

Young Worker

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YOUTH CARRIES ON-- THE TRADITIONS OF '76

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WHEN the delegates coming from every part of this nation gather in Detroit on July 4, they will face vital problems. These problems arise from the fact that a generation of youth has grown to manhood and womanhood devoid of opportunity, deprived of the elementary rights to "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

In attempting to solve these problems, it is entirely fitting that we on this 150th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, turn back the pages of history to learn how our forefathers solved their critical problems.

In 1776, the people of the thirteen American colonies faced a crisis. To remain subjects of the tyrannical British Crown, or to become an independent republic free from foreign oppression—this was the question. The former meant regression, the latter progress. The colonists chose, the fight for independence—**for**

Eighty-five years later, in 1861, the American people faced another crisis. The continued industrial development of this country demanded the complete abolition of the antiquated system of chattel-slavery. The nation divided into two hostile camps. Once again the American people decided in the interest of progress.

TODAY we face a new crisis.

This wonderful land and its wealth, created by the physical and mental labor of past generations, has been usurped by a handful of wealthy parasites. This class of modern industrial lords is responsible for our present plight, for the fact that the human and natural resources of our country are being wasted and destroyed. At a time when science and modern industry make possible greater material and cultural benefits for all mankind, our generation of youth faces various degrees of deprivation. While millions of men, women and children lack the bare neces-

sities of life, milk is dumped into rivers, wheat and cotton plowed under and livestock destroyed in millions.

Once again the American people, and first of all the young generation, must decide between reaction and progress.

THE Second American Youth Congress has a job to do. It must carry forward the traditions of 1776 and 1861. It must align itself with all forces who stand

their "Committees of Correspondence," which applied the general principles of the movement to the various localities and townships.

THE Second American Youth Congress too, must discuss the practical aspects of reaching and winning the bulk of America's youth for the united front movement, for the Declaration of Rights. Imme-



C. C. C. and Transient Camps, the conditions of Negro youth in some locality, the conditions of child laborers in certain branches of industry, etc. These could be publicized throughout the nation and help make the entire country conscious of the special problems confronting America's youth.

There is no question in our minds but that the Second American Youth Congress has every possibility for working out a broad correct program and the forms and methods by which the same can be applied. The main pre-requisite for this is the continued unity of the many organizations involved. This means that the program must be one which can be accepted by large masses of youth and their organizations, regardless of diverse political or religious views, regardless of nationality or color.

THE united front of these hundreds of organizations of youth must continue until the Declaration of Rights is won, until the demands of youth are granted. To consider the American Youth Congress as a united front which must disband after one or more specific action, as some people think, is to consciously or unconsciously destroy all that is being built. The American plutocracy must be given to understand that the American Youth Congress is here to stay until its demands are won.

This does not imply that any organization should be asked to give up its own independent program and principles. On the contrary, every organization has the right to propagate its own special views. However, no organization has the right to force these views on the united front. We, Communists, openly declare our struggle for the abolition of capitalism, for the establishment of a Soviet America. However, we are ready to unite with other organizations of youth in the American Youth Congress on the basis of a minimum program which we can all actively support in the interest of progress.

IN 1776, the colonists dramatized their need for common action by circulating an illustration of a serpent divided in thirteen parts, with the words over it, "UNITE OR DIE!" The thirteen colonies united, defeated reaction and built a mighty nation. Today, when our young generation faces a world of unemployment, hunger and war, let us remember the wise creed of the founders of this nation. Only unity on the basis of a common program of action can defeat reaction, can lead us toward "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."



for progress, who oppose the modern dogmas and tyrants, the slave-masters of our industrial era. The most important of these forces is the working class, those who labor by hand and brain.

THE young generation in striving for a better life will also meet up with the modern Tories—the open reactionaries. These are already beginning to squirm with fear at the growing movement of youth. The Hearsts and their ilk, live the Times of '76 and the South-eastern army of '61 will not stop at anything to keep the young generation from gaining its rights. But the tardy acts of these public enemies will not frighten us. We know that a man is judged not alone by his friends but also by his enemies. History will cherish the memory of those who fight for progress. It will have words of contempt for those who stand in its path.

But in order to carry out the Declaration of Rights to be adopted in Detroit, good intentions alone will not suffice. In 1776 the fighters for liberty knew this. Before they succeeded in defeating reaction they worked tirelessly to bring their message to the people. They established people the conditions of the youth in the

directly following the Second Congress, the membership groups, of every affiliated organization, plus many other groups of youth, will meet and discuss the Declaration of Rights. Millions of American Youth must have the opportunity of expressing themselves on the Declaration of Rights, so that in every sense it becomes the proclamation of youth.

In discussing effective organization, the Second Congress should take up the feasibility of establishing a network of local "youth councils," which will react to every grievance and injustice to youth, and in every locality whether it be city, county or town, unite the youth for common action. Only this will make the American Youth Congress a living force of ever greater dimension and strength. Serious thought will also have to be given to the various forms and methods by which to further develop the work of the congress. Special attention should be paid to those forms and methods which will dramatize the plight of the young generation to the entire country. Following the congress, regional groups could form broad investigation committees to bring to the attention of the American

