

The four members of the committee, R. Gillespie, Scotland, J. Barnes, North-West, M. Tallantire, London, and A. Jones, Wales, resigned on Saturday afternoon an hour after the start of the committee's normal quarterly meeting, at Transport House. Two other members, Miss J. Dugdale, Eastern region, and Mr. D. Ablitt, East Midlands, also walked off the committee refusing to take part in its activity. They are considering their position. The last straw, according to the six members was the expulsion from the National Committee by the Labour Party last month of three other members, which was carried out without any consultation with the NC. Only two members of the original NC of the YS elected at their annual conference last Easter remain, although Transport House is attempting to find and appoint replacements for the missing seven members.

The trouble of the YS began shortly after last Easter's conference which elected nine left-wingers out of a total of eleven. There followed an 'investigation' into the unofficial YS paper 'Keep Left' and also 'Young Guard', and the investigation of the seven members alleged to have been associated with these two papers. The investigation resulted in the proscription of 'Keep Left' and the suspension of the three members of the NC associated with it. After representations to the NEC of the paper 'Young Guard' was not proscribed although a committee member associated with it was suspended for a time before being reinstated. During all this period the NC was never fully representative of all areas. The expelled members represented in fact, one third of all YS branches. At this Autumn's Labour Party Conference repeated attempts were made by delegates to get the whole matter aired. Not one single minute was found for the YS and suspicions were rife that the platform had not been enthusiastic to have the matter discussed. Throughout the whole year the main resolutions for political action passed at the YS conference have not been acted upon and all attempts by the NC to implement them obstructed. In particular the repeated demand for the right of political discussion at all levels of the YS and for democratic control of their 'official' paper "New Advance" have been refused and the editorial control has remained in the hands of 47 year old National Youth Officer, Mr. Reg. Underhill. In their statement the four members who resigned yesterday pointed out that it was worse than useless to continue sitting on a committee which is entirely unrepresentative of the YS and is powerless to act on decisions of the YS.

The great danger as they see it is that large numbers of Young Socialists, disgusted at the treatment of their national elected committee, will leave the party at a time when it is vitally important for the party to be attracting as many young people as possible. The members who have resigned will continue to work as hard as ever for the Labour Party in their branches and their constituency parties. They see, however, the bureaucratic sabotage of the YS as part of a campaign being waged by a section of the NEC and the leadership to whittle away democracy in the party and to undermine the class and socialist basis of the party. They believe that if the attack on the YS is successful then the anti-socialist and anti-democratic elements in the party will be immeasurably strengthened. The YS are a vital force for good within the party. Increasingly in Council and Parliamentary elections it is they who are carrying the burden of work and it is they who are reviving the Party's organisation at all levels, from the Ward upwards. A party with little tolerance for youth is one which can have no confidence in the future. The ex-members of the NC are convinced however that the mass of the party's rank and file will rally to the aid of the YS and see that they get full recognition of their grievances.