

# Highlights of Sixth Y.C.I. Plenum By Herbert Zam

From the Fifth to the Sixth Plenums, etc.

AT the Fifth Enlarged Plenum of the Young Communist International, a very thorough analysis was made of the position of the Y. C. I. and of its various sections. A balance sheet was drawn up; the relations of the leagues to the masses of the young workers, the internal activity of the leagues, their methods of work—these questions were discussed and the general conclusion reached was that the leagues had been far too narrow in their activity, they had not established sufficient contact with the non party youth thru intermediate organizations, thru activity on the basis of the immediate interests of the young workers, and last, but not least, the inner life of the leagues was not made sufficiently attractive for the young workers. We had the phenomenon in practically all countries that, whereas the political influence and prestige of the leagues had increased tremendously, the growth in membership did not keep pace with this political development, and that the turn over in membership was very large. The remedy for this situation laid down by the Fifth Plenum was: We must cease regarding the so-called non political organizations of the working youth as our enemies, and must consciously endeavor to win them for us; these include trade union youth sections, sport and cultural organizations, etc. We must, when the circumstances permit, create special organizations "for the winning and leading of the non party youth"; we must make our work so concrete as to tie it up with the actual needs of the young workers at the particular moment; we must be highly flexible in our tactics, and each league must endeavor to adapt itself to the peculiar conditions within its own country. And last, but not least, it is necessary to enrich the inner life of the league, to add more attractive features, to pay greater attention toward satisfying the cultural needs of the young workers within our organization, as a means to overcoming the poor recruiting power of the leagues and the high turnover of membership.

At the same time, the objective analysis of the situation showed that there was a definite leftward tendency among large masses of the young workers which expressed itself in youth delegations to the Soviet Union, the formation of opposition movements within the Social Democratic and bourgeois youth organizations,

The question at this Plenum, of the Sixth Plenum was, therefore, to what extent had the decisions of the previous plenum been carried out. To what extent had the International profited from the leftward movement among the young workers?

## Strengthening of Y. C. I.

THE progress of the Y. C. I. in the period between the two conventions was evidenced first of all by the growth in membership of approximately 13,000, (excluding the Russian League) that this growth was greatest in England and China, the countries of intensest class struggle, was only another indication that the Y. C. I. is the only organization that can actually lead the young workers in a real struggle against the capitalist system. In China, where the struggle against the imperialist powers had already assumed the form of open warfare, the Young Communist League was the leader of the entire youth. The Y. M. C. A. which had been the greatest and most powerful opponent of the Y. C. I., the agent of the foreign imperialists among the youth, was not only rapidly losing all hold upon the Chinese youth, but was being driven out of the country by the revolutionary action of the Chinese young workers and students. Practically all other youth organizations, the organizations of the student youth, the peasant youth and the young workers in the trade unions had placed themselves under the leadership of the Young Communist League of China. International Youth Day was officially celebrated by the government and the entire people wherever the Nationalist armies had conquered.

In England, during the general strike, the Young Communist League was the only youth organization that did not go out of existence. It took a leading part in pulling the young workers and apprentices out on strike, many times against the direct orders of the trade union bureaucrats, and at all times without any aid or encouragement from them. It initiated a movement for the unionization of the young workers which has met with the support of the entire organized labor movement. It organized a youth delegation to the Soviet Union representing thousands of young workers. It took up the fight for the rights of the young workers to receive unemployment benefits, organizing demonstrations and marches on the Boards of Guardians in which

thousands of young workers participated. The reward to the British League was the doubling of its membership in the period of the general strike, and the tremendous increase in its influence.

These facts were brought out in the special reports given by the representatives of the Young Communist Leagues of China and Great Britain. There were also special reports by the representatives of the German and Russian Leagues. These are the four most important sections of the Young Communist International at the present time, and it is in the examination of the activities of these sections that it can best be judged as to whether or not the decisions of the previous plenum were bringing fruit or not. The German League also reported a small increase in membership, which was very significant, as previously, the membership had been on the decline. The reorganization crisis had been overcome, and now the league was proceeding systematically in the organization of shop nuclei in the largest factories. Following the advice of the Y. C. I., the league had built up a defense organization against the militarist organizations which already had over 20,000 members, only a small percentage being members of the Y. C. I. On a local scale, united fronts with the Socialist youth had been made and a number of unity committees had been set up to broaden these united fronts. In some cases these unity committees even included representatives of religious youth organizations which were rebelling against their priestly leaders. To cap all these activities, a congress of the toiling youth of Germany was held at which over a hundred thousand young workers were represented. The entire league was united behind the the central committee of the German Party in its fight against the ultra left opposition.

The report of the Leninist Young Communist League of the Soviet Union was listened to with special interest. The Y. C. I. S. U. is the largest single youth organization that has ever existed; its membership is now already over two million and growing at the rate of 3,000 every day. It contains within its ranks a majority of the working youth and large masses of the peasant youth. It is the direct defender of the interests of the working and peasant youth, not only in its insistence on the carrying out of the regulations regarding the

youth, but in the initiation of plans and arrangements to better the conditions and raise the standards of the working youth, economically and culturally. The members of the Y. C. I. S. U. realize the important role that their organization plays on an international scale. During the general and miners' strike in Great Britain, they raised thousands of dollars for the support of the strikers, contributing a regular share of their wages every month. The Y. C. I. S. U. plays a leading role in the work of the Y. C. I., and its advice and suggestions are gladly accepted by all members of the International.

In these four reports it was seen that the Young Communist International is making progress. This was also emphasized in the report of the Executive Committee, given by Comrade Lomiazse, which I shall discuss later.

At this plenum, the American League was drawn still closer as an organic member of the Y. C. I. Previously, the American League had only participated in the work of the Y. C. I. by having representatives at congresses and plenums. This situation is now changed. With the return of the first representative we have had there, Comrade Darcy will go to act as permanent representative. In the election of the executive committee, America was given bigger representation than at any time before. It now has three members on the executive committee, Comrades Williamson, Darcy and Zam, whereas in the past it has never had more than one. During the time that Comrade Zam was the representative, he was a member of the presidium, for the first time that America has had representation on this body. Comrade Darcy is the first candidate to the presidium. The American league also had a representative on the presidium of the plenum in the person of Comrade Zam. All these are but manifestations of the close relations which are now being established between the American league and our International leadership. The American league will receive continuous attention and aid from the Y. C. I. and thus will be able to conduct its work much better than in the past.

(To be continued.)

*Subscribe!*