

THE COMMUNIST YOUTH

The Communist International for Juvenile Labor.

** While reformist trade-unions and social-democratic parties keep the young workers aloof from the class struggle and wage no serious campaign for their vital interests, the Communist International has again made good its claim that it stands for the interests of the *entire* working class. Revolutionary labor cannot calmly look on while capitalism in its death agonies destroys and pushes into the abyss of degradation the live forces of production, the source of labor's future—the young generation of the working class. Nor can it permit of capitalism using cheap juvenile labor as a means with which to oppress the adult workers. The session of the Enlarged Executive of the Communist International therefore decided, upon the motion of the Young Communist International, to demand of the other international labor organizations that they take up the fight for the vital demands of the working youth together with their other pressing demands and to request that the youth be assigned a special point on the agenda of the international conference.

In January representatives of the Amsterdam, Right Socialist and the Viennese Centrist Internationals of Youth assembled in Leipzig in order to consider the question of unity. At this unity conference of which the masses of young workers and the members of the Centrist International of Youth only learned afterwards, no word was said about the necessary struggle for the most important economic demands of the young workers which juvenile labor in all countries is determined to wage. Of even greater importance is the fact that at their joint conference neither of the two organisations mentioned the question of the necessary cooperation with the Young Communist International whose ranks contain the overwhelming majority of all the organized young workers of the world.

We publish below the motion of the Y.C.I. and the resolution adopted at the session of the Enlarged Executive of the Communist International.

To the Executive Committee of the Communist International!
To the Executive Bureau of the Red Trade Union International.

Dear Comrades!

The Vienna Second-and-a-Half International has called an international conference of all labor parties which is to con-

sider the problem of the struggle of the proletariat against the capitalist offensive.

The Young Communist International, thinks it its duty to point out the perilous situation of the younger generation of the proletariat. Juvenile labor is the physically weakest section of the working class. Hence it is but natural that the world-wide offensive of capital (wage reductions, lengthening of working hours, etc.) and the industrial crises with their widespread unemployment should hit the young workers hardest. Both *the physical and mental development of the growing up generation are gravely imperilled.*

The defense of the working youth against pauperization must, in our opinion, become the slogan of the entire working class and especially of its parties and trade-unions. This struggle is part of the general fight of the proletariat against the offensive of capitalism, a section of tremendous significance for the entire working class. First because the capitalists are endeavoring to exploit juvenile labor which is more docile and cheaper, in their attempts at defeating the demands of the adult workers. Juvenile labor is principally used for the victimizing of adult workers which is of special danger in periods of unemployment, when the supply on the labour market far exceeds the demand. Secondly, because the problem of the young workers is the problem of the immediate future of the entire proletariat, of the development the struggle of emancipation and its victory thereon.

Hence, the Young Communist International holds that the united front of all proletarians, of all parties and organisations in their struggle against must simultaneously be a united front of juvenile and adult labor. Just as the working class with regard to its present and future must be interested in saving its younger generation from pauperization, juvenile labor understands that its situation can only be improved by means of the struggle of the entire proletariat against capitalism. Juvenile labor is flesh of the flesh and blood of the blood of the proletariat, and must as such participate in the united struggle of the proletarian masses against capitalism. Adult labor will find the young workers to be true and active allies in the common struggle.

Up until now the organizations of adult labor have unfortunately not paid sufficient attention to the young workers, their unbearable condition, their demands resulting from their situation in the process of production and from both the physical and the mental characteristics of their age. On the other hand, however, the broad masses of young workers have so far not participated sufficiently in the struggle of the proletariat. On the basis of these facts the Executive Committee of the Young Communist International requests that you consider the following proposals and effect their acceptance on the part of other proletarian organisations.

I. That a point—"struggle against the degradation of juvenile labor"—be put on the agenda of the coming conference.

II. That representatives of the international organizations of juvenile labor be admitted to the conference on an equal footing with the other participating organizations. (Young Communist International, International Federation of Socialist Youth Organisations, and the Young Workers' International.) Juvenile labor must have a voice in deciding the fate of the proletariat, of which it is a part, and in deciding its own fate.

With fraternal Communist greetings
The E. C. of the Y. C. I.

Resolution of the Executive Committee of the Comintern on the

Struggle against the Pauperisation of the Working Youth.

The delegates to the session of the Enlarged Executive of the Communist International have taken due cognizance of the report of the Young Communist International emphasising the extremely serious condition of juvenile labor which is being aggravated by the world crisis and the international aggression of capital.

Both the Communist International and the Red Trade Union International are fully conscious of the great importance of the situation of the youth as well as its active participation in the fight of the proletariat for its emancipation. The Communist International and the Red Trade Union International declare their solidarity with the attitude of the Young Communist International and wish to stress the necessity for enrolling the young workers in labor's united front against the capitalist offensive. Therefore both the Communist International and the Red Trade Unions International endorse the proposal of the Executive Committee of the Young Communist International.

The question of the situation of the working youth must be discussed at the first conference called to meet the employers' offensive, because that offensive seriously threatens not only the

present generation of workers, but also constitutes—reacting, as it does, upon the situation of the juvenile labor—a peril for the future generations of the working class. Hence we propose that the fight against the pauperization of the working youth be made a special point on the agenda. The organizations of the world's proletariat are face to face with a number of urgent questions concerning the working youth, which must be solved at all costs

1—in order to defeat capital's attempts at making the cheap labor of minors a weapon with which to victimize adult labor;

2—to save the growing-up generation of the working class from going under in the morass of both physical and mental misery.

The Communist International and the Red Trade Union International call upon all youth organisations, labor parties and trade-unions thoroughly to discuss these proposals and demands and to give them publicity in their papers and meetings.

Following is the list of demands of especial importance in the defensive fight against the offensive of capital:—

I.

General Demands for Minors up to 18 Years of Age.

1. Minimum wages, corresponding to the minimum cost of living.
2. Fight against the violation of the eight-hour day, against trade education after working hours and for the establishment of the six-hour day for minors.
3. Provision for the young unemployed.
4. Establishment of educational shops for the young unemployed.
5. 44 hours week-end rest.
6. Four weeks' annual vacation with pay.
7. Prohibition of night and Sunday work.
8. Abolition of the work of minors in trades and factories which are injurious to their health. (Certain branches of the chemical industry, underground work in mines, etc.)

II.

For Apprentices.

1. Limitation of the number of apprentices.
2. Abolition of individual indentures; apprentices to be included in collective agreements.
3. Control of the employment of apprentices by the trade-unions and the shop councils.