

Petty-Bourgeois Anti-Militarism

By SAM DARCY.

MILITARISM is lashing the petty-bourgeois youth. These smug, self-satisfied college students who superciliously smiled at the "ravings" of the working youth against the oppressive system are now beginning to wake up from their complacency and are demonstrating their "rebellion."

On December 29-31 the Evanston Interdenominational Students' Conference with delegates from over one hundred and eighty colleges went on record against compulsory military training with only a few dissenting votes. At this conference they set up three demands as follows:

- a Abolition of military training in church and denominational schools.
- b Abolition of military training in the high schools.
- c Abolition of military training in colleges and universities

including immediate abolition of its compulsory features in the land grant institutions.

One month earlier the National Study Conference on the Churches and World Peace which included representatives from twenty-eight units met in Washington and declared against the R. O. T. C. and C. M. T. C. and all special days such as mobilization day and defense test day. Even in black Tennessee the Methodist Young People's convention with four thousand delegates in attendance went on record against military training.

Church units of young people in South Dakota, Iowa, Ohio, and thruout the west and middle west have been declaring opposition to military training by the score.

The college youth in City College, New York, Coe College, Cedar Rapids, Ia., Connecticut Valley Collegiate World Court

Conference, University of Minnesota, Ohio State University, just to take representative groups from all over the country have by huge majorities gone record against military training.

Why should this be so?

These very college youth who sneered at the workers for their "soap boxing," are taking up the practice.

When we see the list of the organization who are fighting to spread military training we begin to see some light.

Among these are the Los Angeles chamber of commerce (nuff said); the New York State War Mothers (an organization of well-to-do women who are exploiting their sons' deaths for social purposes); American Legion groups (Major Berry's pet reactionary tool); and scores of Bigger and Better business units of one kind or another.

In the struggle against the militarization of the civilian youth therefore, the proletariat finds allies; the petty bourgeoisie. We have no illusions about these. They will desert the ranks of the opposition as soon as war even threatens. In no case will they ever fight with the workers against capitalism. We must however, not refuse to march with them against Big Capital when they are going our way.

We must enter their united front bodies and fight not only militarism but also their pacifist illusions. We must preserve our revolutionary integrity for it is clear to us on the basis of experiences we have had with such bodies in the past that they will not march the whole way. We must say this not because we doubt their sincerity. No! But Lenin said we must learn to judge the possible tactics of others not on the basis of their personal characters, but on the basis of circumstances.