

Bob
Detroit
April 17, 1958

We have accomplished a great deal since we began to do youth work in an organized fashion last June: a national newspaper has been established, a number of local clubs have been organized through which we have met many young people, and a conference has been held on a near-national scale.

We originally hoped to do these things, and we have, but not exactly in the way we first expected. And we have only begun to build the revolutionary-socialist youth movement that is our goal. The work has proceeded very unevenly in different cities and a lot of experiments have been made from which we all have learned a great deal. And many of us have different ideas now than we did a year ago on what can and should be done in the youth field.

It is certainly time that the discussions on perspectives that have been occurring in the local clubs should now be extended into a national discussion.

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The working class, and young people in general, in this country are still essentially conservative in their political outlook. There is no significant movement as yet toward even a labor party. What does exist that is new is a widespread dissatisfaction with the two capitalist parties and a growing interest in socialist ideas. And of course within the radical movement the regroupment process is still going on. But there is not yet any sign that a mass radicalization will occur within the near future.

This coming labor radicalization will greatly change the characteristics of the youth movement we are working in today. In a period of social crisis sharper lines will be drawn between the social democrats, the centrists, and the revolutionists as their different programs seek for mass support. Factions will organize around each program and their polemics will tend to break the youth movement apart. At that time an independent revolutionary-socialist youth organization will have an opportunity to develop on a large scale. This kind of organization is the goal we are aiming at while working in the IBM clubs today.

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These clubs are really only the beginnings of a movement. They are a collection of separate organizations, held together mainly by the efforts of our own tendency within them. The loose movement that these clubs form today is certainly unstable, in the sense that it has no clear and worked-out political program, which is the only thing that can give real stability to any kind of political organization. It is even more unstable because it contains groupings that adhere to different programs, primarily the SWP and CP programs.

This does not mean that the movement will soon fall apart, nor that it has no political justification or viability. I think that just the contrary is true, that the movement's heterogenous character is well suited to the times. In fact this character is just what has stimulated its present growth and ensures its future development.

Possibly the majority of American youth are already dissatisfied with capitalism. Certainly large numbers are seeking out the socialists and listening to their ideas. And many of them are becoming socialists. The experiences of

all the IBM clubs proves this. But still, few young people are ready to commit themselves to partisan politics, to any of the established socialist parties. And few of them are ready to join a revolutionary-socialist youth movement.

But we have met many young people willing and eager to join a socialist club that will not commit them programmatically. What these people want is a club that will give them an opportunity to learn about socialism, to discuss differing socialist ideas. And they want a club that will act, and not just talk, but act in a way that will still not commit them to any definite program.

The "forum movement" is a name that can be applied to the new developments in both the adult and youth fields, and to other countries (notably England) as well as this one. Forums have probably been the largest single activity of all the IBM clubs: they have taken the most effort, and have drawn the biggest public response. Until a labor radicalization occurs it will probably remain so. This is an indication that the main activity of the youth movement today is socialist education and discussion, with socialist action only secondary.

In a way this course was forced on the clubs because of the political differences of the original participants. But it is also an atmosphere that new people are finding congenial. It will undoubtedly continue for a period, though it can't continue forever. As economic conditions deteriorate and political life increases, people will be more willing to participate in socialist political action. The natural desire of young people for action will certainly reassert itself. But for an indefinite period yet the trend will be discussion and education.

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We have generally adopted the term "IBM" to designate the kinds of clubs that exist today, and to use as a slogan to interest new people. There can be a lot of dispute over the political content of the term; the words are general enough to absorb anyone's content. What it actually means to new people is this: IBM is the way young socialists can get together. In a limited sense the clubs have been a kind of united front of pro-SWP'ers and pro-CP'ers carried into a loose organizational form. This kind of unity, though it limits the activities of the clubs, is very attractive to new people as to CP-influenced people. It is just what they are looking for today. well as

Our work in the past year has followed a much different course than we had originally expected. It was first considered solely as a regroupment of revolutionary-socialists, but it soon shifted as we found we could draw political people other than CP'ers, and new people as well into the clubs. In the adult field an actual regroupment of revolutionary-socialists is still occurring, largely around the united-socialist-ticket proposals of the SWP. But in the youth field, after the merger of the Left Wing Caucus and the SWP youth, this process stopped. Instead, we have been participating in a grouping-together of revolutionary and non-revolutionary and new socialists around the simplest kind of non-partisan socialist ideas.

There are few people in the clubs today that work under the direct discipline of the CP. But there are many in the clubs that are influenced by its politics and who more or less follow its line in their political activity. The attitude of the CP toward the IBM clubs is clearly enough one of great hostility, and more and more it is trying to draw everyone that it can influence out of the clubs. As it becomes firmly reorganized under Fosterite leadership it may be more successful in this. But most of these people have broken with Stalinist

discipline, if not with Stalinist politics, and a lot of them want to participate in a socialist club. The CP doesn't want socialist clubs; it wants liberal clubs. The good elements will stay.

The presence of these people in the clubs has caused a lot of difficulty for us. It limits the political positions the clubs can take, it influences what we ourselves can say at forums, and it has even watered down the socialist character of the Young Socialist somewhat.

This is not the kind of movement we would most prefer, but it does give us a lot of advantages for building the large revolutionary-socialist youth movement that we really want and eventually must have. Earlier we scattered our propaganda more or less broadside in the youth field, but now the IBM clubs provide us with a readymade audience. We can talk to interested people through forums and debates, through club discussions, and through private conversations. We can counterpose revolutionary-socialism to stalinism and social-democracy under generally favorable conditions. We can win people over to our ideas without having to engage in organized combat against rival socialist clubs.

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As the IBM movement continues to grow our relation to it should be generally the same as it has been: as a revolutionary tendency working for its ideas within a larger, amorphous, but generally socialist milieu. But as the local clubs develop and we are freed from the work of initiating them, we can devote more energy to spreading our own political ideas.

Some of the people that we have influenced have joined the SWP, most have not. Most of them feel themselves to be part of a vague revolutionary tendency. And just about all continue to work in the clubs. There is a danger that this will hinder the political development of these people, that their growth into revolutionary cadres will be slow in a club that talks more than it acts.

The best way to prevent this is to see that they get a good political education, and that they join with and work for the revolutionary tendency. To do this we will have to thoroughly understand our own problems and we will have to be well organized as a tendency. Up till now we have been working in every city as a caucus of one sort or another, in some places as an SWP fraction. But we have not been at all organized as a national tendency.

I believe that this is the most valuable step we can take right now. The local IBM clubs are not ready to fuse into a national movement, and they may never be. But the revolutionists in these clubs are ready. The process has already begun in this discussion. Out of it we should aim to work out some new organizational setup that can centralize our discussions and our local work, that can join the revolutionists in the local clubs together and enable us to work more effectively within the IBM movement.

Allen Taplin