

Decision of the Y. C. I. on the American League

FIFTH ENLARGED SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE Y. C. I. PROPOSES FIVE MAIN TASKS FOR THE YOUNG WORKERS LEAGUE IN THE COMING PERIOD AND CALLS ON ALL MEMBERS TO END FACTIONALISM BY RALLYING BEHIND THE N. E. C. FOR A UNITED LEAGUE WORKING TOWARDS A MASS ORGANIZATION.

IN its resolution of the tasks of the Young Workers League of America the fourth congress of the Y. C. I. laid down the lines for the transition to Bolshevik mass work. The fifth enlarged bureau session of the Y. C. I. investigated the progress made by the American League in this direction during its more than six months activity, and arrived at the following conclusion.

I. The Differences in the Workers Party and the Y. W. L. of A.

1 Since the end of 1923 a heated discussion has been carried on in the Workers Party on the question of the establishment of a labor party. This discussion reached a climax after the last presidential election in November 1924. With respect to these contentions, questions, the enlarged executive of the Y. C. I. is in entire agreement with the resolution of the enlarged executive of the C. I. on the American question. The C. I. urges both groups in the Workers Party to discuss rationally and quietly on the basis of this platform all questions confronting the part, and to collaborate in a comradely manner. The enlarged executive of the Y. C. I. urges the entire Youth League to be guided by this resolution. It should be taken into consideration that the most dangerous enemy in the ranks of the Workers Party is the Lore group and its ideology. This makes it incumbent on the adherents of the majority as well as the minority to do their utmost to form a united front against this two and a half international ideology.

II. Past Activity

2 Whilst in the resolution of the fourth congress of the Y. C. I., we still had occasion to say that a certain hesitancy, was noticeable within the Y. W. L. of A. with respect to the application of the decisions of the Y. C. I., we are able to day to place on record that during the period following the fourth congress, was work was carried on with greater energy than ever before. The Central Committee of the of the Y. W. L. of A. has shown lately, by the way it is conducting the league's work that it is capable of being the leader of the American Youth League in full agreement with the E. C. of the Y. C. I. We are convinced that it will be able also in the future to lead the Y. W. L. in accordance with the lines laid down by the E. C. of the Y. C. I., and especially in accordance with the lines laid down in the resolution and in the resolution of the enlarged executive of the C. I. on the American question. If members of the Minority group have reproached the central committee of the Y. W. L. with not having done enough towards making the league a mass organization, we declare that there is no justification for such an accusation. The executive of the Y. C. I. calls upon all league members to put an end to factionalism and to work together in a comradely fashion on the basis of the decisions of the C. I. and Y. C. I.

III. The Chief Tasks

The forthcoming convention of the American League, after restating its adherence to the theses and resolution of the second national convention which still form the basis of the activity of the organization, should outline its activities as follows:

3 The main task of the American League is the creation of a mass organization of young workers recruiting primarily from the large industries and organized completely upon the nucleus basis. Such an organization will be able to initiate and lead greater political and economic struggles of the young workers and reap the proper organizational results. This means a constant and persistent campaign to increase the membership to at least 10,000 and the complete reorganization to the league upon the nucleus basis by the next Y. C. I. congress. This can only be achieved by a general increase of activities on all fields and particularly by concerted efforts in the daily struggles of the working class youth. Our slogans must be "In every large shop a nucleus!" and "Every member a shop nucleus organizer!" Only by this means will the Y. W. L. assume its true role as the sole representative of the working class youth.

4 The league has made a big step forward on the economic field and has already shown its ability to participate in the daily struggles of the young workers by departing from the "journalistic" stage of economic trade union work and organizing campaigns with concrete demands for the youth. This must be intensified so that not only the larger sections, but also the entire league has entered in the work. In the campaigns carried thru against the Bunte Cand Co., the Nabisco, the Mail Order Houses, and in the mining industry, the league has gained much experience. The issuing of pamphlets for particular industries has proved to be very successful. While these campaigns for specific youth demands mark a step forward in the work of the Y. W. L., it must

however, be stated that these campaigns have only a practical value if the league succeeds in winning an organized influence upon the masses of young workers, i. e. if it succeeds in organizing shop nuclei, which, together with the fractions in the unions must carry on the actual struggle for the demands set up. Moreover these campaigns have been carried on so far (with the exception of the coal mining campaign) in less important industries. These campaigns must now be extended on a national scale and should concentrate on the key industries. Special efforts should be made to reorganize and continue special national campaigns among the masses of the young workers in large industries such as: coal, steel, textile, automobile, etc., on the basis of special youth demands. The beginning which has already been made in various strikes (Hegeswich) by setting up find a similar response from the concrete demands for the youth must league in every strike that takes place in the future.

The campaigns of the league must be crowned by the calling of conferences of the working youth of particular industries and these must become a means of rallying the broad masses of the working youth in the W. L. These conferences must be big industry to the demands of the Y. come regular features in the activities of the Y. W. L. The aim of the league must also be to organize conferences of the rural youth at which representatives from the workshops should participate thus bringing the industrial youth near to the rural youth and establishing a bond between the industrial youth and their allies in the rural districts. All efforts should be made to have Negro delegates at all of these conferences (industrial and rural).

One of the weakest points in the work of the league has been its failure to concentrate upon the organization of trade union youth fractions without which the practical carrying out of the trade union work is without foundation. The industrial campaigns will have but a propagandistic and in a certain sense a "journalistic" value, if the league members are not organized in the unions and as long as there are no fractions of the Y. W. L. in the unions.

The slogan "Every member of the Y. W. L. an active trade union member" signifies that the members of the Y. W. L. in a particular union must unite into a fraction of the Y. W. L. Hand in hand with the campaign of "Into the unions!" must be carried thru the building up of the fractions of the Y. W. L. These fractions must work in closest contact with the T. U. E. L. for specific youth demands. It is their task to conduct within the general activities of the T. U. E. L. the work for the interests of the young workers, to propagate and popularize the demands of the Y. W. L. and to enlist the support of the T. U. E. L., and thru the T. U. E. L. the support of the unions, to fight for the demands set up by the Y. W. L. It is particularly important that the Y. W. L. wins the support of the T. U. E. L. in their fight for the removal of all barriers against the youth: high entrance fees, high dues, age and color barriers, etc., and for the admittance of the young workers with full rights but lower entrance fees and dues in accordance to the wages received. For this purpose the league should have a representative on all committees of the T. U. E. L. The league must also make the greatest use of the facilities of the T. U. E. L. in order to reach the masses of the young workers thru the publications of the T. U. E. L. (Column in the Daily Workers' Bulletin, and other literature issued by the T. U. E. L., and thru other channels).

5 The recurring agrarian crises which became more severe in each period, make the winning of the agricultural working youth and the youth of the working farmer of greatest importance to the league. This work must be definitely begun by the setting up of a working committee in the N. E. C. which will co-ordinate the entire activity and especially in those sections where the league has already made contacts. It is the duty of the league to carry energetic campaigns thru the setting up of special demands and slogans based on the practical struggles of the rural youth.

6 Despite the traditional race prejudices which exist among the white and colored workers our league must undertake the work among the Negro youth in a serious manner. The program already adopted by the N. E. C. on this work must be amplified and include concrete measures for reaching the exploited colored workers of the South as well as the North. A constant campaign showing the common class interests of the Colored and white workers in their everyday struggles against the boss and the capitalist state must be conducted together with the entrance and the setting up of demands by the Y. W. L. in every political and economic struggle of the Negro. The publications of literature dealing with the Communist

position towards the Negro will be an aid towards our campaign among the young Negro workers in the packing, coal, steel and other industries. Efforts should be made to draw young Negro workers into district and national work and positino.

7 Definite beginning must be made in the educational work of the American league. In our mass activity the N. E. C. must initiate definite campaigns which will popularize the league and its principles. The wide distribution of our press and the regular issuance of nucleus bulletins will assist in this work. The N. E. C. should issue a monthly political bulletin to the membership. Greater training of the membership in the spirit and teachings of Leninism is necessary so that we may create a reserve army of trained workers for work within the party. The N. E. C. must establish courses on a politminimum for every unit of the league, and also establish, wherever possible, "week end schools" for all functionaries were theoretical and practical training will be combined. In order that the league's development may not be retarded by the lack of capable functionaries and officials for district and national work, efforts should be made to establish a Central Training School in Chicago where a group of comrades can be drawn from various centers for intensive training in the theory and practice of Leninism.

In addition to the above tasks, which must be concentrated upon, the league must not forget the following:

General Tasks

8 The transformation of the Young Worker into a weekly organ marks a great step forward for the league. Every effort must be made to maintain the weekly and increase its circulation among the young workers in the industries. The mass character of the paper must be further improved by the development of a national network of young workers' correspondents from the factory and mine. The Young Comrade also must be further changed to and organ of the school struggle.

9 An energetic campaign must be conducted thru our league press against capitalist militarism and the dangers of new imperialistic wars, at all times pointing out the difference between the Leninist conception of the struggle against that of the pacifists and socialists. The establishment of actual nuclei within the army and navy is one of the next tasks of the league. In addition we must issue concrete demands and slogans for the soldiers and sailors. The work in the C. M. T. C. must be continued this year and efforts should be made to establish and maintain connections with the C. M. T. C. civilian clubs. A struggle should be carried on against compulsory military training in schools upon their opening this year. All patriotic demonstrations and holidays should be counteracted by the league.

10 The Junior Section must be more closely co-ordinated in its work and greater attention given to the political education. Following the experiences of the German Y. C. L., a well knit national organization of Junior groups (Junior Sections) with the school nucleus as the basis unit and the school struggle as the basis of activity, must be organized out of the present juniors groups, with the German Young Spartacist League as a model. A beginning must be made thru the reorganization of the existing junior groups on the basis of school nuclei, the center of gravity of all activity must be centered in the schools (school struggle, fight for better school buildings, against nationalist and religionist dope etc.) The most important task, however, is to organize a continuous and energetic nation-wide campaign against child labor on the basis of the program of the Y. C. I. This campaign must be carried on also among the

adult working class (party, fraternal organizations, etc) in order to enlist their support, as well as drawing the children who must in this struggle play a prominent role. Special demands should be set up for the child laborers and all measurers must be taken to organize the fight for the realization of their demands. The aim is to abolish all child labor up to 14 years and the partial demands set up (such as higher wages, etc.) serve only this final aim.

11 The influence of the many bourgeois youth organizations (Boy Scouts, Y. M. C. A., Y. M. H. A., etc) must be combatted relentlessly and their true nature as agents of the capitalist class exposed. This must not be limited to the Young Worker, but must extend to the broad masses of the young worker thru our workshop agitation. Our nucleus bulletins can be of aid in this work. We must point out clearly and distinctly to the young workers in these organizations their subtle character and demonstrate them by our struggles that the Y. W. L. is the only representative of the working class youth.

12 The creation of a national sports movement should be initiated by the league with the Workers Sport Alliance and other sympathetic proletarian sport and athletic groups, forming the basis of a national sport organization. Fractions must be organized in all sport organizations and campaigns conducted to affiliate them to the national workers sport organization.

13 The agitation and propaganda work amongst the foreign language speaking youth, must be continued thru the national propaganda committees, who must work under the immediate control of the N. E. C. The setting up of a language units should be minimized as much as possible and the major efforts must be the organization of the language speaking youth into our shop nuclei and other regular league activities. Ways and means should be devised to make this welding together as easy as possible and an ideological enlightenment campaign must be conducted by these committees in the party press urging the foreign speaking members to join the English speaking party units when of age. Whenever necessary special literature shall be published to spread our propaganda and to counteract the bourgeois youth organizations.

14 The league convention should elect an N. E. C. with a resident administration council at the center and the rest of the members in the districts. Plenary sessions of the N. E. C. must be held regularly. Closer personal contact must be obtained by the national officers in the various district. Not only should new youthful and proletarian comrades be added to the N. E. C., but the entire league should be rejuvenated by limiting entrance to 25 years of age. The positions of functionaries in the lower units as far as possible, should be assumed by members of 23 years of age and under. The departmentalization of all leading committees should be carried thru everywhere.

V. Conclusion

The carrying thru of this program can only be accomplished by the will and activity of a united membership, rallied behind a united national leadership. A Bolshevik discipline must be established in the Y. W. L. as a condition to its transformation into a Young Leninist League. With a unified league under the direction of a capable proletarian leadership, nothing can prevent the growth of the American league into a Young Communist League which will demonstrate by its practical leadership that it is the mass representative of the interests of these working class youth and the leader of its struggle for Communism.

BOSS BREAKFAST

