

# Foundations for a Communist Youth League

Opportunity for building a revolutionary youth movement in the United States is at hand as never before. Nor are the difficulties for the development of a mass Communist youth organization especially unusual. The Spartacus Youth clubs already in existence in a number of cities in the United States are the groundwork on which to go forward with the task of mobilizing the growing numbers of class conscious young and student youth in the daily class struggle and for Communism.

In this task the Stalinist youth organization, the Young Communist League, has grossly failed. The International Communists, if there is to be realized the much-needed mass organization of youth, will have to fill the need.

From one source or another come confusing and false notions as to what a Young Communist organization should be. Yet, if one accepts the foundations on which the Young Communist International was founded and to which comrades Lenin and Trotsky gave so much assistance, it is not hard to outline what a Young Communist League (Spartacus Youth) needs to be and to do.

Like a Communist Party, the Communist youth movement is a politically functioning organization. It accepts the political leadership of the adult organization, but remains organizationally independent within the spheres of youth functions. Its relations with the adult organization are developed on the basis of mutual exchange of representatives between the units of both organizations and through the greatest possible degree of collaboration in all fields of work.

The Communist youth movement—Y.C.L. or Spartacus Youth—is a broad organization of all the youth, young workers or students, who accept the principles and aims of the organization and are ready to participate in its work. But the Communist youth organization does not make a demand upon the youth who wishes to join, that he be already a Communist before he is accepted. What is required is a readiness to learn the principles, theory and practices of a Communist organization and to carry out the tasks assigned. Membership is, hence, for the youth who want to learn to become Communists. In this sense, together with the broader scope of activities than is the case with the adult organization or Party, the Young Communist organization is a broad movement, sufficiently so for any youth who accepts the class struggle and the necessity to participate in it, and who is ready to learn the problems and needs of the revolutionary movement. But while broad in these respects, it is not a loose, amorphous body open to consciously hostile political elements of the youth. Still, a genuine Communist youth movement—not, it must be emphasized, the caricature of the ones the American Y.C.L. and Y.C.I. have been for so many years—is sufficiently broad—non-sectarian, to admit of all youth forces open to conviction. From this we have to observe that the political, industrial, educational, social, athletic and cultural activities of the Communist youth movement have to be of a kind able to attract the completely raw, inexperienced but ready-to-learn youth of America.

The activities of the Communist Youth organization are varied. Insofar as possible, it participates in all phases of the class struggle: industrial, trade union work, united front, etc., independently and in conjunction with the adult organization.

## Youth and Militarism

A major task is anti-militarist activity and, self-evident, today as never before. So far as the industrial proletariat youth particularly is concerned (that is, the youth in industry or in proletarian families) they are extremely unlikely to be infected with the pacifist virus or attitude on the issues of war and capitalist militarism. Born into an era of world-wide military conflicts, observing daily the race for huge armaments by the capitalist powers in preparation for war, as well as noting the necessary building of the Soviet Red Army, the proletarian youth is not prone to kid himself with pacifist syrup about disarmament by capitalist hand. What the working youth, with greater or less consciousness of the problem of war and militarism, wants to know is what he can do about these most menacing of all dangers—involving his very life. . . . Here lies the task of the Communist Youth organization to present and act upon all phases of the Communist position and program on war and militarism. This relates itself to propaganda, attitude toward and activity within the militarist and semi-militarist organizations of capitalism—the army, navy, national guards, C.M.T.C., etc. These matters are not gone into here; they belong in an elaborated exposition of the Communist point of view. What is declared here is that a Communist Youth organization which does not put the problem of anti-militarist propaganda and activity at all times as a foremost task, is no Communist Youth organization at all. This is a touch stone for the youth movement.

Of other tasks, some of the outstanding ones are outlined. The widest degree of activity of the youth in the class struggles of the day is imperative, it goes without saying. Nevertheless, it would be a decidedly short-sighted and opportunistic approach if the Communist Youth movement allowed itself to be involved, under all kinds of pretexts of all sorts, in all kinds of routine activity, and to be made into a waging or running tail to other bodies, political, trade union, etc. in order to achieve a name for "activities." There are some, perhaps, who believe that this very routine work, doing some of the distasteful work for the adult comrades, is the task of the youth. But it is in the Communist Youth organization that the youth (young worker or student) must make their major opportunity to learn thoroughly the fundamental principles and theory of the Communist movement, its history, etc. in order really to be prepared for intelligent participation and leadership, at a later period, in the adult organization, the Party. It has to be said plainly that in the adult organization, the opportunities are often too limited for serious and necessary study by the ranks. Lack of time and the need to carry through numberless concrete tasks among working hours are the main reasons therefore. The adult members have to place a great reliance, however, too much, on experience and the theoretical knowledge they managed to achieve beforehand. The much-needed theoretical background can or should to a large degree be obtained by the youth in the years they are a part of the Communist youth organization. This knowledge, coupled with their activities otherwise, will serve as a strong safeguard against opportunism and adventurism.

## Preparing For War

The numerous articles appearing in the capitalist press on the question of "disarmament" seem to indicate that there is a genuine deadlock on this question among the big imperialist bandits.

It should be clear to everyone by this time that the capitalists have no intentions of disarming. On the contrary, a furious armament race is in progress which promises to break into the open at any time with new wars of plunder and destruction.

This is the reason for calling the so-called "disarmament" conferences which serve to veil the bitter struggle among the imperialists for supremacy in the world market.

Not Disarming, but Rearming

The various conferences on the subject of disarmament never proposed disarming but only dealt with the extent of rearming. Its sole purpose was to try to limit the arming of its rivals. As the N. Y. Times correspondent from Europe noted: "The world is not disarming but rearming."

The break-neck naval race between the U. S. and Japan is reflected in a report issued by the Foreign Policy Association. "Despite the limitations of the Washington and London naval treaties," says the report, "the United States and Japan have embarked on the largest naval-building program since the World War. France and Italy are competing in the Mediterranean, while Great Britain is striving to maintain its relative position in Europe as well as overseas."

Japan's metal purchases have increased as high as 700 percent over 1931. Her armament purchases have been doubled. While her navy is limited by the Washington and London treaties—her army is constantly growing. It is also said that she will demand parity with the U. S. and Great Britain at the naval conference next year.

The U. S. has embarked on a naval building program which will make the U. S. Navy the most powerful in the world. Great Britain has increased her military budget and is devoting a good deal of attention to building up her air forces.

"In a time of extreme nationalism like the present," writes the N. Y. Times, "when nations have deliberately rejected international cooperation in the monetary and industrial

strata of the youth to its own banner or around its bona-fide sympathetic auxiliary bodies. Social, sport, and cultural activities need to be systematically developed. The youth movement needs to build its dramatic and musical groups and like mediums which attract the youth. It can be done; who says otherwise needlessly narrows the possibilities for rallying youth elements to the Communist cause through divers methods. Particularly must the Communist Youth foster a broad Workers' Sport movement of which it must be a guiding participant. The insidious and malevolent influence of the bourgeois sport movements, both professional and amateur is immense, and systematic efforts are required to counter-act this influence on the mass of American youth. A general social and cultural life, in addition to the basic tasks outlined before, will tend to attract young workers and students around us. If the new forces are approached sympathetically, made to realize our genuineness, they will either join the Communist Youth organization, or at least remain sympathetic, even if not ready to accept the entire outlook of Communism. Numerous other tasks for the youth can be posed, but space forbids.

A final, but basic point, and this in reply to the false concepts cultivated and practiced by the Stalinists and others. There is no need of another so-called broader or peripheral youth political organization, whatever this organization may be called, besides the Communist Youth organization itself. If the Communist Youth organization is properly directed and functions along the path given here, it is the organizational expression sufficient to attract to its banner the widest possible strata of youth forces ready to participate organizationally in the class struggle. These were the concepts of the Communist Youth organization in the days of the leadership of Lenin and Trotsky; these were the views that in the best years of the Young Workers League of America gave it vigor, intelligence, activity and growth. There is no need to revise these concepts for a genuine Communist Youth organization in the United States and in the new international Communist Youth movement that must again be built. What is needed is for the Spartacus Youth to build on these bases.

Among the Fourth International disciples there are undoubtedly many aliens. They should be promptly sent back where they came from. If Trotsky should undertake to set foot on American soil he should be given the same medicine. As for the rest, they should be rounded up and tried for plotting against the government. (April 18).

"This country is passing through a grave crisis. . . . The Government cannot afford to look on complacently while social gangsters prey on the emotions of the riot. . . . In a room on East Sixtieth Street there sits a man today who is perfectly willing to chat casually about his work in attempting to organize a movement to overthrow the Government of the United States. This man's name is Swaback. He is secretary of a publication called The Militant, organ of the Communist League of America, which has its headquarters in New York and branches in Chicago, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Salt Lake City, Minneapolis, Kansas City, Pittsburgh, Boston and Philadelphia.

"Talks of World Revolution"

"This man frankly talks of world revolution. His hero is Leon Trotsky.

"He will explain blandly the Trotsky plan is to 'win the working man and thus obtain power through sheer force of numbers.'"

"The 'Communist League of America' may not amount to much. It is but one alien-hatched borer eating at the roots of the American democracy.

"Organized crime is bad enough. Organized bigotry is as bad. These are American-born problems which we shall have to solve in our own way.

"Organized conspiracy against the American social order is alien. It must be met as an alien plague must be met.

"They killed rats by thousands, not so long ago, to end the alien bubonic plague in San Francisco.

"War on alien social rats is the biggest and most important job facing the Federal Government today". (April 22)

Let us get this clear: these words are not being spoken by the Daily Worker. No, indeed, it is not Clarence Hathaway who is denouncing Trotskyism and the Fourth International, calling for the lynching of Comrade Swaback and the extermination of the C.L.A. It is William Randolph Hearst, reactionary, capitalist, imperialist, militarist, enemy of the workers throughout the world.

As the Daily Worker itself might say in one of its more earnest moods: Does this not prove that Trotsky is the vanguard of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie?

"Congress' Against War"

While the capitalists are arming to the teeth, the Third International deludes the workers with Congresses Against War and Fascism, which content themselves with passing pious resolutions—which remain on paper. The mass trade unions which at the critical moment can be decisive in mobilizing the workers for the struggle against the oppressors are spurred for "united fronts" with bourgeois intellectuals. This gives the reactionaries in the unions a clear field. The Second International, true to its colors, has not even seriously raised the question of a struggle against war and Fascism in the unions it controls or influences.

Mussolini, however, and his Fascist cohorts are preparing for the slaughter. In a speech before the Chamber he made his position clear. "We must fortify our navy and make our air force so strong and numerous that its roaring motors will drown all other sounds, its shadow hide the sun over Italian soil. We will be able then, between 1936 and 1940, when I believe there will be a crucial point in European history, to make our voices heard and see our rights recognized."

To meet this challenge a new International is needed—an International based on the principles of revolutionary Marxism—from which the Comintern has departed. Only such an International can carry on and spread the lessons of Red October.

Forward to the Fourth International! —W.

Several weeks ago the I.L.D. held a demonstration in Harlem. The New York Daily Mirror had an editorial on the subject charging the affair to the Communist Party. It contained the following remarkable statements:

"The tendency is to attribute all such disturbances to Moscow's machinations. Quite probably Moscow never heard of Stein (the demonstration leader) We have our own disturbers who find the Moscow hatrack convenient. When this government recognized the Soviets there was an express understanding that all propaganda subversive of American governmental policies and principles should cease on this continent. So far there has been no evidence the Russians have not lived up to their promises"

"The paper which thus exonerates Moscow from any anti-governmental activity in this country is owned by William Randolph Hearst. Mr. Hearst is a leading capitalist, Big Navy advocate, war-monger, imperialist, anti-laborite, open-shop advocate and general reactionary. He hates revolution. He knows what he wants. He speaks his mind in this editorial: no fear of Moscow; let's just clean up the local Communists and then all is well.

Another Hearst Editorial

On April 18 and April 22 the same newspaper contained editorials expressing more of Mr. Hearst's views. The papers of preceding days had been full of the news of the persecution by the French police of Comrade Leon Trotsky. Here is what the Daily Mirror, organ of reactionary capitalism, said on that subject:

Let us analyze what, if anything, labor has gained since the Roosevelt New Deal went into effect. When the Roosevelt administration took office a year ago it was faced with two problems: first, to see that the wheels of industry began to turn; second, to put some of the millions of unemployed back to work. To accomplish these things the new Government passed a bill in Congress known as the National Industrial Recovery Act. This is part of what has been called the "New Deal."

In the NRA there is a clause under section 7a that recognized the right of workers to organize and bargain collectively. The employers in the basic industries such as steel, automobile, etc., refused to meet with the workers' representatives of the Code hearings in Washington. In spite of that our humanitarian President signed the codes which are for open shop industries.

Violating Codes

This was not enough for the captains of industry. No sooner were the codes signed than they began violating every stipulation contained in them. For instance, the workers in the automobile industry are supposed to be worked from 40 to 48 hours a week during the busy season. It has been proved by organizers of the American Federation of Labor through affidavits that the company forced workers to slave from 60 to 65 hours a week. The Steel Corporation and many other corporations have violated the most important clause in the code, section 7a.

It was pointed out at the hearings in Washington by union organizers, and even by Mrs. Pinchot, how the steel companies are terrorizing and intimidating the workers into joining the company unions. Mrs. Pinchot explained how she could not hold any meeting with workers nor speak to the workers in many Pennsylvania steel towns, not to speak of organizers who had come to organize the workers into legitimate trade unions. She forgot to point out, however, that in Pennsylvania her own husband is the Governor. In the steel towns it was explained that the companies employ spies and spotters who betray workers that go to union meetings. As a result those workers participating in union activities are dis-

## Decisive Struggles Approach In Spain

Events in Spain are moving rapidly in the direction of a definite test of strength between the working class and reaction. The rupture of the Republican-Socialist coalition and the triumph of the rightists in the November elections clearly indicated the trend toward both extremes and it cannot now be long before the historic question—Fascism or Communism will be posed.

While Spanish Fascism is not yet a real mass movement, all of the conditions for its growth exist. Encouraged by the Fascist victories in Germany and Austria, the party of Gil Robles has been making important gains in Spain. But the proletariat also has drawn its lessons from the German and Austrian events and all indications are that the Spanish workers will be in a position to take the offensive before Fascism is strong enough to seize power.

The Workers' Alliance

Definite steps in the right direction are being taken by the Spanish proletariat. Workers' Alliances, permanent united front organs are being built up in numerous cities and provinces throughout the country. In the Levantine provinces and Catalonia, the Workers' Alliance already embraces all proletarian groups with the exception of the anarchists of the P.A.I. (Iberian Anarchist Federation), and the Stalinists. While these two sects are screaming in union for the "united front below"—each, of course, demanding undisputed leadership—the great mass of syndicalist and socialist workers, through the unions and political organizations, have agreed on united action against reaction and Fascism!

Although the Socialist Party leadership claims to support the united front they are in practice sabotaging its formation on a national scale, fully realizing that they may soon be called upon to demonstrate the seriousness of their new orientation towards armed insurrection and the proletarian dictatorship. However, with the posing of the united front, in such a sharp and categorical manner, the reformist leaders find their backs to the wall, and, threatened by a split in their ranks they have entered the Workers' Alliance in almost every locality where it has been set up. The Socialist Youth, together with several of the national labor federations and unions of

the U.G.T. (Socialist controlled trade union center), are giving unrestrained and enthusiastic support to every step towards united action and a revolutionary policy.

At this time, when the Spanish working class is girding its loins for the decisive battles and the seizure of power, the Stalinists leave nothing undone in their efforts to hamstring the revolution. They indulge in adventurist attempts to call partial and "general" strikes, under any and all circumstances, for partial demands or as "political demonstrations" At a time when it is essential to prepare decisive revolutionary action, the Stalinists attempt to dissipate the energies of the working class in a thousand futile partial struggles. As is usual with them, all who disagree with them are "counter revolutionary scabs" etc. Fortunately for the future of the Spanish revolution the Stalinist influence is quite limited.

New Alignments of Proletariat

Upon the background of these events, the political forces of the proletariat are realigning themselves. Every one of the traditional camps into which Spanish labor has been divided for decades, is now cracking from top to bottom. The Socialist Youth, a large section of the S. P. membership and many of the unions are completely out of control of the reformists and a split is averted only by continual and ever-increasing concessions on

the part of the leadership. Large sections of the C.N.T. are in open revolt against the anarchist F.A.I. leadership which controls the central organs of the Federation. Large syndicalist groups are moving towards political action, and headed by such groups as the Syndicalist Libertarian Federation, (with 200 local branches plus a Youth movement), are approaching the Marxist concept of the state and revolution.

Expulsions and desertions are rife in the Stalinist party as demands for united front action increase in the ranks. To the International Communists (Bolshevik-Leninists), whose prestige grows daily despite their slight organizational strength, falls the task of rallying these diverse leftward moving forces, assisting them to break with reformism, anarchism and Stalinism, in order to lay the basis for that new Communist party, destined to be forged in the fires of the revolution, the creation of which is essential to the complete victory of the proletariat.

CHICAGO NOTICE

CONCERT AND BALL

Given by the

ITALIAN SPARTACUS LEAGUE

Sunday, May 27th, 1934

WEST SIDE AUDITORIUM

1201 W. Taylor Street, Cor. Racine

Concert — Dancing from 8 p.m. till 1

Tickets 25c

RAILROAD PAY CUTS

"If we restore the 10% wage-cut of 1932, we will be ruined," shrieked the railroad magnates on the front pages of the press, which everybody reads.

However, on the financial page which is read chiefly by Wall Street, they indicate that things are not going so badly with them. The following is a comparison of the "net operating income" reported for several railroads for the first two months of this and last year (after all expenses for wages, fuel, taxes, etc., and probably interest on bonds, are deducted):

Erie—1933, \$398,695; 1934, \$892,642.

Lehigh Valley—1933, \$161,391; 1934, \$1,265,127.

Reading—1933, \$1,311,292; 1934, \$2,587,269.

Seaboard Airline—1933, \$348,460; 1934, \$755,454.

Not so bad for bankrupts, eh?

The St. Louis Southwestern reports a deficit of \$546,730 for 1933 and \$327,376 for 1934 AFTER fixed charges have been deducted. In reality, according to its own statement the road earned for these two months of 1933 and 1934, \$6,985 and \$184,209 respectively. For the same period of 1933 the Southern Pacific reported a deficit of \$2,342,620; for 1934 the deficit had been cut to \$133,106.

We reserve the right to be a little skeptical about any reported "deficits" on the railroads. A good bookkeeper can do wonders with figures. Even granting, however, that SOME roads did run at a loss the fact remains that ALL the workers had their pay cut.

Labor and the New Deal

Let us analyze what, if anything, labor has gained since the Roosevelt New Deal went into effect. When the Roosevelt administration took office a year ago it was faced with two problems: first, to see that the wheels of industry began to turn; second, to put some of the millions of unemployed back to work. To accomplish these things the new Government passed a bill in Congress known as the National Industrial Recovery Act. This is part of what has been called the "New Deal."

In the NRA there is a clause under section 7a that recognized the right of workers to organize and bargain collectively. The employers in the basic industries such as steel, automobile, etc., refused to meet with the workers' representatives of the Code hearings in Washington. In spite of that our humanitarian President signed the codes which are for open shop industries.

Violating Codes

This was not enough for the captains of industry. No sooner were the codes signed than they began violating every stipulation contained in them. For instance, the workers in the automobile industry are supposed to be worked from 40 to 48 hours a week during the busy season. It has been proved by organizers of the American Federation of Labor through affidavits that the company forced workers to slave from 60 to 65 hours a week. The Steel Corporation and many other corporations have violated the most important clause in the code, section 7a.

It was pointed out at the hearings in Washington by union organizers, and even by Mrs. Pinchot, how the steel companies are terrorizing and intimidating the workers into joining the company unions. Mrs. Pinchot explained how she could not hold any meeting with workers nor speak to the workers in many Pennsylvania steel towns, not to speak of organizers who had come to organize the workers into legitimate trade unions. She forgot to point out, however, that in Pennsylvania her own husband is the Governor. In the steel towns it was explained that the companies employ spies and spotters who betray workers that go to union meetings. As a result those workers participating in union activities are dis-

ATTENTION HARLEM WORKERS

A House Warming Party and Celebration of the Harlem Branch of the Communist League of America will take place SATURDAY, MAY 5th, 1934, 8 P.M. at the headquarters 130 East 107th Street, N.Y.C.

charged by the hundreds under trumped-up charges of inefficiency, etc.

Civil Liberties Survey

Over two hundred codes have been signed by President Roosevelt so far. The National Complaints Board has received from organized labor over six thousand complaints, and over ten thousand workers have been fired for joining the unions (by patriotic employers) This shows how big business has violated the codes it drew up and signed itself. Not one of the big sharks has been prosecuted for violating the so-called law and the spirit of the "New Deal". On the other hand, the survey of the New York Times of February 11, 1934, tells another story of what labor is suffering under the New Deal:

"Too many employers confuse Roosevelt's New Deal with Coolidge's New Capitalism. The methods of the latter era are used flagrantly to smash labor's effort to organize despite the NRA. At no time has there been such widespread violation of workers' rights by injunctions, troops, private police, labor spies, deputy sheriffs, and vigilantes, etc. More than 15 strikers have been killed, 200 injured, and hundreds arrested since July 1 of 1933. More than forty injunctions of sweeping character have been issued against miners, agricultural workers, bakery workers, shoe and leather workers, food workers, hotel workers. Troops have been called out in half a dozen strike districts. Criminal syndicalist charges are again being used against the active strike leaders.

The National Labor Board and its regional boards have lacked the power and the will to overcome the defiance of employers who fear neither General Johnson nor Attorney General Cummings. California, Alabama, the Eastern shore of Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Illinois are called the worst areas of repression. On the black list of the union California is placed first, for brutal attacks on agricultural workers trying to organize. A double lynching over which the governor gloated, and the continued imprisonment of Mooney and Billings. The survey holds too that attacks on independent and left wing unions have been particularly severe. Alabama is cited on the black list for the Scottsboro case, lynchings and the reign of terror

—S. FISHER.