

Public Speaking—Jack Warnick (in jail).

Trade Unionism—Caroline Decker (in jail).

August 2.—Writ in superior court to lower bail. Denied.

August 4.—Taken from bed in pajamas and paraded on "show-up" before Red Squad and "witnesses" for the people.

August 5.—Paraded before "peek-a-boo," a square, tent-like enclosure with small holes in it, in which "witnesses" are placed so as to closely scrutinize the victim without being seen themselves.

August 6.—First day of trial, choosing a jury. Jury panel exhausted. 200 more called in—by cops. Adjourned until August 8.

August 7.—Second "show-up." "Witnesses" become better acquainted so as to be able

to "swear to tell the truth and nothing but the truth" and to smoothly identify us as having "roamed about from place to place without any lawful business."

August 8.—Resumption of trial. Mr. Friselle advised that they "employ the best attorneys to fight the cases." Clifford Russell, best known criminal attorney in Sacramento, is retained by the City Council of Sacramento at a fee of \$500 (publicly) to "fight the case."

All the court clerks and bulls and cops are dashing around madly to bring in the "proper" kind of jurors and to get the dope on the few they don't know. Russell doesn't have to "object" much now, the judge is taking care of it for him. Anyone who looks like a worker is excused from the jury by the prosecution.

Five of us are conducting self-defense, the fifth conducting defense for all the others. We

are not permitted direct examination of the jurors but forced to ask questions through the judge.

"Are you aware that the Communist Party is a legal political party?"

Judge Carraghar—"Question denied."

"Are you aware that the Cannery and Agricultural Workers' Industrial Union is a legal labor organization?"

"Question denied."

"Do you believe in that part of the Constitution which guarantees the right of freedom of—"

"Question denied."

"Do you believe in the rights of workers to organize into the union of their own choice?"

"Question denied. All questions of that type will be denied. Neither Communism nor labor is on trial here."

No. Just high-class vagrants!

America's Youth Rejects Fascism

THEODORE DRAPER

THERE is one inescapable issue in America today—Fascism. At the First American Youth Conference, just held in New York, Fascism was the major issue, and it divided the delegates from the beginning. At this conference of the representatives of more than 1,700,000 American youth, the delegates were led right up to the waters of fascism—and they refused to drink.

It was the broadest united front conference ever held in America. American youth, from the Young Communist League to the Boy Scouts of America, were represented. About four hundred delegates were present, two hundred from organizations and fully half from National youth organizations. This remarkably diverse group assembled to discuss everything from war to "spiritual renaissance."

Background.—Preparations for the Congress were undertaken three months ago by an organization styling itself the Central Bureau for Young America. Actually, the name was a circumlocution for a young lady named Viola Ilma. Her aspirations date from the summer of last year, when she had the opportunity of meeting Baldur von Shira, the Nazi youth fuhrer, Bertrand de Jouvenel, the youthful French fascist, and young de Rivera, the former Spanish dictator's son. Their visions of power captivated her.

She could already boast of not inconsiderable achievements for a girl said to be no more than twenty-three. A year and a half ago she took it into her head to send out notices to the literary columns announcing a new magazine, *Modern Youth*. There was no such magazine, but there was an idea that no contributor was to exceed the age of thirty. Apparently what she hoped to get was little more than ephemeral publicity. She had no

financial backing and no experience. To hear her tell it, the innocent notices about *Modern Youth* were answered with an avalanche of inquiries, subscriptions and contributions. Everybody had taken her seriously. Finally she induced a small printer near Chicago to extend credit for three issues. Back in New York she hired Louis Kronenberger to do the actual editing. When it ran up a debt of \$11,000, that was the end of *Modern Youth*. Viola Ilma was down but not out.

About this time Miss Ilma became a sort of protégé of Anne Morgan. In July, 1933, she attended a convention of the American Woman's Association, of which Miss Morgan is president. That convention sent her to Geneva as its representative to the International Congress of Women held that summer. Ilma was thus enabled to roam Europe and meet the inspiring fascist gentlemen. Returning home, she hastily sketched her impressions even while yet on board ship. She says that new ideas, new visions "poured in on her." She issued a book some months ago under the ecstatic cry, *And Now — Youth!* It is a melange of Fascism and fantasy, and although ghosted, it fairly represents what is in her head.

Her impressions of Germany are especially significant. In the book, and recently in her conversation and speeches, she has been satisfied to say that what impressed her about "Hitler's new Germany" was its magnificent "discipline, drive and organization." Certainly she is no fascist; no indeed. But when fresh from Europe she was much less timid and said:

Then I went to Germany for ten days and saw something quite different. It was a thrilling experience to see youth with something to

live for. Hitler, whatever else may be said about him, has given them self-respect, courage and a new vitality. (N. Y. Times, Dec. 10, 1933.)

Well, little else need be said if you could say that.

It is said on good authority that Miss Ilma has a vision of a million anonymous youth, all standing erect in one great field, hands aloft, shouting, "Heil Ilma!" It is not impossible. This is the young lady behind the First American Youth Congress.

Preparations.—Ilma's first step was to set up the Central Bureau for Young America. It sounded fancy and was intended "to assist and foster sound intellectual, spiritual and physical development of the youth of America." Anne Morgan gave her money. So did Mrs. August Belmont, some Wall Street brokers and men about town. Ilma has a genius for wheedling "contributions" out of rich dowagers. Arthur Garfield Hays chipped in too. She let him make a speech in return for that at the Congress.

The future of the Central Bureau thus became the future of Viola Ilma. She boasts that "the president, secretary, treasurer and office boy was Viola Ilma." In a world already full to bursting, positions of importance and prestige had long been preempted by scores of other Viola Ilmas. The First American Youth Congress was needed as the coming out party of the Central Bureau. It was to introduce little Viola as "America's Leader of Youth." Youth must always be capitalized.

Miss Ilma procured space for the Congress at Washington Square College, New York University, by interesting Professor Harvey Zorbaugh of the sociology department. Their aim was to garner everything in sight under

thirty. A Congress committee was set up with Viola Ilma as chairman. The Central Bureau took on added forces, some from her immediate family, and its mailing assumed really gigantic proportions. Miss Ilma got lots of New Deal figures to join her advisory board and thus gave the Congress a tone of official acceptance. She was a von Shirach without a Hitler.

One might suspect from all this that Miss Ilma is a remarkable young person. Far from it. She is energetic and pleasantly dramatic and, above all, gives the perfect illusion of being the very personification of Youth, especially, one gathers, to maids like Anne Morgan. Were it not that she became the instrument of larger forces, she might have remained a little girl with big, dangerous ideas.

Issues.—Back of the Central Bureau, directly and indirectly, looms the Roosevelt administration. Ilma chose as programmatic keynotes, as the basis for her own united front in the forthcoming Congress, points significantly common to both the Roosevelt and Hitler "new deals." In every bit of literature issued to prospective delegates and in her conversations at her New York office, you got to learn that the hope of American youth lay in transient camps, subsistence homesteads and an apprenticeship system. All are part of the New Deal and integral to Fascism. The project for subsistence homesteads is an attempt to use the crisis-created misery of millions of youth (and older workers too) in order to freeze them into a servile standard of living. It means the evasion of more direct and substantial aid like unemployment insurance. This goes for transient camps too, with the added implication of militarizing the youth. The apprenticeship scheme needs only Hitler's terminology to be identical with the system of industrial "leaders" (employers) and "followers" (workers). Her emphasis on these can be seen from the five roundtable conferences planned for the delegates at the Congress. The session on transient camps ranks first, the session on homesteads and apprenticeships ranks second. By adopting precisely those portions of the Roosevelt program which are most plainly fascist, Ilma was able to tie her kite to Roosevelt and Hitler, both at once.

The proof of the pudding is in this: that the chairman of the transient session was William J. Plunkert, head of the F.E.R.A. division of transients, and the chairman of the second session was to be John J. Sidel, of the N.R.A. apprenticeship division. Both came hot from Washington for the Congress.

Miss Ilma has always and insistently emphasized Youth as some sort of abstract unity. One would think after a reading of *And Now — Youth!* that every living soul under thirty is of the Lord's anointed. The highest praise she has found for Roosevelt, whom she has consistently supported since her return from Europe, is to call him "the first young man's President." The purpose of such tripe about Youth and its mission is to obscure the class divisions in Society. For a class analysis of every burning problem, she substitutes an age

analysis. This is not to deny that there are special problems of youth, but they are only special exemplifications of the general problems of the workers everywhere. The problem of the transient youth, for example, is essentially the problem of unemployment and that problem extends beyond thirty.

There is one more item in which the Central Bureau was intensely interested and that was a "census of Youth." There is no question that Ilma had reason to believe that it would be financed by Washington, using the Central Bureau as its agency. Before Viola Ilma became a "Leader of Youth," she would become an "Authority on Youth." It is pretty clear that in return for whatever support Miss Ilma could appear to have swung for the Roosevelt youth program, the lucrative "census of youth" was to be her reward.

Rumblings.—Just when the Central Bureau was getting down to business, opposition turned up. Professor Zorbaugh broke with her when he discovered that liberal and radical organizations were being held down to a minimum. Not only that, but she had provided for about two hundred "unaffiliated" delegates. They represented nobody but themselves and were hand-picked. Two weeks before the Congress, Prof. Zorbaugh invited twelve organizations for a conference. It is useful to indicate how broad the opposition united front was, right from the beginning, by enumerating the organizations present: Avukah, League for Industrial Democracy, National Pioneer Council, National Student Federation, National Student League, New America, Pioneer Youth, War Resisters League, Young Communist League, Y.M.C.A. (Student Division National Council), Young People's Socialist League and the Y.W.C.A. (National Student Council).

The caucus was meeting to fight off a very important bid for Fascism. Miss Ilma had taken over not only a fascist program, but also a very obvious fascist procedure. From all appearances it appeared that the Congress had been framed before it had begun. Fuehrer's do not bother to get the will of their subjects. The organizations drafted an open letter to the Central Bureau demanding a democratically elected executive, resolutions and credentials committees, and a revision of the agenda.

No answer was ever received. When Miss Ilma ignored them, the organizations met again and undertook further action. The united front was holding together solidly. A committee of five was appointed to draft a united front resolution.

Another opposition caucus was held on the very eve of the Congress. About eighty delegates were present. The opposition had grown to twenty-eight organizations. The program of the Congress had been issued that very day and the worst fears of the opposition were realized. The rules were complicated and clumsy, but they unmistakably prevented any decisions by the assembly itself. Voting power upon all questions was vested in an Ex-

ecutive Board and that Board was top-heavy with Central Bureau people. The Congress at large decided nothing. The Executive Board made all decisions in private session.

No provision had even been made for the election of a chairman. The fight on that point was to be the opening gun.

The First Day.—The morning session opened with a slate of "distinguished" speakers, Mayor La Guardia, Governor Winant of New Hampshire, the New Deal in the person of A. A. Berle. The Congress had opened very suddenly and informally; no chairman. As soon as the speeches had ended, Miss Ilma advanced to make announcements. She had just begun when Waldo McNutt of the Rocky Mountain Council of the Y.M.C.A. called out for the election of a chairman; called out from the floor. Miss Ilma became very disconcerted, but proceeded as evenly as possible. From all sides of the auditorium a cry for chairman started under way. Miss Ilma lost her head, looked alternately fierce and frantic, and retired in favor of one of her henchmen. The chair was shifted from one person to the other. The scene was fairly ludicrous. The tide could not be stemmed. Debate started on the floor, one person denouncing the rowdy Communists, the next calling for the right of an assembly to elect its own officers and make its own rules. Miss Ilma finally took the chair again, and when an anonymous friend of hers shouted at her to adjourn the session, she abruptly did so in a voice weak from anxiety and despair.

The afternoon session was devoted to the round-table conferences. The same issue was immediately raised in every session by challenging Miss Ilma's hand-picked chairmen. In four sessions her choice was ousted, even Plunkert, and chairmen elected from the floor. The opposition to the Ilma dictatorship now embraced the overwhelming majority of delegates. The real showdown was still to come in the evening when the Executive Board was to have its first meeting. Yes, the same strategy.

About a hundred people were admitted to the Executive Board. The session was supposed to be concerned with a symposium on various political tendencies, but it never got that far. The moment Miss Ilma took the chair, the cry began for a chairman. She simply ignored them. Above the confusion rose the strident objections of Gil Green, a leader of the opposition representing the Young Communist League. Ilma again appeared to be at a total loss. A moment later she retired. Her successor, Prof. J. B. Nash of the University, had his own difficulties. He held out for nearly an hour and then weakened. He permitted nominations and McNutt was pitted against Miss Ilma. She declined.

It was at this point that the Congress split. Miss Ilma and about twenty-five faithfuls left the room. The Executive Board continued in a strange new atmosphere of sweetness and light. Miss Ilma had gone straightway to the Hotel Brevoort, five blocks away, for her own little, private little Congress.

Two Days. — Next morning, about two hundred people gathered before the auditorium, but the doors were closed. Rain was beginning to fall. It was later discovered that Miss Ilma had ordered the doors closed. After tense and highly impatient waiting, a room was finally procured by the local chapter of the National Student League. After this, two meetings were going on, the Congress in the University and the Ilma group at the Hotel Brevoort. The morning of the Congress was devoted to organizing itself. Every few minutes word would be brought of the rump session. A delegation of six was sent over to negotiate. They were refused a hearing. Professor Nash turned up with an appeal from the Chancellor. He wanted to speak to a small committee, perhaps the difficulties could be resolved. As the committee walked into the Chancellor's room Miss Ilma walked out. What the Chancellor wanted was another attempt at mediation, and he got it. Miss Ilma would not compromise with the new committee. From then on both groups officially ignored each other. Miss Ilma's small faction of thirty became the "conservative" or "reactionary" faction, the Congress of fully one hundred and fifty became the "progressives," "radicals" or "democratic control group." Miss Ilma complained to the papers that the Communists had washed their faces and put on their best clothes and had "ganged up on her." This is actually what the United Press carried on Thursday. Miss Ilma was licked.

Summary.—What occurred at the Congress was a struggle between two forces. One represented the extreme right. The other a coalition from the left, a solid, unbending united front between Communist and Socialist youth. It is true that the left wing delegates were at all times a minority but the Ilma group was a small minority likewise. The majority of delegates, the youth of the middle classes, had to be won for either side by decision and an adequate program. It

would be unrealistic to think that the Boy Scout delegates had any initial predisposition against the fascist tactics and policies of the Central Bureau, or even understood their implications. The majority of delegates were precisely like that, but practically all stuck to the end with the left wing against the highly romanticized Ilma.

Miss Ilma was crushed and a militant program carried because the left wing, the Communist and Social youth in particular, stayed solid throughout. The middle class elements responded when working class youth presented a united program. Before the Workers Unemployment and Social Insurance Bill was supported by the Congress, the impact of the crisis upon the middle class had to be demonstrated. They had to recognize the problem as their own, not an alien appendage. When that was done, Miss Ilma, her program and her methods, went with the rubbish. The left was the center of gravity opposing the fascist right not by a process of isolation, but by a process of understanding and penetration. In this respect, the Congress represented, in miniature, the actual relation of class forces in the struggle against Fascism.

An examination of the two programs shows how far apart was the Congress and its rump. The Congress supports the Workers Unemployment and Social Insurance bill, the peace proposals of the Soviet Union for complete disarmament, the 30-hour week, with no reduction in pay, the unrestricted right of all workers to join trade unions of their own choice, including the right to strike and picket. It proposes the abolition of the transient camps and, pending that, abolition of military control of those camps, as well as the abolition of the R.O.T.C. and C.M.T.C. Contrast this to the right-wing program which typically supports the maintenance of the camps, increased armaments, and against all isms but "Americanism." Here are programs as wide apart as the poles. Miss Ilma was completely isolated and found herself on the outside of a

Congress upon which she had expended generous amounts of time, money and something less than astuteness in an effort to frame it in her own image. She was left with nothing but thirty of her hand-picked "unaffiliated" delegates. The Congress remained as a body behind the militant leadership of the broad, united front opposition. That was an achievement. The lesson should be learned far and wide.

Out of this Congress came something important. Never before have such a variety of organizations united on such a militant program. The executive board of fifteen elected to carry on the work of the Congress has a representative of the churches, the transient youth, a trade union, student organizations, the Young People's Socialist League and the Young Communist League. Two steps forward were taken. For the first time since the Socialist exodus from the American League Against War and Fascism are Communists and Socialists together again. The unity transmitted itself to much wider sections, including middle class youth. In fact, on the second night of the Congress, when Earl Browder spoke for the Communist Party and Norman Thomas spoke for the Socialist Party, Thomas stated that he believed a united front between the two parties would be achieved by September 1. He hailed the French parties for having come to an agreement and declared himself in favor of similar agreement here. This youth Congress was a long step in that direction.

The job ahead is to transform words into deeds. The executive board has already decided to hold a conference of youth in Washington, when Congress opens, to press the demands of the First American Youth Congress, especially for H.R. 7598, the unemployment insurance bill. This is the answer to Fascism, this was the achievement made possible by a real united front. Perhaps Miss Ilma was right to be optimistic about the possibilities of youth. Only don't capitalize it.

A Million Workers Say Strike!

CARL REEVE

THE unanimous decision of the 500 delegates to the Thirty-third National Convention of the United Textile Workers Union of America, with 300,000 members, to declare a general strike in the textile industry, was not an empty threat.

For a whole week these 500 delegates met in stormy session at the Town Hall, New York City. There are one million textile workers in the United States, and in this strike convention every branch of the industry was represented. There were delegates from the silk, woolen, worsted, cotton and rayon mills of New England. The Southern textile states

—Georgia, Alabama, North and South Carolina, Virginia and Tennessee—sent scores of delegates. The hosiery, silk and thread mills, the dye houses of Eastern Pennsylvania, New Jersey and New York were represented. Textile workers in twenty states and 217 cities, including the Pacific Coast, met and elected delegates representing 300,000 workers.

The gathering in Town Hall was something new in the history of the textile industry of the United States. Never before has there been such a representative gathering of textile workers. Two years ago the United Textile Workers union was no more than a

dormant skeleton, with only scattered locals. Since then 230,000 workers, in 537 new local unions, have joined the U.T.W.

It was this mass influx into the United Textile Union which caused the seeming contradictions in the debates. On the one hand there were the delegates of the new local unions — raw, inexperienced in parliamentary maneuvering — illusions clinging to them, but militant and fighting mad. On the other hand there was the leadership of President Thomas MacMahon, mossbacked and musty, in the saddle for a score of years.

When a telegram was read from William