

Socialist Youth

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YOUTH INTERNATIONAL VITAL

Can I.U.S.Y. do the Job?

By JACK DIPPLE (Tottenham L.O.Y.)

THE Spring issue of *Quest*, well-produced magazine of the South-West Scotland Federation, contains a forceful Editorial under the title *Our Opportunity*. After criticising the adult Party attitude to the League as a breeding ground for loyal 'Party-liners,' the Editor says:

"Our opportunity lies above all in the International sphere," and later "This National Conference can make history if it issues to its N.C.C. unequivocal instructions that it will not tolerate dallying on this question. We must demand action on a scale such as has never been dreamed of before." "In the midst of the present international turmoil we, in the League, must speak to the young people of the world. We must declare our faith in International Socialism."

Two other letters in the same issue of *Quest* continue on the same theme. An especially good one from James Young, Chairman of Cummock League, says:

"Surely since the last war the people of this country have been seeing on the films and in the press, little but the building of guns, tanks, and, most disastrous of them all, the research which has produced an atom and hydrogen bomb. Is this the way to educate young people of a peace-loving country?" And in concluding his letter, "The eyes of the world look to Britain as the leading country in educational and political activities. Only Socialism can give a real positive lead to the world."

The Scottish delegates at the League of Youth Conference were thoroughly imbued with the spirit of International Socialism. Their spirited rejection of one section of the National Consultative Committee report on international activities, coupled with their enthusiastic support for the rejection of other similar sections, proves this point.

But the whole Conference rose to the occasion when Fred Jarvis, fraternal delegate

from the National Association of Labour Students Organisations, made his plea for friendship with the peoples of Asia and Eastern Europe. His speech paved the way for the attack on the insipid international work of the N.C.C.

The Eton and Slough delegate moved an Emergency Resolution of solidarity with the underground Spanish Socialist fighters against Franco. Tremendous applause greeted the N.C.C. comrade who replied for the Platform, when he accepted this resolution on behalf of the N.C.C. (causing great embarrassment to certain comrades on the platform). In defiance of diplomatic support for Franco by the Labour Government, Leaguers insisted on declaring their support

for the fight against the arch oppressor of Spain. The Emergency Resolution was carried unanimously!

SOCIALIST YOUTH INTERNATIONAL

In rejecting the work of the N.C.C. on the international field, the League has but taken the first step. What is required now is a positive indication of what the League desires in this field. Youth Camps and pen friendships are not enough. Such things as the *18-30 Conference* and participation in the *World Assembly of Youth*, both of which contain Tory and Liberal youth and religious bodies, not to mention stooge colonial youth

(Continued on page 3 col. 1)

LEAGUE WANTS ANNUAL CONFERENCE

EDITORIAL

THE League Conference has been a success. It has proved that the League is a responsible body, able to discuss its problems seriously. It has gone on record in favour of some much-needed alterations in League organisation. And this 'non-political' Conference has shown the futility of trying to separate organisation from politics. International Socialism was proclaimed as our objective, amid a great demonstration of enthusiasm. Conference vigorously demanded an increase in the international activity of the League and passed an Emergency resolution of support for Spanish Socialist Youth now being persecuted by Franco.

The campaign for League democracy has been successful. Not all its demands were passed by Conference, and confusion was shown by allegations that its supporters were disrupters and splitters of the Party. Nevertheless, the main principles of the right to have an Annual National Conference with resolutions and delegates of the Leagues' own choice, and the right to discuss policy at all levels of organisation, were overwhelmingly agreed.

The National Status Movement was subjected to much slander, and a real weakness was shown in its lack of penetration to some

parts of the country, where delegates knew nothing of its activities and were swayed by the statements that we wanted to create a separate Party. The majority of the Southern Region (where the National Status Movement has been most active) supported it strongly. However, the National Status Resolution, embracing all the demands, was defeated by about twenty votes. This is disappointing to many Leaguers, but a defeat by such a narrow margin is by no means a triumph for our opponents.

(Continued page 3, column 3)

WHAT HAPPENED ?

IMPRESSIONS OF CONFERENCE

By PETER EVANS (Richmond L.O.Y.)

A REPORT of the discussion of the first part of the League of Youth Conference would be a very complicated affair, because all the following items were taken at once: motion to refer back part of the N.C.C. report dealing with "Unofficial Bodies"; Tottenham resolution on "Unofficial Bodies"; Beckenham resolution on "Deleterious effect of National Status Campaign"; two amendments to Beckenham's resolution, one from Potters Bar and one from Eton and Slough.

The chairman ruled that the items all dealt with the same subject, but since the Beckenham resolution dealt only with the National Status Campaign, whereas the other items dealt with unnamed "Unofficial Bodies" (a very much wider field), the discussion was very confused. The majority feeling of the Conference was against unofficial bodies, and the Tottenham resolution was defeated.

Then the composite motion from Holborn and St. Pancras, embodying the actual National Status demands, was dealt with. The opponents of this largely repeated the arguments around the previous resolutions and complained of the methods of the National Status Movement, rather than dealt with the points themselves. Delegates from areas other than the Southern Region were in many cases unacquainted with the N.S.M. campaign as an organised movement, and were persuaded that it consisted of a crowd of Party-wreckers and saboteurs, with the result that the resolution was defeated. Though I much regret the decision of the delegates, I think that in most cases it was intended as a manifestation of loyalty to the Party, arising from the "red-scare" arguments of the platform and others.

Incidentally, the Chairman was apparently so confused by the procedure laid down by himself that he forgot to take the vote on a resolution which was being dealt with simultaneously. He had to be called to order from the floor!

The composite National Status motion was defeated by a majority of 25.

On Sunday morning, a resolution complaining of "Baseless Allegations against the Government", which had been moved the previous evening by the Kirkdale delegate

Editorial Policy

The Editorial Board does not necessarily agree with the policy contained in signed articles. It is our intention to publish as far as possible all articles likely to assist in the clarification of Socialist ideas and in the stimulation of discussion generally. We welcome all articles submitted on that basis and will endeavour to publish as space permits.

All correspondence and articles should be sent to :—

Miss Audrey Brown, 67, St. Alphege Road, Edmonton, N.9.

and seconded by an eloquent delegate from Wrexham, was defeated. An important amendment from Norwood was carried by a majority of 76. This will enable policy to be discussed by the League at all levels of its organisation.

The other important feature of the morn-

ing session was the reference back of the international sections of the National Consultative Committee's Report, which was overwhelmingly carried. Under this section, the delegate from Eton and Slough moved an Emergency Resolution sending fraternal greetings to the Socialist Youth of Spain, calling for closer relations with them, which was carried unanimously. Franco's Fascist regime was vigorously condemned, and the Tottenham delegate attacked the sending of an Ambassador to Spain at the same time as we were told that Spanish socialists were suffering persecution. Conference responded enthusiastically, and supported the Scottish delegate who said that we ought to be ashamed of our lack of international activity.

In the afternoon a further victory was scored by the passage of a resolution from Harrow West, seconded by myself on behalf of Richmond and Barnes, supporting the need for an Annual Delegate Conference, without delegates or resolutions being vetted by Constituency Parties beforehand. The League of Youth is solidly united in favour of a democratic Annual National Delegate Conference.

THE LOST WEEK-END

By a Visitor to the Y.C.L. Conference.

I DON'T know who wrote "The Lost Week-end", but after attending the 18th National Congress of the Young Communist League, I know what he meant. The Congress was a farce—a waste of time for the 256 delegates. Its function was merely to rubber stamp the line of the Cominform and try to instil some much-needed enthusiasm into its membership.

The main discussion took place around the report of John Moss, new Y.C.L. Secretary. This was primarily a 'line-fixing' speech with a familiar ring: calling for Youth of all political and religious beliefs to "unite in the struggle for a Five Power Pact of lasting peace." He went on to say later how it would be possible for the Y.C.L. to approach the League of Youth in the May elections to get "joint action to defeat the Tories."

The most striking feature about the 'discussion' that followed was the complete lack of controversy. Every speech was a variation on the original theme. There was no criticism of the policy, no real concrete discussion of the international situation and the perspectives for socialist struggle.

The line, fixed by the top leadership, was holy and not to be questioned. The job of Congress was to engender enthusiasm for it, and the discussion showed that this was a difficult task. Almost every speaker made the point that "not enough is being done by the comrades." "Evenings spent with half a dozen others round a gas fire discussing internal Y.C.L. problems must cease." "We must get out into the streets and take our programme to the Youth."

The delegate from Hackney described how his branch had collected 8,000 'Peace' signatures, canvassing milk bars and pin-table saloons. "This is the way forward," he said.

Much stress was laid, too, on the lack of organised work in the factories and on the need to increase sales of *Challenge* in this

sphere. "Only the Y.C.L. has the correct programme" said one delegate. "We have to take it to the Youth in the factories and they will flock to our banner."

Culture was another prominent topic. Delegates were urged by the National Committee representative to read Dickens' *Martin Chuzzlewit*, describing the role of dollar imperialism. The Oxford delegate informed the Congress that his branch had started a poetry reading circle to help to save Britain's cultural heritage from Yankee influence.

The whole atmosphere was so artificial that even Harry Pollitt was forced to remark on it. He complained that there was no conviction in the speeches. He said that everything was taken for granted. "It's all written down for you," he said. Pollitt then called for a return to the old pioneering spirit, for a revivalist campaign. "Speak more from the heart," he urged.

Hero-worship marked the close of the Congress. All the fraternal delegates, National Committee members, and finally Harry Pollitt, mounted the rostrum one by one to receive tumultuous applause. Then there were three cheers for the Congress decisions, followed by three cheers for Comrade Stalin, proposed by Pollitt. "Let him hear you in the Kremlin, comrades."

Thus ended this two-day fiasco. Summing up, I would say that this week-end proved beyond doubt that the Y.C.L. can never build a strong movement amongst the youth of this country while continuing blindly to follow the dictates of Moscow.

Don't Abolish the Boss

SAY NORAH WALSH, MANCHESTER.

WHILE welcoming the introduction of a League paper, I feel that we should not use it as a medium for expression of extremist and bitter views, founded, no doubt, on sincere and burning idealism, but nevertheless impractical and even dangerous.

I should like to commend on some of the articles in your mid-December issue. Norman Goodchild (*Youth Wants Peace Through Socialism*) thinks it is inconsistent to work for peace by piling up arms. I would remind him that our idealism will not deter a potential aggressor unless we have the practical backing of power. It would simply be an ostrich-like disregard of danger if we were to allow other countries (perhaps not so idealistic as ourselves) to attain that position where they may dictate terms to us by the sheer weight of their armaments.

He also bitterly denounces the "Boss class," the "Capitalist class." Now, while agreeing that there has been shameful and heartless exploitation of the workers by capitalists in the past, I feel obliged to point out two things. These same capitalists had usually 'risen from the ranks' of the workers, and England at that time was in a

stage of social evolution and so there was bound to be serious dislocation and social upheaval.

In addition, the bosses have an important and necessary place in an industrial society such as ours.

Even in workers' organisations such as the Co-op, there must be managers and so on. Incidentally, the Co-op workers have to form a Union to protect themselves against their employers—risen from the ranks!

We must not try to build the future of our country on bitterness and hatred; certainly let us learn from the past and resolve not to fall into the same errors, but to foster class hatred and stir up old bitterness is simply to play into the hands of the Communists, who are out to undermine our freedom and impose on us the iron shackles of Stalin.

Jack Hamilton (*Youth in Industry*) wants shorter working hours and one month's holiday a year. Right; that is a worthy object—but what do you intend to give in return? Are you prepared to work harder and stop clock-watching? If not, industry will collapse, unemployment will once again raise its ugly head, and the sufferers will be the very people whose cause you champion—the workers.

John Reekie (*Prices Rise—We Pay*) disagrees with Government policy on important issues. You have a right to your opinions, John, but you are playing into the hands of the Conservatives, who want a split in the Party. We must aim for unity on all main issues. Remember—United we stand, Divided we fall.

John Daly (*A Programme is Vital*) would like to see eighteen year olds enfranchised. It is sobering to reflect that youth at that age is usually headstrong, and impetuous (I repeat, usually), and so is liable to fall for the most glamorous, violent, and revolutionary doctrine available, to wit, Communism. Its 'democratic' slogans appeal to the blindly adventurous, and what is more adventurous than youth?

In conclusion, may I say to all members of the League of Youth—whenever a doctrine appeals right away to your feelings and idealism, don't affiliate yourselves to it immediately. Study it carefully and objectively and try to rid your minds of bitterness and prejudice. If it stands up to this test then go ahead: let your idealism strengthen you to work for it, give your whole energy to it, and you need never reproach yourselves for having acted unwisely in your haste.

Editorial

(Continued from page 1)

Later in the Conference, when some of the main points were taken separately, they were overwhelmingly carried, and our task now is to ensure that these decisions are implemented.

Conference went unanimously on record for an Annual National Conference. We must give the National Consultative Committee every possible support in its endeavours to get this operated.

DISCUSSION OF POLICY

A resolution from Kirkdale condemned unspecified 'baseless allegations' against the Government which are made by various Leaguers, also unspecified, but the amendment from Norwood which was passed by Conference was a very good answer to this. Whilst also condemning baseless allegations, it provided for discussion by the League of Party Policy at all levels of its organisation, in order that the frustration within the League will be overcome and it will be enabled to play a more useful part in the Labour Party. The constructive speech of Peter Fletcher of Norwood, moving this amendment, contrasted superbly with the 'red scare' speeches of his opponents.

The resolution from Willesden which put the question of policy discussion even more strongly was the prelude to an example of highly undemocratic Chairmanship, when the Chairman refused even to hear a point of order from the floor and went on to take a vote amidst indignant protests and with the vast majority of the Conference not participating in the voting. The Willesden resolution was therefore declared as fallen—but this is a very hollow victory indeed, so shaky that the Chairman refused to allow a recount, despite great demand from the floor.

We must, of course, continue to press for the acceptance of the other points of National Status within the League and Party. But the decisions already taken by the League Conference will ensure great changes in the League—if they are carried out. Our task now is to see that this is done.

SOCIALIST YOUTH CHARTER

The National Status movement in its organised form is no longer necessary. It is essential, however, that the League gets down to discussing a Youth Charter. The Conference declared for International Socialism. We must press home the idea that this vague declaration—inspiring and important though it was—will not go far towards preventing a war. We must now go forward to show how we, the youth, can help to make socialism a reality.

A Socialist Youth Charter could be the means of winning the thousands of young workers we need. Discuss it in your branches now, and send us your ideas.

INTERNATIONAL

(Continued from Page 1)

organisations, are out of the question. They have already folded up without any criticism from us. What we need is a Socialist Youth International, flexible enough to express our point of view without dictation from the adult parties, but with healthy mutual respect and co-operation.

The International Union of Socialist Youth could perform this function if it were transformed into such an instrument. The League must demand that I.U.S.Y. becomes a body for the positive leadership of the struggles of youth throughout the world for better living conditions. Much more information on this body should be made available to League members, and they must take a far greater interest in it than they have in the past. The League of Youth should play an important part in I.U.S.Y. and it is our job to see that it does. We want a positive programme for the youth of the world, not another appendage to the anti-Soviet crusade.

Again in the words of the Editor of *Quest*:

"Declaring our hatred of war, we must emphasise our desire for a real solution to this world's problems, and we must follow it up by concrete examples of our determination to achieve that end."

All Leaguers should read

Socialist Outlook - 2d. monthly

A Worker's Alphabet

A is for All, All into the fight,

Attack on the bosses to put them to flight.

B is for Battles that we must win

To bring the new society in.

C is for Courage the workers have shown,

Class Conscious and Confident they'll hold their own.

D is for Dope that the Press Lords give us

Deceit is their trade, they're really superfluous.

E is for Energy that will carry us thro',

Everyone class conscious, steadfast and true.

F is for Fight, our Fight to the end

For we're solid together, not an inch will we bend.

G is for Grab all, the bosses you know

Greedy and Grasping, one day they must go.

H is for Hardship we all must endure

However, keep smiling for victory is sure.

I is for Interest, profits and rent

Into the pockets of the Indolent.

J is for Justice in ruling class law

Juries Judge strikers while bosses plan war.

K is for Knife with which the Government strive

To cut your standards for the armaments drive.

L is for Luxembourg, Liebnicht and Lenin

Who showed us the way and made a beginning.

M is for Marx who said long ago

That bourgeois society would have to go.

N is for the Need that has arisen

To rid the world of Imperialism.

O is for Outlook, the workers' press

That Transport House would like to suppress.

P is for Peace between every nation

Wake the Party Up!

SAYS A LEAGUER (Now Conscripted)

IN the League of Youth we have many complaints against the Party. I want to show what I feel are our basic complaints, why they exist, and what we can do to put things right.

Our basic complaints are: That the Government is not doing all that it should be doing to make this a Socialist State, and that the League seems unable to alter the Government's policy in any way.

Why isn't the Government forging ahead with a Socialist Policy? Because of bad leadership? Because there is no strong demand in the Party for such a policy? Or because it doesn't think it could face the electorate with undiluted socialism? I would say we have a combination of all three reasons.

Our leadership is not all that it should be; the people of this country do not get the leadership they need to make them ready to fight for socialism. In the Party there is not a big enough demand for action; the Party has gone to sleep (in some Wards a political discussion is a rarity). The people of this country still eat, sleep, think and breathe capitalism, thirteen and a quarter million may have voted Labour at the General Election, but how many are Socialists at heart? How many are satisfied to reap the benefits that a Labour Government has won, but still want to see

That will come with the end of exploitation,

Q is for Quandary the Government's in, It's policy's letting the Tories win.

R's for Rebels making the colonies free They're throwing the Imperialists into the sea.

S is for Solidarity that's winning our fight

Stick well together for victory's in sight.

T is for Trial that you get if you're red One day our class will be judging instead.

U is for Unity, each one for all United we stand till all bureaucrats fall.

V is for Victory of which we are sure, Vanquishing the bosses is the cure.

W is for Workers, Wages and hours We are nearing the day when control is ours.

X is for eXit the whole boss class eXtra enjoyment for me and my lass.

Y is for Young workers to whom fighting is new,

Yes Young but determined to fight with you.

Z is for Zeal shown by the Left Wing Showing the workers what Socialism will bring.

the capitalist profits system in action in case they can gain from that as well?

Why can't we have a say in the Party Policy? We can't as the League on its own. We may be very progressive young people, but we don't represent a very large proportion of the community as a whole, or even of the Labour Party. The Party cannot be guided by a small group alone, be they Attlee's friends, your friends, or my friends.

Answers to both these problems are the same: Wake the Party up, not from the top to start with for we can tackle all that when we have convinced everyone else that a Socialist Policy must be followed through. We must shake our Ward and Divisional Parties; we must take office where we can; we must reorganise, we must stimulate in every Party member belief in socialism, and we must get them to fight with us with resolutions and at Party Conferences. We must get the support of our fellow workers in the Trade Unions. Then and only then can we shake Transport House, then can we be rid of capitalism and be sure that the nation is behind us, for our leaders will gain confidence to lead and new leaders will appear.

I may sound as if I feel all this is easy and can be done in a flash, but let's not kid ourselves—it can't be, it will be a fight, but it's worth everything we can give it. For it is Democratic Socialism, and that is what we mean to give the people of Britain and in time, the whole world.

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BUILDING THE LEAGUE

We intend to devote some of our space to League news, and shall welcome reports of the activities of your League.