

They Call Themselves "Militants"

By GIL GREEN

If the powerful student strike of April 12th proved anything, it was the effectiveness of united action in the struggle against war and fascism. Only the unity established between the Communist, Socialist and religious youth and the organizations in which they have influence, made possible the mobilization of 150,000 students for this day. This conclusion was drawn by the students who participated in the actions, by every class conscious worker and every sincere opponent of war and fascism.

Yet, surprising as it may seem, one group of youth drew other conclusions—directly opposite conclusions. We refer to the National Executive Committee of the Young Peoples Socialist League. Instead of greeting the unity of the Socialist and Communist youth, the leadership of the Y.P.S.L. at its recent meeting viciously attacked the Communist youth and the National Student League as having "sabotaged" the student strike. This charge was printed for two consecutive weeks in the "Socialist Call" the official organ of those Socialists who refer to themselves as "Militants." Thus, this attack becomes also the official policy of the Thomas-Hoan leadership of the Socialist Party.

What is the purpose of such an attack on the Communist youth? The Y.P.S.L. National Committee knows as do the thousands of students throughout the nation that the Communist youth everywhere supported and worked actively for the strike. In fact in scores of schools there would have been no actions on April 12th had it not been for the uncompromising stand of the Communist youth, had it not been for their militancy and determination to make this strike an action of the broadest masses of students. We will let the students of New York City, of Chicago, Los Angeles and the entire nation, bear witness to this fact.

The purpose of the latest attack of the Y.P.S.L. leadership can be but one—to provoke a split in the united ranks of the students' anti-war movement. For so effective was the unity established for April 12th that the various students' organizations have decided to turn their strike committees into permanent anti-war committees. Thus the united front of April 12th is fast becoming a united front for every day of the year against imperialist war and fascism.

Why does the Y.P.S.L. leadership wish to provoke a split in the united front of the student youth? Because the continued existence of this united front destroys every one of their previous arguments to the effect that unity between the Communist and Socialist youth is impossible. Hundreds of Socialist youth are already asking the question: If unity is possible among the students, why not between the Y.P.S.L. and Y.C.L., why not between the Socialist Party and Communist Party?

To destroy the growing sentiment for united front within its own ranks, the Y.P.S.L. leadership must invent certain lies to confuse its membership, to make them think that the Communist youth "sabotaged" the student strike. But let

every Y.P.S.L.'er ask his leadership why the Students League for Industrial Democracy does not corroborate this accusation, and why, on the contrary, they reject it? Because the membership and leadership of the S.L.I.D. knows how base and false this charge is.

What does the Y.P.S.L. leadership hope to achieve by such tactics? Only one thing. Following the example of the Thomas-Hoan leadership of the Socialist Party, they are preparing to unite once more with the "Old Guard." Thus, they take the lead in attacking the left, in order to unite with the right. This explains why the recent meeting of the Y.P.S.L. National Committee rejected every proposal made by the Communist youth for united action. We asked the Y.P.S.L. leadership to go on record as favoring a united May Day. We proposed to them to unify our forces within the trade unions for the launching of a huge drive to organize the unorganized youth. We offered to support the petition campaign of the Young Socialist International for jobs for youth. We called for closer working together between both organizations in preparation for the anti-war demonstration to be held under the leadership of the American Youth Congress on May 30th.

Every one of these proposals was rejected and was replaced by a vicious attack on the Communist youth as "splitters of the trade unions." Instead of attacking Mike Tighe, who at the very moment they were meeting, was splitting the ranks of the steel workers; instead of attacking William Green's latest sell-out of the rubber workers; instead of attacking the policy of expulsions in the trade unions;—they attack the Communists who are leading the fight to organize the unorganized, who are leading the fight for trade union unity.

For this policy, my dear "Militant" leaders, you will receive the heartfelt thanks of the ruling class and only another kick in the shins from the "Old Guard." People who call themselves "Militants" should not do their fighting by crawling on their knees and exposing their posteriors. If you really want to defeat the "Old Guard" then center your attack against the right, against the open betrayers of the working class, the Cahans and Langs, and not against the revolutionary workers.

As for the Socialist youth, they will soon enough see that their struggle against the right wing, the "Old Guard," is being betrayed. They will launch a real fight for the united front of all workers behind a policy of class struggle. The student masses will also know how to give a fitting answer to those who wish to destroy their unity.

It is necessary to demand from the "Militant" leadership that they match their words with deeds. As Frederick Engels, one of the founders of Scientific Socialism said many years ago: "Among sensible people it is a matter of course to judge a man . . . not by what he pretends to be, but by what he does, and what he really is . . ."

This is the yardstick by which the members of the Y.P.S.L. must judge their leadership.