

AN APPEAL TO THE DELEGATES TO THE NATIONAL CONVENTION OF THE YCL

Comrades:

5/3/37 28
Your convention decisions are already determined! In the very midst of the pre-convention discussion, those who, like ourselves, expressed disagreement with the People's Front, social patriotic line of the Young Communist League were expelled -- for putting forth our revolutionary convictions at a time especially provided for that purpose. What a mockery of inner-League democracy!

Why these expulsions? Why was less than two weeks permitted for discussion of the draft program of the YCL (first printed in the "Daily Worker", April 10, 1937)? Why do the leaders of the YCL fear discussion, criticism?

Because the YCL, like the CP, has abandoned Marxism, the communism of Lenin and the Russian Revolution. Its program is class collaboration as against class struggle, People's Front as against working class united front, social patriotism instead of revolutionary struggle against all imperialist wars and governments, nationalism in place of proletarian internationalism.

In Spain, the workers and peasants replied to Franco's coup d'etat by spontaneously seizing the factories and land, organizing workers' and peasants' committees and militia. They began the workers' revolution. But the People's Front, above all the Communist Party, opposed these revolutionary steps. Unity with the liberal bourgeoisie had to be maintained at all costs. They became the best defenders of Spanish capitalism; in the name of bourgeois democracy, they dissolve the most democratic organs, the workers' and peasants' committees and militia; they physically attack those who raise the slogan "War at the front (unity of all anti-fascists against Franco) and revolution in the rear" (the continuation of the revolution begun last July until a workers' and peasants' government is formed). Just as Lenin was attacked as an agent of the Kaiser, so those who wish to follow the road of the Russian Bolsheviks are called agents of Hitler!

In France, the People's Front government, which is supported by the Communist Party, bans volunteers to anti-fascist Spain; adopts laws for compulsory arbitration and against criticism of the colonial administration. The People's Front police shoot workers who demonstrate against Fascism; and arrest those who carry on revolutionary propaganda in the army. The Communist Party supports the French army and navy, votes for the military budget, and is preparing the workers for the next imperialist war in the name of the defense of democracy against Fascism. Social patriotism is the essence of the Communist Party program!

Only yesterday this line was exemplified by the action of the Chinese Young Communist League. At its national convention, it placed the butcher of the Chinese masses, Chiang Kai Shok, on its presidium. Will your convention do the same?

You are asked to support the same program. The draft presented to you is merely its expression in the youth field. It is a social democratic or Left New Deal program. One remnant of the old revolutionary tradition is left: the name "Young Communist League" -- would it not be wiser that this also be dropped?

(over)

Left New Dealism: the struggle against the "economic royalists" (not against the capitalist class); the struggle for democracy, which if victorious will lead "in the course of time (to) the realization of that greatest ideal of mankind...a socialist society" (not the revolutionary struggle for power, the dictatorship of the proletariat); against gigantic military expenditures (not against all imperialist armaments and governments in peacetime and wartime); for "full support to the first land of Socialism, the Soviet Union" (no unequivocal statement for the defense of the Soviet Union -- or is this phrase too radical and sectarian?). An organization "of and for America's young people"... "embracing the forward looking youth" (not an organization of young workers which embraces youth of other classes who give allegiance to the working class). Not a word of explicit criticism of Roosevelt. Not even the old demand of the YCL against military control of the CCC camps is mentioned! That would alienate the "forward looking youth"!

The draft program calls for organic unity with the Yipsels on one pre-condition: the expulsion of the Trotskyites from their ranks. And by Trotskyites is meant the consistent revolutionary Socialists, the opponents of People's Frontism. In the Soviet Union, the bureaucratic leaders, who completely dominate the Communist International, have conducted monstrous frame-up trials against Old Bolsheviks. Trotsky, the organizer of the Red Army, and Lenin's co-worker, is called an agent of the Gestapo. Other Old Bolsheviks, the old general staff with Lenin, of the Communist International, are accused of plotting the destruction of workers' power in Russia and instituting a Fascist regime. With the aid of these "trials" a furious international campaign is conducted against the revolutionary Socialists in the Soviet Union, Spain, France and the United States. All this in order to put across the nationalist program of the Stalin leadership, and its People's Front program in the capitalist countries! These trials make more difficult the defense of the workers' Soviet Union, the struggle against Fascism, war and capitalism. Only if this line is defeated can world socialism be victorious.

Unity of the youth is the need of the moment. Unity on a revolutionary program--a program which rejects People's Frontism and social patriotism and raises the banner of Marx, Liebknecht and Lenin.

That is why we join the Young People's Socialist League, the organization which scores of YCLers have joined in the past months. We urge you to critically examine the policies imposed upon you, and we are confident that you will reach the same conclusions as we have, and join the YPSL.

- CCNY DAY BRANCH - Bob Taylor
- " " " - Isadore Rosenberg
- " " " - Bill Davis
- " " " - Milton Zaslow (Resigned)
- " " " - Abe Weber "
- " " " - Max Mont "
- TOM PAINE " - Bernard Lieberman
- " " " - Irving Feigin
- NATHAN HALE" - Helen Gourin
- SUNNYSIDE " - Maritian Malraux (Resigned)

New York City, May 2, 1937