

# Proletarian Youth Movement

## The Fascisation and Militarisation of the Youth and the Tasks of the Young Communist Leagues

(Resolution unanimously accepted by the January Plenum of the E.C.Y.C.I. on the Report of Comrade Chemodanov.)

The Plenum of the E.C.Y.C.I. fully associates itself with the decisions of the Thirteenth Plenum of the E.C.C.I., which determined in a Leninist manner the basic tasks of the international proletarian revolutionary movement.

The world economic crisis arising on the basis of the general crisis of capitalism, which is becoming more profound, has shaken the foundations of the entire capitalist system and intensified the class and other internal imperialist antagonisms. The bourgeoisie mobilises and makes use of all the reactionary forces and methods in the feverish search for a way out of the crisis. Fascist oppression and exploitation of the working class is increasing. There is an unbelievable increase in the want and misery of the toiling masses. The imperialist countries are frantically preparing for a new armed division of the world. But at the same time throughout the world there is an increase in the indignation of the toiling masses and their readiness to overthrow the unbearable oppression of the exploiting classes. Socialist construction is victoriously developing on one-sixth of the globe; the power of the basis of the international proletarian revolution, the U.S.S.R., is steadily strengthening.

The contrast between the U.S.S.R. and the capitalist world is deepening more and more.

"At the present time the world is approaching more closely to a new cycle of revolutions and wars." (Resolution of Thirteenth Plenum, E.C.C.I.)

During the years of the economic crisis, an army of millions of unemployed youth has grown up in the capitalist countries. There is a greater and greater increase in the capitol of the youth who have never had a job anywhere. The plunder of wages from the employed youth is taking on unprecedented forms. A slavish system of apprenticeship is being established. The toiling peasant youth, especially the farm labourers, are in a state of complete exploitation by the landlords and money-lenders. Their situation is approaching nearer and nearer to that of the colonial youth. Uncertainty as to the morrow is more and more felt by the student youth, the children of the intellectuals and also the petty-bourgeoisie who are being ruined under the blows of the crisis. The youth in capitalist countries are compelled to defend their economic and political rights by a fierce struggle.

In the conditions of the extreme intensity of class relations and the approach of new revolutions and wars, the political activity of the youth is growing. Their rôle in the class struggle is rising. The bourgeoisie also, like their chief social buttress, social democracy, are unable to keep the broad masses of the youth under their influence by the old bourgeois-democratic methods. It is everywhere going over to terrorist, compulsory State methods of fascisation and militarisation of the youth.

The bourgeoisie is depriving the youth of all political rights. With brutal violence it is attacking the revolutionary organisations of the youth. The Y.C.L. of Germany has been driven underground and is subjected to unheard of persecution. By means of arrests and prison sentences, the bourgeoisie is trying to completely paralyse the political activity of the Y.C.L. of Czechoslovakia and Austria, which have already been suppressed. The slightest manifestation of discontent and the slightest demands are most vigorously combated by the bourgeoisie in all countries. However, the reorganisation of the bourgeoisie in the struggle for the youth is not only characterised by clear terrorist methods (arrests, jails, concentration camps, torture, shooting).

Both in the fascist countries and in the so-called democratic countries, the bourgeoisie is taking advantage of the political inexperience and insufficiently developed class-consciousness of the youth and is increasingly inflaming chauvinist and nationalist feelings among them. The bourgeoisie in Germany and Japan is trying to put forward "racial" tasks as an offset to the growth of proletarian internationalism. Demagogy on the national duty of the youth, on their patriotic obligations, the defence of the

fatherland, war, etc., is becoming more and more unrestrained, with the aim of lulling the class-consciousness of the youth.

In conditions of "prosperity" in the capitalist countries the bourgeoisie was able, by means of bourgeois democracy, to get into their hands a widespread network of youth organisations containing the basic strata of the youth. However, irrespective of whether they belonged to these organisations, the youth are taking a more and more active part in strikes, in revolutionary demonstrations and the actions of the unemployed and the peasants. Communist influence is spreading more and more to the youth. The strivings of the youth towards unity in the struggle for their economic and political demands is becoming clearer and stronger.

In all capitalist countries the bourgeoisie are taking a determined line for still more organisationally consolidating their influence on the youth. The leadership of the mass bourgeois youth organisations is passing from the hands of separate political parties directly to the government and is being centralised in the government apparatus. The youth are more and more being driven compulsorily into the bourgeois youth organisations. In all the countries of capitalism, forced labour is being introduced for the youth, at the basis of which, both in the countries of the fascist dictatorship and those of bourgeois democracy, lies the slavish exploitation of the youth, both employed and unemployed (Germany), the preparations of cadres for war and the compulsory training of the youth in the spirit of bourgeois fascist ideology.

The Young Socialist International, in all its treacherous policy, carries out the line of the Second International—a line for weakening, disarming and splitting the working class, training its young generation in the spirit of the defence of the bourgeois fatherland and bourgeois democracy. The Y.S.I., like the whole of the Second International, as the experience of Germany showed, helps the bourgeoisie to establish the fascist dictatorship and prepare for imperialist war. The process of the ideological and organisational bankruptcy and disintegration of the Y.S.I. becomes intensified and accelerated under the conditions of the intensification of the imperialist class contradictions, the growth of Communist influence and the class consciousness of the youth. In spite of the wishes of the leaders, the rank and file members of the Y.S.I. are more and more collaborating with the Young Communists for a joint revolutionary struggle against fascism and war. The social fascist leaders are compelled to use ever more "Left" manoeuvres and sham revolutionary phrases to keep the youth under their influence. Under the flag of struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat, the so-called "Left" socialist youth organisations, in a bloc with the Trotskyite counter-revolutionary foremost detachments of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie, are trying to frustrate the establishment of the united front of the toiling youth in the struggle against capitalism and the rallying of them around the revolutionary vanguard—the Communist Parties. They are trying to form a new youth international, the chief task of which is to be to make it easier for the bourgeoisie to struggle against the Communist International and its influence among the masses of the youth.

The Y.C.I. was formed by the great leader and teacher of the international revolutionary proletariat—Comrade Lenin. It was and is the only revolutionary organisation of the youth, not in words, but in deeds. Despite the fascist terror, despite persecution and oppression, it carries on and will continue to carry on a decisive and uncompromising struggle against capitalism, against imperialist wars, for the dictatorship of the proletariat, for socialism.

In the U.S.S.R.—in the struggle for socialism; in China—in the struggle for Soviet power, against feudal-landlord and bourgeois oppression and international imperialism; in Germany, Poland and Italy—in the conditions of brutal terror, in the heroic struggle against the bloody fascist dictatorship; in Japan—holding high the banner of proletarian internationalism; in Spain and Cuba—everywhere the Y.C.L.ers have shown themselves to be

worthy assistants of the Communist Parties in their heroic struggle for the cause of the working class and the toiling masses.

#### Tasks of the Young Communist Leagues

The approach of decisive class struggles, the danger of the outbreak of a counter-revolutionary war against the U.S.S.R. and new imperialist wars, the growing danger of fascism and the sharpening class struggle for the youth puts before all Sections of the Y.C.I. new and still more difficult and responsible tasks.

The Y.C.L. is the closest assistant of the Communist Party which carries its influence to the broad masses of the youth. The chief task of the Y.C.L. is to rally the masses of the youth around the Communist Party and to educate them in the spirit of confidence in it, in the spirit of struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat, for socialism.

1. The Y.C.L. will only be able to fulfil this task if it undeviatingly carries out the line of the Comintern in practice and conducts a most merciless struggle against concrete manifestations of opportunism and sectarianism in practice, "in the first place against Right opportunism (Guttman, Remmele and Neumann) and the defeatists in other countries in the estimation of the perspectives of the German revolution" (Plenum, E.C.C.I.), if it deeply studies Marxist-Leninist revolutionary theory and its Bolshevik application in the struggle against the social and national oppression of the youth.

The Y.C.L. must decisively increase its rôle as the revolutionary organiser of the youth, fighting under the leadership of the Communist Party for improving the economic situation of the youth, for increasing wages, resisting wage-cuts, for unemployment relief for the youth, against any worsening of the conditions of its labour and life.

The Y.C.L. must mobilise all its forces, energy and initiative for the struggle against the chauvinist and nationalist propaganda of the bourgeoisie. This requires from the Y.C.L. that it should increasingly propagate Leninist revolutionary teachings among the broadest strata of the youth as well as intensify the struggle for the smallest economic needs and demands of the youth and against their compulsory fascistisation and militarisation.

Without forgetting for a moment that the chief task of the Communist Party is to win over the majority of the working class and consequently also the working-class youth, in every way strengthening the work in the mills and factories, it is necessary to carry on wide mass economic, political and organisational work in the forced labour camps, in the mass bourgeois, fascist and reformist organisations, in the universities, the schools, the plantations, the villages—everywhere where the youth are to be found.

Arming itself and the youth with Marxist-Leninist theory, the Y.C.L. must give revolutionary perspectives to the youth.

This can be achieved if our propaganda is linked up with the struggle of the working class and the toilers against the exploiters, with the struggle for the smallest economic interests and political demands of the youth. The Y.C.L., by seizing on the economic interests of the youth, must draw them into the strike struggle of the working class on a wide scale, making the greatest use of strikes as a tried weapon in the struggle against the attack of the employers, against capitalism, linking up the struggle for economic demands with the preparation of the toiling youth for the struggle for power.

In the economic struggle the Y.C.L. must widely popularise and make concrete its programme and the programme of economic demands of the Y.C.I. In organising the youth for the struggle against every attack of the employers on wages and conditions of labour, the Y.C.L. must see that this struggle is raised to a higher political level and must take an active part in mass and general political strikes, in the decisive class struggles against fascism, for the dictatorship of the proletariat.

(To be concluded.)

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## The Fascisation and Militarisation of the Youth and the Tasks of the Young Communist League

(Conclusion)

2. It is the duty of every Young Communist to **expose the class nature of fascism among the broad masses of youth**, explaining to them that:

“Fascism is the open terrorist dictatorship of the most reactionary, most chauvinist and the most imperialist elements of finance capital.”

They must make the youth understand that:

In Germany and in a number of other capitalist countries the growth of fascism and its seizure of power mean that:

a) The revolutionary crisis and the indignation of the broad masses against the rule of capitalism is growing:

b) The capitalists are no longer able to maintain their dictatorship by the old methods of parliamentarism and bourgeois-democracy in general:

c) Further, the methods of parliamentarism and bourgeois-democracy in general are becoming a hindrance for the capitalists both in internal politics (the struggle against the proletariat) as well as in foreign politics (war for the imperialist re-division of the world);

d) Capital is compelled as a result of this to pass on to the open terroristic dictatorship inside the country and to unrestrained chauvinism in foreign politics, which represents the direct preparation for imperialist war.” (Resolutions of the Thirteenth Plenum, E.C.C.I.).

In Germany before the fascists came to power they promised to **liquidate** unemployment, to **prohibit** the exploitation of child labour, night work and injurious work for the youth, to **repeal** the law for reducing wages, to give a yearly paid three-week vacation to the youth, etc.

In **practice** the fascist government not only **failed to carry out a single one of these promises**, but it **liquidated** the remains of the political rights and freedom of the youth, **gave** concentration camps and jails, **drove** hundreds and thousands of the youth into the labour service camps under slavish conditions of work.

In **reality** the fascists brought unprecedented oppression and increased exploitation and poverty to the youth, under the cover of chauvinist and nationalist propaganda as well as anti-capitalist demagogy.

They are preparing cadres for the future imperialist war from among the youth and are pushing them into the abyss.

It must be explained to the youth that:

“Fascism, born in the womb of bourgeois-democracy, is in the eyes of the capitalists a means of saving capitalism from destruction. Only with the aim of deceiving and disarming the workers, social-democracy denies the fascisation of bourgeois-democracy, making a distinction in principle between the democratic countries and the countries of the fascist dictatorship.”

The masses of the youth must be made to thoroughly understand that:

“The fascist dictatorship is not an inevitable stage in the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie in all countries. The possibili-

ties of averting it depends on the forces of the fighting proletariat which are being paralysed mostly by the disintegrating influence of social-democracy, which is and remains the chief social buttress of the bourgeoisie."

On the basis of Marxist-Leninist theory, on the basis of concrete examples and facts, the real nature of bourgeois-democracy must be exposed to the masses of the youth. By the example of the Soviet Union the essence of **proletarian democracy** must be explained to the youth in plain language.

Every Y.C.L.'er must always bear in mind the directives of the Communist International that there is only one path of struggle for overthrowing every dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. The chief slogan of the Communist International in this struggle is **Soviet power**. By the living example of the Soviet Union the youth should be shown that the Soviet power on one-sixth of the globe has destroyed economic and political oppression and slavery for the toiling youth and will destroy it throughout the world, that it will not only destroy the slavish system of forced labour and apprenticeship, but will guarantee work for the youth, the defence of labour (6—4 hour working day, equal pay for equal work, four weeks vacation with pay, material well-being and physical health.) The Soviet power is reorganising technical and professional education, making it possible for every young worker to receive the necessary qualifications which he needs and wants in the shortest possible time. The Soviet power opens wide the doors of all educational institutions and opens up the path towards the commanding positions in industry, agriculture, science, technique, etc. It ensures the active participation of all the toiling youth in all government life, in the construction of socialism.

The Young Communists must carry on all their work in such a way that the revolutionary activity of the youth and their participation in the class struggle will constantly improve. Under the leadership of the Party the Y.C.L.'ers must **promptly** rouse the masses of the youth to the struggle for their vital demands in defence of the trade unions, the workers' press, workers' clubs, the freedom of strikes, of workers' meetings, organising protests, demonstrations, strikes and forge the united front of struggle against fascism, for Socialism and for the Soviet power.

3. The Y.C.L. must build up its mass work in such a way that at the present time, in the period of the direct transition to a new cycle of revolutions and wars, the broad masses of the youth will already be organised **for an active struggle against imperialist war and its preparations**, for converting imperialist war into civil war, for the courageous defence of the Soviet Union and the Chinese Soviet Republic. In struggling against the opportunist underestimation of the danger of war, the Y.C.L. must expose and fight against every measure undertaken by the bourgeoisie in preparation for war and increase its political educational work in the **army** and also among the **conscripts**. It must also increase its ideological struggle against pacifism.

The Plenum of the E.C.Y.C.I. approves of the initiative and activity shown by the local organisations of the Y.C.L. in participating and preparing the **Paris International Congress** and the **American National Congress of Youth** for the struggle against war and fascism. By actively participating in the formation of anti-war and anti-fascist committees and in the election of delegates, by participating in meetings of the socialist and reformist youth and the youth in other organisations, many Y.C.L. organisations have obtained successes in the strengthening of the united front and the carrying out of the decisions of the December Plenum of the E.C.Y.C.I. on mass work. However, these are only the first steps. The results thus obtained and the contacts with the masses of youth must be consolidated and the **united front of the youth must be widened still further in the struggle for their economic interests and political rights against fascism and war**.

4. The Plenum of the E.C. Y.C.I., faced with the decisive class struggles and imperialist wars, calls upon the Young Communist organisations to mobilise their forces and energy in the struggle for the formation of the united front.

While forming and strengthening the united front of the toiling youth in the **struggle** for their economic and political interests, in the **struggle** against fascism and war, and not by negotiations from above and behind the backs of the masses, creating it from below, it is necessary to expose utterly the bankrupt leaders of the Second International and the Y.S.I. among the masses.

The social-fascist leaders of the Y.S.I. and also of the Second

International and the reformist trade unions, who in practice organise the reactionary united front with the bourgeoisie under the cover of empty talk about unity and democracy, split the working class, clear the path for fascism and prepare the masses for imperialist wars.

They are more and more throwing out of the ranks of the socialist youth organisations those who begin, not in words but in practice, to struggle jointly with the revolutionary workers, with the Communists and the Y.C.L. against the attack of the employers on the wages of the youth, against hunger and want, against fascism and war.

It is necessary to give active support to the growing revolutionary oppositional movement among the young Socialists. Together with them, shoulder to shoulder, united organs of struggle should be formed from below and the fight must be carried on against exploitation and oppression, against the fascisation and militarisation of the youth. It must be explained to them that the path of their leaders is the path of fascism and war. Without waiting for the final breakdown and disintegration of the Y.S.I., it is necessary to win over into our ranks and to the side of Communism all the honest and revolutionary elements among the youth who are still under social-fascist and reformist influence.

A most determined struggle must be declared against the opportunist distortions of the line of the Comintern, which conceal the face of the Y.C.L. in its struggle for the united front and which strengthens social-democratic illusions among the masses.

It is impossible to tolerate such gross distortions of the decisions of the December Plenum of the E.C. Y.C.I. and the political mistakes which were committed.

In Germany, where individual Y.C.L.'ers, instead of clearly and definitely putting before the Young Socialists the questions of a joint struggle, of their coming over to the Y.C.L., themselves strengthened their bankrupt and decaying organisations, instead of bringing them and their individual members into the Y.C.L.

In Czechoslovakia, where the Y.C.L., "hoping" that the leaders of the Young Socialists would accept its proposals for the united front, concealed its political face, stopped the struggle against social-fascism and found itself lagging behind the revolutionised youth.

In France, the opportunists in the leadership of the Y.C.L., who were later exposed, not seeing the manoeuvres of the leaders of the Young Socialists, began to carry on negotiations from above on the question of the united front, disorientating the League, which slackened its struggle for the formation of the united front from below.

In Austria, where the Y.C.L., supporting the opposition movement in the Socialist Youth organisations, did not show sufficient activity in winning the revolutionary elements of the Young Socialists over to our side and in exposing the manoeuvres of the leaders of the Young Socialists and the centrist opposition.

While creating organs of the united front jointly with the Young Socialists for a common struggle against the reduction of the wages of the youth, against the plunder of unemployment relief, against any worsening of the conditions of labour and life of the toiling youth, against fascism and war, supporting the growing oppositional movement in the ranks of the Young Socialist organisations, it is necessary, in view of the conditions of the class struggle and the revolutionising of the youth, to raise directly the question that individual lower organisations and members of the Young Socialists should come over to the Y.C.L.

5. The chief task of the Communist Parties is to win over the majority of the working class and therefore the majority of the youth.

However, in the practical work of many of the Y.C.L. organisations, there is not a sufficient struggle for the working youth. After the December Plenum of the E.C.Y.C.I. in 1932 no decisive successes were achieved in the struggle for carrying out the slogan of the Comintern on the formation of a Y.C.L. cell in every place where there is a factory Party cell. In Great Britain, this slogan was "annulled," not without the knowledge of some Party organisations. In France and in some other countries, this concrete task of the struggle for the working youth was likewise not brought forward as one of the chief tasks of the Party and the Y.C.L. organisations. In the struggle for the working youth, for the formation of a Y.C.L. cell alongside every factory Party cell, a radical change must be brought about. The whole of the work of the Y.C.L.

organisations and above all of their leading organs, must be subordinated to the struggle for the working youth. Every Y.C.L.'er must always remember in connection with this that his authority will be strong and high and the cell will develop and have authority only if the youth see that the Y.C.L.'ers not only understand how to agitate in words, but are able in practice to organise their struggle for their own everyday economic demands and needs however small these may be.

6. The December Plenum of the E.C.Y.C.I. pointed out that:

"The Y.C.L. must liquidate with Bolshevik insistence and consistency the ignoring and sectarian underestimation of the struggle for the masses of the toiling youth in the Y.S.I., the reformist, fascist, syndicalist, Christian, militarist and similar organisations, attracting the members of these organisations into the class struggle on the basis of the united front from below and carrying on among them active, revolutionary mass political work."

These directives of the E.C. Y.C.I. have not yet been made the basis of the mass work of all the Y.C.L. organisations.

Every Young Communist must understand that a successful struggle against the fascisation and the militarisation of the youth is impossible unless work is carried on among the masses in the widespread network of bourgeois, fascist, reformist and sport organisations and also in forced labour camps. Attention must be focussed particularly on the work among the masses of youth in the reformist, fascist, Christian and syndicalist trade unions.

It is necessary to ensure in practice that not a single mass youth organisation, not a single forced labour camp, will be without an organ of the united front, committees for the struggle against fascism and war, associations of subscribers and readers of Communist papers, circles for the study of Marxism-Leninism, etc. A decisive factor in the development of mass political work inside the mass bourgeois youth organisations and in the forced labour camps is the formation and strengthening of the Y.C.L. groups, fractions and cells. The daily guidance of the Y.C.L.'ers who work in the mass organisations must be organised through such committees, and special cadres of instructors must be appointed for this purpose.

There must be a decided improvement in the work among the unemployed youth, a development of mass work among the students, including children, and a radical improvement in the work among girls, for drawing them into the revolutionary youth movement. The work among the broad strata of the young farm labourers and peasants, and especially the nationally oppressed toiling youth, must not only be increased but in many countries it must be started, not in words but in deeds. Without limiting ourselves to the formation and widening of Y.C.L. organisations, it is necessary to develop in all countries a wide network of legal and semi-legal mass auxiliary youth organisations.

In developing mass work, it is necessary in the shortest possible time to put an end to the sectarian isolation of the Y.C.L. organisations from the broad masses of youth, especially in Great Britain, Austria and Norway.

A very urgent task for all Young Communist Leagues is the struggle for the abolition of the tremendous difference between their organisational development and the extent to which the youth are included in them, and the growing Communist influence.

It is necessary to fight in a Bolshevik manner for the strengthening and organisational formation of the growing Communist influence and the revolutionary upsurge among the masses of working and toiling youth.

7. The League must immediately bring about a reconstruction of the content, forms and methods of work of the Y.C.L. organisations. In many sections of the Y.C.I. a purely formal attitude was taken to the directives of the December Plenum of the E.C. on the reconstruction of the work on the basis of the development of initiative and the heightening of the activity of all members of the Y.C.L. on the basis of inner-League democracy and Bolshevik self-criticism. We cannot tolerate the situation in which as formerly a restricted section of activists in many organisations try to work for the mass of the members and take the place of their activity and initiative. The work of all the leading bodies especially in the legal organisations must be put under the control of the masses, and in practice we must bring about an enhancement of the personal political responsibility, and must bring about living concrete leadership and not leadership by circulars in a bureau-

cratic manner. **Young cadres of workers** who have been tested on mass work in the struggle for the Party line must be decisively promoted. It is necessary to ensure the strengthening of **Party guidance** and an increase in the Party core in all sections of the organisation.

All sections of the Y.C.I. without exception must immediately develop a **Bolshevik** struggle for the fulfilment of the directives of the Thirteenth Plenum that:

“The entire situation demands from the Communist Parties the simultaneous training of **cadres** for underground work, a serious organisation of **struggle against provocation**, combining the strictest **conspiratorial** methods with the greatest guarantee of the best contacts with the **masses**, and to see that the structure and the work of the underground organisations will not be schematic.”

In all the organisations of the Y.C.I., it is necessary to start immediately to carry on a profound study of the revolutionary theory of the proletariat—Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin, and to attain a genuine **Bolshevik** application of this in the everyday struggles.