

Theses on Young Communist International

I. Developments in the Young Communist International since the Fourth World Congress.

1. Following out the decisions of the Fourth World Congress, the Third Congress of the Young Communist International outlined in detail the tasks which had already been set in a more general form by the Second World Congress of the Young Communist International, with its slogan "To the masses." It defined the basic form of the organisation, the content of the work and methods of a mass organisation of the young of the working class, and stated as its most important immediate task the transfer of the basis of the organisation to the factories by starting factory nuclei. It laid stress upon the necessity for the fuller participation of the Young Communist Leagues (Y.C.L.) in the struggles and problems of the Communist Party and of the working class and assigned as their immediate practical task the fight against bourgeois militarism, against new wars, and against the "break through" offensive of capital.

2. The development of the Y.C.I. in the period which has just passed, has proved the correctness and necessity of these decisions. They have proved their worth and have enabled the further development of the Y.C.I. into an organisation of working class youth. They have also justified themselves in the steady rise, even from the numerical point of view, of most of the more important sections of the Y.C.I. This rise is especially notable because at the same time there has been a marked drop in the so-called Socialist Youth organisations. If the Y.C.L. continues to carry out the decisions of the Second and Third World Congresses energetically, it will soon be seen that this rise has been neither accidental nor temporary, but that it is a permanent improvement which will lead to the development of the Y.C.I. into a mass movement of working class youth and to the complete liquidation of those organisations which call themselves "Socialist" or "social."

3. The most important results were attained in the following fields :

(a) The political activity of the Y.C.L., whose participation in the fights and problems of the working class and of

the Communist Party, have markedly increased. The political line to which the Y.C.I. held fast, was right and good, and its members have in most cases proved themselves the best of the Comintern front.

(b) With regard to their re-organisation on a basis of factory nuclei, the Y.C.L. have not only achieved the ideological re-adjustment of their members, but have in some cases already created the necessary conditions from which the whole re-organisation of the movement can eventually follow on the new basis in some of the bigger organisations. The Y.C.I. and Y.C.L. have been the pioneers in this work and have given great help to the Communist Party and to the Comintern by tackling this job and by collecting valuable experience.

(c) The Communist International welcomes enthusiastically the readiness for self-sacrifice, the initiative and the activity shown by the Y.C.I. in the struggle against war and imperialism and in propaganda in the bourgeois armies. Its work among the French troops in the occupied area of Germany and in the Ruhr has been the first practical, concrete and international work which has been carried out in this field. Also the active work of the French Y.C.L. in the French Army is an important step forwards. The Y.C.I. has proved that work of this kind is possible and effective even under the most difficult conditions.

(d) The Y.C.I. has also made great progress in its development into a centralised and unified international organisation. In addition to the numerical growth of the most important sections of the Y.C.I., the Comintern particularly welcomes the steady intensification of its influence on the broad masses of working class youth and the continuing consolidation of the Y.C.L.'s in various countries into a strong world organisation of youth.

In all this work the Y.C.L.'s have had only inadequate support from the Communist Parties. In some cases the Young Communist Leagues had first to contend with violent opposition from individual parties or from their Central Committees, before they could fulfil their tasks. (For instance, in anti-military work, or, again, in Sweden where the Young Communist League and the Y.C.I. were violently attacked by the majority of the Party Executive because they stood by the line laid down by the Communist International; in Czechoslovakia, the Party did its best to hinder the attempt on the part of the Y.C.L. to form factory nuclei, and continued its opposition for a long time; in the Balkans also it met with obstruction, and there were other similar cases.) Moreover,

the decisions of the Third Congress of the Comintern with regard to the independent organisations of the Y.C.L.'s have not yet been carried out in all cases.

4. In some fields, the Young Communist Leagues could work in an imperfect manner only. Thus the fight of the Young Communist League against the offensive of capital, and against the impoverishment of working class youth, and its activity in the trade unions has been, with the exception of a few countries, still too feeble. Its educational work has also not yet been equal to the demands of the vast new stream of members and to the great fighting tasks which lie before it in this field. Here again the lack of support from the Communist Party has been a contributory cause. The attempt to win over the peasant youth which has to be conducted with special methods and which has great significance in view of the necessity for fighting the recently formed fascist youth movement and the various Christian organisations, has also not been sufficiently made in the period we are reviewing.

5. Taking it all together, the results of the last working year show great progress. The Y.C.I. has increased its influence and has been able to draw broad masses of working class youth into the new struggles of the working class. It has made its movement more active, consolidated it and taken decisive steps to develop it into a mass organisation of working class youth. Added to this, it has also given real help to the Communist International during the past months in the battles of the working class, by its earnest endeavours to act according to true Communist and Leninist principles. It has collected valuable information for the work of the Comintern and the Communist Parties in the course of its campaign against war and its work in the bourgeois armies.

II. The Immediate Tasks of the Y.C.I.

6. In considering the development of the Y.C.I. in the recent period, the Fifth Congress finds that the decisions of the Second and Third World Congresses of the Y.C.I. and of the Third Congress of the Comintern on the Young Communist Movement have thoroughly justified themselves in practice. The Y.C.I. and its sections must continue their work on the same lines and must immediately undertake the next steps towards transforming the Young Communist organisations and the whole International of Youth into really Leninist organisations, into strongholds of Bolshevism.

The struggle to Bolshevise the Y.C.L.'s must be regarded as its central task, the starting point of all its col-

lective work. That must be impressed upon the consciousness of every individual member. The Bolshevisation of the Y.C.L.'s must be expressed in the transformation of the whole organisation into a mass organisation of working class youth, inextricably bound up with the youthful peasants and workers, and pressing forward energetically in the work of conquering the majority of working class youth, the leaders and representatives of the interests of the masses, must take firm root in the consciousness of the young workers. The Young Communist Leagues must get hold of the best elements among the young workers and in the course of their development and their battles must liquidate all other "Socialistic" and "social" organisations of youth.

But they have not only to conquer the masses of young workers and to permeate all their practical work in the masses with the will to fulfil this task, they must also educate the young workers organised in their ranks into true Leninists, into faithful guardians of the legacy left us by our great leader. They must see to it that every one of their members has a thorough knowledge of the main teachings and tactics of Lenin, and is capable of applying his methods. This Leninist education must be expressed in the active participation of the Young Communist Leagues in the battles of the Communist Party, and the working class, and in the union of this practical work among the masses with theoretical education.

The whole Y.C.I. must be permeated with Leninist principles. It must steadily strengthen the principles of centralisation, of international discipline, and of unity, and must root itself more and more firmly among the masses, while it encourages the idea among all its sections that the working class is the leader of all oppressed peoples. The Y.C.I. must work for the enrolment of the poorer young peasants and the oppressed youth of the colonial countries in the fighting line of the international working class. This is the way in which the Y.C.I. must develop a new generation of young Leninists.

7. At the same time the Young Communist Leagues must give special attention to the following questions: Intimate participation in the life of the Communist Party and in the battles of the working class (political activity); reorganisation on the basis of factory nuclei; active work in the bourgeois army and fight against impending wars; preparations for the tasks connected with civil war, particularly systematic military training; economic and trade union activity; educational work.

(a) Political Activity. This must continue and, where it has not reached a satisfactory stage, must be strengthened. Political activity means that the Young Communist Leagues must be in closest contact with all the fights of the working class, take part in them all under the leadership of the Communist Party, and mobilise working class youth to do the same. They must also take an active interest in the solution of all the problems of the Communist Party, and the Comintern, and in all questions of party life. Political activity is not a special task in addition to the other tasks of the Y.C.L.'s; its nature is simply the permeation of every activity, its vitalisation, and its influencing in the Leninist direction. It is the basis and method for all the tasks of the Y.C.I.

The Communist Parties must do everything they can to develop this political activity, which will mean a great reinforcement of the fighting front of the working class and the education of new competent political fighters for their own ranks.

(b) The Y.C.L.'s must go on energetically with the work they have already begun in the creation of Factory Nuclei. They must also immediately proceed from this to a complete re-organisation on the new basis. The slogan of every young Communist must be the complete re-organisation on the basis of the Factory Nuclei by the time of the next World Congress. The Fifth World Congress of the Communist International points out, in view of certain tendencies, that the Y.C.L.'s must organise their own factory nuclei quite independently of those organised by the Communist Party. This applies in periods of illegality.

(c) The Work in the Army and against fresh wars must be energetically continued by the Y.C.L.'s. This is one of the most important of the commandments, arising out of the international situation and the prospects of revolution. The transition from simple propaganda to concrete work, as it was made in the occupied area of Germany and in France, must quickly be extended internationally. Special attention and effort must be given to carrying out Lenin's slogan of nuclei in the bourgeois armies. The Y.C.L.'s must make every possible attempt to mobilise the young workers against fresh imperialist wars. They must meet the hypocritical and misleading doctrine of the Social-Democrats, that a general strike is the infallible method of stopping an outbreak of war, by sober propaganda showing what happens when a war actually breaks out. They must point out the necessity of transforming an imperialistic war, when once

it has broken out, into a civil war within the imperialistic states, and in order to do this, they must carry on revolutionary work in the bourgeois armies.

(d) The Fight in the Economic and Trade Union Field must be intensified in the future, or where necessary, must be definitely taken in hand. The Y.C.L.'s must progress from mere propaganda to the actual fight for the defence of the material and cultural interests of working class youth, they must act here as the representative of youth. With this end in view, work in the reformist trade unions must be markedly strengthened, the final end being to revolutionise them. In all trade unions existing fractions of Y.C.I. members must be further developed and proposed as candidates, and any sort of division between young and old, especially in the form of special sections for young workers, must be energetically opposed.

This can be done by showing the trade unions and the adult workers by practical results that the Young Communist Leagues, as they develop into the only mass organisation for the working class youth, are defending the interests of youth only as a part of the whole battle of the struggling proletariat. This is also true of the relation of the Young Communists to the Red Trade Unions with which they must work hand in hand, knowing that these are the only trade unions which are in a position to lead the fight for the interests of the young workers in a really useful way. Communist trade unionists must see to it that the Y.C.L.'s are recognised in the trade unions and among the adult workers as the organisations which look after the interests—economic and otherwise—of the young workers in harmony with those of the whole working class.

(e) The more the Young Communist Leagues succeed in rallying round their banner the mass of the young workers, the more must they be careful to carry on systematic Communist and Leninist Education for all their members, in the closest association with all the battles of the Communist Party and the working class. Unless they do this, they will be in danger of diluting the true Communist character of their fight and activity and becoming superficial. The training which must be carried out in the immediate future is first and foremost political training. It must enable Young Communists to take over the heritage of Lenin's works and deeds and to carry them further. How far the Y.C.I. is able to carry out this task of Leninist training, depends on the support given them by the Comintern and the Communist Party.

To make this support possible is one of the most pressing tasks of the International.

8. Although the Young Communist Leagues must concentrate their main forces on these tasks in the immediate future, they ought not to neglect tasks in other fields.

The winning over of rural youth is specially important since on it, in most countries, must depend the victory of the proletarian revolution.

The fight against our opponents especially against Fascist, so-called "Socialist" and religious organisations of youth, must be carried forward with every possible intensity in the future. The aim of the Young Communist Leagues must be to do away with these organisations altogether.

The work of preparing the Young Communist Leagues for attempts on the part of the bourgeoisie to suppress them and for the period of illegality must not be neglected.

Work in the colonial lands of the imperialist nations must be carried forward with the ultimate end of drawing into the Y.C.I. the native youth of these lands. At the same time the Y.C.I. has the task of organising the young workers who are fighting for their national freedom in colonial and semi-colonial countries, in the dominions, and in the East, and winning them over for the international struggle of the working class.

Constant attention must be devoted to conducting propaganda among the young women. They must be attracted to the Communist youth organisations to a greater degree, than they have been hitherto.

Great attention must also be paid to work among children. This must be carried out according to the principles of Communist education, through which the proletarian children will be drawn into the battle of their class which must be led by the Y.C.L.'s.

9. The period of the direct struggle for power which in the near or distant future will be at hand in several countries, must lead the Y.C.I. to consider its tasks during this period in the greatest earnestness. The experience won in Germany last October must be carefully examined, and careful preparatory work be carried out on this basis in the respective Communist Leagues.

10. All these tasks can be fully accomplished by the Y.C.I. and its sections only if the various Communist Parties provide them with the necessary help. The support of the

Y.C.I. and its sections is one of the most pressing tasks of the Comintern and the Communist Party in the near future. If this support is successfully given, it must result in winning over the great masses of young workers to Communism and in providing the Communist Party with new cadres of class conscious and steadfast Leninists.

In detail this task chiefly consists in drawing young Communists into the political activities of the Communist Party and the fights of the working class and to give them the opportunity to assist in the solution of the problems before the Communist Party and the Comintern. The factory nuclei of the Communist Parties and their fractions in the trade unions must also give every possible help to the Y.C.L.'s in their economic struggle and in the fulfilment of their other tasks. It is especially important that the Young Communist Leagues and the Y.C.I. should have better support in their work in the army and against fresh wars. The actual carrying through of this activity which is one of the most important preliminary tasks for the victory of the proletarian revolution, can only be attained if the Communist Parties participate in it as leaders. Also the pressing task of Leninist training must depend largely on the help afforded by the Communist Party.

11. The Y.C.L. must do everything possible on its side to unite itself more closely in daily work with the Communist Party in all its daily activities as far as it possibly can, but must also carry out a regular and systematic training within its own ranks as a preparation for entrance into the Communist Party, and must see to it that its members enter the Party when they attain the right age.

In this way, the Young Communist Leagues and the Y.C.I. will fulfil their duties towards the Communist Party and the Comintern and so fulfil the expectations of the Comintern that they will be in the future as they have been in the past, the best fighters and the best defenders of the policy of the Comintern.