

# WORKERS

# THEATRE



AUGUST  
1931

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Vol. I - No. 5

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NOTICE - Beginning with this issue the WORKERS THEATRE Magazine is published monthly by the United Workers Theatre of New York (Workers Laboratory Theatre of the W.I.R. at 799 Broadway, N.Y., and Proletbuckme). The United Workers Theatre is planned to include all Workers Theatre groups in the New York area.

The aim of the magazine is to stimulate the growth of Workers Theatre in the United States.

## WORKERS' THEATRE

by John E. Bonn (Prolet-Buehne, New York)

Report, given at the cultural convention  
in New York, June 14th 1931.

### I. What is Workers' Theatre?

Workers' Theatre is NOT: a Theatre playing anything for workers  
- nor  
a Theatre showing the dramatized world  
of the worker for anybody.

Workers' Theatre is - like any form of art - part of a culture,  
reflecting (expressing) and promoting (impressing) this culture.

Workers' Theatre of today is a part of the proletarian culture  
of today.

The proletarian culture of today is a culture in the beginning:  
fighting against the bourgeois class  
fighting for the proletarian class  
it is a culture of Class-Struggle.

Therefore:

Workers' Theatre of today is the Theatre of the Class-  
Struggle.

Its only purpose is reflecting (dramatizing) the Class-Struggle  
and promoting (propagandizing) the Class-Struggle.

Its only audience are the masses of the workers.

### I. Workers' Theatre and Bourgeois Theatre.

What can we learn from the Bourgeois Theatre?

Which are the relations between both types?

Workers' Theatre (approaching the workers) concentrates on every-  
day's economic problems

Bourgeois Theatre (when approaching the workers) wants to divert  
from everyday's economic problems

Workers' Theatre (as a matter of propaganda) approaches the  
masses of the exploited proletarians

Bourgeois Theatre (as a matter of business) approaches a few rich

Workers' Theatre (as a means of struggle) is a medium of activiz-  
ation of the workers

Bourgeois Theatre (as a means of entertainment) is a medium of  
relaxation of the idle

Workers' Theatre is for the **EXPLOITED**

Bourgeois Theatre is for the **EXPLOITERS**

There is no connection between Workers' Theatre and  
Bourgeois Theatre

And there is only one relation between both: **ANTAGONISM**

Therefore:

-We cannot learn from Bourgeois Theatre  
We have to build up Workers' Theatre from the bottom  
learning by experiences  
and Self-Criticism.

### III. Workers' Theatres in Soviet-Russia and Germany.

#### a) How are they organized?

The workers of towns, city sections, factories, industrial groups, Workers' Organizations (W.I.R., I.L.D., Youth Org., etc.) Unions, the Workers' Press, etc.

have

small (10 to 20 members) well organized and disciplined groups  
organized on a national scale in the

Russian (or German) Union  
of Workers' Theatres  
on an international scale in the  
International Workers'  
Dramatic Union

#### b) When and where do they play?

They play at any occasion  
at any place

where workers can be reached:  
at factory-gates, in streets, in halls, in demonstrations, at workers' affairs, in meetings, etc.

#### c) What do they play?

They show everything, that reflects and promotes the Class-Struggle:

recent political events, conditions in factories, the brutality of the police, the necessity of organizing, agitation of strikes, the 5-year-plan, etc.  
in large variety of forms:

songs, mass-recitations, dance,  
pantomime, one-act play, revue,  
improvisations, etc.

#### d) How do they play?

Out of the given conditions:

non-professional players, limited  
time for preparations, limited  
financial resources,

and the given tasks:

to play as often as possible,  
to reach as many workers, as possible,  
to catch up with the daily events as fast  
as possible,  
to be able, to play at any place,  
to be understandable for every worker,  
to have close contact with the audience,  
arose the beginning of a new dramatic style:

The Collective Report.

(To be continued in the  
next issue.)

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The Jewish-speaking Dramsections

C. Gordon

Organizer City Club Committee

There are, at present, in the Jewish-speaking workers' clubs 14 dramatic circles with a membership of nearly 300. These circles grew out of the necessity of doing away with professional entertainers who cost the clubs too much money and who gave them crumbs of petty bourgeois culture. The reorganization of the clubs on a sectional basis forced the clubs to organize local sections in order to offer variety in club activities, and to give members an opportunity to participate in the particular activity in which they feel an interest. The work is carried on, now, on a centralized basis. The City Club Committee, (the central organization that unites the Jewish-speaking clubs in New York) has a special division whose function it is to assemble and prepare plays, and do technical organizational work in the sections.

The repertory circulating in the dramsections consists of about 20-25 pieces, (one-acters, satires, short skits) material which does not deal with current events in the class struggle and which reflects this country only to a minor extent.

As the sections become more active, the shortage of plays becomes acute. In view of the number of sections and the amount of work done by them, the number of new plays suitable for their stages is negligible. During 1930-31 only 4 additional plays were obtained. A crisis is approaching.

To forestall the crisis it was decided that each section be urged to create its own dramatic material. Up to date, however, this decision to create own material has brought no appreciable results. Several attempts were made to write and produce plays dealing with current daily problems. Several grotesques with political themes were also produced, as well as dramatized songs, but this was done only in a few clubs possessing better developed sections or whom the shortage of material hit hardest. The remaining sections continue in their old manner, performing the traditional one-acter. We must have closer cooperation between the various language groups to guide the Jewish dramsections to new ways and a broadened repertory which should be more daring in its propaganda value and stronger in its expression.

The dramsections serve not only their own clubs but appear also at affairs given by other fraternal organizations. During the past season these dramsections appeared 60 times before such other clubs and organizations. This in addition to 49 performances before their own clubs.

In spite of the fact that the dramsections are an old and deep-rooted institution in the workers' clubs, they have not gone very far organizationally. Up to date we have not established any close ties with other proletarian groups which have gone

forward and whose experience would prove of great value to us. This was because of the fact that recently we have had to purge our ranks and reorganize. Up to recently there existed in these dramsections a petty bourgeois leadership which aimed to convert the club into a theatre, provincial "specialists" who brought all the claptrap of the cheap theatre into the dramsections, and hindered the powers of the collective in order to push forward their cheap individualism. However, this element has now been brushed aside and the leadership of the dramsections is in the hands of serious minded workers who regard their section as a useful and necessary unit in the club and the whole labor movement; a unit under the control of the polit-circle-- the circle that controls all the club activities.

Besides the one-acter, the dramsections are forced to utilize also other theatre material which requires special study. For this purpose we have organized several courses-- one course in make-up, another in diction and elocution-- attended by about 45 students. Plans are under way for the Fall to organize jointly with the "Artef" a class for directors for the platform and the small club stage.

This short article merely touches the survey and does not give a full picture of the Jewish dramsections and their role in the clubs and ~~and~~ the labor movement. We have tried to clarify, however, that we come to the federation of other language groups not as visitors but as an organized part of the labor movement, ready to work with all our might towards the building of a powerful united proletarian cultural front.

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### Tasks Before The Jewish-speaking Dramsections I. Plattner

In the Jewish Workers' Clubs there are various groups organized, such as political, dramatic, sports, etc. The task of the political group is to educate the workers politically, the task of the sports section is to develop them physically, etc. Now what should be the task of the dramatic group, how should it function, and how does it fulfill its task.

Let us say, a club decides to run an affair to make some money. It invites so-called "talent" from outside. This "talent" is often paid, and it occasionally happens that an evening which brings in perhaps 15-20 dollars altogether, has to provide fully half of that sum for these entertainers. And what do these entertainers bring to the worker audience? Most often something altogether unsuited. Songs are sung which are entirely out of spirit with the character of the evening. Poems are recited which are of little or no value to the worker in his struggle. In short it may be stated that in most cases these entertainers ruin the evening and at the same time get away with a good part of the receipts.

It is clear then that the clubs are very much in need of "talent" of their own, in other words, dramatic groups. And such

groups were organized, groups which were to, at least partly, replace these professional entertainers.

The results show, however, that up to now we have merely created "professionals" of our own-- real actors, dramas, comedies, beads, costumes, in short, real theatrical troupes after the old pattern which may be expected at any moment to take to the provinces.

The organizing of dramatic groups for the purpose of replacing professional entertainers is fundamentally false. It is true that they are of financial help to the clubs and to the movement, but this in itself is by far not their most important function. Were this the only reason for their existence we would perhaps be better off without them, for the damage they ~~do~~ do outweighs their usefulness. They create a spirit of stardom, and the club becomes alive with the petty ambitions of stage-struck individuals, with rivalry and petty jealousies, with intrigues and back-stage politics. In short, it creates a real, typical Yiddish theatre atmosphere into which it often pulls the club as a whole. As a result, the contents of the play, and more important still, its purpose, its significance to the worker audience, its educational value, is completely forgotten.

What play material is chosen for these groups? There is no suitable repertoire to choose from. Whatever one-act plays or skits are to be found are either haphazardly written, or foreign, and therefore unsuited to the daily struggles of the American worker. As yet, there has been no social demand for such plays. Proletarian literature grows as the revolutionary movement and as the workers' dramatic groups grow. It is certain that such a literature will come. Already certain plays, one-acters, etc. have appeared. These have to be chosen, compiled, adapted. As yet this has not been done and our groups play whatever comes to hand as long as it is not definitely counter-revolutionary in character. Needless to say, they will more often choose, in line with some of their above-mentioned characteristics, good star vehicles, something in which can be found a hero, a primadonna, a comedian, etc., but nothing which would serve to organize the worker by means of his theatre.

Now how should the dramatic groups work in order to fulfill its task of educating the worker politically. First of all, the question of repertory. It is not necessary to search for plays. The world about us fairly roars with struggle, with proletarian life and activity-- the club, the shop, strikes, etc. Each day brings vital news-- hunger marches, demonstrations, evictions, deportations, arrests, etc. We are living thru an endless course of campaigns carried on by the movement-- election campaigns, anti-religious campaigns, anti-war campaigns. Questions of all sorts arise in the life of the worker day by day. Struggles with the foes within and the foes without. Lovestonism, fascism, social fascism, leftism. All this is stuff for the workers' play.

Must the worker wait for the playwright? No. In the first place this would again create that objectionable atmosphere of "real theatre". Secondly it would not serve our special purpose. The struggles of today are of momentous importance. Relief for the striking miners must be organized immediately. The Scottsboro victims need help. The drama groups must be ready with timely service.

For instance, a group has to enact a play on the Scottsboro issue before the workers of the neighborhood in order to educate them in this matter, and by so doing organize help for these class victims. The group should thereupon call a meeting, discuss the case thoroly and become well acquainted with it from every angle. It should then outline the various roles, such as the judge, the negro workers, the International Labor Defense representatives, etc., and distribute these roles among the players. Each actor should then write his own lines. The group must meet again, read the lines, change and coordinate them wherever necessary, and the text is ready. As a rule, such a play should end with the participation of the worker audience, and the appeal made directly. The audience should be made to participate in the play wherever possible. The duty of the worker-actor is to convince the workers, to bring them into a fighting mood and stimulate them to action.

The players do not need a stage with the complete, cumbersome scenic paraphernalia such as beards, furniture, costumes, etc. The play can be very effective with the simplest means. Simple lighting, a simple change in costume, such as changing the collar or hat can create the effect of a rabbi, a priest, etc. Props such as hammers, sickles, stars, can be cut out on cardboard. Simple scenic symbols, such as prison bars, windows, etc., can be created by a few lines on cardboard. Placards are always effective. Red flags, emblems, and a little lighting will contribute to the colorfulness of the scene.

The dramatic groups must decide in advance what to prepare for recurring yearly campaigns like elections, anti-religious campaigns, Sacco-Vanzetti memorials, Hirsh Leckert, etc. There is an inexhaustible supply of theatre material about us. Don't wait. Use it!

Self-activization, liquidation of stalinism, keeping uppermost in mind the class interests of the workers, their needs and struggles, these must be the tasks of the dramatic groups, and they must work accordingly.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: The method of having the actors write their own lines is impractical, and to the editor's knowledge has ~~not~~ been tried before, but unsuccessfully.

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Report of the Cultural Convention  
H. Shapiro

On June 14th a convention, called by the John Reed Club of New York, was held for the purpose of consolidating the cultural forces of the American worker based on his most vital problem, the class struggle. To turn these cultural forces into an important weapon for the class struggle.

For this purpose 265 delegates of the metropolitan area gathered, representing mass organizations of thousands of workers in orchestras, singing societies, theatre groups, workers' clubs, sports unions, etc. A number of delegates from nearby towns were also present.

This convention is an outgrowth of the Charkov conference, as Comrade McGill expressed it, a legitimate child of the Charkov conference. Among the numerous things brought forward at this convention by the delegates were: the importance of the cultural force in the class struggle; that artists should not only perfect themselves as artists but also as workers; that our cultural activities should take us into mass organization rather than individual; the need of proletarian revolutionary plays, songs, etc., the exchange of plays, songs, cartoons and the like.

Special attention has been called by several delegates from workers' clubs to the lack of proletarian plays for their dram-sections. On this point delegates from workers' clubs have pointed out that the W.L.T. did some valuable work in supplying plays to some of the organizations. Among other things the importance of the shop as a basis for all culture has been called to the attention of the audience. Also, the importance of workers' correspondence, the strengthening of political contents. Also the political education for both artists and audience.

Attention has been called to the fact that the German agit-prop theatre is not only an important weapon in the class struggle but also a very fine theatre. On the need of agit-prop theatre Comrade Bohn of the Prolet-Buhne pointed out that we have already agit-prop theatres in the W.L.T. and the Prolet-Buhne. He also pointed out the power of the theatre as a weapon of destruction of capitalism, also that we have nothing in common with the bourgeois theatre, a statement to which Comrade Buchwald took exception. Comrade Markoff also added that the workers' theatre must be the expression of the revolutionary worker of America.

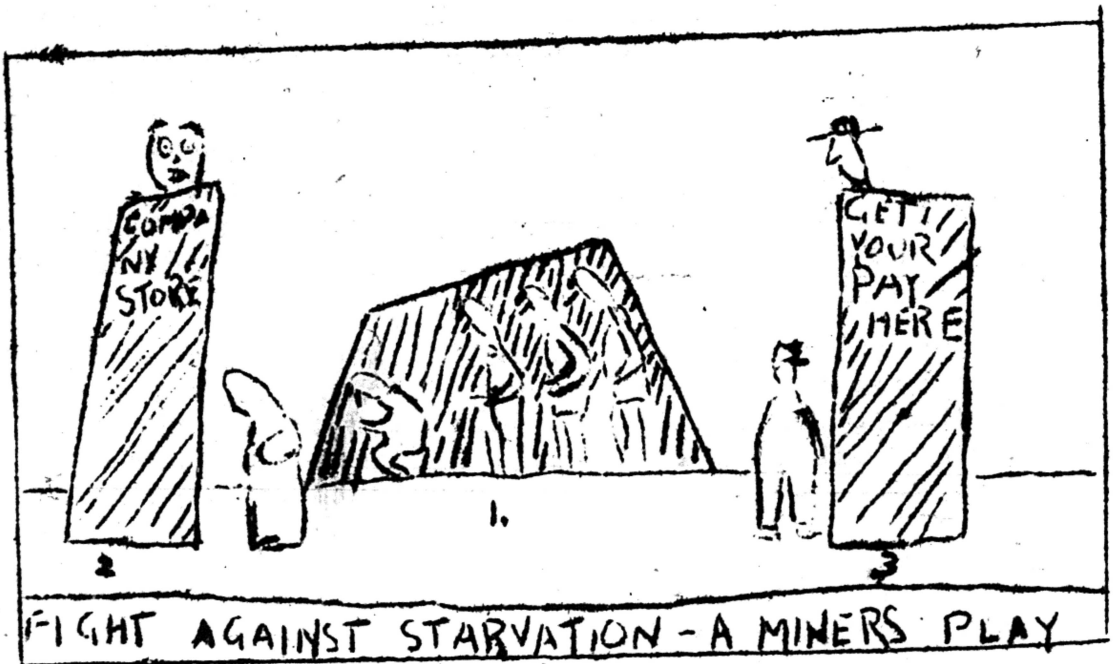
On the working of the German theatre Comrade Bohn told us that they write their own plays in the collective method. They play wherever they can, they have no separation between audience and actor, and are most practical and economical in sets and lighting.

The keynote of the convention was struck at the opening by an agit-prop production of the United Workers' Theatres of

N. Y. (Workers' Laboratory Theatre and Prolet-Bühne) showing the convention a theatre form new to America-- the Collective Report "Art is a Weapon" (published in the July issue of the Workers' Theatre magazine.

A high light in the convention was the greeting, a message of solidarity brought to us by Comrade Stachel of the T.U.U.L. He scored the fact that communist organizations were not quick to realize the importance of the cultural movement. The convention made a collection and sent him back to the miners with \$60.00.

The presidium elected an executive committee of 35 to consider and act upon the various problems, also decided on a national convention and a Spartakiad of all cultural forces for the anniversary of the October revolution.



Settings for first and last scenes of miners play in this issue.

1. Black backdrop on wall where miners work representing a mine.

2. Company store,--grocery clerk,-- and woman.

3. Pay clerk and miner receiving his pay.

2 and 3 are bright yellow-colored paper.

Help the Miners  
A play by  
A. Prentis

Persons: Miss Stewart: secretary  
Mr. French: mine operator  
Mrs. Parker: a society lady  
Rev. Dribble  
Quinn: chairman of the United Miners local  
Steve, Jim & Kazanovitch; miners.

A desk, 5 chairs on platform.  
Miss Stewart stands at one side of desk sorting letters.  
Mr. French comes in, sits down at desk, begins to read mail.

Miss Stewart: Good morning, Mr. French.

Mr. French: Good morning. Any telegrams?

Miss Stewart: No, but Mr. Fuller, the mine superintendent, called up to say that 90% of the men in mines No. 1, 2 and 5 have gone out yesterday and he may have to shut down unless you get new men today.

Mr. French: (under his breath) The bastards. Did they try to make them go back to work?

Miss Stewart: He says that they tried. They hired new deputies who went around telling the men that unless they go back they'll be evicted, but it seems the men are possessed of the very devil and are more stubborn than ever. He says that they even tried a little rough stuff, but that only made more men walk out.

Mr. French: (pensive for a minute) Is the committee coming this morning?

Miss Stewart: Yes, Mr. French, they are due here any moment, now.

Mr. French: Who is on the committee?

Miss Stewart: First, there is Quinn, chairman of the United Miners local-

Mr. French: Yes, I know, Parsons fixed it all up with him yesterday.  
Who else?

Miss Stewart: Then there is Rev. Dribble, representing the governor, and Mrs. Parker, representing the civic organizations.

Mr. French: I'll handle them allright. (Bell rings)

Miss Stewart: There they are.

Mr. French: Show them in, but watch this Quinn, he's an all round crook.

(Miss Stewart goes to the door, shows in committee and goes out)

Rev.Dribble: Good morning, Mr.French.

Mr.French: Good morning, when have I the pleasure--?

Rev.Dribble: Rev.Dribble, representing the governor, and this is Mrs. Parker, representing the civic organizations.

Mr.French: How do you do, Mrs. Parker.

Mrs. Parker: How do you do, Mr.French. I am very pleased to meet you.

Mr.French: The pleasure is all mine, I am sure.

Rev.Dribble: And this is Mr.Quinn, chairman of the United Mine Workers.

Quinn: You remember, Mr.French, don't you? We met last spring down at the races?

Mr.French: Yes, I do remember you.

Quinn: When your partner, Mr.Parsons, spoke to me last night about coming over here, I said: "Don't say another word, Mr.Parsons, I know Mr.French very well, he's a fine all round man, and I'll do all I can to help."

Mr.French: Thanks a lot.

Rev. & Mrs.Parker: Thank you. (all sit down)

Mr.French: (to Quinn) Have a cigar?

Quinn: I sure will. (to Mrs.Parker) Do you mind?

Mrs.Parker: Not at all, Mr.Quinn. (Quinn smokes up and stretches his legs)

Mr.French: How about you, Reverend Dribble?

Rev.Dribble: I'll take one, to smoke at home, to enjoy it, so to speak.

Mr.French: Go on, take a couple. (Rev.Dribble takes a handful) What do you say, we get down to business.

Mrs.Parker: I was just about to propose the very same.

Rev.Dribble: (Smelling one of the cigars) Well, Mr.French, as the governor mentioned to you over the phone yesterday, we were delegated to meet you and Mr.Quinn and to urge you to gather at a round table in order to iron out your differences, so to speak, and arrive at an amicable agreement.

Rev.Dribble: Needless to say, both of you are aware, like all the rest of us, what turmoil, what unrest has spread in our city ever since this strike commenced, what a bad effect it has had upon business and the community. We urge you therefore, in Christian brotherliness to forgive and forget and settle down the strike as soon as possible.

Mrs.Parker: You know, Mr.French, a committee representing the Womens' clubs visited the strike area, and we decided at once to speak to you, as conditions there are so horrible that if they continue we don't know what might happen and we fear the worst.

Mr.French: Now listen, Mrs.Parker and Rev.Dribble, and I hope you get me straight. We, that is, the mine operators, did not force this strike. The men were working and making a living, we were providing them with homes, we were providing them with commodities at cost price, we were building schools and churches, in short, taking care of all their material and spiritual needs. Suddenly, Quinn and the rest of his delegates decided to call a strike, merely because, owing to the general depression, we were forced to institute economies that threw out a few men and slightly affected a few others. Now we are no charity institution but a thoroly organized corporation, responsible to a board of directors and stockholders, and as chairman of the board I do not intend to make any move that will help these strikers win even a single point, especially not after our mine superintendent has phoned this morning that 80% of the miners in some of our mines have returned to work. I'll starve them all if necessary---

Rev.Dribble: But at the same time, Mr.French, you should, perhaps, realize that they are only poor ignorant miners, and you should be magnanimous----

Mrs.Parker: Many are foreigners, not Americanized and illiterate.

Mr.French: Somuch the worse for them-- they should be thankful they are getting a chance to make a living here after starving in the country they come from. They have no business listening to these agitators who are only out to cause trouble and to line their pockets with money.

Quinn: Now listen here, Mr.French----

Mr.French: Listen nothing. Ever since you and your gang came down here we've been having nothing but trouble. Before you came everything was going fine. We never had strikes, the company was making a good profit, the men were sa tisfied----

Rev.Dribble: That is very, very true.

Mrs.Parker: You are right, Mr.French.

Mr. French: You bet I'm right. Ever since they came we've had nothing but strikes, damn them. Every time we start to mechanize the mines we find ourselves with trouble on our hands. And why did they call these strikes? Just to give some delegate a chance for a rakeoff. And now you come to me asking me to settle, to be magnanimous. To whom-- to those Hunkies and Polaks? Do you think I'm a fool? Do you realize how much money we've lost thru this strike? Do you realize that were we to give in to the demands on this strike the whole mine region would organize over night, and we'd never be able to break them again?

Mrs. Parker: But your duty to the community ----

Mr. French: The community be damned. We the mine operators, are the community, we pay your taxes, we support your schools and libraries, we donate to your churches.

Rev. Dribble: We realize that, Mr. French, and are very grateful.

Mr. French: If we lose this strike it's you who will suffer most, your schools and charities.

Quinn: Now listen here, Mr. French. I was keeping quiet all the time you was talkin, permit me to say a couple words. Now don't get me wrong. You say you had no trouble until we came down. Now we had to call strikes, conditions in some of the mines wasn't so hot, some mines were payin' less a ton than others, some were usin' cheap negro labor, some were importin' European labor, altogether, conditions was pretty rotten.

Mr. French: The conditions in my mines are the best to be found anywhere.

Quinn: Well, you're an exception, Mr. French, but all operators isn't as white as you, and do take advantage when miners isn't organized.

Mr. French: You claim that conditions in my mines are excellent-- then why did you call out my men?

Quinn: Look here, Mr. French, you know we didn't call out the men, you know it was those damned reds who done it.

Mr. French: You are a hell of a union leader if the men in your union can walk out on strike without your permission or say-so.

Quinn: We tried to stop them, we did our best to show them it was wrong----

Mr. French: If you have no power in the union-----

Quinn: Who has no power??--- I'll show you who has the power, I'll show you that 95% of the men are solid behind me, only them reds is causin' the whole trouble, they're agitatin' against me, they should be deported.

Mr.French: Mr.Parsons explained to you yesterday our position. Now, if you have any power, you can prove it by getting the men to go back to work.

Mrs.Parker: That would be noble work.

Rev.Dribble: You should do it for the good of the community.

Quinn: Just a minute, just a minute, I can't settle things like that, I got to talk to the rest of the committee.

Mr.French: Yes, you can tell them the strike is lost, the men aren't doing themselves any good by staying out, tell them I am willing to talk terms.--

Quinn: Will you agree to the demands?----

Mr.French: Tell the men that they must first go back to work. A fter that the governor will appoint an impartial committee to discuss terms.

Quinn: I just don't know how they'll take it---

Mr.French: Also, tell the rest of your committee that it is for the benefit of the miners themselves as the operators will gladly help the committee drive the reds out of your union.

Quinn: By God, I'll--do it--

Steve: (From rear of room, surrounded by Jim, Kazanovitch in miners' clothes)  
No, you aint.

Mr.French; (to Quinn) Who are they?

Quinn: The reds.

Steve: (A miners walking up to stago) A committee of the Rank and File.

Mr.French: (Jumping up and searching for revolver in the drawer of desk)

Jim: Don't bother lookin for the gun, Mr.French. We aint on the picket line where your yellow dogs can take pot-shots at us. We have our gang too. (to audience)  
Workers, we was sent here as a delegation from the central committee of the Rank and File. Fellow workers, are you with the strikers or are you against them?

Audience: We are with the strikers, we are with you.

Jim: I thought so.

Mr.French: What the hell do you want here?

Kazanovitch: Last night your partner, Mr.Parsons, visited this rat (pointing to Quinn) this traitor to the workers' class at his hotel and gave him \$5000.-

Mr. French: that's a lie.

Kazanovitch: It's the truth and you know it. We have friends all over, and they put us wise. Now today this skunk is trying to sell out the strike and we came down to stop him.

Quinn: You can't stop me.

Kazanovitch: We can, we will. We aint got crooked, grafting delegates like you, who sell out the strike when they get graft. We's elected from the rank and file of the strikin minos, and if we don't settle, nobody will.

Rev. Dribble: You know, my good man, you disregard the fact that the strikers' are starving.

Mrs. Parker: Their babies have no milk.

Mr. French: If you rods are bent on mischief, we can find a way to get rid of you.

Jim: No you can't you can try to beat up or deport a couple of us but you can't break sixty thousand miners. Us miners have about stood it long enough from you and the others. You've been sucking every drop of our blood long enough, diggin coal for you so that you and your women have plenty to eat, live in swell homes, ride around in expensive cars. And what've we been getting out of it? Thirty cents a ton of coal and nothin left at the end of the month, nothin put by for old age except T.B., and gettin crippled or killed in an explosion, our kids without milk, our wives without eats and clothes. But this is the end. We aint 't gonna stand it no longer. The miners is comin out in the whole mine region, from Pennsylvania, Illinois, Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, from your mines, comin out to a man, marchin 5 and 10 and 15 miles mornin and evenin to the picket line with the women and kids. And the slogan is: Rather starve strikin than starve workin.

Mr. French: Then we will starve every damned one of you.

Jim: No you aint, not as long as we have the solidarity of the workin calss. As long as there is one man workin here in this country so long will the workin class send us help and food and clothes. We aint fighting our battle only, we're fightin the fight of the whole workin clas--- and the workers know it and will stand by us-----

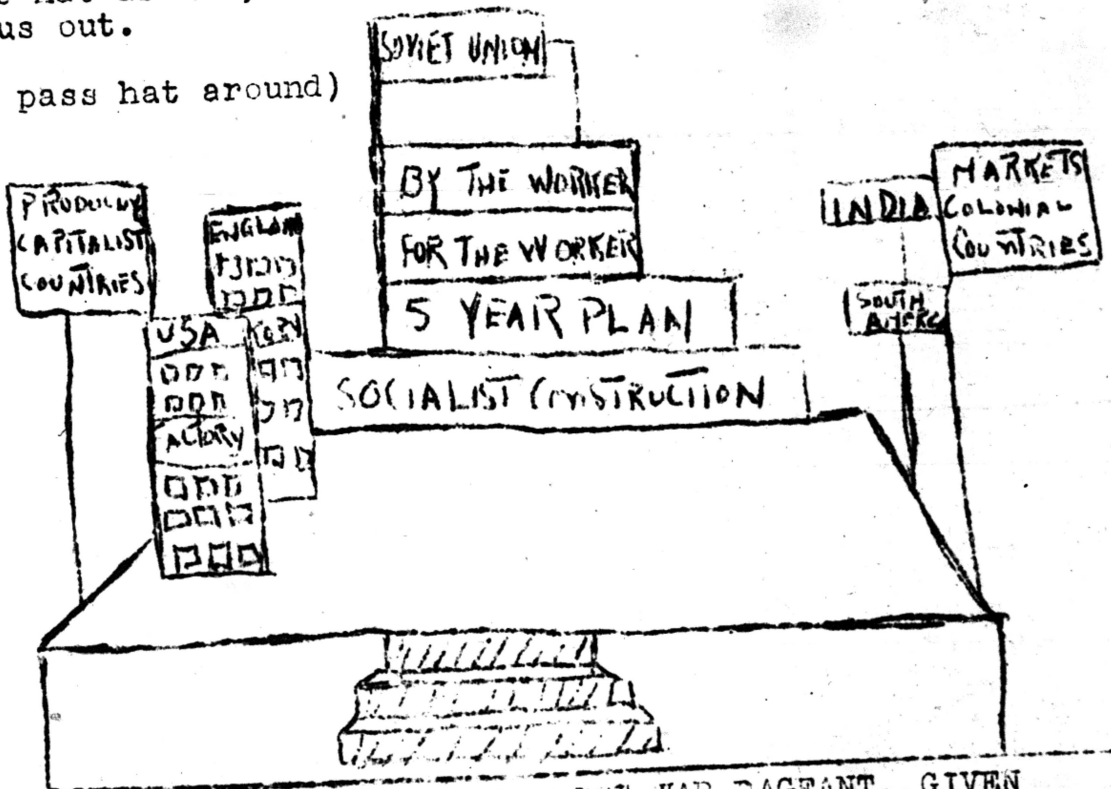
Mr. French: We'll see about that. (to the others) Come. (they go out)

Mary:  
(a miner's wife) I have 4 kids home, I had 8 but 4 died cause they hadn't no milk when they was at the breast and mine wasn't no good. Now, the oldest boy was workin with his dad at the mines till now, but of the other three, two has T.B. and one is down with plain starvation. Now, those of you women what's lost any children know how it feels to see your kid, your



own blood, close his eyes and die off on you, and you help-  
 less cause you aint got no money for no doctors, no medicine,  
 no mil-. I've seen four of mine die off like that but other  
 women down at the mines have seen five and six go. An the  
 Red Cross won't help any, they say they can only help when  
 distress is caused by an act of God. And our men comin home  
 after a hard days work and no eats on the table for them  
 cause the men don't earn enough, they pay them only 30 cents  
 a ton. The men just had to strike, they couldn't stand it no  
 longer. And now we're up against it. Before the strike we  
 were half starving all the time, and now that we are pulling  
 down new mines every day, we're starving altogether. We're  
 all on the picket line, the men, the women and the wids, and  
 we have to walk sometimes 15 miles in the mornin and evenin  
 to picket on one sandwich a day, sometimes we aint even got  
 that. And the yellow dogs and the company cops shootin us  
 down and beatin us and throwin us out on the street and  
 arrestin us. Things is very bad. Now as Jim here said, you've  
 got to stand by the miners, don't let them starve, don't let  
 them lose this strike, give what you can, and then some more  
 for the miners aint got nothin, the miners is fighting not  
 only their fight but the fight of the whole work-in class.  
 And if they lose the strike you'll feel it. Give, shell out  
 your poc-ets to the last cent. Steve and Jim and Ham- will  
 pass the hat around, fill it up, don't let the mine owners  
 starve us out.

(miners pass hat around)



Setting for the AUGUST 1st ANTI IMPERIALIST WAR PAGEANT, GIVEN  
 on Union Square, New York, under the direction of the  
 DRAM SECTION OF WORKERS CULTURAL FEDERATION

Fight against Starvation.

A play about the strike of the Penn-Ohio miners

by H. Ober.

8 people are necessary for this play.

1. Dig and dig and dig the cave
2. Dig until you dig your grave
3. I've dug mountains of coal, I'm tired and old
4. You've dug mountains of coal, and you freeze in the cold
1. Bread and water, our daily ration
2. No milk, no meat, pure starvation
3. The work is hard, with heavy pick
4. My child needs milk, my child is sick
- 2,3 Our strength is gone, our backs are bent.

Clerk on : Two weeks work: deduct for rent  
right to Deduct for powder and all you spent  
miner Two weeks work, you owe one cent

Miners: Dig and dig and dig the cave  
Dig until you dig your grave

1. Say brother, here's hard luck  
Can't dig further, have to blast a rock
2. You blast and blast and blast all day
- 1,2 For blasting a rock you get no pay.

Grocery clerk : Two weeks work: deduct for rent  
on left to Deduct for powder and all you spent  
woman He worked two weeks. He owes one cent.  
Madam - This is a company store  
There is the door.

1. Hey there I'm no slave
- All: Dig and dig and dig the cave  
Dig until you dig your grave.
1. The bosses' wife lives fine
2. She never works as hard as mine
3. The bosses' wife has all she needs
4. Food and dresses, silks and beads

Clerk on: Madam - This is a company store  
left There's the door

1. Company everywhere
2. Company store
3. Company mine
4. Company house
1. Company money
2. Company police
3. Company government

All: Company everywhere

1. We work and starve
2. We slave and starve
3. We dig and starve
4. Bread and water's our daily ration
1. To hell with starving. Fight starvation

All: Dig and dig and dig the cave  
Dig until you dig your grave

1. Follow workers, The National Minors Union is calling a striko
2. Our comrades are calling a striko
3. I say strike today
4. Strike today

All: Strike today

2. Better to starve striking
3. Than to starve working

All: Strike against starvation.

S C E N E T W O

Office of a coal operator  
Boss & Secretary

Boss: (amazed) Well, well, so the miners are striking again. Well, well. The minors are striking. Gee, but that's funny. (He coughs) A strike today, with so many minors out of work, it's a joke, That's what it is, a joke. Today the workers have got to take whatever I give them- wage-cuts, speed-up, unemployment, part-time, breadlines, injunctions, lynchings, police terror, tear gas, machine guns, gas, war---- whatever I give them. The workers have got to take it and shut up about it.

A strike today - ha, ha, ha- - just watch me break this minors strike. (to Secretary) Got the unemployment agency. Tell them to send the unemployed. I've got jobs for them.

Secr.: Yes Sir (calling) Hello, hello- yes will you send as many unemployed as possible. We've got jobs for them--- What? Unemployed? Unemployed wouldn't come? Impossible. Pardon, the Unemployed are striking?- What's that? They stick together? Employed and unemployed? (hangs up)

Boss: Well----

Secr.: The unemployed are on strike too.

Boss: That's funny. The unemployed are striking. Ha, ha, ha (laughs) First time I ever heard about such a thing- alright. They are getting too lazy to work. Something wrong somewhere. Are you sure you got that right?--

Secr.: Yes Sir--

Boss: All right I'll show them. I've always managed to get the niggers to take their jobs in time of a strike. (presses button, foreman appears)

Foreman: Yes Sir-

Boss: Get all the niggers you can get a hold of. Tell them we've got jobs for them. Put them to work. Break that God damn strike.

Foreman: It's no use---

Boss: What? (excited) What do you mean, "no use"?

Foreman: The niggers are on strike. They all strike, black and white. They stick together.

Boss: (furious) Impossible, who ever heard of such a thing. I can't believe it. A nigger wouldn't take a job from the whites. Is that possible? I always managed to keep negroes and white separated.

Foreman: It's a fact-

Boss: Fact or no fact. I'm going to teach these miners a lesson, they wouldn't forget for a long time. Tell the state militia, the coal and iron police, the deputy sheriffs- tell them they've got to break this strike, by any means,- injunctions, evictions, tear gas, rifles, machine guns- any means. Above all they must get a hold of the leaders. We'll take their leaders away. That'll settle it.

Foreman: I'll call the chief deputy sheriff. He'll will be more impressed when you talk to him.

Boss: What's the matter with you? Can't you carry out my orders. Doesn't my order mean anything to you? What? Am I not paying you to do that? Are you striking too?

Foreman: It's a tough situation. You won't believe me when I say that I can't understand it.

Boss: What can't you understand? I speak English when I say the leaders, I mean the leaders nothing else. The leaders, you get that? We always got the leaders and we've got to get them now.

Foreman: It's hard to explain, but let me put it this way! Did you ever hear of a strike without one or two official leaders leading it?

Boss: No. There are always one or two leaders. Have them arrested, kill them, Do anything you can but get them.

Foreman: But there are no leaders leading it.

Boss: No? What? (excitedly) I don't want to talk to you any more. You are a blockhead. Call the chief.

Foreman: Yes Sir (goes to phone and calls) Send the chief deputy sheriff here. Right away. The boss wants to talk to him.

Boss: (puzzled) You mean to tell me, there's no leader, no single man who leads, like in the United Mine Workers, one or two officials lead that's all.

Sheriff: (enters) Yes Sir- you sent for me?

Boss: Will you tell me what this fellow is blobbing about? All he can say is that ther's no leader, whoever heard of that? Ha, ha, ha.

Sheriff: Well he is right. We tried every possible means to terrorize them, to isolate their leaders. But we could find no leaders. Nobody is a leader, yet everybody leads. It's the most peculiar thing.

Boss: (furious) You talk in riddles- this is a conspiracy- nobody is a leader, yet almost everybody leads. Whoever heard of that?

Sherriff: We tried our best. Our stools reported that they have some kind of Committee. They call it a "Strike Committee". Its made up of wor-  
kers in the mines - ordinary workers elected by the miners. This  
Strike Committee is the leader. How can you arrest the leader when  
it seems everybody is in the Strike Committee.

Boss: Damn you all. No leaders, No leaders is all I hear. Get the leaders.  
I'm willing to spend some money and settle it.

Foreman: All the miners are leaders. This is not the United Mine Workers of  
the American Federation of Labor. We can't find any leaders.

Boss: Then get me the United Mine Workers. They've got just a few leaders.  
Fagan is one of them, Lewis another. Yet Fagan he charges too much,  
but he'll break this strike. I'll settle with him.

Sherriff: He is having a conference with Goyvor Pinchet about the strike. I'll  
call them up. (goes to the phone) yes, we are willing to settle, what?  
Some of the operators settled and nobody went back to work anywhere.  
It's peculiar. (hangs up dejectedly)(to boss) They say this strike is  
different. The leaders settled but nobody goes back to work. They  
don't listen to the United Mine Workers. The National Miners Union is  
their union.

Boss: The National Miners Union?

Sherriff: Yes. It's a different Union. They have different methods. Their  
leaders are strike committees. They organize the unemployed and lead  
them in the fight for unemployment insurance. They unite negroes and  
whites, and do not permit any break in their ranks. Solidarity of  
negroes and whites is their motto. We can't break this strike.

Boss: (viciously) Well, then - I'll show you. We'll see who is running things  
around here. I've got one weapon left that will beat them. I've used  
it on them plenty of times and it always beat them. Do I have to tell  
you what it is? - It's Starvation - when they've been hungry for a few  
weeks - when their wives are fainting and their children are sick for  
lack of milk, they give in. Starvation will break this strike.

### SCENE TWO

Mass - Recital

All	Fellow workers!	5	The workingclass.
4	Comrades!	67	What is our weapon?-
1	The miners' strike	123	The weapon of the workingclass!
2	is our strike.	567	The weapon against starvation!
3	Their victory	4	Solidarity
5	is a victory	345	Solidarity of the workingclass.
6	of the whole	All	Solidarity is the weapon of the workingclass.
7	Workingclass.		
123	A victory against starvation.	1	Solidarity
4	The miners must win.	12	means
1	because	23	money
4567	The miners fight is our fight	34	food
All	against starvation.	45	clothing
2	the workingclass	67	for the striking miners
3	must	123	for the starving women
45	defeat	4567	for the starving children
67	starvation.	All	for our fighting comrades
123	Starvation is the weapon of the bosses	4	This means
4	against	123	Solidarity
		567	Solidarity of the workingclass
		4	The only weapon against starvation
		all	Lies in your hands!

# REVIEWS

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## "HIRSCH LEKERT"

(Produced by Brighton Beach Jewish Drama Section)

Reviewed by A. Prentis.

Whether influenced by the contents of their plays or by traditions, most language dramatic groups seem to be under the impression that unless productions have all realistic trappings, unless the characters wear the exact cuts of clothing and whiskers called for in the play, the performance will be a flop. The Brighton Beach Jewish Drama Section, producing "HIRSCH LEKERT", is no exception.

The play: - a performance in three scenes of the story of Hirsch Lekert, a cobbler in Russia, who wants to avenge the whipping of workers for demonstrating against the brutality of the governor, and who attempts to shoot him. He is caught and hung.

The acting in the first scene was excellent, showing what wealth of talent is latent in these workers who were able to put on such a performance after only two weeks of rehearsing. The second scene and the third scene were weak, the fault of both play and performance. For here was an opportunity to make a powerful appeal to the workers to keep on fighting, and not only to worry about Hirsch Lekert's death.

But the settings: - a typical Russian oven, painted on white background and an actress dusting it! The prison scene: - the audience fearful every moment lest the prison bars fall apart! And the make-up and whiskers: requiring three men, working continuously making them up! What poor theatre, what waste of energy!

The above group as well as other dramatic groups should avoid such elaboration. They should have no painted settings in their plays, they must do away with make-up and wigs, but above all, they should use plays dealing with current episodes in the class-conflict. Such events like the miners' strike, election campaigns, the death of Katovis, the Scottsboro-case have more dramatic value than all plays ever written, including Shakespeare's, because they are closer to us and affect us directly.

In conclusion, we would suggest, that performances be given in workers' halls rather than in temples. Performances should begin at a reasonable time, say 9 pm., and not 11 pm., when workers like to go home and rest up for another hard labor day.

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ART IS A WEAPON!

THEATRE IS A WEAPON IN THE CLASS-STRUGGLE!

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# CORRESPONDENCE

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Out of the increasing number of letters arriving us not only from the U.S.A. but from all parts of the world, we publish the following letters, which show clearly the very need for an organ promoting the exchange of experiences between the various groups and which express the willingness of the Workers' Theatres to co-operate in this important task:

From: Workers' Art Theatre  
SIDNEY, AUSTRALIA.

Dear Comrade,

A Workers' Art Theatre has been founded in Australia by George H. Bley, as an independent movement.

Its objective is of course to counteract the capitalist propaganda of the Prust Theatre, etc.

Could you inform us as to how the Workers' Theatre Movements are run in America and what is their constitution.

If you have any plays and other literature suitable for our movement we should be glad to have them as we are desirous of keeping in touch with other movements of this nature in other parts of the world.

Thanking you in anticipation

Yours fraternally,  
W. Saltmarsh  
Secretary.

From: Blue Blouse Dramatic Studio  
- CHICAGO, ILL.

Dear Comrades,

It is good to hear from you. We certainly will send in articles to your magazine. It would please us greatly if you would send us a few of your back numbers.

The Blue Blouses were organized for the purpose of furthering the radical left movement through the medium of the stage. During the winter season, we have been called upon to perform before various organizations. Many calls were for recitations which were received very heartily.

We have also "put on" our famous mass recitation of the "Gotta Build Blues" several times before large audiences.

For a time we were engaged in very intensive work on the play "The Belt" which was finally given at an "All Blue Blouse Affair."





# NEWS

ALL DRAMATIC GROUPS are urged to read in reports on August activities and plans for September until August 25th latest for publication in the September issue.

WORKERS' CULTURAL FEDERATION (DRAMATIC SECTION). - Until the opening of the headquarters the address of the Bureau is: 799 Broadway, Room 330, New York City. Write to this address for information concerning repertory, organization, directing and other problems of the dramatic work.

-----The Section arranged a "Get-Acquainted-Party" on July 22. There representatives of 9 Workers Theatres were present. The German Prolet-Buehne performed "Tempo - Tempo!" an Agitprop production showing the exploiting speed-up tempo of Capitalism and the constructive socialist tempo of Soviet-Russia. The English Brighton Beach Dram Group of the W.L.T. performed an one act play exposing imperialist war propaganda. In a following discussion the performances of this evening and plans for a better co-operation between the dramatic groups were discussed.

WORKERS' LABORATORY THEATRE NEW-YORK. - The next production will be a miners' play (published in this issue). All comrades of the other groups are invited to attend the Monday-night-meetings at 799 Broadway, Room 330, where problems of playwriting are being discussed.

THE NOVI-MIR CLUB, 2700 Bronx Park East, NYC, is planning to organize a dramatic section in fall.

PROLET-BUEHNE (GERMAN WORKERS' THEATRE N.Y.).-- This group did an important step forward towards efficient Agitprop work by visiting (without invitation) the picnic of an A. F. of L.- Union Local and giving there a Collective Report on the Scottsboro-case. - "Something must be wrong!" ("Da stimmt was nicht!") a play, exposing the anti-proletarian press, and explaining the importance of the revolutionary press for the workers, will be given the first time on August 23. at the "Arbeiter" Picnic in the Edenwald Park.

## JEWISH WORKERS' DRAM SECTIONS

Prospect Club gave a performance of the one act play "At Benny's Home".

Downtown Club is preparing for August 15. the Mass-Recitation "The March of the Young Communists".

Brownsville Youth Center has scheduled for August 15. "Unemployed".

Boro-Park is rehearsing for Aug. 15. the 3 scene play "Shop".

FRCM JAPAN Comrade Seki Sano came over to study the Workers' Theatres of America and to establish international contacts. Arrangements have been made for an exchange of news, plays and other material between the "Japanese Association of Proletarian Theatres" and the "Dram Section of the Workers' Cultural Federation in U.S.A."

GOOD PLAYS ARE NEEDED! Send your plays immediately to the "Dram Section of the Workers' Cultural Federation" for distribution among the various groups. Plays in foreign languages are wanted as well, they will be translated by the Dram Section.

DON'T FORGET to send in your news, reports and - subscriptions - at once to 799 Broadway, Room 330.

**ELECTIONS IN NOVEMBER!** - Start preparations for the November Election Campaign immediately! Arrange discussions on the right ideological basis for the election plays and on the best ways and means to approach the masses. Get your plays ready as soon as possible and send them to the "Workers' Theatre" for publication. Also the language groups have to take part in the election work, and not only among the workers of their nationality. There are many forms (pantomime, dance, pictures, signs; etc.) which can be used for propaganda among the wide masses of the english speaking workers.

#### INTERNATIONAL THEATRE CONFERENCE

Representatives of Workers' Theatre Groups of seven countries met in Moscow at the second plenum of the "International Workers' Dramatic Union". The reports from Germany, U.S.A., England, France, Japan gave evidence of the rapid growth of the proletarian theatre in face of the crisis and decay of the bourgeois theatre. Experiences were exchanged and agreements for socialist competitions between the groups of various nationalities were concluded.

A. Lozovsky, general secretary of the Red International of Trade Unions, stressed the need for further activation of the groups, saying in his address to the delegates: "The sharpening class-struggles demand not only powerful acting, but actual participation in events. We must not only follow events but stand in the forefront of them."

The American delegate coming back August 1. will give a full report on this important conference.

## IN THE RED SPOTLIGHT

### IN PRINCIPLE

... against all technical apparatus' complicating and slowing down the work of the Agitprop Troups we could not but approve the installation of a RED SPOTLIGHT in this magazine. As an excellent device to search up the field (of our own activities as well as those of our opponents), we offer it to the disposal of all comrade players and groups to put shortcomings, achievements and important stratetic points in the right light.

### THERE IS PLENTY OF MATERIAL:

Experiences, little accidents, in rehearsals or performances, mistakes, wrong and right ideas, funny happenings etc., which are not fit to be reported in a long article, which however can help other groups to improve their work and to avoid failures already done by others. There is plenty of material! Don't keep it! Send it to the RED SPOTLIGHT of the "Workers' Theatre", 799 Broadway, Room 330, N.Y.C.

### AT THE FIRST TRY OUT

... of our new device we hit some good ones. Reminding us of the old Roman word "Difficile est satyram non scribere." ("It is hard not to write a satyre.") And we decided to write one once a while. For why shouldn't we tell the truth laughing, when it comes out shorter and better this way? At last: a RED SPOTLIGHT is not - yellow!

CHILDREN'S SECTION.

THEATRE FOR CHILDREN.

by Comr. Olska (W.L.T.)

By the term "Theatre" is usually meant the theatre for adults, that theatre, which does not deny admission to children, but does not recognize, therefore cannot be concerned with their peculiar problems. There exist, however, a few theatres, designed for and entirely devoted to work for children. Some use adults for acting children's plays, others depend entirely on children. They are not widely known, because they give a limited number of performances a year, that reach only the middle and upper classes of children - in a word: the bourgeoisie. Workers' children cannot afford to pay the price of there admission.

Adrienne Morrison, a one-time prominent actress, is the guiding spirit of a Children's Theatre in New York. She engaged specially trained adults to perform in a repertoire for children, and expresses the purposes for such a theatre as follows:

1. To represent in dramatic form a child's natural sense of beauty and fun,
2. To stimulate children's appreciation of the imagination and artistic in literature and drama,
3. To show them, that the best in literature and acting is more entertaining than the cheap meretricious,
4. To train them in discrimination and taste, so that in later years, they will demand excellence of the adult stage,
5. To present to american children the works of the best modern playwrights written for children.

Miss Morrison considers that these five reasons constitute the basis for the necessity of a special children's theatre; that american culture would be just so much less elevated, if the theatre had no existence; that it is an essential part of the structure of civilization.

Another kind of children's theatre is the theatre in the private schools. It is made up of its student body in both, actors and audience. It is not only offered as a superior recreational facility and training school for professionals, but also training in the more advanced tempus of grace and learning. It has come to be regarded more and more every day, as an integral constructive part of the child's education. The King-Coit school in New York, one of the most superior, has found, that it strengthens and intensifies the child's desire to learn. The proper production of a play leads them into research of history, geography, architecture, costume, philosophie and hundred fields. The purpose and result of such stimulus is a child of superior attainments, fit to grow into an adult of the ruling class.

There is still another institution, devoted to the aesthetic development and entertainment of children. An outgrowth of the "Little Theatre" - Movement was a Children's Branch. The children here are also of a class, whose parents can afford, to send them to a school professionals for their education. It is only the children of the proletariat - the workers - who go to the public-schools, who are denied the advantage of training in the theatre. All bourgeois institutions recognize the value of theatre in a child's life, yet are totally indifferent to the fact, that the overwhelming majority, the children of the masses, are outside of the reach of these theatres. They are not only indifferent, but such is their intention. It is inherent in the conditions of time and money necessary to receive these benefits.

The public-schools, which are free to all, are the only schools, a workers' child can be admitted to. In the curriculum elementary dramatic study - not a theatre - is provided for. The attention given it, however, is most negligible and unconsidered. The teachers are never specifically equipped, there is very little study of either, history of drama or technique of acting or any other theatre courses. So far from its being scholastically and socially an integral, constructive stimulus, it is the most careless department in the whole system. On holidays and special occasions, the fever of celebration takes hold and an appropriate play is hostily sought, after a few days of search, the traditional one is chosen, and excitedly put on, one way or the other, for that one time, at its close, the curtain descends until a new holiday. Usually their plays are nationalistic or religious in character.

It is clear, therefore, that the workers' children must create their own theatre. Just as well as the bourgeoisie prepares its children to rule, so and even more necessary it is for the proletariat, to lead its children on the correct ideological road to victory. A Workers' Children's Theatre is the concrete application of this ideology.

There exists in Leningrad since ten years ago just such a theatre, called "Teatr Yunayich Zritel'er" (Theatre for the Young Spectator). It was organized by a group of artists and educators on principles, the outstanding of which were and are:

That the child is a separate entity, not a miniature edition of an adult,

That it is a social-educational force,

That they would use specially trained, highly sensitized actors in adult plays. A play with child-character would be done by actresses only,

That the school and theatre would work together in production, which obviates the need for a school theatre. The close contact between the two makes it possible to truly produce, what the public wants.

In New York we have a group of workers' children, who have written one play collectively. It is composed of children, who live in the midst of American boss' poverty and bourgeois propaganda and who, through efforts of Workers' Organizations are beginning to devote themselves to the class' struggle - toward the creation of a truly social society.

In actual production and concentrated work in Workers' Children's Dramatics, the pioneers, the leaders of the workers' children, have done very little. This was mostly due to poor organization and to lack of realization of the importance of a Workers' Children's Theatre as a means in awakening other children to class-consciousness. It seems, that only the Jewish Workers' Schools really have done any work in children's dramatics, but these were organized only with the aims of entertaining the adult class-conscious workers, and not to reach and propagandize workers' children. We still look to the Pioneers for a Workers' Children's Theatre in America. A Theatre, that will reach the workers' children and work as an Anti-toxin to the propaganda of the bourgeois schools.

### TO THE BEGINNING AND FUTURE OF A WORKERS' CHILDREN'S THEATRE!

Editor's note: We do not agree with all points offered in this article, we print it as a start of a discussion on Workers' Children's Theatre. All groups are asked to send in their comments and criticism.

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#### BREADLINE

- A play, written by Spanish Workers International Relief Scouts.

(Children with pots and pans on breadline. Line keeps on growing. Children talking out loud. Cop is seen on the side, trying to keep order. A Boy-Scout is seen at the door of the Salvation Army, letting one child in at a time. Suddenly a large car passes. In it is seated Archibald Money.)

- Jonny: Gee! That kid is got it easy. Parents are rich, and he gets swell grub to eat. - Jimmy, when did you eat last?
- Jimmy: I had a bowl of stew last night. And you?
- Jonny: You're pretty good. I had a glass of water and a X slice of bread this morning.
- Antoinette: Gosh, it sure is tough to be poor. You know, my father hasn't been working for over a year and there are 7 kids in the family.
- Jimmy: Aw, that's nothing. It's worse in my family. My father was in the world-war, and now he's paralyzed, so my mother has to look for work, but she can't find any. My kid sister is sick, we can't pay the rent, we have no food and no clothing. You know, my sister Mary couldn't go to school last Tuesday, 'cause it was X cold, and she didn't have a coat to wear.

- W.I.R.-Sc. So says Hoover! Listen! If your father is a worker, then you belong to the W.I.R.-Scouts, a workers' organization. How did you become a Boy-Scout anyhow?
- Boy-Sc. Why? In school my teacher told me, its a fine organization.
- W.I.R.-Sc. It's full of bolony; it's for the rich and not for us. Come down to this party, and hear more about us.
- Kids: (Pointing to W.I.R.-Scout)  
Gee, he's smart! (To Boy-Sc.)  
You don't know, what you're talking about.
- W.I.R.-Sc. That's not right. He is a workers' child, too. He will learn, tho, that his place is in the W.I.R.-Scouts and not in the Boy-Scouts.
- Kids: Gee, it's late. Let's tell our mothers, we're going to the party.
- W.I.R.-Sc. (To the Boy-Sc.) Are you coming to the party?
- Boy-Sc. Sure I am.
- (END OF SCENE I.)

SCENE II.

(Children begin to cheer, as the scene begins)

When you're up, you're up,  
When you're down, you're down;  
When you're up against the Red-Scouts,  
You're upside down.

(This is a party, the children begin to eat,  
and then one of the children gets up and speaks.)

- Child: I'm just going to say a few words to all the children here this evening. Most of you are here as a result of receiving our invites at the breadline this afternoon. Yes, breadlines in the richest country in the world. Breadlines, where dishes of slop are given away to workers' children, to quiet their hunger. We want good food. There are thousands of restaurants, groceries, and bakeries, where food is thrown out. Why can't this food be given to the unemployed workers?  
There are homes and apartments, where plenty of rooms are vacant. Why can't the unemployed workers and their children live there?  
There are clothes' stores and shoes' stores, packed full of clothing and shoes, and the workers and their children go without clothing. Why is this so?

Joan: Did you say, your father was in the world-war?

Jimmy: Yeh!

Joan: Well, don't they pay him a bonus?

~~Jimmy: Bonus Hell! My father never got a cent.~~

Armand: My father and mother have been without work for 7 months and my mother has to go begging to get food.

Antoinette: Take a look at the shoe-store across the street! It says: Buy Now! I sure need a pair but where am I going to get the money to buy now?

Every one yells:

Look at yours! Look at mine! Look at mine!  
(All raise their shoes and show their torn soles)

Cop: Come on, in order, in order. Get inline!  
(Kids hiss and boo. Start rattling their pans  
x and in general make a lot of noise. Hear them  
say, they want food.)

Salv.-Army Lassie: I am sorry, children, but the Good Lord Jesus ran short of food for today. Tomorrow our great lord will have an abundance of food awaiting you.

Everyone talks: I'm hungry. I want food. what are we going to eat tonight. My sister is sick and needs food. My father is sick. We're all hungry!

W.I.R.-Scouts: Just a minute, Kids. Don't go away yet. Here, take these. (Distributes leaflets)

Kids: Gimme one, gimme one!  
(Make a grab for the leaflets. Children are reading them, when the Boy-Scout appears.)

Boy-Scout: Hey, what's that? Gimme one of them!  
(Stands on the side, reading it.)

Kids: Say, this is swell, inviting us to a party.  
Boy, I'm going!  
So am I.  
Me too.  
Say, can I bring my kid-brother along?

W.I.R.-Sc. Sure!

Boy-Scout: (Just finished reading)  
You're one of these Bolsheviks! Gimme those leaflets!  
You can't distribute them here!

W.I.R.-Sc. Your father is a worker. Isn't he?

Boy-Sc. Sure, he is a worker. But he hasn't been working for sometime. But he'll find a job soon.

A Child: (Raising hand anxiously)  
I can.  
'cause the rich run this country, and they run it so they can make more money for themselves. The workers build it and now can't get, what they made. In the Soviet-Union, where the workers kicked out the rich, the workers now run the country, and the workers get everything. In the U.S. the bosses and their children can choose their clothing and food, while the worker eats and wears what he gets.

Leader: Must we stand for such things?

Children: No!

2. Child: Well, the best way to fight such things, is to get together with all other workers and their children and fight ~~against~~ together against these conditions.

Boy-Scout: I'm in the Boy-Scouts for about 6 months now. My teacher told me, it's a fine organization, but what you say, is right. There are lots of people, who are out of work, and the government doesn't help them. My father has been out of work for a long time, and I'm sure, we going to be put out on the street out of our home soon. Now I know, why my teacher told me, that the Boy-Scouts were a fine organization. The fellows running our Boy-Scouts, are rich guys. Why would they want to run clubs for us, if they didn't have a reason? Sure, they want to make us forget, all the bad conditions of our parents. Well, here is one, that's going to fool them. And I am going to tell all my friends about it, too.

(General applause.)

(Children arise and sing the INTERNATIONAL.)

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Editor's note: This play is published as written by the children of the Spanish W.I.R.-Scouts in N.Y. From the point of view of propaganda the play has some weaknesses, as for example the winning over of the children, especially the Boy Scout, at the breadline and at the party, was done too easy. But it gives a good idea of what children, when properly stimulated, can do.

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All dramatic groups and all children's organizations are urged to send in

Articles, reports and news on Workers' Children's Theatre Plays, written by Children or for Children to "Workers' Theatre", 799 Broadway, Room 330 - New York City. N.Y.



## A JEW AT WAR

A Jew At War, the Amkina film, this week at the Cameo Theatre, is easily the outstanding Soviet picture this year, many will conclude--this best in the past few years. In a fast moving plot, fast at least in comparison to previous pictures from the U.S.S.R., the Jew is shown in his relation to the revolution.

There is no doubt left in the mind that the Jew had a special problem, a problem related to his clanishness, mass amalgamation of races, religion and ideas, that occurred after 1917 and is still occurring today. This was poignantly presented when Davidko as manager of the new shoe factory is sought out by the patriarchal Jews in the city where he works. He has the power to give them leather so that they again may open up their little shops to make and trade in shoes. They plead with him,--"You are a Jew, you are one of us." But he sternly rebukes them and tries to explain that the shoe factory represents the greatest good for the masses instead of the inefficient and wasteful way of the jitney trader. They leave, unsatisfied, and obviously completely ignorant of what Davidko means.

This episode should have been given far more time and treatment. It symbolized the greatest problem the Soviet has to face. It is not only its problem but the problem of revolution and socialization. Were all able to understand Davidko in his desire to promote the shoe factory and not the way of small greedy trader there would be no problems here or in the Soviet.

The other chief episode concerns the food grafter. It is dealt with in an utterly human way. Instead of picturing the food commissar as a scoundrel who sidetracks a carload of food for an opera company which should go to the starving Red Troops at the front fighting the White invasion, he is shown as a foolish human being who simply did not have the foresight to realize what he was doing. Nevertheless, he goes before the firing squad at the orders of Davidko, who was his comrade at the front during the World War. It is ruthless but strangely there is no feeling that Brandt, the food commissar has been treated unjustly. One feels that he was one of the unfortunate tragedies that inevitably occur in a great social upheaval.

Through it all is woven the emotional conflict of the Jew, represented by Davidko, the leading character, a member of the Moscow State Theater. The picture begins in a small town inhabited by Jews fleeing before the guns of the invading German Armies. There follow the conventional scenes, some symbolic, some real, of war as it is lived by men in the

trenches. There are many beautiful scenes of rain, of darkness, of windswept steppes.

The picture closes with a scene of children running across the field, their happy upturned faces filled with the promise that the Revolution holds. It is a promise simply and powerfully presented.

Member of the  
WORKERS FILM AND PHOTO LEAGUE

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Summary of planned activities of the DRAM SECTION of the  
Workers' Cultural Federation.

The following suggestions of the DRAMATIC SECTION of the W.C.F. were approved of by the executive committee of the Federation:

1. To form a central agit-prop troupe for the purpose of training new forces of mass organizations, in order to plant the Workers Theatre in those organizations.
2. To work toward the establishment of a Workers Dramatic Union of the U.S.A.
3. To form Dramatic Councils thruout the U.S.A. for the purpose of establishing contacts between the various Workers Theatre Groups on a national scale.
4. To include one member each of the following commissions in the Dram Section:
  - a) Writers
  - b) Artists
  - c) Music for the purpose of coordinating the work of the theatre with the activities of these sections.
5. To use the "Workers Theatre" as the official organ of the Dram Section.

All groups should send in their contacts and addresses of other dram groups immediatcly to

DRAM SECTION of the WORKERS CULTURAL  
FEDERATION, 799 Broadway, Room 330, NYC.

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CORRECTION:

Page 29 should be read before 28.

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