

WE'RE NOT LOST

The National Secretary of the Young Communist League offers his organization's views on the formation of a United Youth League in America

By GIL GREEN

Illustrated By Bard

MUCH has been written and even more said about the plight of the younger generation. In fact, without knowing a thing about astronomy, I am willing to wager that if the articles written on this subject were assembled and placed end to end, they would reach the moon. And after reading a good deal of the stuff, one cannot help but get the impression that at least a few of the honorable authors live on that celestial body.

Now, I want to make it clear at the outset that I certainly do not object to articles and speeches on the youth problem. In fact, I am oftentimes a victim of this habit myself and am only too glad to welcome the participation of others as helping to sharply bring to the attention of the American people the conditions existing among its youth. What I do object to however, is the note struck by a good number of these experts (!).

There seems to be a movement afoot to sell youth the idea that it is a "lost generation" and as such has nothing to live for. As a Communist, I can only disagree completely with this view of the official prophets of despair.

We Make Our Lives

Of course, we as Communists know only too well of the plight of America's younger generation, of its thwarted ambitions, sufferings and hardships. In fact, we believe that we realize this state of affairs better than most people. But this does not lead us to the belief that all is lost.

To draw such a conclusion would mean to admit we're licked and ready to fold up. Nothing is further from the truth. America's youth may be down but they're not out. The fact is, they are only beginning to fight.

We firmly believe that the young men and women of this country, together with the rest of the people as a whole, have every possibility for deciding the future course of their own lives and of the nation. But in order to do that, they must first have a clear understanding of the cause of their difficulties, and of the solution.

Our plight is not due to some natural catastrophe—some famine or earthquake. Our country has more than sufficient wealth and natural resources to

provide its youth with ample opportunity and with guarantee for future security. We live in the most modern industrial land on the face of the globe. Our rich fertile fields can provide food abundantly. Our giant factories can turn out products in an endless stream. Yet the farmers are forced to reduce their crops, and industries operate at only 60% capacity. And this, in the face of millions who are needy and a whole generation of youth that is more than anxious to work, to build and to create.

A System in Decay

What then is the cause? Are we to pin the blame on to the likes and dislikes of a temperamental God and thus escape the real answer. Some people may, but we do not.

We declare that the cause of our plight is to be found in the nature of our present day society—capitalism. Under this system our land and its wealth, the accumulated product of the sweat and blood of generations of American toilers, has become the private property of a small group of millionaires and billionaires—the capitalist class. It is this class with its sole motive of profit which is responsible for the hardships and sufferings of our generation and our people.

Capitalist society throughout the world is in the midst of an ever deepening crisis. It is declining and decaying. The very productive forces which it nurtured and developed with the aid of science and technique, are today running wild, beyond control. Through the introduction of modern machinery and new methods of speedup, less and less workers produce more and more goods. Ours is the age of mass production and of mass unemployment. Ours is the fate of a surplus generation.

This System Works

But this need not be so. By uniting its ranks and joining hands with all toilers under the leadership of the working class, the youth of this country can remove from its throat the clutches of the parasitic ruling class. It can help build a society in which exploitation of man by man will be unknown and in which the productive forces of the

country will be utilized in the interests of the people. This is what we mean by a Socialist society.

There was a time when people said Socialism was impossible, that a society without classes, without exploitation, was only a wild figment of the imagination. Today we know differently. We can point to one land which has already abolished capitalism and is building a Socialist world—the Soviet Union.

Is it an accident that of all the lands of the world, the Soviet Union is the only one which faces no crisis, which has no unemployment and which is constantly raising the material and cultural level of its people? It is not! Socialism has decisively proven its superiority over Capitalism. Socialism works!

We Are the Builders

If our generation is to live up to the heritage of those who went before us, if we are to keep alive the ideals of freedom and equality, if we are to follow the revolutionary and democratic traditions of the founders and builders of this nation, then, upon our shoulders rests the responsibility of ending the plight of our generation and of future generations by militantly fighting for a Socialist America.

It is the struggle for Socialism that converts us from the status of a lost generation to that of a generation with great ideals, courage and purpose. We must make the dreams of past generations for a truly free America a reality.

Nor can we hesitate. Either we go forward or backward. Decaying capitalism is dragging the people of the world into another horrible slaughter. In order to maintain its rule, it is destroying the hard-won democratic rights of the people, and driving towards fascism.

The youth of America must not permit this country to retrogress into a land of capitalist reaction, oppression and war. The victory of fascism in the United States will mean the destruction of all past culture and progress and the doom of our generation.

Hands Across America

It is for this reason that the burning need of the moment is the unification of all progressive forces and first of all of labor, in the fight for peace and for the immediate needs of the masses of people and the youth. But more than that, it is necessary for all those youth who wish to bring about a new social order to band themselves together in one united organization of youth.

In the past few years, tens of thousands of young men and women have become convinced of the bankruptcy of capitalism. Everywhere youth are talking of the need for a new society based

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on production for use and not profit. Why cannot all these radical youth, these class conscious youth, unite in one organization that will make them a more effective factor in the struggle for their immediate needs and will educate and train them as fighters for Socialism?

Such a united organization would grow by leaps and bounds. Such an organization through practical experience and democratic discussion would help youth find the path to freedom.

We call upon the members and leaders of other youth groups (Socialists, Christian, Farmer-Laborite, Epic, Townsend, etc.), to discuss with us the possibility of one united youth organization of the above character. What are your views? What are your proposals?

Join with us in a ringing cry: We are not a lost generation!
