The problems this Convention is called upon to decide are of the gravest importance. Will the ASU remain an anti-war organization? Will it tie itself to the tail of the third-party movements springing up in the wake of the "Progressive" politicians? Will it be a militant, progressive organization when the surgical operations on the program and activities are completed?

But in the face of such problems, the preparations for the Convention have been characterized by more strenuous efforts for organizational intimidation of opposition to the "new line" than for a free discussion of program and policy.

THE DRIVE TO SPLIT THE A.S.U.

It is no accident that the proposal to line the ASU up with the pro-war policy of collective security has been accompanied by a campaign to purge the ASU of those elements who stand by the Oxford Pledge and the present program and who represent the chief obstacle in the way of quietly and peacefully coordinating the ASU into the Roosevelt war front. For the first time in the history of the student movement, influential elements are campaigning for the expulsion of members for their political views. At CCNY Evening, motions were made to "expel the Trotskyites" and a vicious campaign of slander was spread over the pages of the YCL-controlled school newspaper. At New Utrecht H. S. (N. Y.) threats of expulsion have been made. Other examples have appeared.

The Student Partisan, published by a group of students in the U. of Chicago ASU, calls for a split. "To aid in the building of a powerful anti-war, anti-fascist organization... expel the Trotskyites!" (p. 26)—"Who are these "Trotskyites" who are in the way of building an anti-war organization? The Student Partisan says: "Today the Oxford Oath is obsolete. It is defended only by those favoring false neutrality and by the perennially purist opposition—the Trotskyites. It has become, with the passing of time, meaningless and reactionary." (p. 13)

This is the real reason why the Student Partisan calls for their expulsion. They are the most determined opponents of the drive to switch the ASU on to the rails of collective security and support of the war "to make the world safe for democracy".

What is the Student Partisan? It is the unofficial organ of the Young Communist League at the U. of C. Who are the people that are instigating this split campaign? It is the Young Communist League in the schools. They are importing their world-wide campaign against "Trotskyism" into the ASU. The ASU is now being made the vehicle for such an attempt by the YCL, and the independents and liberals cannot merely hide their heads in the sand and pretend not to notice, while decrying any mention of "YCL", "Trotskyites", etc. This kind of growth in the life of the ASU can only be eliminated by decisively defeating the YCL campaign.

This campaign does not merely take the form of verbally calling for our expulsion. The YCL method is to build up to such a split by a campaign of slander,
discrediting, isolation and suppression. Of this character are such tricks as the "Open Letter to Harold Draper", adopted by the N.Y. High School Council and printed in the Student Advocate, which purports to conjure Draper for the crime of writing, in the organ of the YPSU, an article which supports the present program of the ASU and the Oxford Pledge, attacks the leadership of the ASU for not carrying it out and scrapping it, and calls for the formation of progressive groups in the ASU chapters in opposition to the drive to abandon the Oxford Pledge and impose a collective-security program on the ASU—a censure passed, moreover, without the slightest hearing being given to Draper or opportunity to defend himself against the "charges". We know what is behind this unprecedentedly bureaucratic action. We know that, in answer to the high school principals who cited this article as evidence of the existence of "bothersome" left-wing elements in the ASU, the ASU leaders promised that they would "get rid of" us—all this is a means of assuring legal recognition by the principals. We have heard before of trade-union bureaucrats who have promised to expel union progressives as a means of assuring harmonious collaboration with the bosses.

DEMONSTRATION AT THIS CONVENTION

It is under this threat of a split that the Convention meets. We are interested in a democratic and intelligent discussion at the sessions. But the procedure adopted by the ASU leadership does not make for this.

1. The most important sub-committee of the Convention is the Program and Resolutions Committee. This committee must be representative if the discussion is to be facilitated. We therefore favor its election at the full session where all the delegates are present, and by proportional representation. The ASU National Committee, however, decided to make up the Program Committee from delegates elected from each of the interest commissions. If each commission is to elect about two delegates to the Program Committee, it is reasonable to expect that those will represent the majority view only, or only those views tolerated by the majority. If the NEC does not reverse this decision before the Convention opens, it must be changed by the delegates.

2. We propose likewise that the new NEC be elected by proportional representation. The NEC is a policy-determining body; and even with regard to its executive functions, its composition will to a large extent determine the militancy in action of the organization. To have the confidence of the membership it must be really representative, not merely formally so.

3. The discussion must not be rigged in advance to weight the majority point of view, as the political-action commission has been. In drawing up the list of consultants (adult speakers) at the commission, the Administrative Committee considered only persons who are in favor of political action by the ASU. A motion made with the modest proposal that at least one of the speakers be a person opposed to ASU political action was rejected. This is known as bureaucratic suppression of minority opinion.

A WARNING

If the recent past is any guide, you will hear a good deal about what terrible people the Trotskyites are. The lie will be repeated that we called the ASU "a company union" (that is not and never was the point of view of the YPSU—we state our support of the present program of the ASU); you will hear that we are "disruptive" (that is what William Green called John Lewis because the latter refused to accept modestly the bureaucratic practices and reactionary politics of the former), that we want to "revolutionize" the ASU. Our proposal to the ASU is the maintenance of the present program; these red herring have only one purpose: to substitute for arguments and spread a haze of slander and confusion over the issues. We intend to stick to the issues.
The program of the ASU, on paper at the present time, faces in an anti-war direction. It analyzes the cause of the coming war as the conflict over "economic stakes", pointing to American-Japanese tension over the ousting of imperialist interests in the Far East. It condemns the League of Nations and the Allied Fascist imperialists, pointing to American participation in the imperialist actions of the anti-war forces, especially the working class, and as our own independent action, declares for the Oxford Pledge "to refuse to support any war conducted by the U.S. government."

You are asked to throw these ideas overboard and substitute the program of collective security, which propagates the idea that the coming war will represent the conflict of democracy and fascism and supports American participation in the imperialists line-ups forming today.

What is this "collective security" which the ASU is asked to inscribe on its banner?

It is the program of American imperialism, all sections of which are lining up behind Roosevelt's new foreign policy of "quarantining the aggressor". London, the "fascist menace" of 1936, has solidified himself with Roosevelt's declaration against "peace at any price"; Col. Knox, London's running mate in 1936, exclaimed F.D.R.'s Chicago speech: Stimson, Hoover's Sec. of State, the Herald Tribune (main organ of the Liberty League) have lined up for the same policy. Is the ASU going to join this united front of American imperialism?

It is based on the lying myth of the "war to make the world safe for democracy", vintage of 1917. Yet at the same time, the democratic imperialists of France, England, and America ally themselves with other fascist nations (Poland, Rumania, Yugoslavia), themselves represent the colonial peoples as autocratically as the fascists (the American government supports the new "totalitarian" regime of Brazil, not to speak of Cuba), and are preparing to intervene in time of war a regime of military industrial dictation at home, through the industrial mobilization plans. Yet the advocates of collective security tell us that these nations will be fighting for democracy, just as the German people were told they were fighting Russian Czarism.

It is the program of peace through military alliances. The war, the band of satisfied imperialists (the democratic and fascist "Haves") versus the unsatisfied, hungry imperialists (Germany, etc.). The League of Nations, as the present program points out, is actually only the alliance of the former. Collective security represents the "collective" attempt by those powers to maintain their security from their imperialist rivals.

It is the program of peace through preparedness. To support collective security means to support the necessary means to make such a foreign policy effective—military might. To overawe the "fascist aggressors", as collective security proposes, leads straight to Roosevelt's war-building program.

It is a war program. The jockeying of alliances and the reciprocal raising of armaments will reach the boiling point. The "collective action" of the "good" imperialists becomes collective war against the League of Unsatisfied Imperialists.

What is the alternative? Certainly not isolationism, which is a reactionary utopia and impossible. Both collective security and isolationism start from the premise that peace can be obtained by somehow using the imperialist governments. We take our starting point from the necessity of mobilizing the independent action of the anti-war forces against the imperialist policies and war stops of the government.
our enemy at home.

The main force for peace is the fear of the war-makers that war means an attack for the rear, internal resistance, not "national unity" but struggle against the government. And when the progressive forces cry in advance that they are ready to support the war that is looming, that is the green signal light for the imperialists; it is the chief incitement to war because it takes away the checks from under the war-machine.

The struggle based on the Oxford Pledge is the struggle for peace. Not that it is complete. We, as revolutionary Socialists, complete it with the program of utilizing the war crisis to work for the overthrow of American imperialism and its replacement by a Socialist government. The ASU must complete it in an immediate sense by conducting action NOW against the government's war preparations --- against ROTC; against American imperialism in Latin-America and the Far-East; against the war budgets, for the withdrawal of American ships and marines from the Far-East waters.

This independent action of the anti-war forces is likewise our instrument in our support of the Chinese and Spanish masses against their fascist would-be. Independent boycott, stoppage of shipments, material aid--- these are our weapons. But to call for a governmental embargo (i.e., economic sanctions) against the "fascist aggressors" is to play into the hands of the collective security gang. We rely not on the imperialists, but on our own independent strength.

The ASU leadership has already, before any decision by this convention, steered the ASU along the path of collective security. The Oxford Pledge has well-nigh disappeared from its activities and propaganda. They openly state that the embargo resolution adopted was the first step toward the adoption of collective security. They signed the USPC Call which openly calls for collective security. They have in fact betrayed the program of the ASU.

The ASU program must be maintained. Or else the ASU becomes another league for war.

The student movement has changed in the last few years. We do not sigh for "the good old days" out of a sentimental attachment, but because a vital factor has been dissipated---militancy of action. It is marked especially in connection with the Student Strike. The strike in the high schools has already been killed; "peace assemblies" have been accepted in their place. Even in the colleges where there were demonstrations, they substituted for the annex lunchroom conditions; the ASU chapter stood aside and it fizzled out; they were afraid of antagonizing the administration.

This is what we mean when we speak of the new attitude of the leading elements of the ASU --- "respectability and legality at all costs, the cost being the sacrifice of militancy.

The two lines are distinct. They propose to gain the majority of the students by watering-down of program, no avoidance of militant demonstrations in order not to antagonize the liberals. The "liberals" outside the organization will be won to the ASU program, not by catering to their backwardness, but by involving them in action for specific objectives.
jfvotivos. When this brings them up against the administration, they will learn that the administration represents, just as in the event of war they will learn that the administration will be the agent of the war machine.

Once the student strike was a "dress rehearsal" for the event of war, with the new lies of "collective security" and "collective imperialist war", a peace assembly under the wing of the administration is the fittest dress rehearsal for planned in-action in the event of war.

Militancy of action is the only effective weapon. It is the most effective means of winning pure demands on the campus, just as trade union militancy is more effective than collaboration with the bosses. It is most effective in gaining influence and members, waking up the student body. It is most effective in educating the members of the ASU themselves through action.

This convention will decide. Every delegate must express himself unequivocally for a militant ASU.

NO POLITICAL ACTION!!

Two years ago the ASU was formed through the fusion of a Socialist controlled organization, the Student LOT, a Communist controlled organization, the N.S.L. and unfiliated liberals of various political tendencies. At both the first and second national conventions, it was unquestionably recognized that the ASU could remain united only by acting completely neutral in all political disputes.

If the ASU permits each chapter to support any political candidates it chooses the organization will be significantly weakened. Any students will remain good ASU members, faithfully working for the united front program the organization holds today. But these same students would be forced out of the ASU if, by remaining in they are identified with political parties with which they disagree.

Even a graver danger arises if the ASU nationally gives support to a political party. The organization will be put in a position of supporting and taking responsibility for each politician who buys allegiance with the inflated currency of promises. Moreover it is false to say that there are no longer political divisions in the ASU. No party, Farmer-Labor or otherwise can satisfy all the divergent elements in the Student movement.

This question of political affiliation is not to be taken lightly. Each delegate must seriously consider the problems involved. Delegates! Bring the question openly to the floor. Vote down every proposal to chain the ASU to a narrow political machine.