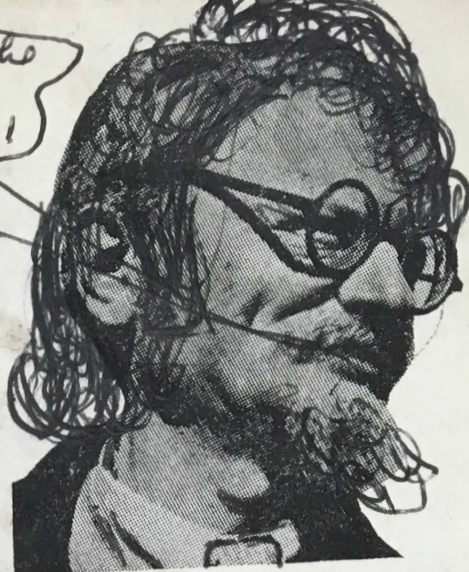


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# THE YOUNG SOCIALISTS 1970

## Programme and Perspectives

**DRAFT RESOLUTION**  
for the 10th Annual Conference  
to be held on 11/12 April, 1970  
at the Spa, Scarborough

PETER G. ...  
MEMORIAL ...



**PETER GRAHAM,  
MEMORIAL LIBRARY**

This Draft Resolution is submitted by the National Committee of the Young Socialists for the Tenth Annual Conference of the Young Socialists which will be held on April 11 and 12 at The Grand Hall, The Spa, Scarborough.

It is open for any amendment or alteration and addendum that you may think necessary.

Branches have the opportunity to submit counter resolutions if they wish.

All amendments must be sent to S. Torrance, National Secretary, 186a Clapham High Street, London, S.W.4.

# 1 The Young Socialists and the international class struggle

**THE** Young Socialists fight on all questions affecting youth against the capitalist system which deprives them of security, of education, of a future.

All the great human conquests of science and technique, all the heritage of culture, are turned by capitalism into instruments of exploitation and destruction.

The oppression of colonial peoples, the prospect of mass unemployment, the growth of militarism and racialism, the threat of world war—these are the horizons of capitalism.

Youth all over the world is rising to reject that future. The millions of young Vietnamese

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workers and peasants who come forward year after year to beat back American imperialism have inspired a generation of youth in every continent.

Now the long and bitter struggles of the colonial peoples come together with the effects of capitalist crisis in Europe, North America and Japan.

The workers of these countries, with the young workers in the forefront, have in the last two years openly challenged the power of the capitalist state and of the Stalinist bureaucracy in eastern Europe.

The struggle against capitalism is essentially the struggle for workers' power and socialism. It is an **international** struggle.

The great blows struck by the working class in the recent period are the greatest possible confirmation of the history of our Young Socialist movement.

We have always insisted that youth must build an independent, revolutionary youth movement in which all the problems of youth are brought into the struggle of the working class for power, guided by Marxist theory and the revolutionary party.

## 2 French general strike

In May and June 1968, the workers of France, with the youth in the vanguard and supported by the students, brought the whole capitalist regime to its knees in a great general strike.

A revolutionary situation was created in a period of a few days. Only the treachery of the Stalinist and reformist trade union and party leaders prevented the workers from seizing power.

Instead the de Gaulle government's resignation was followed by a general election. Despite this historic betrayal, the economic concessions forced by the working class so accelerated the crisis of French capitalism that de Gaulle was brought

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beginning to reject these



down by referendum in April 1969.

The Pompidou bankers' government now faces the renewal of the great strike struggles of a growingly confident French working class.

France sets the pattern for the struggle of youth for socialism everywhere.

The fight is a revolutionary one, a fight for power, and it involves the building of an independent revolutionary leadership against the Stalinists and reformists. The Young Socialists will never forget this lesson.

### 3 Czechoslovakia—a landmark

Czechoslovakia proved this to the hilt. August 21, 1968, and the events which followed the Warsaw Pact invasion of that date, is a landmark in the history of the international struggle for socialism and the experience of the Young Socialists and their counterparts internationally.

The same Stalinism which betrayed in France through its 'peaceful roads' here acted with ruthless and massive brutality to suppress the workers of Czechoslovakia who rose up to fight the bureaucracy.

A generation of fighters for socialism was given a bitter lesson in the truth of Trotskyism: the struggle against the Stalinist bureaucracy cannot be won by **reforming** the bureaucracy, only by **political revolution** to overthrow it and thus preserve the socialist basis of the economy; and this struggle for political revolution, against Stalinism, is one with the international fight against capitalism.

The youth in every country, therefore, can wage the struggle for socialism only under the banner of the Fourth International founded by Trotsky in 1938, in the fight to solve the crisis of revolutionary leadership.

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### 4 The Monetary crisis

Since the early 1960s, the capitalist monetary system has been increasingly ridden by crisis, and the relative stability of the post-war boom years has received more and more severe shocks.

The monetary crisis eventually saw devaluations of the pound sterling and of the franc, and only a series of stop-gap measures like the 'two-tier' price system for gold has prevented the return of the international system to the competitive chaos of the twenties and thirties, when the crisis of over-production was made deeper and deeper by successive devaluations.

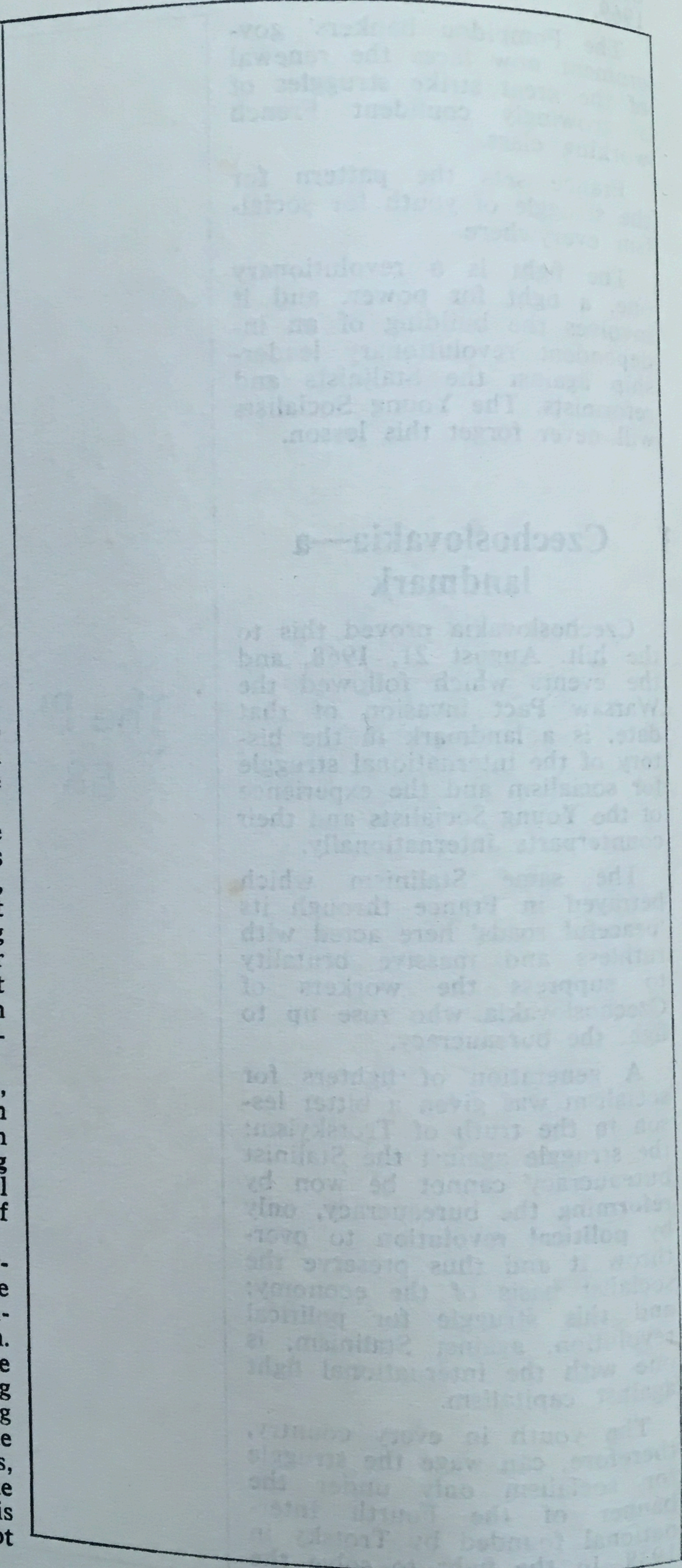
But behind the monetary crisis is the basic contradiction of capitalism. The productive forces are stagnating because of the grip of international finance-capital and the monopolies, with their narrow national frameworks and their subordination of science and technique to profit, and to the militarism necessary for the defence of the profit system.

Of these productive forces, the greatest is the working class itself. The long years of boom, of full employment without major defeats for the working class, has created a situation for the capitalists and their Stalinist supporters which has for them the most awful historical implications.

Capitalism has entered a crisis, a period of recession, which requires the massive destruction of productive forces, including the smashing and even physical annihilation of millions of workers.

But these plans must be carried out in the teeth of the struggle of a strong and confident working class and youth.

Particularly in Europe, the fighting capacity of the working class begins to explode, breaking beyond the controls of the Stalinist and reformist leaders, and right in the face of the inescapable pressure of the crisis upon the capitalists to attempt



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a large-scale defeat for the working class.

The Young Socialists acclaim in particular the resurgence of the workers of West Germany and Italy. A new generation, their whole working experience made since the Second World War, has led the older workers to an inspiring recovery from the period of Hitler's and Mussolini's fascism.

The great strike wave of the late summer and autumn of 1969 was the continuation in those countries of the new stage of the European revolution begun by the French and Czech workers in 1968.

The revival of the struggle at new levels in Spain, Greece and the rest of Europe is on the agenda.

## 5 United States— the centre of economic crisis

The United States itself is the real centre of the economic crisis which underlies all these struggles. Even the preliminary battles—the resistance of the Negro masses, the student struggle, and the nationwide opposition to the Vietnam war—have been marked by great violence and intensity.

This reflects the unprecedented concentration of all imperialism's contradictions at the centre of the system.

Inexorably, these basic considerations are forcing their way into government policy in meeting the growing balance of payments problems.

In the United States above all, the problem of inflation, which expresses the contradiction of a relatively prosperous and confident, trade-union conscious working class as the basis of 'stability', is forcing the pace of an inevitable head-on struggle between the classes.

The American workers, again with the youth to the fore, will move into action with all the confidence of the European workers; but their struggle will

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have a scale and a sharpness caused by the very international strength of US imperialism, which brings into the US all the world problems of capitalism.

It is this struggle of the working class which has been anticipated in the Negro, student and anti-war battles.

In the US as in every other country, the great question is one of revolutionary leadership, of preparation for these great struggles.

## 6 A United Socialist States of Europe

THERE IS no capitalist way out of the world crisis except tens of millions of deaths through depression and the awful prospect of a Third World War. There is no reform solution.

Either the capitalists take on the working class, as they must, and defeat it; or the working class overthrows capitalism in one or more advanced countries.

The Young Socialists are determined that such an overthrow can be carried out. That is why we participated in organizing the International Assembly of Youth in 1967, with all the countries of Europe, the US and many others represented.

That was the real meaning, made clearer every day, of our break from the Labour Party in 1964.

For the United Socialist States of Europe, as part of the world socialist revolution: that is the real perspective before the youth of the capitalist countries.

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## 7 A programme for youth in the struggle against British capitalism

IN BRITAIN, the choice before youth and the working class is now presented directly in the challenge: how can the enemy, the employers and the Tory Party, be defeated in their plans to come back into office and to 'discipline' the working class?

The employing class and the Tories are the arch-enemy of youth and its future. Faithful representatives of the interests of imperialism, they must attempt to dismantle the welfare and education systems, destroy housing as a social service, lower unemployment benefit alongside drastically reducing the labour force, bring in new laws and strengthen judicial, police and military repression against the youth in these worsened conditions, and encourage racialism to divide the youth.

These plans against youth are an essential part of the Tories' attacks on the working class.

Taking advantage of the path opened by Wilson and the Labour government, they are preparing government measures to break up the trade unions as expressions of the class interests of workers, and instead reducing them to organs of the capitalist state.

Employers and scabs will receive all the protection of the law against workers in struggle for jobs and wages. Unemployment and racialism are to be the weapons for enforcing these measures.

This programme of the Tories, openly announced, is the measure of the betrayal of the Labour government which has prepared the way for their return to power.

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All the warnings of the Young Socialists in 1964 have been borne out. Wilson must be exposed and fought, or the crisis will find him attacking the working class on behalf of his capitalist paymasters, and the danger of a Tory return will grow.

The only effective preparation against the Tories is to fight against Wilson, for socialist policies.

Northern Ireland has brought out more clearly than ever the nature of the struggle against Toryism and the role of Wilson and the Labour government.

Thousands of young workers entered a struggle for important reforms, the so-called 'civil rights'. But the Unionist (Tory) government of Northern Ireland replied with brutal repressions.

Because the struggle for 'reforms' had been carried out with the perspective of gradually changing capitalism in Northern Ireland, the young workers were led into a trap.

No sooner were they organized for protest, than the class enemy hit back with counter-revolutionary measures. Helped by the government forces, Unionist extremists attacked the working class.

Eventually 7,000 troops were sent in by the British Labour government. They are there to control and centralise the disciplining of the working class, not to prevent it. Under their cover the Tory government is being kept in, and its police and reserve forces are being more effectively organized.

Meanwhile the 7½ per cent unemployment threatens to get even worse because of the traditional shipbuilding and textile industries decline, with the Protestant as well as Catholic workers coming under the hammer.

Revolutionary preparation of the youth for struggle against capitalism, preparation against Wilson and the Labour govern-

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ment as well as against the Tories: these are essential, in Britain or in Ireland.

## 8 Struggle against the system

In order to counter the Tories' plans, youth need to struggle against the whole system whereby large numbers of them are condemned to low-paid jobs in unhealthy, unsafe and unorganized shops, where apprentices are exploited on men's work, and where training for a trade is the exception rather than the rule.

We therefore endorse the programme which we have fought on since 1966:

(a) For all young workers in jobs we demand:

- A shorter working week with ample opportunity for open-air sport and recreation.
- At least one month's paid holiday a year.
- The right of all youth to learn a trade and improve their technical qualifications.
- The organization of training courses for young workers in factories or groups of factories, paid for by the employers and under workers' control.
- Hours of craft training to be taken out of the working week and paid for at regular rates.
- Equal pay for equal work.
- Forbidding of all work not connected with the apprenticeship.
- Prohibition of night work and arduous, unhealthy tasks;  
workers' control over the use of young labour.

## 9 Young workers' committees

Young workers must be able to fight for these demands in their own right. Young trades unionists must, therefore, enjoy full negotiating rights.

The union bureaucracy must be made to agree to the forma-

## Amendments



tion of young workers' committees to study the demands of youth and win the support of older workers in fighting for them.

Such committees will be active in recruiting and educating young workers. The doors of the trades unions must be thrown wide open to youth; to this end we demand reduced dues for young workers.

The union bureaucrats must be made to recruit to the appropriate unions all youth in low-paid jobs in the catering trades and unorganized youth in the sweat shops.

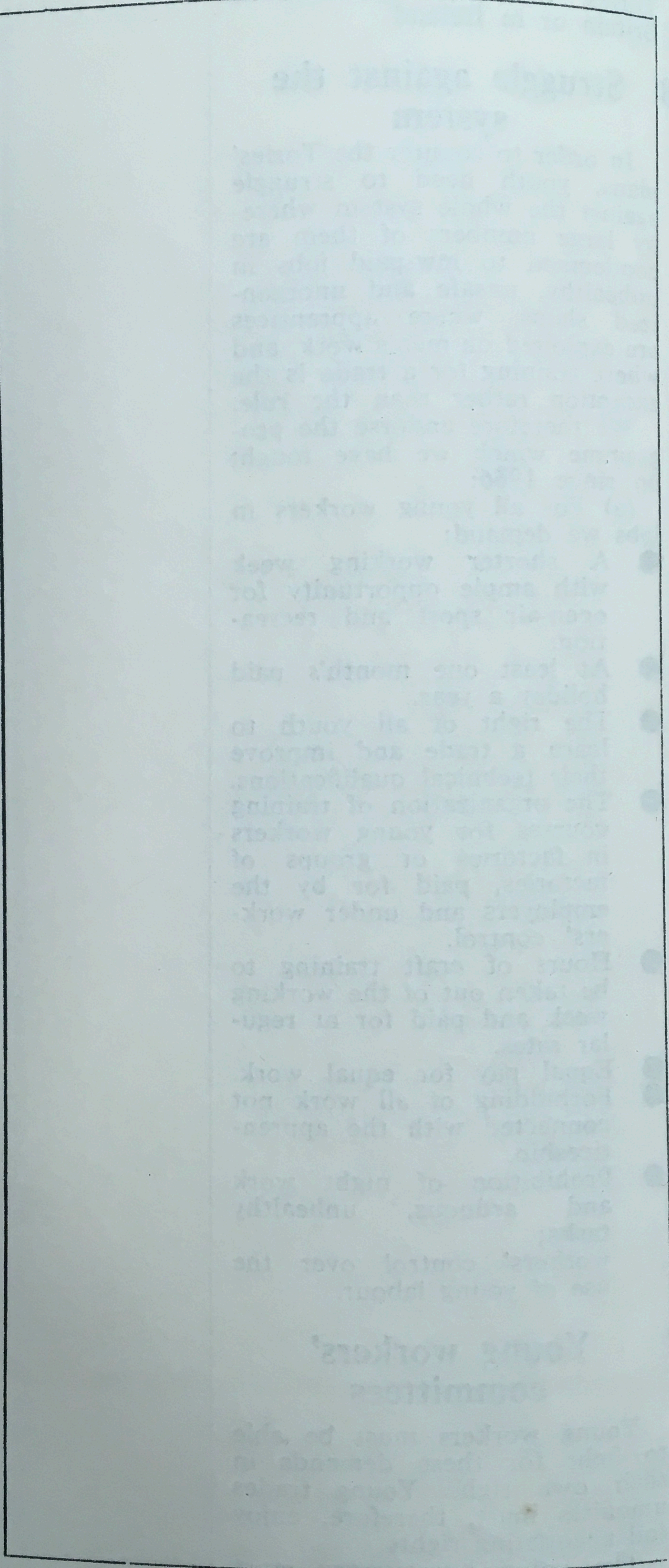
We call on all young workers to support the struggle of the All Trades Unions Alliance on the fundamental question of building a revolutionary leadership in the unions.

### 10 Unemployed youth

(b) It is the urgent task of the Young Socialists to campaign on behalf of unemployed youth and to prevent them from becoming isolated from employed workers.

For this reason we demand:

- Unemployment benefit for all young unemployed workers paid at adult rates from the day they leave school.
- The opening of technical re-education centres under workers' control and paid for by big business.
- Re-open the shut-down factories under public ownership and workers' control.
- A full programme of public works (hospitals, schools, youth clubs, housing projects, swimming pools) paid at trade union rates under workers' management.
- Work-sharing without loss of pay.
- Trade unions to recruit and take responsibility of unemployed youth.
- Political struggle in the trade unions for policies of nationalization under workers' control as the answer to unemployment.



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## 11 Comprehensive education

(c) The profits of big business must be used to give young workers a better education with which to face the future.

Education today is pathetically inadequate.

In this field we make the following demands:

- Comprehensive education for all.
- Re-organize education in co-operation with the factory:  
control by workers' organizations over technical education.
- Raise the school-leaving age to 16 with full grants to working-class families.
- Free access to science and culture for working-class youth, with special arrangements for entrance to universities and technical colleges.
- Student status, with full maintenance grants, for all worker-students and those at school from the age of 16.

### Vote at 18

(d) At the age of 15 the employer demands the right to exploit the labour power of youth, yet the youth is denied all political right.

The Young Socialists demand:

- The right to vote at 18.

## 12 Full recreational facilities

(e) The employing class and its state condemn youth to a life of boredom and frustration. The talents, energies and enthusiasm of young workers are viciously exploited or allowed to go to waste.

The Young Socialists lead youth in a fight to develop all their physical and mental powers in the fight for socialism.

Hence we demand:

- Full recreational facilities for young workers, includ-

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- ing access to gymnasia, sports fields, clubs, swimming pools, cinemas and theatres.
- All youth centres to be placed under the control of youth themselves.
- Premises to be made available to young workers where they can meet to discuss their problems and interests free from victimization and intimidation by the police.
- Elected committees of young workers, trades unionists and tenants, in conjunction with local trades councils, to investigate cases of police brutality against youth.
- Nationalization of the recording companies, dance halls, film corporations and cinemas, under the control of committees of youth, working-class and popular cultural organizations.

### 13 Against racialism

(f) The employers constantly use their hirelings in the law courts, the police force, the press and parliament to divide the youth. They encourage racialist ideas in youth to turn their frustration against immigrant workers.

The Young Socialists must conduct constant propaganda, rallies and campaigns against the racialists and their thinly-disguised spokesmen in parliament.

**In this respect we demand:**

- Repeal the Immigration Act.
- Full rights for immigrant youth in relation to employment, education and leisure.
- Opposition to any government plans to conscript youth to fight imperialist wars.
- Young Socialists, together with other organized workers, will organize and train British and immigrant youth together for the defence of their organizations against the fascists.



## 14 Rents and housing

(g) Young working-class families need accommodation of their own. Capitalism denies them mortgages, extracts exorbitant rents from them or forces them to live with their parents.

The Young Socialists put forward the following demands:

- 100 per cent interest-free mortgages for housing.
- Rents to be fixed at a level young working-class families can afford.
- Step up the house-building programme on the basis of the nationalization of the insurance companies and building societies.
- Nationalize land, the building and building supplies industries.

This programme for youth can be fought for successfully only as part of the struggle for socialist policies in the working-class movement as a whole.

The Young Socialists have always fought for such a socialist programme. That is why it became necessary in 1964 to break from Wilson and build the independent socialist youth movement.

Defence of the trade unions, opposition to all forms of anti-union legislation, repeal of the Prices and Incomes Act—the Young Socialists are proud to have taken the initiative, along with the Socialist Labour League, on this question.

The struggle against the Labour government on these demands could only be waged by a movement hostile to Stalinism and to reformism in all its disguises.

## 15 A socialist programme

AGAINST THE attacks of the Labour government and the plans of the Tories, it is essential to fight on a socialist programme;

Nationalization of the big industrial monopolies and large companies, banks, building societies and insurance companies,

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under workers' control and without compensation.

Workers' control and suspension of interest payments to ex-owners in the already nationalized industries.

Repeal of the reactionary legislation of the Wilson government's Immigration Act, Prices and Incomes Act, Health Service charges. Restoration of cuts in the social services.

Planned use of the gigantic funds expropriated from the finance-houses and monopolies to tackle the problems of housing and poverty.

Increases of national insurance contributions over the last five years to be abolished and the funds kept up by progressive taxes on the wealthy.

Foreign trade must come under state control.

Interest and mortgage rates will be lowered, once they are freed from the international money market by the nationalisation of the banks and abolition of the Stock Exchange and financial speculation.

All support of the US imperialists' war in Vietnam, including recognition of the Ky-Thieu regime, must be ended and an agreement concluded with North Vietnam.

All troops must be withdrawn from Ulster, Anguilla and all colonial countires and support given to the African liberation movement against the Smith regime in Rhodesia.

A socialist government would not only grant immediate and unconditional independence to the British colonies, but would vigorously support the state expropriation under workers' control of British commercial, industrial and financial interests in the former Commonwealth.

In support of the workers in struggle in France, Italy, Ireland and all western Europe, the policy of a socialist government would be a United Socialist States of Europe.

This would link up with the fight against bureaucratic rule by the workers of Czechoslova-



kia and eastern Europe and the Soviet Union.

All relations with the Greek dictatorship and the fascist regimes of Spain and Portugal would be broken off.

A socialist government would unhesitatingly sever all connections with NATO—counter-revolutionary alliance—and with the UNO—docile tool of imperialism.

There must be no more secret diplomacy or participation in summit meetings of the Big Four.

## 16 Mass Young Socialists

The working class and the youth are strong enough, in Britain as throughout Europe and America, to fight for power and to implement such a programme.

It would release the creative energies of millions of young workers to create a new society in which the young control and expand their own future and where the old are cared for and allowed to continue their lives in security and confidence, confidence in the youth of their own class to maintain power and complete the struggle against the class enemy.

This is the prospect held out by the present class battles which have begun since 1968. It is a prospect which depends fundamentally on the building of a mass socialist youth movement, under the leadership of the revolutionary Marxist party and providing the forces from which that party can be built.

1970 is 100 years after Lenin's birth and 30 years since Trotsky's assassination. For us it is the great year of building the revolutionary party in Britain and internationally.

## 17 The Daily Paper

For this reason the Young Socialists attach the greatest importance to the appearance of the daily Trotskyist newspaper, Workers Press from September 1969.

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It marks a great historical change for the revolutionary movement since our last national conference.

When we came out of the Labour Party in 1964, we consciously set the target of working for such a daily paper, in conjunction with Socialist Labour League.

Young Socialists, inspired by the programme of Lenin and Trotsky, have provided the political forces and the material resources upon which the Workers Press is built. In 1970, 'the year of Lenin and Trotsky', we pledge ourselves to renew and expand those forces.

The Workers Press is becoming the organizer of hundreds of thousands of workers in struggle. It is the most vital instrument of the construction of the revolutionary party. Providing a daily political lead, in the factories and trade unions it opens the political road for us to masses of young workers far beyond our previous scope.

The Workers Press provides the opportunity of a great quantitative as well as qualitative development of the Young Socialists' movement.

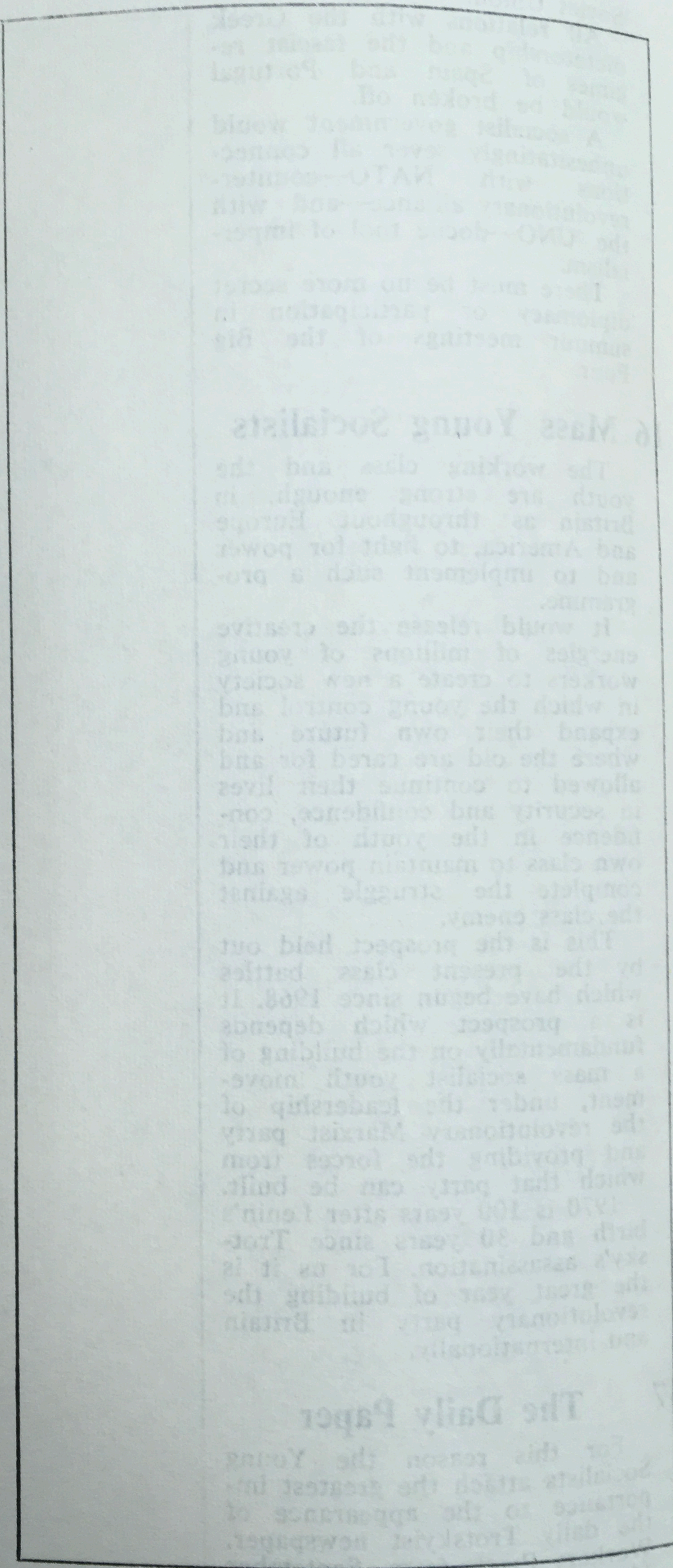
## 18 A mass YS movement

FOR A NUMBER of years in the period after 1961, the Young Socialists fought a hard struggle for socialist policies under conditions where the majority of adult workers were still testing out their reformist leadership, with many of the most advanced workers under Stalinist influence.

It is vital that we recognise the change in the situation and the great opportunities which have opened for us. Five years of Labour government in the period of capitalist crisis, together with the worsening crisis of Stalinism, have led to big breaks in the situation.

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struggle, and gathers increasing momentum as such, is all the time becoming a political struggle, because capitalism, reformism and Stalinism are openly bankrupt, and must answer the working class in an openly counter-revolutionary way.

Now the opportunities for the Young Socialists to become a truly mass youth movement are therefore greater than ever before.

Instead of being comparatively isolated from the adult movement, the YS and its programme have forged bonds of struggle and sympathy with the actually developing struggle of the working class.

On every major question and especially defence of the trade unions and opposition to the incomes policy, the Young Socialists have established themselves in the workers' movement.

At this point we emphasise: every form of youth activity must be the province of the Young Socialists.

Precisely because we are entering struggles which will involve the broadest masses, including many who seem 'non-political', the YS must be able to create relations in the widest circles of youth, through recreational and sport activities and organizations, as well as in colourful demonstrations on all political questions.

The very depth of the capitalist crisis will bring into relation with the Young Socialists layers of youth who previously ignored politics and even trade unions.

In order to find a road to this youth we will need to **combine the most principled political struggle with the broadest forms of activity.**

As the economic and political class struggle strikes deeper and deeper into the masses it brings forward more 'backward' layers. And yet this very expansion and deepening of the struggle poses bigger and deeper questions than were immediately posed to the narrower circles of



yesterday: only revolutionary principles and strategy can answer the needs of these newly-awakened masses.

They will raise these questions in contradictory forms: the path will be more contradictory and full of internal conflict than before, just as it is in the working-class movement.

This situation is part of a similar situation in the adult movement. More and more millions of lower-paid and previously non-militant workers are drawn into great struggles over wages and jobs: trade union consciousness seems to be given a boost.

But it is not the same as if these workers have entered the wages battle at the same level as those who led the way during the boom of the fifties.

Their demands now clash with the necessities confronting the bosses: speed-up, sacking, reduction in real wages, 'rationalization', entry into the European Common Market.

And so, no sooner are these masses involved in an upsurge of trade union struggle, than it is political questions they must answer.

## 19 Struggle for Marxism

And yet, at the first stage political backwardness must inevitably predominate. The power of the working class in struggle for its demands had to be mobilized and developed, but this necessitates a struggle for Marxism against all the backwardness which the crisis of capitalism has brought to the surface.

Among the youth, we must take this contradictory situation seriously, armed with the science of contradictions, Marxism, dialectical materialism.

Our members must be able to bring youth forward to organize social, cultural and sport activities—dances, discotheques, football leagues, film schools, athletics tournaments, music and sporting festivals, mass summer open-air activities—and at the same time to fight tenaciously and in a disciplined way against all anti-socialist

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tendencies among the youth.

We resolve to build the YS area federations for the greatest expansion of our social and sport activities, and to train all our members for the political defence of our organization and its politics.

## 20 Development of Marxist theory

This fight—against racialism, against the influence of bourgeois ideology in the youth, can be carried out only on the basis of a programme of Marxist education which goes much further than anything in our previous development.

We must organize three-monthly regional schools, as well as our annual summer school at which the study of the writings of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky is used to study and learn from every stage of our own experience, so that we can play our part in the development of Marxist theory in Britain, the key to the struggle for socialism in this country as in every other.

It is this heritage of Marxist theory, developing a relation to the international crisis of capitalism and Stalinism, on which the unity of the world socialist youth movement is built.

In this conscious struggle to train ourselves as Marxists, to develop dialectical materialism, we fight in order to put an end to the traditional dominance of 'commonsense' and routine acceptance of capitalist ideology, which has prevented Marxism from striking deep roots in the British working class.

In 1970, the year of Lenin and Trotsky, the Young Socialists' conference pledges itself to educate in struggle hundreds of young Marxist revolutionaries who will begin in all their political work from the international and historical interests of the working class, and from the whole heritage of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky which expresses these interests.

Only this can match the needs of the youth and the working class today.



Amendments

# Notes

The first aspect of the youth movement is the youth movement itself. It is a movement of the youth, and it is a movement of the youth. It is a movement of the youth, and it is a movement of the youth. It is a movement of the youth, and it is a movement of the youth.

## Development of Marxist Theory

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It is the heritage of Marxist theory, developing a relation to the international crisis of capitalism and Stalinism, on which the unity of the world socialist youth movement is built.

In this conscious struggle to turn ourselves as Marxists to develop dialectical materialism we fight in order to put an end to the traditional dominance of bourgeois and reformist organisations, and reformist organisations of capitalist ideology, which has prevented Marxism from gaining deep roots in the British working class.

In 1970, the year of Lenin and Trotsky, the Young Socialists' conference pledges itself to education in struggle, hundreds of young Marxist revolutionaries who will begin in all their political work from the international and national interests of the youth and the working class today.



# 10TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE YOUNG SOCIALISTS

## APRIL 11/12

# 1970

## Grand Hall The Spa, Scarborough

Coaches leaving from all areas. Cost approximately £4 includes bed and breakfast, fare, Conference and also dance on Saturday evening.

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I would like to come to the Conference/join the Young Socialists

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

.....

Deposit enclosed: £.....

Complete and send to: Sheila Torrance, 186a Clapham High Street,  
London, S.W.4.



**Title:** The Young Socialists 1970: Programme and Perspectives

**Organisation:** Young Socialists [SLL]

**Date:** 1970

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