the Third Congress of the Y.C.I.  
by Comrade Shatzkin.

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"We do not propose to formulate the program in its final form at this congress. It is self-evident that the program is, and should be, the most important document of the Young Communist International, and that therefore the adoption of a new program cannot take place until after a thorough discussion in the Leagues. We had too little time for this before the Third Congress; the material on the question was published rather late and even then it was not complete. We believe that the final adoption of a new program should be postponed to the next meeting of the Bureau. However, since there were no fundamental differences among the members of the Executive and of the program commission, we believe that the present draft should be accepted as a basis for discussion in the Leagues.

"During the period between the Third Congress and the Bureau Session, the question should be brought up for discussion in the Leagues, through the press and in meetings. The Bureau will then be able to formulate a final program for the Y.C.I. and to adopt it in the name of our congress.

"First of all, we must clearly realize that our program is primarily a practical program, that is, that it deals in a general fashion with the plans of the Young Communist Leagues for their future struggle. We are a section of the Communist International, and the program to be formulated at the next congress of the Comintern will also be our program. Its program is the general theoretical basis for the activity of all sections of the C.I. including the Young Communist International. The individual program of

the national sections, as well as our own program, are intended to draw the concrete conclusions from the general program of the C.I., that is, our program shall be the special application of the general principles of the Comintern to a definite section of the working class and in a special province of the communist movement. It follows therefrom that our program can, and must, be more concrete than that of the C.I. This is why that question which plays the most important part in the formulation of a new program of the C.I. namely the question of immediate demands, must be adopted in our program. Obviously, to be practical it must include all our immediate demands and the struggle for these demands. We can set up a detailed plan of our activity and of our struggle only for the period of preparation for the proletarian revolution, and the period of the conquest of power. We cannot formulate our program chronologically, as the Comintern has done, or set up a concrete plan for the work and the struggle of the Leagues after the conquest of power. We must confine ourselves in this respect to a general survey of the various possibilities of development of the situation and of the tasks of the young workers after the conquest of power; for there is a difference in the character of our program and that of the Comintern as to the possibility of formulating our tasks in the period after the conquest of power. The program of the Comintern makes use of the experience of the Russian revolution in all great political questions, as for instance, the question of proletarian dictatorship, the proletarian state: i. e. the Soviets; the relation between the proletariat and the petty bourgeoisie, between the imperialist nations and their colonies, etc. . . . all the general political problems which can be internationalized from the experience of the Russian revolution. In ours we have to deal with more concrete problems. The most important part of our program, for instance, is the work of education. This is not to be found at all in the program of the Communist International. A further important part of ours is the question of our economic demands and our work in the economic field. There is hardly anything in the program of the C.I. about this matter for the working class as a whole, nor were the plans for the antimilitarist struggle mentioned in it.

"Just because we have to deal with much more concrete problems, we cannot so easily make use of the experience of the young communist movement of Russia after the conquest of power, nor



generalize from it on an international scale, and adopt the conclusions in our program. Our program must contain only such matter as may really be viewed as international phenomena. The experiences of the Young Communist League of Russia are too inseparably bound up with the concrete conditions in Russia to allow us to generalize upon them and take them up in our program. At the meeting of the program commission I have already given an example of why it is so difficult to generalize on the Russian experience. Russia began with the old economic policy and passed over to the new. At the congress of the Comintern, it was stated that the western countries should begin at once with the new economic policy. Of course, this makes a great difference. When you consider the influence of the new economic policy on the condition of the working class youth in Russia, you will realize that this different development in the various countries will create a different situation in the condition of the young workers, and, as a result, quite different tasks for the Leagues. I need not go into any more details in this question, but I would like to say, that the emphasis of our program can be laid upon a practical plan for the activity and the struggle of the Young Communist Leagues only for the period before the conquest of power. For the period after the conquest of power, we must limit ourselves to a statement of possibilities, since we cannot lay down any well detailed, concrete practical plan and theoretical conclusions for that period.

"The next question in the formation of our program is the political foreword. Our program begins with a political foreword, which describes the nature of capitalism and its development into a world revolution. A few comrades are of the opinion that it might be better not to give the first place to this political introduction, since most young workers do not understand it, or even if they do, they find it rather uninteresting; that it might be better to begin with the situation of the young worker, which is of greater interest to the working class youth, and then go on to the general political situation. I am of the opposite opinion, because it is selfevident that the condition of the young worker arises from the general situation of capital and the working class, and not *vice versa*. If we wish to build up our program logically and not arbitrarily, to express the natural development of conditions, we must begin with the general situation, and then pass over to details. This is why I propose that the present order should be retained.

"Other comrades believe also that the situation of the working class youth should be described otherwise than as it has been done. Each chapter dealing with the development of capitalism should be accompanied by a corresponding chapter dealing with the condition of the young workers during that period, so that the whole material should not be divided but instead be included under one chapter chronologically arranged. I do not believe that this change is justified either. First of all, it would make each individual chapter too long, which is a disadvantage from an editorial standpoint; second, it would force us, if we were to give a detailed description, to repeat the various problems of the young workers' situation in every chapter of the development of capitalism. In the numerous questions confronting us, for instance, the questions of hours of labor, night work, wages etc. there is no improvement of the condition of the young workers during the development of capitalism, but rather an increase of their suffering. For this reason I believe that this change also is not advisable.

"Another question is that of the style in which the program is written. Many comrades object that it is too dry, too boring, and that since it is to be used for agitation purposes, it should be written in a clearer, more lively style. I agree with these comrades and I believe that in the time between the congress and the meeting of the Bureau, the program should be thoroughly studied and improved in style. However, we should not exaggerate. The use of the program for agitation purposes is important, but nevertheless secondary. The program is first of all a statement of principles; this demands an absolute exactness of phraseology, and strictly Marxian theses. In a choice between popularity and truth we shall naturally choose the latter. This is why we should not lay too much stress upon the program as a propaganda pamphlet. This cannot be, otherwise we should have to make it too long, dilute its contents, and use incorrect expressions. Of course, we ought to improve the style of the program and simplify it, as far as possible.

"What are the differences between this program and the old Berlin program? First, we have added some new chapters, and secondly we have enlarged many others already dealt with in the old one. Then we have taken up new problems, such as the role of the young communist movement. This question is hardly mentioned in the Berlin program. It was first brought up at the Second World Congress of the Y.C.I. There we dealt with the question for



the first time, and therefore we could not give it a final, programmatic form. The experience gained after the Second Congress proved to us that our resolution as to the role of the young communist movement was right. This is why we can give place to the problem in our program at the Third Congress.

"It is self evident that this is necessary. We need some unified basis for our practical activity, some general formulation of our various fields of work, in order to understand these various fields and not forget our general purpose in the daily tasks.

"The second new question is that of the colonial and semi-colonial countries, which is not touched upon in the Berlin program. The necessity of dealing with this question is clear. In 1919 we were an European organization; today we have grown to a world organization. This development of the Young Communist International must find an echo in our program. Unlike the social democratic international of youth, we must not disregard the colonial and semi-colonial peoples who number more than half the population of the earth.

"The third new question in our program is that of the possibilities arising out of the proletarian revolution. At the Berlin congress we listened to a special report on the tasks of the Young Communist Leagues, after the conquest of power by the proletariat, and adopted a resolution in the matter. That was in 1919 when the Russian League had had only two years of experience in work under a proletarian dictatorship, and therefore there could be no question of giving place to this problem in our program.

"Today we have not progressed so far that we can formulate an international plan for the activity of the young communist organizations after the capture of power. This we can do, however; we can trace, in the program, the general possibilities of development after the conquest of power; the characteristic features of the new situation, and the tasks which they include. These then are the new points which we can put in our program, thanks to three years of practical experience of the Y.C.I.

"Besides these new points, there are number of questions which had already been dealt with in the old program, but which require more thorough treatment. Among these comes first of all the political foreword. This introduction remains, in general, the same; but we have added something new to it. Much has happened since 1919, and many new points of view have appeared in the Com-

munist International. The program of 1919 reflects too much, in its political sections, the political situation at that time. The problem then was parliamentarism, one of the most debated problems in Germany and in other countries. As a result the question of parliamentary activity took too much space in our very concentrated political foreword. The predominance of this problem has not only a formal but also a political importance. This must be corrected, and the political introduction revised.

"Another question to which we gave more room is the situation of the working class youth under capitalism. At the Berlin congress our knowledge of the condition of the young workers did not go beyond this, — that we needed this knowledge for our agitation against capitalism, that we knew this condition to be so bad that we were compelled to fight capitalism. Since then, however, we have gained much experience in our concrete economic struggles; in the course of our practical agitation and struggle we have come to know much better the condition of the young workers. This is why we have given more room to a description of the young workers' condition in our new program. But not only can we describe in detail the life of the young workers, as the Berlin program has not done, but we can attempt a generalisation of the condition of the working class youth as the object of capitalist exploitation. This is very important. Our practical experience in the process of becoming acquainted with the condition of the young workers has also taught us the difference in the status of the young workers under a capitalist regime or under some other form of society. It is self evident that the young workers as the object of exploitation will disappear in socialist society. But their situation was also different in pre-capitalist societies. For instance, the young worker in the middle ages, the apprentice, lived under quite different circumstances than those of the present; the young worker of that day was not a wage slave, but a real apprentice, at school with a master. The relations between master and apprentice were patriarchal more than anything else.

"The tasks of the Leagues in the various fields of our activity have also been amplified. In the Berlin program, our activities on the economic field, against militarism, and on the educational field were only described in general, without details, because we did not pursue those tasks then as extensively as we do now. Since the Berlin congress we have dealt at length with these questions. We



have also gathered much experience in them through our practical activity, and can therefore give place in our program to the chief results of this experience. A great number of important questions are not mentioned in the Berlin program, as, for instance, the economic demands of the young workers, the question of our relations to the trade unions in our economic struggle, the slogans for an anti-militarist struggle, etc. All these various fields of activity have been given more room. The chapter on the Young Communist International has been enlarged, but remains essentially the same.

"These are the main differences between the new and the Berlin programs. This ends the first part of my report.

"Now as to the problems themselves. The first question is the already mentioned political foreword. We have a political foreword first because, as we have said, the situation of the young workers arises from the general development of capitalism and the situation of the whole working class; and second because we are a political organization, because we believe that political activity is the basis of communist education. An inspection of the programs of our opponents reveals the following: the program of the Young Workers' International contains no political foreword. This is not an accidental omission, but springs from the very nature of the social-democratic youth movement. The Young Workers' International mentions but rarely the general political problem of the working class and its task; it stands upon the same theoretical basis as the bourgeois liberal pedagogues — that the youth has nothing to do with politics.

"Their progress and their activity corresponds with their view of their tasks.

"The centrist international of youth, whose disappearance through amalgamation with the second international of youth is imminent, settles the question of a political foreword like every centrist. Their program contains a political foreword, but this introduction is so worded as to prevent the political participation of the youth and to divert them from the revolutionary struggle. For the second and a half international of youth is essentially a Central European international, and the whole purpose of their political foreword is to show that a revolution is impossible in Central Europe at the present time. This is not said quite as openly as I have put it; they speak more of the dependence of the Central European countries upon the Allies. We can easily see from their political

foreword that the centrist international of youth stands closer to us in words, but when it comes to deeds, they unite with the second international of youth. Their tendency to fusion with the second international of youth proves this fact.

"And now the question of the role of the young communist movement, the most important part of the program. You know how the social democrats look at this question. I will speak here primarily of the second international of youth. It is evident that in the fusion of the two internationals of youth the second international will devour the second and a half; the influence of the second and a half will appear, at most, in the formulation of a few questions. But as a rule the ideology of the second international of youth will predominate in the future united international. The social democrats are not especially clear as to its role. They develop in the direction of a radical-liberal bourgeois youth movement. The period of the world revolution had destroyed all those petty bourgeois intellectual-radical groups which refused to join the class war against capitalism. The social democratic youth movement has become the heir of these defunct petty bourgeois movements. They overestimate the significance of the cultural factor in the social democratic youth movement, and in history in general.

"Let me give you a few examples. In 1920 appeared in the *Neue Zeit*, the theoretical organ of the German social democracy an article by a certain N.L., who, as far as I can judge, is a young socialist teacher. Therein he propounded the following theory: a certain movement may be noticed in all sections of the youth, proletarian as well as bourgeois. This movement tends to the creation of independent youth organizations and independent youthful activities. This general manifestation has a common cause — the cultural aspirations of the youth which conflict with the capitalist culture. And he concludes: "these cultural aspirations are the same in all classes and if the social democracy were able to set up a program which corresponded to these aspirations, it could unite the whole German youth under its wing." This is a theory which leaves wholly out of consideration the political and economic basis of society; sees every problem in the cultural light; forgets the Marxian principles of the class struggle; and believes in the petty bourgeois heaven as a kingdom of youth. This is the most extreme expression of the decadence of the ideology of the social democratic youth movement.



"I would like to quote another example: the famous "Weimar Spirit". Reformism as a political system, devoid of all romanticism, remote from the actual struggle, naturally does not appeal to the large masses of the youth. That is why the social democrats seek an ideal for their youth movement and for an ideology which will attract the youth. Gogol, in his *Memoires of an Insane Man* writes: "The mouth was made in Hamburg." The ideals of the social democratic youth movement were made in Weimar, and these ideals are dead and decomposed. Young people assembled in Weimar; there was much dancing and a torchlight parade. This was called an "event" and on that day the "new man" of the social democratic youth movement was born. New men are born of new economic and political conditions, and not of torchlight processions. It was a discovery peculiar to the social democrats, that a new man can be created by a spiritual experience; but this is the new ideal of the young German movement, of the bankrupt bourgeois youth; that is what they have taken up. Some of the more clever among them realized that the intellectual intensity of the Weimar spirit was too great and after the first hurray things went off a little more quietly. But this spirit has taken firm root in the social democratic youth movement and even today it holds sway over large masses of them.

"Another example of this kind of mentality are the German Young Socialists, a somewhat older group which forms a special faction within the social democratic party. This is an out and out petty bourgeois tendency which openly combats the materialist conception of history; which will have nothing to do with economic problems; which declares that its task is to "create the new man"; that the spiritual side of man is not sufficiently considered; and that the emphasis of activity should be laid upon spiritual development. Reading their literature one realises immediately that this is a petty bourgeois, individualistic movement, a movement that has no place in any socialist, proletarian, and still less in any Marxian organization. The activities of the social democratic youth in the past few years correspond with this ideology. The party and the youth of the social democrats work more and more in conjunction with bourgeois organizations, and naturally this finds expression in their ideology. There is nothing astonishing in the fact that after signing the same appeals as were signed by the German democratic youth, the social democratic youth should adopt the same ideology and the eulogy of republican forms, until practically every difference between

the two organizations disappears. Naturally, after laying emphasis upon the education of "the new man" they disparage political and trade union struggles. These young workers take no part whatever in political activities, except perhaps in Sweden and Denmark. But after the proposed young workers convention in Scandinavia — a convention *à la Bielefeld* — it is probable that these social patriots will be sufficiently Germanised and Weimarised so as to no longer form even this exception.

"As for the Centrists, they remain centrists in this matter also. They believe that the youth should take part in politics — but academic politics. Theoretically they stand for and advocate academic political activity: practically they are against all participation and take no share in political matters. This is clear from the fact that the ideology of the centrist youth is that of political neutrality, and political neutrality is possible only in an organization which takes no active part in politics. But they are not neutral, in reality, since they are adherents of the centrist socialist parties — even if their activity is educational instead of political. Not much will remain of this centrist conception — except perhaps in diluted and modified forms — after the fusion with the second international. The ideology of the second international will conquer not only the Swedish and Danish social democrats but also the sections of the centrist international of youth.

"Our definition of the role of the young communist movement is well known and, we believe, is correct. We need spend no time in discussing it. I want only to emphasize that when we say we are a mass organization for the communist education of the young workers and that we differ from the second international of youth and the centrists, we mean that we are an organization for education in the struggle, through the struggle, and by the struggle. The centrists say: "The communists have come around to our point of view. We advocate education and they advocate education". But the difference is that we mean different things when we employ the same words and that we act in accordance with our meaning, in our views of socialism, of the forms and methods of a working class party. The same thing is true of the youth movements. The centrists interpret education as academic politics, theories, and no action: we interpret education as knowledge derived from and through the struggle, and as preparation for further struggle.



"There is another difference: the social democratic youth organizations say: Politics belongs to the party; the economic struggle to the trade unions; and education to the youth." We say that the communist education of the youth is impossible unless they participate in all the other forms of the proletarian movement. Since we are an educational organization we can achieve our aims only by participating in the political struggle side by side with the party; by sharing the economic struggle side by side with the trade unions.

"The next question in our program is militarism. The socialist youth applies two different methods to this struggle. Sometimes they say, as the old social democrats said to Liebknecht: "Militarism is a product of capitalism. We must fight, not against the fruits of capitalism, but against capitalism itself. We refuse, therefore, to engage in a special struggle against militarism." This view still has a few advocates. If we were attacking a city protected by a line of trenches we would not say: "We march to take the city, never mind the trenches."

"Another of the tactics of the social democrats is a pacifist attitude. We know their ideas of demonstrating under the slogan "No more war!" by making soulful and pathetic speeches on international love, by discoursing on the mission of the League of Nations, vegetarian pacifists joining the left wing of the bourgeois pacifists. The social democrats and the youth organisation of the social democrats carry on no anti-militarist propaganda. They merely state: "We are against war. Wars are unnecessary, good people. Love one another and put your trust in arbitration." But we see nothing practical, such as an effort to win over a section of the army to the socialist idea—a dangerous task but a necessary one for the victory of the revolution. Neither the right wing nor the centrist youth organizations, such as those led by the Austrian League, have any anti-militarist tradition, and due to the influence of this League all the others are condemned to inactivity.

"As to the economic struggle, the socialist youth organizations are filled with the illusion that a radical improvement in the condition of the young workers is possible under capitalism, and that it can be achieved soon. But the disruption of capitalism brings with it an ever increasing exploitation of youth. The improvement of the condition of young workers is possible only after a radical

transformation of society. Our not sharing these illusions differentiates us from the socialist youth.

"The second radical difference lies not only in the methods of struggle for our economic demands but also in our different conception of these demands. The second international of youth bases its demands on the possibility of improvement under the capitalist system while we base ours upon the needs of the working class and the turning of these needs and the demands based upon them into an instrument for the overthrow of capitalism. The social democrats take a superficial view of the matter and make no proposition for any radical change in the situation of the working class youth. This being the case it is easy to understand why they are not willing to help in the creation of a new society.

"But they also differ from us in the immediate concrete demands. The most important problems, such as the matter of wages of young workers, unemployment, the relation of the young worker to the trade union, and others, are not even mentioned in their program. A comparison of their program and the decisions of their various congresses shows a great difference even between their theories and their actions.

"The third basic difference lies in the methods of our struggle — or rather between our struggle and their inaction, for the social democrats do not struggle for the interests of the youth. They believe their main task should be to keep the youth removed from exciting activity. Their efforts on the economic field seem to be intended merely to draw young workers into their organization, as catholic and other organizations advertise themselves for this purpose. They actually take advantage of the strong desire of the young workers to improve their conditions by diverting it into reformist channels, distracting it from the revolutionary struggle.

"In educational work we find the same thing. Educational work is an indispensable part of communist enlightenment. It and the participation in the struggle of the proletariat are and must be inseparable. But among the socialist youth organizations education is an end in itself and has absolutely no connection with the class struggle. It is useless for the purposes of proletarian education, as such.

"During the war we proclaimed "Education through struggle!" Among the social democratic youth knowledge in itself takes the



first and highest place. I think we are all agreed, comrades, that knowledge can be acquired only through struggle—through collecting and assimilating the experiences obtained through our struggle and using them as the basis of our theoretical education.

We must discuss here the relation of general education to political education. The socialist youth either rejects political education or gives it a secondary place as compared with general education, while with us the situation is reversed and political education takes first place. We oppose the too wide spreading of general educational work and its separation from the class struggle. At the same time we do not accept the other extreme, as represented by some of our comrades at the Baden Congress, who interpreted the slogan to mean the rejection of all general educational work. We must use general education but only in so far as it serves the purposes of our political activity and our communist education. For example, the use of singing. There are songs and songs, and some of them we can use in our organizations—revolutionary songs, political-satirical songs, battle songs, etc. Literature is also a province of education, and there are a great many revolutionary novels and poems we can use in the study of the Revolution with the youth. We have already written about this matter in the *International of Youth*. But an attempt to teach young workers the whole history of literature would be outside our province.

“The aim and criterion of our educational work is the struggle against the bourgeois ideology. In this respect I believe that our obligations are greater than even those of the Party. For instance we must fight against religion; against the teaching that the world was created by the might and power of a God, we must use natural science to explain its true origin. Here again it is unnecessary to go beyond the needs of our struggle.

“Another question in our program is the organizational structure. Here also we differ from the social democrats, in both our national and international organizations. Internationally we differ as to the autonomy of the national sections. You all know that the centrist youth movement stands for the autonomy of the national sections. This thesis in their program is a reflection of bourgeois nationalism and proves an incapacity for real proletarian internationalism. This is already seen in the bourgeois international organizations, and this very principle which rules the young

catholic international is adopted almost literally in the program of the second and a half international of youth.

“We, on the contrary, have a centralized international organization which does not recognize the autonomy of the national sections but only recognizes the necessity of adapting the directions of the international to the actual conditions in each individual country. The decisions of the International are our supreme law.

“There are also great differences between the organizations of our national sections and those of the socialist youth. The centralization and discipline in the communist Leagues is quite different from that of the social democrats. This corresponds to a difference in principle between the two: our organizations are built on the principle of democratic centralism and strict discipline prevails in the Leagues; while the social democrats, with their loose organizations, are free to do what they will or choose.

“Still another difference is that the social democrats cannot expand beyond their district groups. Being merely educational societies they do not find it necessary to organize otherwise than by districts. But we are not educational societies. Our aim and intention is to become mass organizations, preparing the young workers for the struggle, and hence we organize nuclei in the shops.

“In the question of colonial peoples, the social democratic international of youth does not take the colonial peoples into consideration at all. The two socialist internationals of youth are actually and in reality Central European organizations. They have no representation in the large Entente countries or outside of Europe. The more attention they give to the Anglo-Saxon and labor countries the less they give to oriental lands. Their reason is that they share the race prejudices of the adult social democrats towards colonial peoples and are therefore unable to estimate the significance of these.

“We support the national revolutionary movements of these countries. We unite the two great movements—the proletarian world revolution and the national revolutionary movement in the colonies, and demand the organization of the colonial youth. We cannot say much more than this in our program, concerning our tasks in the East. We shall attempt in those countries where the proletariat is small to support the youth movement and to lay the foundation for a class movement.



“These are the chief matters which separate us from the social democratic youth. Coming to the possibilities of our movement during the period after the conquest of power by the proletariat, this is not considered at all by the socialist youth organisations. This proves that their protestations are mere phrases and that the social democrats do not even think of the time when capitalism shall have ceased to exist.”

THE PROGRAM  
of the  
YOUNG COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL  
(as adopted at the Berlin Congress  
of the Y. C. I., November 1919)

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THE unheard-of development of capitalist accumulation and production has brought capitalism to a new stage in its development — to the phase of imperialism, which is characterized by the formation of trusts and syndicates, and by the rule of finance capital. Its colonial policy, caused by the necessity for finding new markets for trade and procuring raw material, the competition of the national capitalist cliques, led with iron necessity to imperialist wars.

The war of 1914-18, the consequences of which cannot be liquidated by the resources of capitalist society, has disturbed and destroyed most of the capitalist countries. The terrifying calamities of war, famine, financial and commercial bankruptcy, and the destruction of human lives, have brought humanity to a crisis from which there is but one way out — World Wide Social Revolution. The material conditions necessary for this are here. The class antagonisms have become extremely acute. The victory of the Revolution depends entirely upon the will and the energy of the international proletariat. The way to Socialism leads through the dictatorship of the proletariat, which is characterized by a government of the revolutionary Soviets. The first task of the working class is the struggle for the overthrow of the political, economic, and intellectual domination of imperialism, and to establish a proletarian dictatorship. This struggle can come to a victorious end only when the proletariat decisively breaks away from the Second International, which is reformist to the core and compromises with bourgeois society, betraying thereby the whole working class. Only then will the working masses unite under the standard of the Communist International — the leader of the proletariat in the revolutionary struggle.



In a revolutionary epoch one must employ primarily the means of revolutionary struggle of the masses (demonstrations, strikes, general strikes, armed uprisings). At the same time the proletariat cannot reject in principle other political resources, such as parliaments. The entry into parliament depends upon the political situation of the moment, and must be decided in each case separately by the organizations of each country.

(2) If the position of the adult workers under the rule of capitalism is exceptionally hard, the position of the working youth is quite intolerable. Low wages, a long working day, barbarous treatment from the employer and immediate superiors characterize the position of the young workers. Conditions are even worse in those trades where the apprentices are wholly within the power of their trade masters. Such an unlimited exploitation of young workers hinders their intellectual and physical development. The bourgeois governments allow the working class youth only so much education as is necessary for them to possess in the capacity of industrious and useful cattle. The bourgeoisie strive to imbue the youth with their own ideology. School, confession and bourgeois young people's organizations, as well as militarism, have but one object — to alienate the proletarian youth from the struggle for Socialism and to make of them devoted soldiers for capitalism. The world war aggravated this situation considerably. Millions of young proletarians were sent to the front to serve as cannon fodder; millions of others were driven into the ammunition plants.

Although the State and the employers exhaust the strength of the youth to the utmost, political and personal rights are permitted them only on a very modest scale. Such a state of affairs has incited the working class youth to take up a merciless struggle against imperialism.

(3) The formation of separate organizations of the proletarian youth is dictated by: (a) The position of the young in the process of production and in society. This position forces them to fight in defense of their own interests; in the reorganization of labor; reforming the school system, etc. (b) The psychological characteristics of youth (the prevalency of sentiment over reason, aptitude for cooperation, great receptivity as regards all new and revolutionary ideas, readiness for sacrifice and action). (c) The necessity of special methods for its socialist and revolutionary education (independent organizational work, active participation in political

struggles); the application of all methods which give the young workers an opportunity of acquiring those qualities which will be extremely necessary to them in the future as champions of the proletariat and bearers of the revolution.

(4) The working class youth is the most active and revolutionary part of the proletariat. The most important task of the Young Communist Leagues is, for the present, an incessant agitation among the wide masses of workers, the organization and carrying out of political demonstrations, the immediate struggle for Communism by taking part in the overthrow of capitalist tyranny, and the training of the youth to fit them for building up the communist society.

(5) The Young Communist Leagues carry on an energetic struggle against all bourgeois parties and also against such right socialists, lackeys of the bourgeoisie, as Scheidemann, Renner, Bissolati, Renaudel, Henderson, Gompers, Troelstra, Branting, Vandervelde, etc.; and against the socialist centrists, Kautsky, MacDonald, Robert Grimm, Bauer, etc., who by their vacillation only help to uphold capitalist society. The Young Communist Leagues likewise oppose the syndicalist ideology, which is against a political struggle for the conquest of proletarian dictatorship and which rejects the right of the political party to conduct this struggle, and which also rejects proletarian centralization. They are equally opposed to the anarchist ideology which does not admit of a proletarian government as an intermediary phase between capitalism and communism, and which, in the sphere of political economy, preaches petty bourgeois ideas. The same struggle is directed against the youth organisations connected with the above mentioned parties. In their political struggle, the Young Communist Leagues are subject to the principles of that party or local fraction which is affiliated with the Third International, or to the principles proclaimed in the program of the Communist International. The organizational relations toward the parties are determined by two fundamental principles: (a) organizational independence of the youth; (b) close contact and reciprocal help.

(6) Although the Young Communist Leagues will continue an energetic struggle against bourgeois militarism in all its abstract and practical forms, still they do not defend the ideas of a liberal pacifism. They know that the working class will yet be forced, in order to put down imperialism, and to defend its own victorious dic-



tatorship from unexpected attacks by the bourgeoisie, to have recourse to arms and to fight against bourgeois militarism. *For the arming of the proletariat! For the Red Army!* That is the cry of the communist youth.

(7) The struggle for the amelioration of the economic situation of the proletarian youth is one of the principal problems of the Leagues. A practical reform of the conditions of labor is possible only in a communist community. In the present period of capitalist domination it is possible to attain a partial amelioration of the situation of the young only through the revolutionary class struggle, but in no wise by collaborating with the compromisers and the bourgeois governments.

(8) One of the elementary problems of the Young Communist Leagues is the training of proletarian leaders and future builders of the communist society. Communist judgement and readiness for action are attained not only by taking part in the political struggle, but also through theoretical socialist instruction which is a sharp weapon in the fight against bourgeois ideology. Socialist education combined with active participation in the political struggles — these are the true methods of training young proletarian champions.

(9) The Young Communist Leagues, moreover, set themselves the task of a universal education of the working class youth in the Marxian spirit, thereby raising their cultural level. The working class youth must extort from the bourgeoisie the treasures of knowledge which are indispensable to the workers as a guide in the movement for the emancipation of the proletariat. They must conquer the paths to science, literature, and art. Besides honest workmen and brave soldiers of the Red Army, the working class youth must supply scholars, technical experts, organizers, philosophers, poets, and artists for the new communist society. It is the mission of the proletarian youth and its organizations to be in the front ranks of the constructors of a new culture conceived in the spirit of communism.

(10) The communist organizations must turn the proletarian youth into a healthy people — healthy bodily and mentally. Therefore, the Young Communist Leagues are also concerned with the physical development of the young. This work, to which we can give only a part of our activity at the present time, is also of great importance for the young workers.

(11) Although the Leagues strive to influence with their ideas wide circles of the working class youth, this is not done at the expense of clarity of our communist program and tactics. A matter of extreme importance is the propaganda amongst the rural laborers and the poorer peasants.

(12) The Young Communist International considers that the existence of separate organizations of the collegiate socialist youth is superfluous. Honest revolutionists in the ranks of the young students must become members of the proletarian youth organizations, as equals among equals, and comrades among comrades. The formation of groups of the collegiate youth within the general youth organizations must be regulated according to the conditions in each country separately.

(13) In the present revolutionary epoch, the struggle of the proletariat can be victorious only if it is world-wide. This applies as well to the struggle of the young workers. As a consequence, the political organizations of the youth unite themselves under the banner of the Young Communist International. The chief aim of the Young Communist International is centralization and guiding the work and struggles of the Young Communist Leagues in the various countries. Its regulations are the supreme laws to all organizations of the youth. Its practical work consists in international education and international guidance of political manifestations. Its duty is to give unity to all the activities of the youth organizations; to serve them as a directing force; to support them morally and materially; to form new Leagues and to bind together as closely as possible, the proletarian youth organizations of all countries.

(14) The Young Communist International stands upon the basis and the principles laid down by the First Congress of the Communist International. The Executive Committee of the Young Communist International is connected organizationally with that of the Communist International and works in close connection with it.



# TENTATIVE DRAFT OF THE NEW PROGRAM OF THE YOUNG COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

(as adopted by the Third Congress of the Y.C.I.  
Moscow, December 1922)

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THE time when the working class youth suffered without protest under the yoke of exploitation is forever gone. A tremendous development has taken place in the minds of the masses of young workers in the city and in the country; of apprentices, of the children of the proletariat who have been thrown ruthlessly into the process of production by growing capitalism. The unbearable servitude of the young workers in capitalist industry and capitalist society has awakened in them also the consciousness of class and has united them in the struggle against their miserable conditions of existence. The young workers have gathered in hundreds of thousands around the banner of the Young Communist International. Millions of young workers and poor peasants, the oppressed and martyred youth of the colonies, aroused by imperialist wars and gigantic social conflicts have joined the army of the militant proletariat. Closely united with the adult workers in this struggle, the working class youth gradually approaches the goal to which the Communist International points—the overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of a communist society.

## THE WORLD REVOLUTION

Capitalism holds sway over the largest part of the earth. Its most important characteristics are: ownership of the means of production; exploitation of the large masses of the working class by small groups of bankers, factory and land owners; and anarchy of production. The capitalist state in all its forms is the instrument of power of the capitalist class for the oppression of the workers and for their continued exploitation.

The constant concentration of capital and production has brought capitalism into a new phase of development—imperialism

—whose characteristic features are the formation of trusts, syndicates, and cartels, and the domination of finance capital. To find new markets for its products and fresh sources of raw material, to open new investment possibilities for its capital, the imperialist bourgeoisie subjugated most of the industrially backward and undeveloped nations outside of Europe and took possession of those countries, at the same time bringing others under its disguised rule. Through their governments the various national capitalist cliques fight each other bitterly for the division and domination of the world, for colonies, for European markets, and for sources of raw materials and fuel. This economic war leads inevitably to armed conflicts, to imperialist wars.

The imperialist world war of 1914-1918 cost more than ten millions of dead and maimed; it disrupted finance, industry, and transportation everywhere; it brought hunger and misery to the workers. Capitalism cannot repair the fatal consequences of that war. Its various attempts at economic reconstruction have been in vain; the disruption of its economic basis proceeds without interruption and capitalism is faced with complete collapse. The political differences between the nations have not been removed but have been made more acute by the peace treaties. Due to a widespread, bitter, and constantly increasing class antagonism all the attempts to reconstruct capitalist economy and establish a social balance lead to nothing. Capitalism has brought humanity into a blind alley and the only way out is—the world revolution.

The emancipation of mankind from the yoke of capitalism has become the immediate task of the international proletariat. The proletariat must overthrow the bourgeoisie, erect the proletarian dictatorship and the Soviet system, take from the capitalists the land, the banks, the industries, and the means of transportation, and proceed in this manner until the complete abolition of private property and classes has been attained; until the final establishment of a communist economic system and a communist society.

The essential economic conditions for the world revolution are present. Its success depends upon the will, the strength, and the fighting power of the proletariat. The proletarian revolution can be successful only if the working class definitely frees itself from reformist illusions; breaks away from the Second International—the lackey of the bourgeoisie—and places itself under the leadership of the Communist Parties and the Third International, the revolu-



tionary leaders and representatives of the working class of the world. The first prerequisite for the capture of power is the acceptance of communist principles and aims by the majority of the working class.

In its struggle for the proletarian dictatorship, the revolutionary proletariat, led by the Communist Parties, employs the methods of revolutionary mass action (demonstrations, shop council movements, strikes, general strikes, control of production, occupation of factories, armed revolt, etc.) and the institutions of bourgeois democracy (parliaments, etc.). It seeks to remove the capitalists from every position of advantage in the daily problems of the life of the working class, and to undermine the bourgeois democratic institutions from within until the time comes when it will finally destroy them.

The world revolution has begun. In a vast territory of Europe and Asia the laboring masses, led by the working class of Russia, have overthrown their bourgeoisie and established Soviet Republics. German and Austrian imperialism have received their death blows. The proletariat of those countries have begun the struggle for the capture of power; gigantic strikes and social conflicts have shaken all the capitalist countries to their foundations. Millions of oppressed colonial slaves have taken up arms for their emancipation from national and social enslavement.

But the world revolution is a long drawn out struggle which will fill a whole epoch in the history of humanity. During this epoch the revolutionary wave will rise and fall. Defeat will follow victory and victory will follow defeat. The working class will be finally victorious only if it is prepared for the greatest sacrifices, if it is filled with the greatest heroism, if it learns discipline, and if it fights its class enemies on every front.

### *THE WORKING CLASS YOUTH UNDER CAPITALISM*

The class character of capitalist society becomes especially apparent in the present condition of the youth and in its social position. The youth is divided into two sections—one of the oppressed class, and one of the ruling class; and these two have as little in common as have the capitalist class and the working class. The offsprings of the ruling class enjoy every advantage of education and careful training, while the young workers of city and country share the fate of the adult working class and are the objects of a ruthless exploitation. The niggardly crumbs of education which are granted

to the young workers under the capitalist regime serve only to make them more profitable objects for future exploitation. They are condemned to lives of wage slavery.

The economic situation of the adult worker under capitalism is exceedingly difficult; but that of the working class youth is quite unbearable.

From earliest childhood the sons and daughters of working class families become the objects of capitalist exploitation. Child labor under the most dreadful conditions continues to be widespread. The old type of apprentice who was received into the family of his master as a member of that family, and who had every opportunity later to become a master of his trade, has disappeared forever. Apprenticeship nowadays is merely a mask for the merciless exploitation of the youth, and even as such it is rapidly disappearing. The development of industrial technique has enabled the capitalists to place young children and adolescents as unskilled workers in the process of production. There remains only a very small aristocracy of skilled labor, maintained at the expense of the large majority.

The capitalists take advantage of the diminished power of resistance of the young workers to exploit them outrageously. The young workers are forced to work long hours (often longer than adult workers), and far beyond the capacity of their undeveloped bodies. No consideration is given to their need for further education. They must be satisfied with absurdly low wages, much below those of adult workers for the same work. Night work, work under unhealthy conditions, dangerous occupations, barbarous treatment by the employers, unemployment without benefits and its results, misery, prostitution, crime,—all these are the fate of the young workers under the capitalist regime.

Conditions are especially bad in small industries and in small shops. These seek to meet the competition of the big industries by the merciless exploitation of the apprentices, who are absolutely helpless in the hands of their employers and masters.

Girls, being the weakest element of the young workers, are the objects of an especially brutal and degrading exploitation, even worse than that of the young male workers.

Capitalism, which has proletarianized the cities, also brought the mass-proletarianization of the rural population with untold misery to the poor peasants, so that the situation of the young rural worker is even worse than that of his urban brother.



The pitting of the young workers against their older comrades to whom they are related by bonds of class, of common misery, and of blood, is another especially crass sign of the miserable condition of the working class youth under capitalism. The capitalists make use of the young workers to cut wages, to break the strikes of the adult workers, and to rob the adult workers of their jobs.

The economic servitude of the young worker is closely connected with the spiritual oppression enforced by the bourgeoisie. The bourgeois schools teach only such things, and only as much, as will make the young workers willing and capable slaves of capitalism in the factories, in the army, and in politics. This is the purpose of the public and continuation schools. Only the youths of the bourgeoisie can attend the high schools, colleges, and universities. Bourgeois literature and the bourgeois press, religion and religious bodies, the church, bourgeois art, literary trash for the youth, moving pictures, music halls, variety shows—all serve the same purpose. Special bourgeois youth organisations, educational and social,—hiking clubs, sport clubs, nationalist unions, military organizations, religious, free thought, pacifist, political, boy scout organizations,—all exist for the special purpose of poisoning the minds of the young workers for the benefit of the bourgeoisie.

The militarism of the capitalist states, which serves to carry on imperialist wars and to suppress the working class at home, recruits its forces primarily from the young workers and peasants. For the military caste these young human beings are nothing but cannon fodder. The militaristic spirit is intended to make the young workers the willing victims of imperialist slaughters, and in many countries the infusion of a militaristic spirit begins in the preparatory military organizations of children of school age. The capitalist military service turns the young workers into automatons to be used against their class brothers at home and abroad. They waste the best years of their youth in military barracks. It is the blood of the working class youth which drenches the battle fields of imperialist wars.

But although capitalism demands from the young workers these incredible sacrifices of toil and of blood it refuses them the most elementary political rights.

Especially in the small artisans' shops, the apprentice lives in abject dependence upon his employer. The working class youth is not allowed the right to vote, even in the pitiful institutions of

bourgeois democracy or in the shop councils. In many countries the young worker is deprived, legally and illegally, of his rights to organize politically, to attend political demonstrations, etc. Class justice and the organs of suppression controlled by the bourgeoisie pitilessly persecute the revolutionary young workers.

This situation became even worse during the war, and in the period following the war the misery of the working class grew beyond bounds. Enormous masses of half grown youths were sent to the front and children were drawn into the workshop to take their places and the places of the adult workers. In the shops they were mercilessly exploited without being trained, even the few existing protective laws being abolished. To repair the damages of the war and to emerge from the present crisis—at the expense of the proletariat, naturally—the capitalists intensify the exploitation of the proletariat and especially of the proletarian youth, and concentrate their attacks upon the standard of living of the working class, imposing upon the workers an unendurable misery. The process of the decay of capitalism brings with it increased suffering for the young workers; economic misery, political oppression, and disfranchisement.

#### *THE NECESSITY FOR AND THE ROLE OF THE YOUNG COMMUNIST MOVEMENT*

The general political and economic situation of the working class youth and its special position in capitalist society forces it to an actual participation in the class struggle, and imposes upon it, within the framework of the general class war, a special struggle for a change in its own conditions of work and education. To fulfill these tasks the working class youth has organized itself into Young Communist Leagues.

The necessity for such separate young communist organizations arises from the peculiar psychological needs of the young workers. These require the establishment of special independent organizations. Still another reason is that the youth must have a preparatory school for the Party.

The first young proletarian organizations which arose in the capitalist countries of Europe at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries were organized to fight militarism, to defend the interests of the working class youth, and to give a special socialist education to their members. As reformism



increased in the labor movement it sought to bring the proletarian youth under its control. Where it attained a certain degree of success it devoted its efforts to withdrawing the young workers from the class struggle and to transforming their organizations into mere educational societies. But the reformists found it difficult to control the revolutionary elements of the youth so that even before the war the young socialist organizations—or at least their best elements—were a strong support of the revolutionary left wing of the labor movement. At the outbreak of and during the war a majority of the members of the young proletarian organizations of most of the capitalist countries remained true to the principle of the revolutionary class struggle and unlike the socialist parties who placed themselves beside the bourgeoisie, became constantly clearer in their aims.

As the working class had, at that time, no revolutionary parties, the young socialist organizations were forced to break with the policy of the socialist parties and to undertake an independent political struggle against the bourgeoisie, its social democratic accomplices, and the war. Thus they contributed much to the preparation of the ground for new revolutionary parties of the proletariat. With the formation of the Communist International and the Communist Parties and their growing strength, the Young Communist Leagues were able to define their particular role as youth organizations within the general revolutionary movement and to devote themselves to their special tasks among the proletarian youth.

Since the working class youth is a part of the working class it does not require any further organization than the Young Communist Leagues for the various activities of the working class, such as political, economic, athletic, and others, as the proletariat as a whole has already organizations for these purposes. The Young Communist League is the mass organization of the working class youth and that part of the labor movement which represents the interests of the young workers in all matters. It is the mass school for the communist education of the working class youth, where they can obtain practical education by their organized participation in the struggles of the proletariat. This practical education is supplemented by theoretical teaching. The Leagues are at present the most devoted assistants to the Communist Parties and the reserve force of these for the future.

## *POLITICAL ACTIVITY OF THE YOUNG COMMUNIST LEAGUES AND THEIR RELATION TO THE PARTIES*

The Young Communist Leagues firmly reject the hypocritical slogan of the bourgeoisie and of the Social Democracy—that the youth must not participate in politics. The energetic participation of the working class youth, which is such a mighty factor in social production, is also an equally mighty force in the working class political struggle, and is the basis of the communist education of the young workers.

The Young Communist Leagues are subject to the political leadership of the Communist Parties, which they accept as the vanguard of the proletariat and the leader of all its organizations; that is, the Leagues accept the program, the tactics, and the political instructions of the Parties.

Thus, united with the Communist Parties, the Young Communist Leagues participate in all the Party activities and struggles against the bourgeois parties and organizations, and against those representatives of capital and its political organizations which strive to preserve the rule of capitalism and capitalist exploitation. The Young Communist Leagues also oppose the Social Democratic Parties of all shades, which are the direct and indirect allies of the bourgeoisie in the proletarian camp. These attempt to save capitalism from destruction and to divert the working class from the revolutionary struggle; and continually betray not only the final aims but also the immediate interests of the proletariat. The Young Communist Leagues also combat the "pure" syndicalists who deny the necessity of the proletarian dictatorship, a proletarian party, and proletarian centralization; and the anarchists who are the ideologists of the slum proletariat and the petty bourgeoisie and who reject the proletarian state and preach reactionary economic views.

The Young Communist Leagues firmly oppose those organizations of the youth which follow in the wake of and are supported by bourgeois parties and bourgeois groups, such as the numerous religious associations, nationalist sports leagues, militarist, pacifist, and chauvinist youth organizations. They fight against the social democratic, syndicalist, and anarchist influences among the youth. With those syndicalist elements who recognize the necessity of the revolutionary struggle for the proletarian dictatorship and who have rid themselves of their antiquated prejudices, the Young Com-



unist Leagues fight as comrades sharing the same struggle. They strive to lead all the unorganized and misled elements of the proletarian youth along the road of the proletarian class struggle and they endeavor to unite the entire working class youth under the banner of Communism.

These are the concrete tasks of the Young Communist Leagues on the political field: untiring agitation for the militant aims of the Communist International; support of the Communist Parties in all their daily work and activities; participation in all the revolutionary actions of the proletariat; discussion and explanation of current political events and the immediate tasks of the proletariat; active participation in all Party debates within the scope of the Communist Parties.

Without questioning the political leadership of the Communist Parties, the Young Communist Leagues require organizational independence for the work of education. In the interest of successful cooperation in all militant activities the closest organizational contact between Parties and Young Communist Leagues is essential and is obtained by mutual representation in all bodies and by continual mutual support.

### *THE ECONOMIC STRUGGLE OF THE YOUNG COMMUNIST LEAGUES*

Any radical improvement in the conditions of the working class youth is impossible under capitalism. Moreover, during the period of the decay of capitalism the bourgeoisie strives to lower as far as possible the standard of living of the working class youth and ruthlessly opposes every slightest attempt of the young workers to better their conditions. Thus the young workers can expect radical changes in their situation with regard to labor and education only after the victory of the proletariat.

The establishment of socialist society not only demands a reorganization of the conditions of work, with regard to the education of the young workers, but it also brings about the conditions that make this reorganization possible. As the conspicuous example of the Russian revolution has proven, it creates socialist education which is a combination of productive work and of instruction and is educated to become useful, instead of being an object of exploitation. The special task of the Young Communist Leagues within

the scope of the general struggle of the working class is the realization of socialist youth education on the basis of the transformation of the conditions of labor for youth.

But even before the conquest of power by the proletariat the Young Communist Leagues struggle energetically for the betterment of the young workers' situation. This struggle aims at the protection of the young workers against the growing misery and degeneration resulting from capitalist exploitation, and strives to increase the power of resistance of the working class by raising its standard of living; all this to the end of depriving the capitalists of some of their advantageous strongholds and of uniting the masses of young workers to fight for their most elementary and immediate demands.

The basis and the goal of our programme is the

### *SOCIALIST REORGANISATION OF JUVENILE LABOR*

This means the abolition of wage slavery for all young workers up to eighteen years of age. They must be cared for by the state and treated from the point of view of education, until they have attained this age.

Aside from our relentless opposition to all child labour, which naturally requires no further explanation, our partial demands for all young workers of both sexes up to eighteen years are the following:

Minimum wages ranging from the subsistence minimum upwards. Equal wages for equal work, for young and adult workers of both sexes. Progressive grading of apprentices' wages during the course of apprenticeship.

If the six hour day is established, wages are to be paid for eight hours.

Wages of all young workers to be determined by trade union agreements.

Six hour working day with the inclusion of, and full pay for, continuation school hours.

Forty four hour week end rest.

Strict prohibition of night work for all young workers up to twenty years.

Prohibition of piece work and of the speeding up system.

Fully paid four weeks' annual vacation. Free accomodation of young workers in recreation homes, sanatoriums, etc.



Prohibition of young workers up to twenty years being employed in shops and industries injurious to their health, such as glass works, underground work in the mines, certain branches of the chemical industry, and others.

Equal unemployment doles for young and adult workers; unemployment doles ranging from the subsistence minimum upwards.

Compulsory employment of the unemployed youth either in shops or training schools which guarantee continuation of training for the young workers who have been compelled to interrupt their apprenticeship.

Regarding *Technical Training and the Apprenticeship System* our demands are as follows:

Compulsory free and complete trade education for all young workers up to eighteen years.

Technical training to be based on practical work and regulated according to the principles of the workshop schools, factories, etc. The basis for this is the establishment of special apprentices' departments in the factories.

Establishment of common training shops for a number of home and petty industries, in which part of the working hours are to be spent.

Abolition of individual indentures, and the inclusion of the apprentices in all collective agreements.

Abolition of apprentices' sweating, by strict regulations regarding the right to employ apprentices—maximum number of apprentices in proportion to a definite number of workers, severe punishment for mistreatment and for offences against working hours and protective legislation.

Two years apprenticeship, including the probation period, which is quite sufficient in view of the present capitalist character of work.

Prohibition of employing apprentices with work not belonging to their trade.

Prohibition of the living-in system.

Strict supervision of apprenticeship by the organs of the working class—trade unions, shop councils, and others.

Labor organizations and their representatives to have a voice in the supervision of the training shops and trade schools. Apprentices or pupils to elect councils for the same purpose.

For the *Establishment of a Militant Front with the Adult Working Class* the Young Communist International has formulated the following demands:

Young workers to have full rights on all shop councils.

Young workers to be accepted on equal terms in the trade unions but to pay lower dues.

According to the peculiar conditions that may exist in different countries the Young Communist Leagues may enlarge or adapt these demands as the occasion requires.

The fate of the working class youth is inseparably connected with that of the whole working class. The economic struggle of the young workers can be successful only when it is carried on with the full support of, and in conjunction with, the adult working class. The adults must support the struggling young workers, since the interests of the working class youth are the interests of the proletariat as a whole, and since the economic problems of the working class are inseparable from those of the young workers. The Young Communist Leagues conduct their economic struggle through the organizations of the whole proletariat and, primarily, through the trade unions.

The trade unions are the mass organizations of the workers for the protection of their economic interests. The Young Communist Leagues advocate on principle the equality of young and adult workers in the trade unions and strive to induce the trade unions to defend the interests of the young workers. Each member of the Young Communist League must also be a member of his trade union. The Young Communist Leagues are, however, thoroughly conscious of the fact that only the revolutionary trade unions desire to, and can, represent the interests of the workers, young and old. They therefore oppose the reformist trade union bureaucracy, strive to revolutionize the trade unions, and support the Red International of Labour Unions.

#### *THE ANTI-MILITARIST STRUGGLE OF THE YOUNG COMMUNIST LEAGUES*

Militarism is an invariable and inevitable component of capitalism and is one of the most powerful instruments of its rule. The struggle against militarism is therefore the struggle against one of the mightiest tools of bourgeois class rule.



The young workers of the city and of the country are the first victims of militarism: they are the masses who are called upon to fill the ranks of its armies and to die on the battle fields. From their earliest youth militarism seeks to poison their minds and by ideological and organizational measures to bring them under its influence. It is therefore the primary task of the Young Communist Leagues to combat militarism relentlessly and to conduct an energetic anti-militarist propaganda among the masses of the young workers both inside and outside the army.

During the period of the world revolution bourgeois militarism fights more and more openly against the working class and becomes the instrument of white terror. Thus during this period the Young Communist Leagues and the Communist Parties should take even stronger and more radical action against militarism.

To the chauvinism of the imperialists, the petty bourgeois pacifists and the social democrats oppose their petty bourgeois pacifism. Pacifism, as such, is a hopeless Utopia. The bourgeoisie, fighting for the division of the world and trembling before the proletarian revolution, will never lay down their weapons until the workers have disarmed them. But what is worse, pacifism harms the proletariat. It does not alarm or disarm the bourgeoisie but it robs the proletariat of its weapons by illusions which surrender the fostering proletariat, psychologically and physically helpless, into the hands of its armed class enemy.

No less harmful to the working class are the methods of anti-militarist struggle advocated by the anarcho-syndicalist elements; individual refusals to serve, which, like every other independent individual action, keeps the revolutionary elements of the proletariat out of the army and thereby hinders the influencing by revolutionary propaganda of the workers in the army.

The communist understand that the armed rebellion of the proletariat against capitalism is necessary in the struggle for its emancipation. Only by the victory of its weapons will the proletariat be able to lead humanity to the creation of a society which being without classes no longer requires militarism; only by the creation of a red army and by the armed defence of the achievements of the revolution against the counter-revolutionary attempts of the bourgeoisie can this goal be attained. In its war against capitalism the proletariat must strive to enlighten the proletarian and semi-proletarian ele-

ments of the bourgeois army and win them to its side, to turn the weapons that were directed against the working class against the ruling class.

In this struggle the Young Communist Leagues and the Communist Parties are confronted with the special tasks of:—

Struggle against the psychological militarization of the young workers by the bourgeoisie;

Struggle against the military education of the working class youth as a preparation for army service;

Revolutionary work within the bourgeois armies, through nuclei in the regular standing armies, the colonial and occupation troops, in preparatory military institutions, and by propaganda against war, militarism, and the use of the army in the service of capitalism;

Struggle for the material interests and the right of organization of the soldiers;

Struggle for the annulment of the Treaty of Versailles and the other peace treaties which are the causes of new wars;

Struggle against imperialist wars by every means, including the general strike and armed uprisings, and the transformation of the imperialist war into a revolutionary civil war;

Struggle against and disarmament of the armed organizations of the bourgeoisie, which are especially created for the suppression of the proletariat, and against the military and nationalistic youth organizations which serve them as reserves;

Self-protection of the working class against reaction, and the arming of the workers for their struggle.

The Young Communist Leagues carry on a broad propaganda among the young workers, especially among those in the army, for the spread of these principles in opposition to bourgeois militarism.

### *THE EDUCATIONAL WORK OF THE YOUNG COMMUNIST LEAGUES*

The work of education and propaganda is an indispensable part of the whole activity of the Young Communist Leagues. By education, in this sense, is meant the communication to the young workers of the summed up experiences of the struggle, in order to make them conscious and determined fighters against capitalism and for the proletariat, for revolution and for the builders of a



new society. It thus becomes a counter-balance to and a fighting weapon against the exclusive influence of the bourgeoisie upon the young workers.

The first task of the Young Communist Leagues is the political enlightenment of their members and of the broad masses of the young workers. It instructs them in the laws of economic and social evolution, in history, in the forms and methods of the class war and the labor movement, in the political and economic situation of the working class, and in the tasks and aims of the proletarian revolution. Marxism—the theory of the proletariat—is our most important weapon in the struggle against capital, and our most perfect tool for the construction of the new society. Thus the Young Communist Leagues strive, primarily, to spread Marxian philosophy among their members and to accustom them to Marxian reasoning and ideas.

The Young Communist Leagues undertake, furthermore, the raising of the general cultural level of the young workers in the interest of the class war. The young workers must obtain from the bourgeoisie the knowledge which they need to organize the proletarian masses and to lead them to victory in the struggle against capitalism. In addition to political education and social science, upon which we concentrate our principal efforts, the Young Communist Leagues also do general educational work in the realms of natural science, literature, and art. In this work they not only bring to the young workers that education which the bourgeoisie now denies them, through their monopoly of the educational system, but they also oppose the Marxian view against the bourgeois ideology in all these fields. They occupy themselves with these things only to the extent to which they relate to the class struggle, and they use them to educate the proletariat in the spirit of the class struggle. This educational work is the preliminary basis for the creation of an intelligent vanguard of the working class, necessary for the struggle; an intelligent vanguard connected with the working class by ties of blood and of common interests; working for the establishment of socialism and destined to become the pioneers of a new proletarian culture.

The Young Communist Leagues do not disregard the physical education of the young workers, realizing the necessity of strong healthy bodies for the fulfilment of the tasks arising in the class struggle, as well as to counteract the dangerous effects of capi-

talist exploitation upon the physique of the youth and to combat the bourgeois athletic and sport monopoly.

The methods of the work of education and propaganda of the Young Communist Leagues are based upon the actual habits of the life of the young worker, his psychological peculiarities, and his independent initiative.

Nor is the educational work of the Leagues confined strictly to the youth; it comprises great educational tasks among the children. The influence of the bourgeoisie which is especially brought to bear upon the young children must be counteracted by a definitely communist education of the proletarian children. They must also be drawn into the class struggle, and in a manner that corresponds to their mental abilities. The Communist Children's Group is the form of organization which the Young Communist Leagues use in this work.

The Leagues also devote much attention to propaganda and agitation in the rural districts, having due regard to the importance of that work. The methods of this work are adapted to the special economic and cultural circumstances of the young rural workers. They are based upon the problems which lie nearest the hearts and lives of the young rural workers; they are adapted to the intellectual level of these young workers; and they give due consideration to their prejudices. The winning over of the rural proletariat can be achieved only by energetic and persistent work by the urban organizations of the Young Communist Leagues.

### *THE BASIS OF THE ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE*

The organizational structure of the Young Communist Leagues corresponds to their role and their tasks. The shop nuclei are the organs through which the Leagues remain in close contact with the masses of the working class youth, for agitation among them and for drawing them into the communist ranks. The Leagues insist upon strict discipline in the organization, and upon independent initiative, that is, upon the energetic participation of its members in all the work and struggles of the League. Leadership is based upon democratic centralization. The Young Communist Leagues are essentially organizations of the working class youth, but they strive to win over the best elements of the intellectuals and of the small peasantry, as well. Without creating any special organization for them, they



give place in their ranks to their most active elements and to those who are most devoted to the proletarian cause.

The Young Communist Leagues understand thoroughly that they live in an enemy world and that white terror may at any time force them underground. They make continual preparations, technically and ideologically, for such an eventuality. Even if forced underground by the persecutions of reaction they strive to maintain at all times and by all means, their contact with, and their influence over, the masses.

### *THE WORKING CLASS YOUTH OF THE COLONIAL COUNTRIES*

More than one half of the entire human race suffers under the yoke of imperialism in the colonial and semi-colonial countries. The exploitation of the backward peoples of Asia and Africa is one of the foundation stones of modern capitalist world economy. The national struggle for liberation of the oppressed colonial and semi-colonial countries is, therefore, a most important factor in the revolution against capitalism. The union of the revolutionary proletariat of the capitalist countries with the colored slaves of imperialism is one of the most important conditions of the victorious struggle. The increasing capitalist development of the largest colonial and semi-colonial countries has created the first condition for the division of classes—the working class on one hand and the bourgeois and feudal class on the other; the native laboring population has been aroused and the national revolutionary struggle becomes a struggle against the native feudalism and the native bourgeoisie.

The condition of the young workers in these countries is even worse than the condition of the youth in the ruling countries. The young workers of the colonies suffer under the double oppression of native and of foreign exploitation which still retains, in many cases, the old feudalistic and patriarchal forms. The widely spread system of petty industries and petty trade, fighting desperately for existence, is the cause of a savage exploitation of the youth such as the young worker of Europe and America has not known for a long time. The misery of the peasantry and the feudal backwardness of agriculture make the situation of the young worker in the rural districts even worse than that of his urban brother. To these may be added the extraordinary cultural backwardness and social enslave-

ment of the youth of those countries; the unbounded influence of the clergy, based upon the ignorance of the masses; the slavish conditions of women; and the patriarchal rights of the employer over his employees.

The young communists of the oppressed colonial countries face a double task:

(1) To organize a mass movement of the young workers under the banner of revolutionary liberation from the foreign imperialistic yoke; to establish an alliance with the proletariat of the capitalist countries; to fight for the economic, cultural, and political needs and demands of the youth.

(2) To create organizations of conscious young communist workers to lead the working class youth in the national revolutionary struggle and to prepare the class struggle for communism which is inevitable in those countries also, with the advent of the advancing world revolution. The organizational forms of the revolutionary youth movement in the colonial and semi-colonial countries are determined by the historical, economic, social and political conditions peculiar to each country.

The young communists of the capitalist countries, especially those countries which maintain a colonial policy of aggression, must fight for the liberation of the oppressed colonial peoples; against the racial prejudices of the workers in their own lands; and must support with energy the struggle of the young workers in the colonial countries.

### *THE WORKING CLASS YOUTH AND THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT*

The overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the establishment of the proletarian dictatorship changes radically the situation of the working class youth. The oppressed, enslaved, workers of capitalism become free citizens of the proletarian state. The proletarian dictatorship strives to improve, radically, the condition of the young workers, politically, economically, and culturally, and gradually accomplishes this task. The revolutionary youth organizations which are persecuted and oppressed by capitalism, receive the material and moral support of the Soviet state: they become active participants in the work of reconstruction of the proletarian state, and especially in regard to youth labor and education. The Young Communist Leagues are given every opportunity to become mass organizations



for the communist education of the working class youth, with due consideration to every sphere of the lives of the young workers. The purpose of this education during the period of the dictatorship is the training and equipping of the young proletariat to become workers and fighters in all the realms of struggle and of reconstruction.

The activity of the Young Communist Leagues changes with the altered class nature of the state. While they were a weapon for the overthrow of the bourgeois state under capitalism, they become a support of the Soviet power under the proletarian dictatorship. The Young Communist Leagues share actively in the establishment of the socialist state, the rebuilding of its industry, and the reformation of its agriculture. The struggle against bourgeois militarism is replaced by the joining of the red army or navy and by work to strengthen these organizations. The best forces of the Young Communist Leagues join the red army, after the conquest of power by the proletariat, and become soldiers, political workers, and red commanders. The Leagues realize their program of economic demands — the gradual socialist reorganization of juvenile labor — through the establishment of the proletarian state and with the aid of the trade unions, the class organizations of the proletariat. The Leagues assume the leadership in this work. The struggle against the bourgeois educational institutions and their mental chloroforming of the youth is replaced by active help given to the socialist state in the establishment of a uniform vocational school system; by the organization of schools for the young workers and apprentices; by the capture of the secondary and higher schools by the proletariat; and by the organization of popular education for the masses. The educational work of the Young Communist Leagues becomes wider and more profound: with the altered purpose of their communist educational work and their increased material and mental powers, new tasks arise on this field.

### *THE YOUNG COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL*

To be successful, the struggle of the proletariat for Communism must be internationally organized. The same thing is true of the working class youth. Therefore the Young Communist Leagues of all countries are united in the Young Communist International, the world organization of the revolutionary proletarian youth and their international leader and director.

The first International Union of Socialist Youth Organisations was formed in 1907, at the Stuttgart Congress. In spite of the attempts of the reformists and social patriots to break up this union, the overwhelming majority of its affiliated organizations proclaimed at the end of the war — the beginning of the revolutionary period — their adherence to the principles of the revolutionary class struggle and created the Young Communist International. This is in reality, then, the true successor of the International Union of Socialist Youth Organisations. The few socialist youth organizations which had never belonged to an international league, for reformist reasons, before the war; or which had broken away from the International Union during the war; or which were later created by the social democrats in opposition to the revolutionary youth organizations, formed the Young Workers' International and the International Working Union of Socialist Youth Organisations, in 1921. They thereby split the united front of the working class youth under the banner of revolution, and in 1923 they united into a single reformist organization, directed against the Young Communist International.

Unlike the social democratic internationals which are merely loose federations, the Young Communist International is built upon the principle of international centralization. Its decisions are the supreme laws for all national sections. The practical tasks of the Young Communist International are: International agitation, and the execution of international actions; leadership of the Young Communist Leagues in all their activities; support of the national sections in their work; organization of new Leagues; and the cultivation of the spirit of solidarity among the revolutionary youth of all countries.

The Young Communist International accepts the principles of the Communist International and forms one of its sections. The Executive Committee of the Young Communist International maintains close contact with the Executive Committee of the Communist International and is subjected to the latter's political leadership.

The Young Communist International has appointed the first Sunday in September as International Youth Day for the international celebration of the young workers, the day on which they manifest their will to fight for their demands until they have attained the final victory of their principles.

A new epoch in the history of the working class youth began with the foundation of the Young Communist International. Na-



tional boundaries and national divisions do not exist for the Young Communist International. It opposes capitalism in one single united front and its iron ring encircles the whole world. The Young Communist International creates the prerequisites for the emancipation of the working class youth from the unendurable political, economic, and cultural impositions of capitalism. Called upon as a part of the militant Communist International to accomplish this task, the Young Communist International will not lay down its arms until this work is done.

## RESOLUTION on the ECONOMIC DEMANDS OF THE PROGRAM OF THE YOUNG COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

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SINCE the Second World Congress issued its call to battle for the economic demands of the working class youth, the economic movement amongst the young workers has *grown considerably*. Increasing economic pressure is sowing the seeds of dissatisfaction in the ranks of the young workers and apprentices, and is giving them a great impetus in their economic struggle. Under the leadership and with the cooperation of the Young Communist Leagues a number of battles were fought. In these struggles the Leagues left the realm of theoretical propaganda and took up the struggle for practical demands. In spite of the different conditions in the various countries, *the basic and fundamental facts of the situation of the working class youth are the same everywhere*, and in all the struggles a need for *definite common aims* and for *joint economic action of the Young Communist Leagues* became evident. This was all the more necessary as, in the present stage of historical development, this fight must ever more and more assume an international character.

(2) The fundamental feature of the position of the working class youth in capitalist society (their inclusion in the process of production as fully developed workers and objects of exploitation under the system of wage slavery, and their deliberate exclusion from education) is the same in every country and demands the united application of the lever of our basic demands. The sweating methods prevailing today in the apprenticeship system, and the exclusion from vocational training of the overwhelming majority of the working class youth, due to the endeavors of capitalism to reduce the number of highly paid skilled workers and to compel still more workers to perform underpaid unskilled labor, are also international phenomena. In



some countries there is an attempt to veil these facts by a system of compulsory continuation school training. The obsolete conditions prevailing in such schools, which in most cases only serve to intensify the exploitation (by the extension of working hours, by causing extra expenses, etc.) call for an energetic struggle for a number of measures towards their systematic and thorough revision. The fact, furthermore, that the young workers, performing the labor of adult workers, receive lower wages than the latter—wages which hardly suffice to sustain life,—and still more, the miserable wages of the apprentices and the discrimination in the treatment of young as against adult workers in the matter of unemployment benefits—all these facts necessitate the establishment of immediate and concrete demands on the wage system of juvenile labor. The long working hours which menace the physical and mental well-being of the young workers, the night work, the lack of recreation and holidays, lead the working class youth of all countries to set up definite demands. The present hygienic conditions under which the youth is working are horrible; child labor is still being employed. The agricultural young workers are subject to particular exploitation. In spite of the varying local conditions, the miserable situation of the working class youth is the same everywhere in the capitalist world. From this fact arises the necessity of setting up economic demands of an international character and of combining them into an *international program of demands*.

(3) The working class youth has previously had an international economic program, "Demands for the Economic Protection of the Youth", adopted at the first congress of the Young International at *Stuttgart*, in 1907. Although the fundamental basis of this program is still the property of the working class youth, it can no more be considered as the basis of the economic struggle of the Y.C.I. and must be revised and amended. This program does not give attention to the all-important question of wages of the young workers, nor does it demand the radical transformation of the system of education and vocational training, but contents itself with reformist demands for the improvement of the present system of apprenticeship. Furthermore, the age limit for shorter working hours must be extended, and the problem of holidays, which is omitted in the old program, must be dealt with. Above all, however, the *Stuttgart* minimum program is *a program of demands for reforms to be carried into practice within the bounds*

*of capitalist society by means of reformist methods*. It lacks those elements which go beyond the limit of capitalist society and which serve to break it down, and which can be fully realized only after the overthrow of capitalism. Its avowed purpose is to "eliminate the worst instances of exploitation which prevent its victims even from participation in the struggle against the present economic system". The *militant program* of the Young Communist International, however, cannot respect the exigencies of the capitalist economic system nor be merely a means to eliminate the worst instances of the exploitation of the working class youth. It must become an instrument for the elimination of all exploitation and must proclaim the ultimate and fundamental aim of the economic struggle of the young workers: the complete transformation of the conditions of juvenile labor, and its socialist reorganization.

Therefore, the Young Communist International, the leader of the class conscious working class youth, has elaborated a *new program of economic demands* of the young workers which it herewith submits to the great mass of the oppressed and exploited young proletariat and to the entire working class.

The basis and aim of our program is the

#### SOCIALIST REORGANIZATION OF JUVENILE LABOR

This means

ABOLITION OF WAGE SLAVERY FOR ALL YOUNG WORKERS UP TO 18 YEARS, WHO MUST BE CARED FOR BY THE STATE AND TREATED FROM AN EDUCATIONAL POINT OF VIEW UNTIL THEY HAVE ATTAINED THIS AGE.

*Our partial demands* for all young workers of both sexes up to 18 years (relentless opposition to all child labor is a matter of course) are the following:

Minimum wages ranging from the subsistence minimum upwards. Equal wages for equal work for young and adult workers of both sexes. Progressive grading of apprentices' wages during the course of apprenticeship.

If the six hour day is established, wages are to be paid for eight hours.

Wages of all young workers to be determined by trade union agreements.



Six hour working day with the inclusion of, and full pay for, continuation school hours.

Forty-four hour week-end rest.

Strict prohibition of night work for all young workers up to 20 years.

Prohibition of piece work and the speeding up system.

Fully paid four weeks' annual vacation. Free accommodation of young workers in recreation homes, sanatoriums, etc.

Prohibition of young workers up to 20 years being employed in shops and industries injurious to their health (glass works, underground work in the mines, certain branches of the chemical industry, etc.).

Equal unemployment doles for young and adult workers; unemployment doles ranging from the subsistence minimum upwards.

Compulsory employment of the unemployed youth either in shops or training schools which guarantee continuation of training for the young workers who have been compelled to interrupt their apprenticeship.

Regarding *technical training and the apprenticeship system* our demands are as follows:

Compulsory free and complete trade education for all young workers up to 18 years.

Technical training to be based on practical work and regulated according to the principles of the work-shop schools (factories, etc.). The basis for this is the establishment of special apprentices' departments in the factories.

Establishment of common training shops for a number of home and petty industries, in which part of the working hours are to be spent.

Abolition of individual indentures, and the inclusion of the apprentices in all collective agreements.

Abolition of apprentices' sweating by strict regulations regarding the right to employ apprentices (maximum number of apprentices in proportion to a definite number of workers, severe punishment for mistreatment and for offences against working hours and protective legislation).

Two years apprenticeship, including the probation period, which is quite sufficient in consideration the present capitalist character of work.

Prohibition to occupy apprentices with work not belonging to their trade.

Prohibition of the "living in" system.

Strict supervision of apprenticeship by the organs of the working class (trade unions, shop councils).

Labor organizations and their representatives to have a voice in the supervision of the training shops and trade schools. Apprentices (pupils) to elect councils for the same purpose.

For the establishment of a militant front with the *adult working class*, the Y.C.I. has formulated the following demands:

Young workers to have full rights on all shop councils

Young workers to be accepted on equal terms into the trade unions, but to pay lower dues.

(4) These demands of the Young Communist International require of the capitalist system a complete change of the present *wage system* for the young workers. The determination of the wages of the young workers, as well as of the apprentices, must not be left to the arbitrary decision of the rapacious employer, but must be done by collective contracts of the trade unions. Under no circumstances can we further tolerate that the wages of the young workers not even suffice for their bare necessities of life; the minimum of subsistence must constitute the basis for the minimum wage of the young workers. The disgraceful custom, fatal to the entire proletariat, of paying to young workers who do the work of adults, lower wages than to the latter, thus causing continuous competition between young and adult workers, must be abolished. Equal wages for equal work! The intensified exploitation of the proletarian girl must cease. The demand for equal wages for equal labor applies to her as well as to the young male workers. The six hour day, once established, must not be of disadvantage for the young workers; they must receive wages for an eight hour day. As long as capitalist apprenticeship continues to exist as a feature of juvenile wage-slavery, and as long as the socialist reorganization of youth labor and the care for the welfare of the young workers is not yet brought about, the apprentices must receive increases in wages corresponding to the skill acquired, i. e. graded increases in wages corresponding to the respective wages of the skilled workers. With regard to the present shameful wage system, the fact must be mentioned, that in most countries unemployed young



workers and apprentices receive, at best, much lower unemployment doles than the adult workers, and in most cases none at all. The young workers, however, must not only sustain life just as the adult workers must, but they are exposed much more to the dangers of misery and often lose the possibility of learning a trade. From these facts results the imperative necessity for the demands of the Y.C.I. for equal unemployment doles for young and adult workers and for the establishment of training shops for the former.

The *six hour day* for young workers was also a demand of the Stuttgart program and, under the pressure of the young workers, even the antagonist Internationals of Youth had to include this demand in their programs. Considering the critical and early stage of development of the youth and their need for mental education and physical training, no one will today deny the imperative necessity of the six hour day. Furthermore, the prohibition of *night work* for all youths up to this age and of their employment in shops and industries injurious to their health, is a matter of course for the working class which does not want its youth to be destroyed in the bloom of its years. We strive for a physically and mentally younger generation; every young worker must receive sufficient *holidays* and good care during these holidays, as well as sufficient week-end rest.

The Y.C.I. furthermore, advocates a number of demands for the transformation of the present *apprenticeship system* and for *trade education for all young workers*, which capitalism has made the expensive privilege of a few. This compulsory trade education is not to have the character of the present bourgeois apprenticeship and continuation schools where the pupils are exploited and receive no real training in their trade but these schools must provide practical training based on the principles of the workshop school and excluding all exploitation. Although this demand can be realized only under the rule of the working class, it must, nevertheless, be raised even today. The basis of this education must be the apprentices' department in every industry, which is to be completed by the workshop schools. By the abolition of individual indentures and through strict control by the organizations of the working class, apprenticeship must be wrested from the control of capital and regulated by the collective agreements of the trade unions. The exploitation of juvenile labor in apprenticeship, the sweating of apprentices, the claim of the rights of the employer, must be ruthlessly fought, and the apprentice who per-

forms the labor of a worker must have the status and the rights of a worker. If, for purposes of exploitation, the training of apprentices in industrial enterprises is entrusted to a worker in the general shop or takes place in piece work squads, this state of affairs must be radically changed. Special apprentices' departments equipped with all modern conveniences for training must be established in all factories and must provide the principal part of education. Under capitalism these apprentices' departments must be strictly controlled by the working class in order to prevent the numerous abuses by the capitalists.

The small medieval workshop, whose hour of doom has struck, cannot be the sole place of modern technical education, for today the chief object is to train *useful workers for industry*. The establishment of collective training shops for a number of home and petty industries in which apprentices devote part of their time to technical education is a necessity, as long as the apprenticeship system continues to exist in handicraft. The form of these depends upon the practical possibilities: either apprentices' departments in great industrial enterprises or practice in continuation schools. Under the slogan of socialist reorganization of juvenile labor the Young Communist International demands the education of all young workers up to 18 years. But this extensive education which can only be realized in a socialist society, has nothing whatsoever to do with the technical training under a specialized capitalist system. For every apprenticeship, lasting longer than two years, capitalist greed is the only motive. Hence, the Y.C.I., now as before, demands of the capitalist system the old Stuttgart demand: A two years maximum for all apprentices—which is today more justified than ever since the division and specialization of labor has advanced considerably in the course of the fifteen years since the Stuttgart congress.

(5) *What is the essence of our partial demands and their relation to our revolutionary struggle?* Above all they can be judged only as *part of the whole*, of our entire militant activities, and of which they constitute an *inseparable part*. Hence, if we formulate a *program of partial demands*, we do so with a view to our ultimate goal: *the proletarian revolution and the establishment of a socialist society*. All our propaganda and all our work is governed by the *knowledge that capitalism is incapable of granting a decided im-*



*provement in the situation of the proletariat—and in the organization of juvenile labor.*

Our partial demands are those which the working class must formulate to keep intact the life and health of its youth, who must be strengthened both physically and mentally for the class struggle and must be made valuable assets of the proletarian state that is to be. When preparing such demands, the working class cannot follow the example of the Social-Democrats and consider whether or not such demands may be adjusted to the interests of capitalist economy. *Only the degree of pauperization which the proletariat can endure and yet retain its fighting qualities, can determine our actions, not the needs and the exigencies of capitalist society.* On the contrary—in the hands of the communists these partial demands become a *lever of action* with which to bring about revolutionary movements and to undermine the power capitalism. This can be accomplished all the sooner since the minimum demands for the workers' standard of living which were commonly acknowledged before the war, are *today* no longer being realized in the period of the decline of capitalism, and will lead to bitter struggles between the working class and capital. While the Y.C.I. is thus fighting for a decisive improvement in the economic situation of the working class youth, it subordinates this struggle to the interests of the general revolutionary struggle of the working class.

The realization of the most modest demands can today be achieved only by bringing into *play the economic and political power of labor*, i. e., by means of the *revolutionary struggle*. A clear recognition of this fact, which finds its expression in the communist policy in parliaments and municipal councils, distinguishes the economic struggle of the communist organizations from the reformist policy of the Social-Democrats who, driven by the fear of the necessity for a revolutionary struggle, have sacrificed the most elementary and vital demands of the working class to the capitalist dictatorship; who have carefully refrained from calling upon the masses and who discriminate between "economic" problems and political struggles. This is a very serious mistake which the social democrats share with the "pure" syndicalists.

The more determined the struggle becomes which the masses make for their demands, the greater will be the resistance of capital. The determination to struggle will increase in the masses and they

will learn to look with confidence upon the communist organizations while, on the other hand, they will have the practical experience of the shallowness of the social democratic policy. The Communist Party or the Young Communist League will fight on the side of the masses, showing them by clear and cutting criticism, the connections between the various problems, the reasons for their successes and their defeats, and the significance of their struggle. To the degree in which struggles for partial demands mobilize ever greater masses of workers (and it is the task of the communist organizations to *extend, intensify and combine* such struggles under concrete slogans); to the degree in which, in this struggle, the needs of the proletarian masses are opposed to the needs of capitalist society—in that degree will the *working class realize that if it wants to live, capitalist society must perish. This knowledge is the basis of the determination for the struggle for the proletarian dictatorship.*

Thus the struggle for the economic partial demands becomes the training school for the broad masses of the working class youth which are still apathetic or muddled.



RESOLUTION  
on the  
PROGRAM

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THE Third Congress of the Y.C.I. resolves:

- (1) To adopt as a basis the new draft of the program proposed by the E.C. of the Y.C.I.
- (2) To instruct the next Bureau Session to decide upon the program in its definite and final form.
- (3) To carry on a thorough discussion regarding the program in the Leagues.
- (4) To instruct the E.C. to publish the Berlin Program and the draft for the new program in the more important languages.