Comment Editorial - -

American youthtwo different kinds

Once again, the call of the American Student Union faintly reaches the ears of American college youth, with the announcement that from Dec. 27 to 30, that auspicious and energetic group of young people will convene in New York to resolve again that this nation is headed for war.

The call begins something like this: "More appropriate than tinselled fir-trees and gay carols this Christmas are rows of little white crosses and dirges for the dead. For war has wrapped Europe in its misery... America itself stands at the very point of total participation in the world wide conflict, the steps 'short of war' becoming shorter and shorter."

And we agree, the steps are becoming "shorter and shorter," only in a different sense than the A. S. U. announcement implies. Those steps are not strides of seven league boots, but are short steps. The fear that American Youth will be thrown into the holocaust has overtaken the A. S. U. with a great degree of hysteria.

We would not agree, ever, that the rows of crosses are more appropriate than "tinselled fir-trees and gay carols." We would never urge American youth to forget Christmas and turn its attention to war, especially when Christmas and whatever realization of religious principles it resurrects is so near.

The mouthings of hot-headed collegians, back of whom are forces unknown, are enough to disgust that representation of American youth which wants only to play its part in whatever is destined to come. Efforts by such an organization as the American Student Union, representing as it does, the

- - Bulletin

eries of so few persons, and unrepresentative as it is of the total youth opinion in this country, are tolerated and given the constitutional stamp of approval, because this nation and its laws and ways of living allow that group its freedom of expression and of assembly.

We're not intimating communism, fascism or anything else comparable is connected with the A. S. U., but we can hardly trust an organization whose propaganda sheet states that this nation is already half-way down the road to hell! The primary basis of unity and strength in our nation is our belief that we have every chance to stay out of war, that we have every chance to continue being the greatest nation in the world, that we have every chance to maintain our democracy and freedom.

Whatever ties there may be between the A. S. U. and the American Youth Congress, which meets in Washington Feb. 8 and 9, we're inclined to look upon the latter as a healthier movement. It's program includes speeches by Federal Administrators who will, according to A. Y. C. announcements, "explain how the U. S. government works."

The willingness of the latter group to hear and follow the advice of the real leaders of the nation stamp it as one worthy of recognition. At least its attitude is one implying a desire to help maintain and build, based on the realization that there is still plenty of room for maintenance and construction.

The charge that the American Student Union has been connected with communist-leaning labor groups may or may not be true. Its speech program Dec. 27 to 30 includes many labor leaders, a few educators whose "liberalism" may probably be questioned. On the other hand, the American Youth Congress will hear from Federal officials. The A. S. U. meeting expects to number 250, the latter 5,000. One must BELONG to the A. S. U. to attend the conclave; one must be just an American youth to attend the A. Y. C. meetings.

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