

AN INVITATION:

Student Councils, College Newspapers, Student Religious Societies, Y.M.C.A.'s and Y.W.C.A.'s, Liberal Clubs, Fraternities and Unaffiliated Students.

THE AMERICAN STUDENT BODY

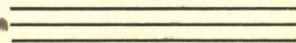
Will Discuss Formation of

THE AMERICAN STUDENT UNION

DECEMBER 28, 29

*December 1935*

AT COLUMBUS, OHIO: THE CAMPUS OF OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY



The American campus is the scene of a growing student movement. Socially matured college newspapers, student government campaigns on serious political issues, student picket lines in mill towns, campaigns for academic freedom and the great student demonstrations against war reflect a profound transformation of the high school and college campus. The bright future painted for students a decade ago has been dimmed by six years of depression and overshadowed by the danger of another world war. Social problems are now as integral a part of undergraduate life as the curriculum, athletics and social activities.

These vivid contrasts of student existence play a crucial part in the growing intellectual ferment. The colleges and high schools offer expert training to technicians, professionals and skilled workers . . . and society rewards the graduate with unemployment or promises to utilize his services in the enormous destructiveness of warfare. Schools and colleges teach the American tradition of individual and political liberty . . . and students find their papers censored, some of their most able and courageous professors dismissed and their first attempts at organization and expression met with expulsions and even semi-fascist assaults. Under these influences there has been a constant search for a united student organization which could act on these problems.

Beginning on December 27, the two student organizations, the Student League for Industrial Democracy and the National Student League, which have in the past devoted exclusive attention to these issues, are meeting at their Christmas conventions in Columbus, Ohio, to consider the amalgamation of their memberships as a preliminary step toward the creation of a united student movement. After separate conventions the delegations from both organizations will immediately convene with the other delegations to discuss plans for the American Student Union. The Joint Program Committee for the Union was established to plan this conference on unity to take place on December 28 and 29.

Such a student union must reflect the collective interests of students in high schools and colleges throughout the country. The program committee cannot blue-print the union's program and policies. These will ultimately be drawn up by a large, representative assembly. Such points, however, as the safeguarding of student liberties, the creation of adequate relief measures, the building of white collar and professional unions as part of the support of the American labor movement, and the forging of a determined and powerful peace movement; such issues as violations of academic liberty, the inadequacy of the National Youth Administration, insufficient educational opportunities, discrimination against the Negro student and the use of the R.O.T.C. for militarization of the campus are plainly relevant to any consideration of program. The committee felt that the union, acting primarily on these immediate problems, should attempt to bring students to an awareness of large social forces and that while remaining independent of any political party, it should find definite orientation toward the idea of basic social change.

This conference which will lay the foundation for the Student Union must be an assemblage elected by the American student body. Its policies and program will be democratically determined by broad delegations which recognize the necessity for and possibilities of such a union. On this basis the union can become the rallying ground for every progressive force on the American campus, unprecedented in scope, unity and effectiveness.

This conference belongs to the student body. We are confident that it will visualize the role such a student union can perform in these critical hours. We urge that you act at once to insure its establishment. Elect delegates to the conference from your clubs and councils—two delegates for the first ten members and one for every ten thereafter; if unaffiliated, secure the signatures of ten students sympathetic to this proposal. Forward all credentials to the Joint Program Committee for the American Student Union at 112 East 19th Street, New York City.

JOINT PROGRAM COMMITTEE

AMERICAN STUDENT UNION