

clarity!
Young Spartacus *action!*

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Columbus Congress Faces Fight Against Social Patriotic Forces

Organic Unity What Kind? What For?

To All Members of the Young Communist League;
To All Members of the Young People's Socialist League;
To All Revolutionary Youth:

In contrast to their previous opposition to the united front with Socialist parties and other working class organizations, the Communist International and the Young Communist International have now gone to the other extreme. Now they propose not only united front actions, but organic unity between themselves and the social democracy, in which they are prepared to liquidate their own organizations. This proposal, originally made for France, is now being introduced into the United States for the youth organization by the American representative of the Y.C.I., Gil Green. Concretely, the proposal is that the Y.C.L. and the Y.P.S.L. merge their organizations and constitute a youth organization independent of the C. P. and S. P. The program for this organization is to be: 1) Agreement with the idea that a new social order is desirable, without specifying how this new social order is to be achieved; 2) "Opposition" to imperialist wars; and 3) opposition to Fascism. Because of the paramount importance of this question to the entire revolutionary movement, and particularly its youth section, the Spartacus Youth League of America, the only revolutionary youth organization in this country, wishes to set forth its views as a contribution to clarification on this question.

Since the Y.C.I. has become a convert to the idea of unity and trumpets the idea so loudly, it is necessary to examine just what sort of unity it wants. According to Gil Green, the Y.C.L. is prepared to merge with the Y.P.S.L. and any other organization on a minimum program of vague opposition to capitalism and opposition to imperialist war and Fascism, as well as for some new social order. The method of attaining this new social order (which is the fundamental difference between reformists and revolutionists) is carefully avoided. Everybody in this organization can have his own opinion on such questions as the proletarian revolution, dictatorship of the proletariat, armed insurrection, reformism, etc. In short, the new "organic unity" organization will be a conglomeration of revolutionists, reformists, centrists, pacifists, Christian Socialists, and the like. To accept this kind of unity proposal means that the youth movement must close its eyes to all the invaluable lessons of the past and throw overboard all the experiences gained by the youth movement since its inception. Such an organization, instead of being a revolutionary vanguard of the youth, could only be an obstacle in the path of the youth gravitating toward the proletarian revolution.

Role of the Revolutionary Youth Organization

The founders of the revolutionary
(Continued on Page 2)

An Explanation and an Apology

The Spartacus Youth League takes this occasion to apologize for any misunderstanding it may be responsible for in connection with the so-called Chicago program of the S.L.I.D. Our comrades acted in good faith when they referred to the document as a product of the city executive committee—an impression gleaned from the first section of the document itself. It transpires however that the document was accepted only as a draft for discussion and elaboration. Neither this specific draft, or others subsequently proposed, was adopted.

An Open Letter To the Delegates

An Open Letter to the delegates of the Columbus Convention:

There is no mistaking that the convention which is in session today is of considerable significance. This significance attaches to it not alone by virtue of the contemplated fusion, but by its inferences for the future development of the youth movement in the United States. A preliminary skirmish is being fought here in Columbus to determine the extent of success which Stalinism may expect in lassoing the radical-minded youth with the rope of social-patriotism.

It is no secret that the Young Communist League considers this fusion convention as the first step toward its own, eventual "organic unity" with the Young People's Socialist League. It is to the credit of the latter that they have grasped the meaning of, and consequently thus far rejected a proposition that would thrust them back into the ideology from which they have been climbing out of steadily. Elsewhere in this issue we discuss the general problem. Here we discuss only the "purely" convention issues.

Students and Student Organizations

A preliminary word of explanation is perhaps demanded of us.

Many of you delegates may know that we stand programmatically in disagreement with student organizations that exist independent of the regular organizations of the working class. Unfortunately those considerations which motivated our decision have never been discussed, to our knowledge, by the bodies immediately participating in this convention, the National Student League and Student League for Industrial Democracy, nor by those secondarily participating, the Y.C.I. and the Y.P.S.L.

Stated briefly, we hold that inasmuch as the student body is representative of diverse class interests, no elementary tie, such as exists among workers, binds them together. For us there is no individual entity: **The Student**. We rather see many students who stem from different layers of the population, a majority of them originating in and therefore reflecting the middle class. The common interest of students as a specialized group are only of secondary importance.

Those student interests that lend a measure of cohesion are effectual only during the school years. Beyond that they become active members, not of a campus, but of a class society. Our concern therefore transcends the years of campus life. We aim to make of the student a conscious ally of the proletariat, a revolutionist who identifies his own interests with those of the working class, who understands that the solution of his own needs lies in socialist victory. The objective circumstances of capitalist crisis operate in our favor—but these can only be capitalized and concretized by a thorough (Continued on Page 2)

A Resume of a Program "Pointers" for Consideration

The Spartacus Youth League presents the following fourteen points to the delegates to the convention of the American Student Union as essential to the anti-war program of that proposed organization. We consider it to be of primary importance that the fusion convention shall adopt a program on war which contains within it the essence of these fourteen points. We urge all delegates to work for and to support such as a condition for the fusion.

National Secretary, S.Y.L.

1. The American Student Union must declare itself against, and expose, all shades of pacifism as impotent and treacherous, as the instrument of class-collaboration and social-patriotism; against disarmament and all such bankrupt weapons of pacifism.
2. The League of Nations must be exposed for what it is: not an instrument of peace, but as the instrument of the victorious nations of the last war to maintain the fruits of their victory and to prepare and direct new imperialist conquests.
3. The American Student Union must reject governmental sanctions as the instrument of British imperialism in its struggle against

Italy for the African market. The defense of Ethiopia, as of all colonial and semi-colonial countries, against the ravages of imperialism, can be conducted only by the working class, not through their support of governmental sanctions or other diplomatic devices, of the bourgeoisie, but through the independent action of the international proletariat against the imperialist aggressor. (Boycotts, strikes, etc.)

4. American "neutrality" must be exposed as a myth; as a policy which serves at present the best interests of the American capitalists, and which serves to blind the working class in order to hurl them into the war when American imperialist interests make it profitable.

5. The American Student Union must declare that the defense of the national state is a reactionary task. It must declare its task to be not the defense of the national state but its complete and final liquidation.

6. The American Student Union shall support the struggle in the defense of oppressed colonial peoples and for their emancipation from imperialist colonial exploitation.

7. The American Student Union must declare that: "a modern war does not represent a conflict between democracy and Fascism but

a struggle of two imperialisms for the redivision of the world," that it does not recognize an "aggressor" and a "defender" in imperialist wars.

8. The American Student Union must declare its opposition to all imperialist wars and declare its readiness to work and to fight in every way against imperialist war.

9. The American Student Union must declare itself opposed to social-patriotism and the "defense of the fatherland," no matter under what guise it is presented. It must declare that its general strategic task is to work for and with those organizations that strive to turn the imperialist war into the war for socialism.

10. The American Student Union must declare its support to and defense of the fatherland of the world oppressed, the Soviet Union, against capitalism and capitalist aggression. That in the event of an alliance between the Soviet Union and the United States against another imperialist nation (democratic or Fascist), we understand as the best defense of the Soviet Union to be the work for the overthrow of our own capitalist government.

11. The policy of the American Student Union on war shall be the policy of revolutionary defeatism. (Continued on Page 2)

Soon Out-Jan. Young Spartacus!

An Open Letter to the Convention Delegates

War Resolution Is Key To Militant Student Program

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ough process of education. That, then, is our principal task—education along the channels of revolutionary solidarity with the working class. This education, we believe, is best served by the working class youth organizations working directly on the campus, through their own fractions and classes, and through general discussion clubs.

A Pledge of Loyalty

How then, you ask us, do we reconcile our position with participation in this congress. Eventually we may be able to persuade you of the justness of our argument. As yet we have not—and we face the reality of your organization. We see in this delegation the ferment of socially conscious students who desire expression in a militant organization that will carry their voice and activity onto the campus. Side by side with you we are therefore ready to loyally undertake our share in that activity—up to the point where it does not flagrantly contradict our political beliefs.

In the past, our members have worked loyally either in the S.L.I.D. or the N.S.L. What they asked in return—the privilege of expressing themselves freely in political discussion and on the day to day problems of work—they may not always have received in the N.S.L. This privilege we also ask in the American Student Union as the premise of our loyal collaboration.

Progress and Program

As you read this the Union is not yet consummated. There is consequently still time to apply ourselves to the direction of the organization. In itself fusion does not decide a progressive orientation. Should it fail in the elaboration of a proper program, its consummation will be a retrogressive step. A living organism cannot be weighed as an abstraction; only as a reality.

All the participants realize that something more is required of the new organization than a militant stand against tuition fees, discrimination and academic tyranny. This realization has occasioned a distrust that is probably unique in two organizations meeting for the purpose of consolidation. Many elements, reacting soundly to the fundamental issues, have voiced their opposition to the fusion for fear of capitulation to the reactionary slogans of the Y.C.L. as expressed through the N.S.L. Of our articles in an internal bulletin of the S.L.I.D. that we have before us, three are directed against the fusion. Nevertheless, despite these manifestations of mistrust and opposition, it appears that the American Student Union will be constituted.

Foremost among the issues which the convention must squarely face are its relations with the working class and its resolution on the struggle against war. The very existence of a student organization is fraught with dangerous possibilities. We do not say that this will be the case; it most certainly is not the case today. But as a body representative principally of the middle class, it is particularly subject to the infiltration of Fascist ideology and may be utilized by Fascism in moments of social crisis, as an instrument of expansion. Against this there exists no absolute guarantee other than clarity in matters of principle and program. That is to say, the correctness of its program—short of its being a completely communist document at which time it would naturally merge into and become part of the revolutionary political organization—lies in the degree of its alliance with the proletariat and the bourgeoisie.

A Meaningful War Program

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American Student Union will categorically assert its solidarity and support of the working class. This declaration can, however, only have meaning if it is implemented and elaborated in other sections of the program. Under current conditions the real test is its answer to the problems of war.

Just as the only progressive outlook for the student lies in his unity with the laborer, so does the struggle against capitalist war require an unmistakable affirmation that only the destruction of capitalism and its replacement by a workers' society can eliminate war. Yet even that is insufficient. The past has provided numerous instances of sincere opposition to imperialist war converted into an equally sincere approval. On this score, therefore, particular attention must be paid to the immediate as well as the ultimate phases of activity.

We all of us realize how near war actually is. The Japanese encroachments on China, the Italian rape of Ethiopia, the unending inner imperialist conflicts (Tang and the United States for example), and the general imperialist hatred of the Soviet Union are laden with high-powered explosives. Tomorrow may witness the universal conflagration. Hence we must, today, clearly plot our course. Temporizing, hedging, vacillating today will be fatal tomorrow. The choice of sides must be clear.

The dispute that will occupy the major attention of this convention has already been aired. Can we support U. S. imperialism in any war it may undertake. Any answer but a resounding NO is an advance admission of betrayal. A harsh word—but unavoidable. U. S. capitalism, as that of every developed capitalist nation, has long since outlived its progressive possibilities. We are no longer living in 1860. If American imperialism takes the path of war, it does so with the design of preserving its rotting structure under the lash of its increasing contradictions. More intense oppression of its native working class, starker exploitation of its conquered peoples, ruthless murder of millions of worker-soldiers—this, and this alone, is the meaning of imperialist war.

An "Actual" Problem

We are not arguing against a phantasm. At the American Youth Congress meeting in Detroit, the Y.C.L. and N.S.L. declared their readiness to support some wars of American imperialism by refusing to oppose all. Mike Gold, writing in the Daily Worker, proclaimed the obligation of fighting in the armies of U. S. imperialism against Japan—the "yellow peril," you know. Spokesmen of the Communist Party have established the same difference between "good" and "bad" imperialist wars in other lands. And on what criterion? On the criterion that the United States may for her own venal purposes be temporarily allied with the Soviet Union! We do not challenge the right of the Soviet Union to accept such assistance. In such a war the Russian workers will be duty-bound to fight for the U.S.S.R. We do warn

against a propaganda that will drive the students and workers into the armies of imperialism, there to suspend their struggle against imperialism, there to submit to the dictates of capitalist rule—under a new version of "Make the World Safe for Democracy."

No better instance of a tendency to dangerous illusions can be cited than the Peace Mobilization. We make special mention of it here because there is a great likelihood that the American Student Union will be characterized by just such acts. As a matter of fact, the mobilization holds the key to the attitude of the A.S.U. Its importance is by no means measured by the one paragraph we devote to it. All the confusing and pacifist tendencies were nowhere better expressed than at this demonstration which compromised the struggle against war by transferring its leadership to liberals and outright reactionary jingoists (Robinson). If the future anti-war activities of the A.S.U. are manifested in such Peace Mobilizations there is real cause for alarm.

You delegates are thereby obligated to insist upon a categorical rejection of a policy which was nowhere better demonstrated than at the Peace Mobilization and as categorical an iteration that under NO circumstances will you lend any manner of support to the war maneuvers of the bosses. There is some evidence that in a spirit of conciliation a "compromise" formula promising no support of the government in the event of war may be adopted. Herein lies a most insidious confusion. Let empty-headed demagogues argue a distinction between support of a war and the government that pro-

ecutes it. Given certain circumstances that may be possible. Given the circumstances of advanced capitalism, it can only mean support of imperialist conflict. A striking condemnation must be dealt, this formula as well as that equally nefarious division of capitalist states into those who desire peace and those who desire war. All capitalism is our enemy, and our main enemy is at home.

Our enemy is at the same time the enemy of the Soviet Union. No program against war is complete if it fails to distinguish between our insurmountable hatred of capitalism and our unreserved loyalty to the Soviet Union. A concession to middle-class sentiment, as we have heard may be the case, by omitting the defense of the Soviet Union is intolerable. In pledging ourselves for the defense of the Soviet Union, we must sharply indicate that this does not, and cannot, rest on alliances with bourgeois governments, peace pacts that shield the moment of anti-Soviet attack, but only in the strength of the laboring masses that rally to its defense.

It is easy enough to combat, or speak against, war prior to its outbreak. We must be prepared to continue that agitation under other forms and methods once war occurs. In other words we remain determined to continue the war we approve of and participate in loyally—the war of the workers against the bosses, in order to actively interfere with the functioning of the war machine, to seek socialist victory on the basis of capitalist defeat.

On Whom to Rely

Whatever the shape of our anti-war struggle, it cannot countenance reliance on the bourgeoisie. Policies that place the struggle against war in the hands of the bourgeoisie, or their agent, the government, are tantamount to delivering the workers into the hands of the war mongers. The working class and its allies do not rely on capitalist politicians and governments, but themselves actively intervene. Hence you must condemn at this convention any agitation for governmental sanctions or neutrality. Obligate yourself to defend governmental sanctions, and you obligate yourself to defend what results from their imposition.

Essentially a contest between social-patriotism and revolutionary decision is being decided here. Clarity alone can dispell the dangerous illusion of social-patriotic slogans and policy. That clarity must be reflected in the program that you write.

Fraternally,
Spartacus Youth League of
the United States.

Pointers for Consideration

(Continued from Page 1)

Its slogans shall be "The enemy is at home," "The enemies of the workers in time of peace are their same enemies in time of war."

12. The American Student Union must declare that Fascism, as the most ruthless and brutal form of capitalist rule, is employed to maintain civil peace, so necessary to the conduct of a successful war policy. The struggle against war presupposes the struggle against Fascism.

13. The American Student Union must declare that the only way in which these ends can be attained is through the alliance of the student behind the working class and the organized labor movement, which is fighting for the same ends and which alone possesses the power to attain them.

14. The American Student Union must declare that war can be abolished only through the abolition of the capitalist system, and that it shall in time of war support the struggle to transform it into the war to abolish capitalism.

ORGANIC UNITY VERSUS REVOLUTIONARY UNITY

Unity and War

(Continued from Page 1)

youth movement recognized that just as the youth plays no independent role in society in general, so it cannot play a role independent of the revolutionary party. The youth International of Karl Liebknecht asserted its independence from the social democratic parties only when those parties committed the great betrayal of 1914. But that independence was again rejected when the C. I. and Y. C. I. were organized because when the Y.C.I. was able to attach itself to a revolutionary Marxist International. The program of the C.I. of Lenin and Trotsky became the program of the Y.C.I. The essential function of the revolutionary youth organization was established to be that of organizing and training the immature youth in the ideas of Marxism, preparing them for membership in the party and for leadership in the proletarian revolution. Thus the revolutionary youth organization was to be the "school for communism."

The emancipation of all the oppressed depends upon the revolutionary unity and the revolutionary organization of the working class. That is an axiom which no conditions under capitalism can change. All the lessons of history prove conclusively that only a party united on a revolutionary program is capable of leading the proletariat to victory. Any party unified on a reformist or centrist program can only lead to defeat. Contrast the victory of the Russian revolution where the working class was divided, but where the revolutionary Marxist party under the circumstances took the leadership of the proletarian movement, to the defeat in Austria where the working class was unified in one reformist party. How many more Austrian tragedies are needed before the inescapable lesson is learned that "unity as such" is disastrous and that only revolutionary unity is of any value to the working class.

One of the chief arguments for this unity is the impending imperialist war. What would be the program of this new organization? Green states that it should be opposed to imperialist war. On the surface, this appears to be very good. But only fools are impressed by surface appearances. Today, the test for a revolutionist is not any longer whether he or she is "opposed" to imperialist war. Every Christian pacifist is opposed to imperialist war, but at the same time, he is also bitterly opposed to the class war and to wars of colonial peoples against their imperialist oppressors. Mere platonic, moral, or ethical opposition to war is meaningless. Even among the blackest reactionaries are to be found opponents of this or that war, at this or that time. The question is not merely one of opposition to war, but rather of an effective program for combatting imperialist war. The S.Y.L., basing itself on the teachings of Marx, Lenin and Trotsky, and the accumulated experiences of the working class, declares that the struggle against war is inseparable from the struggle for the overthrow of capitalism. There is no such thing as a struggle against war, in and by itself. That is why anti-war congresses of pacifists, liberals, doctors, actresses, etc. and such conferences against war, as the Amsterdam Congress, are farces and cannot effect any kind of genuine and lasting struggle against it.

Furthermore, the eloquent silence Nolsen—Ed.) of the Young Communist League on another point must be considered very seriously. What about opposition to an imperialist government which is in some sort of an alliance with the Soviet Union? Shall the new youth organization do the same as the French C. P. which has promised faithfully to support the bourgeois government of France in case of war, because of the alliance of the French imperialists with the

Soviet Union? Would Gil Green also advocate that if the Wall Street government in Washington were to make an alliance with the Soviet Union, the new youth organization should support that government when it fights Japan which is also hostile to the Soviet Union? Or, does Green propose that the new youth organization shall follow the policy of the Seventh Congress of the C. I. and support the democratic imperialist governments in a war against a Fascist imperialist government?

What Then?

We reiterate: The only unity that can lead the working class out of its present desperate position onto the road to socialism is unity based upon the teachings of Marx and Lenin — REVOLUTIONARY UNITY! Any other unity spells doom for the working class. The working class today has no revolutionary international organization. That must be built. The present proposals of the C. I. and the Y.C.I. prove this fact beyond a shadow of a doubt. With Fascism on the offensive; another world war already begun; the Spartacus Youth League calls upon all revolutionists to unite under one banner of revolutionary Marxism, the banner of the FOURTH INTERNATIONAL and the NEW REVOLUTIONARY YOUTH INTERNATIONAL. FOR UNITY OF THE REVOLUTIONARY YOUTH ON A REVOLUTIONARY PROGRAM!

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