

SATURDAY NIGHT FEVER EXPOSÉ

RCYB ATTACKS YOUTH FOR BEING YOUTH

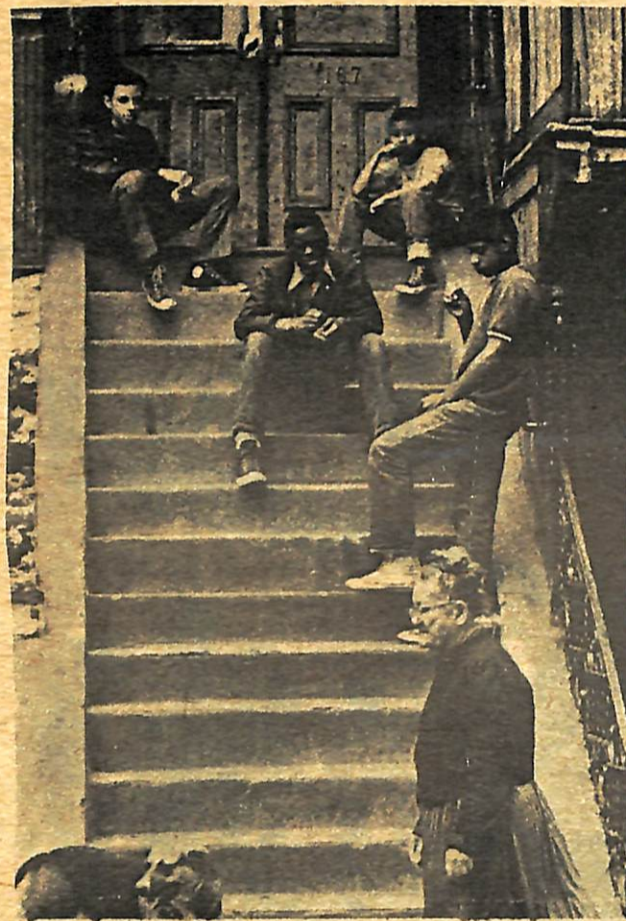


Last month the Young Communist reviewed the hit movie Saturday Night Fever. Since then a plethora of reviews have filled the pages of the "left" press with headlines like "Saturday Night-Racism", "Saturday Night-Poison", and "Saturday Night-A Movie that Lies About Workers." All are similar in one respect, they are one sided denunciations of the movie. All stand in contrast with the review of the YC. We described the movie as a fairly accurate picture of the lives of many youth in this country today, although, as we pointed out, in attempting to offer a road forward the movie, "missed the boat," and offers instead a future that "isn't much." The future it does offer is one of leaving the neighborhood, the working class, and hoping against hope to make it into the glitter world of Manhattan offices. At least one of the newspapers admitted to being besieged by letters from their readers denouncing their review for sectarianism, and as a result, made a half-hearted attempt to correct their errors. We were particularly intrigued, but later amused, to read the review in the pages of the "Revolutionary Communist Youth", newspaper of the forlorn and quickly forgotten, former members of the RSB. The review in and of itself could be quickly dismissed for its literary value as well as its attempt to apply Marxism to culture. But it is worth answering because it is as revealing about their approach to building a youth movement as it is an insipid attempt to speak to culture.

Very briefly, the RCY review describes Saturday Night Fever as a twisted view of what youth are like today and a "complete distortion of what youth today are all about and what their situation is." These sweeping attacks caused us to wonder what conditions of youth these "organizers" were aware of that we had missed. Unfortunately, we were let down. The first scene in the movie that is attacked is the dinner scene, where the family breaks out into a fight and ends up slapping each other. According to the RCY the overall idea you get from it is that this working class family is as dumb as can be, and nobody cares about anybody but themselves. This may not reflect the lives of Summerhill rejects brought up in the hills of Berkeley but it is in fact an accurate portrayal of many families. The yelling and slapping is caused by the fact that the parents do care about their children. In fact, they are upset because their eldest son has left the church and that for them is synonymous with ruining ones life as well as turning ones back on important values. Religion does influence the working class. Added to this is the fact that the father after 24 years of work has been

laid off and feels guilty about not providing sufficiently for his family. These are real social pressures, that affect real families. The stress reflects not dumbness and selfishness, but love and real frustrations at not being able to solve real problems.

The one other paragraph devoted to "exposing" this "insulting" movie is spent deriding Tony's friends. It describes how the boys jump into the backseat of a car with girls. This may take the RCYB by moral ambush, but it does in fact happen, and is a part of the lives of youth. Then there is the guy who translates his anger at the world into anger at Puerto Ricans. A way out? Certainly not. A correct analysis of who the enemy is? Never. But it is certainly a spontaneous tendency amongst the masses of youth in a society where the nationalities are divided and white chauvinism is promoted by the capitalists. Perhaps the most amusing line in the review is the RCYB's attempt to turn a confused kid, bent out and overwhelmed by personal contradictions, into an intellectual, because "he thinks about things a lot." The RCYB's zeal to find intellectual youth brings them to unite with the weakest character in the movie. If this is the RCYB's idea of an intellectual it is not surprising that their paper is as shallow as it is. The most important strength of the movie the RCYB in their frenzied subjectivism has missed entirely. That is that the movie tries to capture the contradictory ideas that exist among youth as they try to make sense of the world. So while they fight



Puerto Ricans and call them spics, when Tony sees racism lead to a Puerto Rican couple being denied the dance prize they deserve, Tony rebels against the hypocrisy. While girls are viewed as simply "good for sex" when one girl is attacked, Tony defends her. And while the disco scene is promoted, time and again it is clear that the kids are not satisfied and are trying to define their future. In the guise of attacking the solution the movie puts forward, the RCYB ends up attacking youth for not having figured out that capitalism can't offer a solution. They gripe about kids looking for skills or going to Manhattan as a way out of the frustration and misery they see in their parents' lives. But griping won't change the fact that today, leaving the working class for many youth has become synonymous with finding something better. And while we agree this is no answer, RCYB misses the boat entirely on this one too. It is precisely these aspirations and dreams of a better world that today cause youth to ask questions and fight for changes. And it is on this basis that the opportunity to unite and lead youth to understand and change the world arises. The RCYB's contempt, and their satisfaction at standing on the sidelines preaching and reprimanding youth for their backward ideas will only mean they will be left behind in the struggle to win youth to stand with the working class to fight for revolution - the only real road forward towards the bright future they desire.

In fact the movie more accurately reflects the fact that life is full of contradictions for youth than the RCYB review does. These contradictions lead to discussion, as shown in the movie, to thinking, shown in the movie, and to frustration and anger, also shown in the movie. Many times this frustration and anger, when led, turns into rebellion and millions of youth going up against authority. But that is not the case today in the Bay Ridge of the movie, or more generally throughout the country, despite the RCYB's ravings that it is.

Why do they have to distort the movie as well as the lives of youth? Simple - their line on how to organize youth does not proceed from the way things actually are, but rather from some fantasy that exists only in their minds. A fantasy that says the vast majority of youth are already "communist", just waiting for the RCYB to show them to the barricades. Which brings us to the heart of the matter. Last month, an article in the Young Communist went into a number of the differences between the RSB and those who split and now belligerently call themselves the RCYB. Those differences revolved around the nature of the organization, how to organize students and youth, as well as the name of the organization.

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WHY IS THIS MAN CRYING?



Above, Shah of Iran breaks into tears upon hearing of growing Iranian student protests against his rotten regime, as reported in THE YOUNG COMMUNIST.

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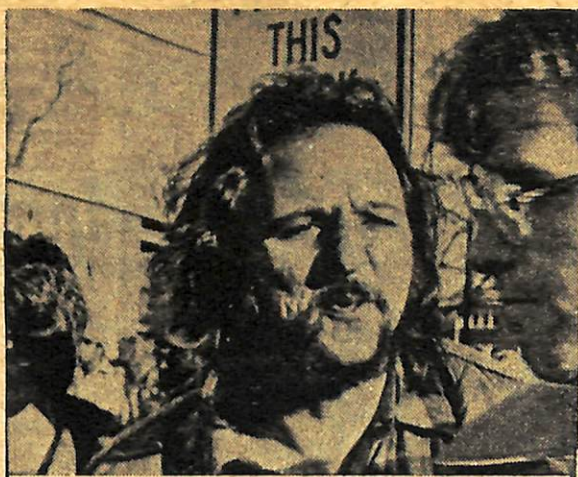
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Basically the RSB struggled against an attempt to turn our organization into one of many "theoretical sects" that make general pronouncements but fail to link Marxism with the actual battles of the people. It was a struggle to maintain the mass character of the organization, so that youth could come around the RSB off of either one particular or a more general discontent with capitalism and through working with and in the Brigade come to see the underlying social laws in operation and how only revolution and socialism provided any fundamental answer to the problems of the people. Failing to take up those battles or even adopting a name that would make it more difficult for newly involved youth to participate in the life of the organization, would quickly condemn us to being a secret society rather than a mass communist youth organization.

In direct opposition to this, the RCYB insisted that "communism be in the name of our organization." Sometimes it was argued that communism would shock people and they say that would be a good thing. Other times they would say that it was no more controversial than wearing a beret, so what's the problem? Alas, what the review reflects, is that the second point won out. The Bay Area declaration that there "is no anti-communism" has become the leading opinion in the RCYB. We knew then that when ones political outlook fails to be in accordance with the world, one must either dream up a new world or rationalize the failure to make the expected gains. The RCYB has opted at least to dream up a new world, if not both. That is what is reflected in the movie review. In the dream world of the RCYB there is no racism, there is no religion, there are no contradictions in the families, and even sex has been banned! Instead, today's youth are "rebellious, ready to go up against the authorities and bust things loose so that there can be some real changes." And therefore, they will flock to the RCYB.

But the problem with railing to take the world as it is, is that it prevents communists from leading people to change it. The RCYB's fantasies will prevent them from actually



RCYB HAS NOTHING BUT CONTEMPT FOR YOUTH. WELL THE FEELING IS MUTUAL!

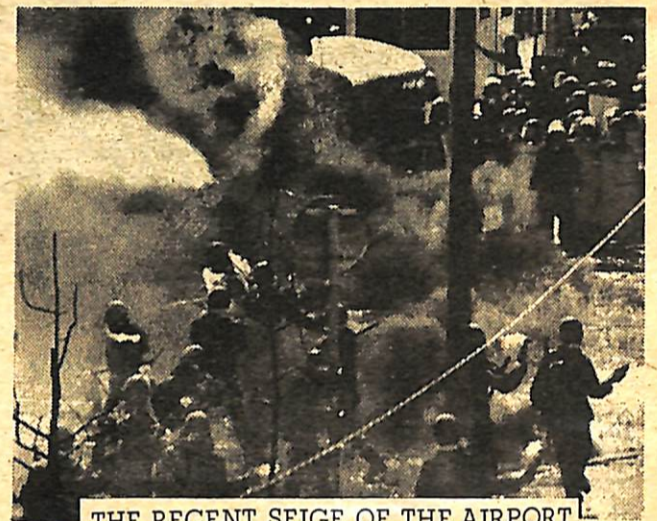
uniting with youth. It is bad enough to declare the characters in Saturday Night Fever "backward" in their newspaper, but they will confront infinitely greater problems when they (if ever) hit the streets and have to actually rap with youth. Potential communists will be written off as backward. The real questions and stumbling blocks that hold youth back from becoming revolutionaries will not be spoken to. In its left form it will lead to sectarianism and when it flips over it will deny the actual role and importance of communists in the struggle since youth are already "revolutionary." The point being that for the RCYB, as is the case for all lunatics, self-constructed dream worlds can have a temporary allure, but living in fantasy demands living in isolation. Mao described the RCYB when he said, "With this attitude, a person does not make a systematic and thorough study of the environment, but works by sheer subjective enthusiasm and has a blurred picture of the face of China today. With this attitude he chops up history, knows only ancient Greece but not China, and is in a fog about the China of yesterday and the day before yesterday. With this attitude a person studies Marxist-Leninist theory for theory's sake. He does not shoot the arrow at the target but at random."

The errors Mao identified are increasingly being adopted as the principles of unity of the RCYB. But, the RSB, as well as many other students, reject this claptrap. Many students who are newly arriving at Marxism at Kent State, at the University of Chicago, in Iowa

and New Jersey, are trying to figure out how to take up Marxism in a way that leads not to divorcement from the people, but to better be able to lead the people in battle against the rulers. This is an important process. It involves simultaneously gaining a deeper understanding of Marxism and also gaining a better understanding of the forces at play in the U.S., on the campuses, in the unions and communities, the opinions of the people, and the contradictions at play in the economy and the government, etc. This is the continuing task of FUSING rather than severing Marxism from the struggle of the people. This is an important task the RSB is increasingly taking up and calls on all students to join us.

Let the RCYB be content with fusing theory and fantasy. The best they could do would be to abandon the pretense of communism and discover a way of placing their ideas in pills. These budding Timothy Learys would certainly become millionaires. ■

JAPAN- FISTS FLY AT AIRPORT



THE RECENT SEIGE OF THE AIRPORT

Imagine 14,000 riot equipped cops guarding an airport. Imagine commando style raids on the airport's control tower. Imagine 12 years of protests and militant opposition to the opening of this same 2.6 billion dollar airport.

You don't have to imagine it, that's what's happening at Tokyo's new international airport located 40 miles from the city of Narita.

Twelve years ago, the Japanese government decided to build the airport regardless of its effects on the people in the area. The mostly farming region around Narita responded with massive protests. The farmers whose families had lived and worked the land there for generations were incensed by the high handed attitude of the government. They were left landless, with no compensation. But more, they rebelled at the government's blatant injustice and lack of concerns for the needs of the people. This was an outrage.

Since that time, the movement has spread involving thousands of students from nearby universities and more recently environmentalists. They have built bunkers and tunnels under the airport to sneak in and sabotage equipment. They have built a huge concrete tower next to the airport that would obstruct any plane landings and serves as an organizing base for rallies.

And they have marched - arms linked, wearing helmets and carrying sticks to ward off the riot cops who are sent to viciously break up the protests.

The movement has grown to such an extent that it now threatens to shake the foundations not only of this airport but of the Tanaka government itself.

After the most recent protest resulting in thousands of dollars in damage, the government is having its doubts about whether they can afford to even open the airport. In fact, attention now is not on new construction as much as it is on protecting what already exists.

The protestors have avowed more than this. The government will never open this airport. They cannot treat the Japanese people with flagrant abuse and get away with it. The only thing that will ever fly from Tokyo's proposed new airport will be the red flag of victory for the farmers and their supporters.

SOMALIAN TROOPS LEAVE

Ethiopians Score Victory



ETHIOPIAN LIBERATION FORCES RIDE ON CAPTURED SOVIET TANK

As of March 14 all Somali troops had left the Ogaden region of Ethiopia, halting - at least temporarily - the months long conflict in that area. The Somali army had invaded the Ethiopian province which borders on Somalia originally under the pretext that many Ogadens are "really Somali." (See YC, Vol. 5, No. 3)

The dispute over Ogaden between Somalia and Ethiopia has gone on for years. And for years, the U.S. had strong domination in the area, using this conflict to its benefit. But the last battle took on a new character as the imperialist Soviet Union played into the situation, looking for its best bets, arming first one side and then the other. And the Horn of Africa became a battleground for the two superpowers.

At present the Soviets have 1,000 of their military forces and 12,000 Cuban forces in

Ethiopia aiding the fascist junta. And for all their promises of troop removal as soon as the Somali incident was over, no moves have been made. In fact, the Soviets are still heavily involved - shifting their attention to putting down the peoples' rebellion in Eritrea - where liberation forces have already freed 90% of that area.

Obviously, none of this makes our rulers too happy. For years, the U.S. was the only imperialist superpower with influence and control in the Horn of Africa. Now they've had to play a backseat role, looking for new angles to get back in including unsuccessful moves towards the Somalis.

One thing is clear, all attempts the 2 super powers may make to dominate the Horn of Africa, will fail. The just struggle of the people will surely be victorious.